



## FILING A COMPLAINT

### COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES LICENSING PROGRAM

The information you provide is valued by the Licensing staff and forms an integral part of their work in providing assurance that a healthy and safe environment is maintained in all licensed facilities providing care.

#### **Every complaint or allegation must be investigated**

Under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, a Medical Health Officer or designate (usually a Licensing Officer) is responsible for investigating every allegation or complaint of non-compliance in a licensed community care facility. The degree to which Licensing investigates depends on the nature and severity of the complaint. Some complaints, such as those involving inappropriate discipline or abuse, are of a serious nature and require more immediate attention.

However, there are aspects of care that do not fall within the scope of the legislation. If your complaint falls under the jurisdiction of the *Act*, an investigation will be conducted by the delegated Licensing Officer. If it does not, you will be advised as such and, wherever possible, provided with other complaint mechanisms that may assist you.

The Community Care Facilities Licensing Program operates under the framework of administrative law. During the complaint investigation, care providers are notified of the complaint, given an opportunity to respond, and to provide plans for corrective actions if warranted. Decisions are focused on ensuring health and safety and are determined with the intent of fairness to all parties involved in the process.

Your complaint will be dealt with as quickly as possible to minimize any inconvenience to individuals in care, the family, and the Licensee of the facility. The duration of the investigation may vary depending on the nature and severity of the complaint and the risk level determined at the time. Some complaints, such as those alleging criminal activity, inappropriate discipline or abuse, are of a serious nature and may involve Child Protection Social Workers or the police/RCMP.

#### **Resolving concerns and disputes**

There are a number of ways to resolve concerns regarding the care of your loved one. Complaints are best addressed and resolved at the time and place they occur and wherever possible with the Licensee or manager of the care facility. Resolving concerns at the facility helps to maintain a good relationship and often will find a quick and effective resolution for all persons involved.

If you are not satisfied with the response or the complaint is of a serious nature where an apparent risk to the health, safety and well-being of persons in care exists, you may refer your concerns to a Licensing Officer. There is no time limit in which to make a complaint, however, waiting too long may have an impact on the accuracy of facts and the health and safety of individuals in care.

#### **The following points may help you in organizing your thoughts before you file your complaint or allegation:**

- In filing a complaint, it is more important to specify facts relating to the complaint without involving personal biases. Your complaint must establish facts rather than attempt to verify a complaint or allegation.
- In order to maximize accuracy and ensure the safety of individuals affected, your complaint should be filed as soon as possible.
- Those involved in the investigation will endeavor to make recommendations as quickly as possible to minimize any inconvenience to individuals in care, the family and the Licensee of the facility.
- Your information and documentation should include: who, what, where, when and how.
- Remember that details are critical in making a complaint and that precise documentation will help ensure accurate recall for future reference.

When filing a complaint, you will be asked for your name, address, and phone number in order that we can maintain contact with you. If you wish to remain anonymous, you can be assured that we will still investigate your complaint.

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**Victoria**

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Victoria, BC V8X 5A7  
Ph: 250.519.3401  
Fax: 250.519.3402  
Website: [Community Care Facilities Licensing](#)

**Nanaimo**

29 – 1925 Bowen Road  
Nanaimo, BC V9S 1H1  
Ph: 250.739.5800  
Fax: 250.740.2675

**Courtenay**

355 – 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Courtenay, BC V9N 1S4  
Ph: 250.331.8620  
Fax: 250.331.8596

**Campbell River**

200 – 1100 Island Highway  
Campbell River, BC V9W 8C6  
Ph: 250.850.2110  
Fax: 250.850.2455

Whatever your complaint is, please prepare to answer any or all of the following questions:

1. What is your identity in relation to the situation? (e.g. staff member, neighbour, family member)
2. Date the incident occurred?
3. Description of condition or injury of the victim (if applicable).
4. Did you witness the incident or did you obtain the information from someone else?
5. Is there anyone else aware that you are filing this report?

The information that you provide will be recorded and is therefore subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)*. This means that records and information relating to the alleged incident may be released under the terms of the *Act*, while every effort will be made to protect you – the source of those facts. If you wish to have your name as the complainant kept confidential, please notify the Licensing Officer or the person taking your information. You will be asked why you need this information kept confidential.

If you have any concerns regarding your rights under the *Act* or incidents where complete confidentiality may not be possible, you may wish to seek further guidance through the Information Stewardship, Access & Privacy office for Island Health at 250.519.1870.

The Licensing Officer will ask at the time of intake if you would like to be contacted when the investigation is concluded and informed of the outcome of the investigation and any substantiated contraventions to the *Act* or Regulations. If you would like to be contacted at the conclusion of the investigation, you will be asked to provide contact information to the Licensing Officer, or you may contact the Licensing Officer at a later date to be informed of any substantiated contraventions.

Note: Some content of this Infosheet was provided by Northern Health Authority.