

DISCLAIMER: This document provides an overview of the organizations and processes available in BC to address seniors' concerns and complaints. It is not an exhaustive list and, while every effort has been made to ensure the information is up to date, we cannot guarantee its accuracy. Please consult with the relevant organization to confirm their processes and mandate before taking action or making decisions.

Overview of Complaint, Investigative and Referral Agencies in British Columbia

HEALTH CARE AND PERSONAL CARE

Seniors Health Care Support Line

The Seniors Health Care Support Line is operated by the Ministry of Health and allows seniors and their families, or other concerned individuals in their lives, to report concerns about their care. The toll-free line is available Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Contact:

Victoria: (250) 952-3181

Toll free: 1-877-952-3181

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=B69F495A453741E5BC82E15D47C659C1>

Patient Care Quality Offices (PCQO)

Each health authority has a PCQO. The PCQO handles patient care quality complaints between patients and publicly-funded health-care providers and contracted agencies, including health care services or services relating to health care that are under the jurisdiction of health authorities. Residential care facilities licensed or funded by health authorities are covered.

A “care quality complaint” is a complaint made by or on behalf of the individual to whom the health care or service was delivered or not delivered. The complaint must pertain to:

- The delivery of, or the failure to deliver, health care
- The quality of health care delivered
- The delivery of, or the failure to deliver, a service relating to health care
- The quality of any service relating to health care

PCQOs formally record and manage complaints in a prompt and fair manner, and work with clients toward a resolution by connecting with the appropriate care providers and investigating relevant policies and procedures. Clients are provided with a response to their complaints as well as an explanation of decisions and actions taken as a result of your complaint.

Island Health PCQO

1-877-977-5797

patientcarequalityoffice@viha.ca

<http://www.viha.ca/patientcarequalityoffice/>**Fraser Health PCQO**

1-877-880-8823

pcqoffice@fraserhealth.ca

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>**Northern Health PCQO**

1-877-677-7715

patientcarequalityoffice@northernhealth.ca

<http://www.northernhealth.ca/>**Provincial Health Services Authority PCQO**

BC Ambulance Service

1-855-660-2757

Other PHSA Agencies & Services

1.888.875.3256 (toll free)

Interior Health PCQO

1-877-IHA-2001

patient.concerns@interiorhealth.ca

<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>**Vancouver Coastal PCQO**

1-877-993-9199

pcqo@vch.ca

<http://www.vch.ca/>

Patient Care Quality Review Board

There are six Patient Care Quality Review Boards in total – one aligned with each health authority. The review boards are independent of the health authorities and are accountable to the Minister of Health. The Patient Care Quality Review Boards receive and review care quality complaints that have first been addressed by a health authority's Patient Care Quality Office and remain unresolved.

Upon completion of a review, the review boards may make recommendations to the Minister of Health and the health authorities for improving the quality of patient care in British Columbia. The review boards are supported by a common administrative body called the Secretariat, which is based in Victoria. The Secretariat works on behalf of the review boards to receive and process requests from people wishing to have their complaint reviewed. The Secretariat also acts as the liaison between the review boards, the health authorities and the Minister of Health.

Contact:

contact@patientcarequalityreviewboard.ca

1-866-952-2448

<https://www.patientcarequalityreviewboard.ca/index.html>

Office of the Assisted Living Registrar (OALR)

The OALR investigates complaints about the health and safety of assisted living residents and about residences that provide assisted living without registration. Anyone with a concern about the health or safety of an assisted living resident can make a complaint to the OALR.

The OALR has jurisdiction to deal with complaints with respect to:

- non-compliance with the Health and Safety Standards guideline, OALR
- a resident being unable to make decisions on their own behalf — the operator may be housing a resident who is unable to make the decisions needed to function safely in the semi-independent supportive environment of an assisted living residence
- operation of an unregistered assisted living residence — someone is offering assisted living services in a residence that is not registered

The Registrar *cannot* investigate complaints about:

- tenancy issues
- operating issues such as, complaints about issues such as residence staff, management-staff relations or services (e.g., dissatisfaction with meals) unless the complaint relates to the health or safety of a resident
- community care facilities
- case manager’s assessments — the OALR does not deal with complaints about people who a case manager has assessed as being ineligible for publicly subsidized assisted living

Contact:

info@alregistrar.bc.ca

1-866-714-3378

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/assisted/>

Community Care and Assisted Living Appeal Board

The Appeal Board is a tribunal created by the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* to hear appeals under that *Act* and the *Administrative Tribunals Act*.

