

As part of the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta's (CRNA) complaints management process, complaints sometimes require an investigation to ensure that all aspects are being considered before determining an outcome.

We recognize that being the subject of a complaint can feel overwhelming, uncertain and stressful. This guide is designed to help you understand what to expect, what is required and how the complaints management process works. We are committed to conducting every investigation in a fair and respectful manner, in accordance with the principles of administrative justice.

If you have questions, you are encouraged to reach out to us or to your workplace representative for support.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the CRNA conducting an investigation?

- Anyone can submit a complaint to the CRNA, and under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA), the regulator must respond. An investigation may also collect the evidence required to support a dismissal of the complaint.

What should I expect during an investigation?

- You will be contacted by an investigator when your file has been assigned.
 - During the initial call, the investigator will confirm your information and answer any questions you have.
- You will be asked to provide specific documentation and to name direct witnesses who can provide information relevant to the complaint.
- The investigation may take months to complete. You will be contacted and updated on the status of the investigation every 60 days (after your initial contact by the investigator).
- When the investigation is complete, you will be contacted to set up a formal interview.
 - During the interview, there will be a full disclosure of witness testimony and documentary evidence collected during the investigation.
 - At this time, you will be given the opportunity to respond to the comments of others, view the documents, and describe your version of the alleged events.
- Following the formal interview, the investigator will submit the completed report to the Complaints Director, after which you will be notified of the decision.
 - The decision process may also take months to complete.
 - You will be contacted and updated on the status of the decision process every 60 days (after your notification from the investigator that the report has been submitted).

What documents do I need to provide?

- ☐ You must submit the completed Agency Choice Form (ACF) indicating the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) or Canadian Nurses Protective Society (CNPS) as your agent in the CRNA's proceedings.
 - You will be sent the ACF after you are notified that there will be an investigation.
- ☐ A current resume.
 - The investigation must include background about the registrant, so it is important to provide a summary of your work experience and career highlights.
 - This does not have to be submitted immediately but should be submitted prior to the investigation interview.
- ☐ A list of recent education or courses completed in the last two years.
 - If you are employed by Alberta Health Services, a copy of your My Learning Link summary can be used, but also include any other education or courses you think would be relevant to your investigation.

What witnesses should I provide?

- ☐ Direct witnesses to the alleged incidents.
 - Character witnesses will not be included in the investigation report.
 - You are obligated to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the investigation by not discussing the details of the complaint or investigation with potential witnesses.
 - You are permitted to provide names and contact information to the investigator for the purpose of investigation without their consent.

Do I have to provide a list of witnesses?

- No. Some situations may not have witnesses.
 - It is your right to name witnesses but your choice to do so.

Will I lose my practice permit?

- Complaint investigations are unbiased and objective. If there is a finding of unprofessional conduct, the goal is remediation of practice, not cancellation of your practice permit.
- Under current legislation, only complaints of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct (if founded after an investigation and hearing) may result in cancellation of a practice permit.
- In very specific circumstances, the registrant's practice permit may be suspended or subject to specific conditions, while the investigation is being completed.

What is the difference between the CRNA and UNA? How do I find UNA?

- The CRNA is the regulatory body for registered nurses and nurse practitioners in Alberta.
- United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) is your workplace representative and can help you navigate this process.
 - 1-800-252-9394
 - nurses@una.ca

What if I just retire?

- Any registrant that has a complaint about their practice is required under the HPA to cooperate with an investigation.
- In specific circumstances, the registrant can discuss other options with the CRNA legal counsel.

Can I apply for, or accept, another job while under investigation?

- Yes. The allegations have not been proven until a decision has been made based on the evidence presented in the investigation report.
- When you are renewing your practice permit with the CRNA, under the good character attestation, you must disclose that there has been a complaint about your practice, and you are under investigation.

Can I apply for a job in another province during this investigation?

- You must disclose that there is a complaint under investigation if you are applying for a practice permit in another jurisdiction.