



# Complaint Management and Investigations Policy

## 1. Purpose

This policy establishes criteria for the submission, acceptance and general conditions that apply to complaints regarding the **competence, performance, and/or conduct** by an employee, senior executive, CEO or board member .

## 2. Definitions

**competence:** means demonstrated knowledge and ability.

**conduct:** means professional and ethical behaviour.

**directly affected person:** means a **person** who has been directly effected.

**employee:** means a **person** engaged by AEDARSA to perform a service in accordance with an employment agreement.

**external stakeholder or person:** means an individual, organization, corporation, or other legal entity.

## 3. Policy

- a. AEDARSA may investigate complaints received from **external stakeholders** about the **competence, performance, and/or conduct**.
- b. All complaint investigations will be conducted, in an open, transparent, consistent, fair, objective, and unbiased manner according to approved AEDARSA policy and procedures.
- c. The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP Act) applies to all complaints submitted to AEDARSA.
- d. All complaint submissions must be made in writing, including all relevant supporting documented evidence, and signed by the **directly affected person**.
- e. All complaints submitted to AEDARSA will be assessed to determine whether they fall within the AEDARSA mandate and meet the requirements and criteria of this policy. \*Certain Complaints may be referred to other organizations that would have the appropriate jurisdiction for investigation.

\*It should be noted that technical or general complaints that are determined not to fall within our agency or delegated responsibilities may be referred. These organizations may include but are not limited to the Safety Codes Council or the Government of Alberta.

- f. Complaints that are determined to be trivial, frivolous, vexatious, or in bad faith may not be investigated.
- g. AEDARSA may not investigate a complaint if it relates to an issue that a **directly affected person** who has made the complaint has known about, or in the circumstances ought to have known about, for more than one year.

- h. Complaints will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in relation to the unique and individual circumstances, complexities, issues, and risk to public safety raised by the complaint. As such, the timeline for completing an investigation may vary.
- i. If a complaint is abandoned, AEDARSA may continue the investigation at their sole discretion.
- j. If the subject matter of a complaint is before either a court or an appeal panel, AEDARSA may suspend the investigation pending the outcome of the court proceedings or the appeal.
- k. If the subject matter raised in a complaint has been considered and determined in either a court proceeding or another organization who holds responsibility for such complaint, AEDARSA may decide not proceed with an investigation of the complaint.
- l. The outcome of an investigation may result in disciplinary or other corrective action being taken by CEO as directed by the Board.
- m. AEDARSA cannot award monetary damages or compel payment of monies.
- n. AEDARSA will periodically review its complaint management and investigation operations to monitor trends, assess complaint response and resolution effectiveness, and to improve service delivery.

#### **4. Process [As guided by Governance Policy 5.7]**

Where an external stakeholder makes direct contact with a Board member for assistance in the resolution of specific service issues, the Board member should refer the issue/complaint to the Chief Executive Officer.

A Board member may not interfere in the handling of a specific case by approaching individual staff members. Concerns about the management of a particular case should be conveyed to the Chief Executive Officer and Chair, if required.

The Chief Executive Officer will inform those affected about the action taken in the case or authorize a manager to communicate the information directly.

Updates will be provided to the Chair for any complaint by an external stakeholder that is brought forward to the CEO by a Board Member.

Internal policies and Agreements govern complaints from clients on specific issues and are dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer. The external stakeholder shall be provided with an opportunity to appeal their decisions to the Chief Executive Officer.

The Board responsibility for hearing client complaints on appeal from a decision of the Chief Executive Officer is an exception to these general principles. These complaints are directed to the Chair who will proceed to seek direction from the board on the most appropriate way to investigate the matter.

This may include a special committee or tribunal and report to the board. Confidentiality is important on all complaint matters.

The Board, in reviewing such matters shall make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer on appropriate actions and recommend any possible policy changes, if required.

## 5. Authority

This policy is established under the authority of AEDARSA Governance Policy Manual which delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to establish policies and procedures for the management and operation of AEDARSA regarding corporate operations, and operating programs which delegates responsibility for program and service planning and activities to the CEO.

## 6. Scope

The policy applies to AEDARSA **employees, board members** and or any **persons** submitting a complaint.

## 7. Related Policies and Procedures

- 5.7 AEDARSA Board Governance Policy

### The Complaint Management and Investigations Policy

This Policy Has been Approved by the AEDARSA Board of Directors.  
It is also included as an Appendix in the AEDARSA Policy & Governance Manual.

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Gord Pattison, CEO, AEDARSA



Jamie Tiessen, Chair, AEDARSA Board of Directors