Who can appeal to the board:

- an individual or organization that applied for: a licence to operate a community care facility, or the registration of an assisted living residence
- a licensee, certificate holder, or registrant
- a person in care, or their representative, who objects to a local exemption
- the appellant must deliver a written appeal notice to the Board and to the respondent within 30 days of being notified of the decision to be appealed

What can be appealed:

- an appointment of an administrator to operate a community care facility
- a refusal to issue: a licence to operate a community care facility, or a registration of an assisted living residence
- a decision taken against a licence, certificate or registration
- a decision to grant a local exemption

Contact:

ccalab@gov.bc.ca

(250) 387-3464

<http://www.ccalab.gov.bc.ca/>

College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC

The College of Physicians and Surgeons is the licensing and regulatory body for all physicians and surgeons in the province. By following the requirements of the *Health Professions Act*, the College has established procedures for:

- managing public complaints and concerns; (addresses and deals with complaints about physicians; and where necessary, discipline physicians);
- evaluating and communicating ethical issues;
- developing and maintaining high standards for physician conduct and performance; and
- adjudicating complaints about care provided by, and/or conduct of, licensed physicians.

The College does not have the authority to:

- deal with concerns or complaints about hospitals, or other health care providers such as nurses, pharmacists, dentists, optometrists, psychologists, chiropractors, naturopaths, or any other health professional who is not a registered physician or surgeon;
- provide diagnoses or treatment recommendations, or direct the specifics of patient care;
- provide any financial compensation to complainants, except in some situations;
- contact the police on behalf of a complainant where illegal activities are suspected without the complainant's specific consent; and
- adjudicate complaints without offering the physician(s) the opportunity to respond.

Contact:

Phone: (604) 733-7758

Toll-free: 1-800-461-3008

<https://www.cpsbc.ca/node/100>

College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia

The College addresses complaints about registered nurses, nurse practitioners and licensed graduate nurses. If possible, complaints or concerns about a nurse should first be discussed with the nurse, the nurse's supervisor or both. The matter can further be pursued with the Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO) and/or health care agency where the nurse works if the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily.

If a concern or complaint cannot be resolved at the agency level or there is no agency involved, then the matter can be brought to the College's Nursing Concerns Coordinator by an online form, by email or by phone. Formal complaints must be submitted in writing with any supporting documents included. Some complaints are handled informally while others are resolved using a formal process.

Contact:

info@crnbc.ca

1-800-565-6505

<https://www.crnbc.ca/>

College of Dental Surgeons of BC

The College registers, certifies and regulates dentists and certified dental assistants (CDAs) in the public interest. The College assures British Columbians of professional standards of oral health care, ethics and competence by regulating dentistry in a fair and reasonable manner. If patients are dissatisfied with the care they have received or have related concerns, they can request an explanation from their dentist. If they are not satisfied with the explanation, they may submit a written and signed complaint to the College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia. Complaints are not accepted by e-mail or telephone.

Contact:

complaints@cdsbc.org

Phone: 604-736-3621

Toll-free: 1-800-663-9169

Fax: 1-866-734-9448

http://www.cdsbc.org/how_to_make_a_compla/

College of Pharmacists of BC

The College protects public health by licensing and regulating pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and the places where they practice. It ensures that College registrants provide safe and effective pharmacy care to help people achieve better health. Individuals who feel that they have had an experience to the contrary are encouraged to inform the College. The College investigates all complaints related to a pharmacist's professional practice. The College does not have jurisdiction to investigate concerns about business practices, financial matters, poor service, or the manners of the pharmacist (e.g. rudeness). These concerns should generally be referred to the pharmacy manager, pharmacy owner, or head office (in the case of a pharmacy chain).

Contact:

info@bcpharmacists.org

Phone: 604-733-2440

Toll-free: 1-800-663-1940

<http://www.bcpharmacists.org/>

GENERAL – ADMINISTRATIVE FAIRNESS

BC Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson investigates complaints about the administrative decisions or actions of a public agency, including delay, rudeness, negligence, arbitrariness, oppressive behaviour or unlawfulness.

The Ombudsperson has jurisdiction over a wide range of public agencies, and through thorough and impartial investigations the Ombudsperson's office:

- identifies issues of administrative unfairness;
- identifies causes of recurring unfairness and advises on how it can be avoided in the future;
- attempts to resolve complaints through consultation when appropriate;
- employs an approach that identifies and addresses the underlying causes of complaints;
- makes recommendations and issues reports that are based on analysis of the facts, are consistent with the Ombudsperson's statutory mandate and applies the principles of natural justice and administrative fairness; and
- provides reports to the Legislative Assembly and the people of British Columbia about administrative fairness issues and how they can be remedied.

Contact:

Victoria: (250) 387-5855

Toll-free: 1-800-567-3247

<https://www.ombudsman.bc.ca/how-to-make-a-complaint>

GENERAL – BUSINESS & CONSUMER SERVICES

Better Business Bureau (BBB)

The BBB receives complaints involving all types of businesses – online, offline, BBB Accredited Businesses, or non-accredited businesses, charities and non-profit organizations – generally relating to marketplace transactions. The BBB is neither an enforcement agency nor can it "punish" anyone. The BBB's role in dispute resolution is that of a neutral third party, helping both parties communicate so that a solution to the problem can be found.

Contact:

Bureaus exist in each major centre in BC. To find one near you, visit:

<http://www.bbb.org/>

Consumer Protection BC

Created under the *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act*, Consumer Protection BC monitors the marketplace to ensure that businesses are communicating clearly and honestly to consumers about their products or services, be it through their contracts, disclosure of information, sales promises or advertising to consumers. Consumer Protection BC provides

individuals with information and assistance wherever possible, but does not generally prosecute cases for individuals.

Consumer Protection BC investigates consumer complaints, seek redress for consumers who have been treated improperly by a business and work with businesses to ensure that they are complying with consumer protection laws in BC. Priority is given to complaints of obvious public interest that affect many individuals and involve significant losses or vulnerable and elderly victims. The agency also licenses specific sectors and regulates certain business practices and requirements.

Contact:

info@consumerprotectionbc.ca

Toll-free: 1-888-564-9963

www.consumerprotectionbc.ca

GENERAL – INFORMATION AND PRIVACY

The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) provides independent oversight and enforcement of B.C.'s access and privacy laws. The OIPC investigates two types of complaints:

1. Privacy complaints, which may result when you have concerns about the way a "public body" or a private sector organization has collected, used, disclosed or secured your personal information.
2. Access complaints, which may result when you are concerned about an act, or failure to act, by a public body or organization that is related to your access request. Access complaints are different than a request for review of a public body or organization's response to a request for records.

Contact:

info@oipc.bc.ca

(250) 387-5629

<https://www.oipc.bc.ca/>

GENERAL – MLA CONSTITUENCY OFFICES

Constituency offices provide assistance to people who have questions or concerns about provincial government programs, policies, and benefits.

To find your local MLA, visit: <http://www.leg.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm>.

FINANCE

Certified General Accounts of BC (CGA-BC) – Professional Conduct Department

CGA-BC has the legal authority to review the conduct and competence of all CGAs and CGA accounting students. An investigator is appointed by the Chair of the Ethics Committee. After completing the investigation, if the complaint refers to a clear and obvious violation of the Code of Ethical Principles and Rules of Conduct, the member will be disciplined. If a member, former member or student is found to be in breach of the Association's Code, the discipline imposed is limited to fines, membership status and remedial actions.

Contact:

Phone: (604) 732-1211

Toll-free: 1-800-565-1211

<http://cga-bc.org/protecting-home.aspx?id=584>

Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia (ICABC)

The ICABC's professional conduct enquiry and discipline process is governed by the *Accountants (Chartered) Act*. The Professional Conduct Enquiry Committee (PCEC) meets with the Director of Ethics to discuss enquiries and decide if an enquiry goes forward for investigation. If the PCEC determines that grounds do exist for a complaint then the PCEC, depending on the seriousness of the matter, either:

- makes a recommendation that the member accept a reprimand, complete one or more professional development courses, or pay a fine; or
- delivers a Statement of Complaint to the Discipline Tribunal.

Contact:

Phone: (604) 681-3264

Toll-free: 1-800-663-2677

www.ica.bc.ca

Ombudsman for the Banking Service Industry (OBSI)

OBSI resolves disputes between participating banking services and investment firms and their customers if they cannot solve them on their own. If OBSI decides the firm has acted wrongly or made an error and a customer has suffered loss, damage or harm as a result, OBSI will recommend the firm compensate the customer (up to \$350,000) and/or make amends. It should be noted that a majority of people who complain to OBSI are seniors and, as such, they represent a very important area of focus for OBSI. Financial service providers not covered by the OBSI include mortgage brokers, insurance brokers and financial planners.

Contact:

ombudsman@obsi.ca

Toll-free: 1-888-451-4519

<http://www.obsi.ca/en/ehome>

Financial Institutions Commission (FICOM)

FICOM is responsible for administering 10 statutes that regulate the pension, financial services (including mortgage brokers, insurance and credit unions) and real estate sectors in British Columbia. FICOM has a process in place for investigating complaints arising from the conduct of members of the real estate, pension plan and financial services sectors. All complaints are responded to in a timely and professional manner in keeping with our regulatory responsibilities and commitment to service. Complaints can be submitted in written form, by telephone, email or by an online form.

Contact:

FICOM@ficombc.ca
(604) 660-3555
<http://www.fic.gov.bc.ca/>

British Columbia Securities Commission (BCSC)

The BCSC is the provincial agency responsible for protecting investors and regulating the investment business in BC. The Commission licenses and oversees the people who deal in investments, makes and enforces rules of conduct, and travels the province offering seminars to BC seniors and pre-retirees through its investor education program, InvestRight. Individuals are encouraged to contact the BCSC if they see or suspect investment fraud or unscrupulous investment activity. Many investigations lead to enforcement actions that shut down sham operations and ban those involved from the market.

Contact:

Inquiries@bcsc.bc.ca
Phone: (604) 899-6854
Toll free: 1-800-373-6393
File a complaint or report a scam: <http://www.investright.org/>
Corporate website: <http://www.bcsc.bc.ca>

JUSTICE

Victim Link

VictimLink BC is a toll-free, confidential, multilingual telephone service that provides information and referral services to all victims of crime and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence. VictimLink BC staff can connect people to a network of community, social, health, justice and government resources, including victim services, transition houses, and counselling resources. They also provide information on the justice system, relevant federal and provincial legislation and programs, crime prevention, safety planning, protection order registry, and other resources as needed.

Contact:

VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca

Phone: 1-800-563-0808
TTY: 604-875-0885
Collect: 711 (Telus Relay Service)
Text: 604-836-6381
<http://www.victimlinkbc.ca/>

BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support (BCCEAS)

BCCEAS is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to protecting the legal rights of older adults; increasing access to justice for older adults; informing the public about elder abuse; and providing supportive programs for older adults who have been abused. The organization works to prevent elder abuse and to provide assistance and support to older adults who are, or may be, abused and those whose rights have been violated. BCCEAS provides programs that educate, support and advocate on behalf of its clients. Programs provided include: Victim Services, Education and Outreach, Legal Services, and the Seniors Abuse and Information Line (SAIL; see more information below).

Contact:

(604) 437-1940
Toll-Free: 1-866-437-1940
TTY: 604-428-3359
TTY Toll-Free: 1-855-306-1443
<http://bcceas.ca/>

Seniors Abuse and Information Line (SAIL)

SAIL is a safe place for older adults, and those who care about them, to talk to someone about situations where they feel they are being abused or mistreated, or to receive information about elder abuse prevention. The staff and volunteers who answer SAIL are trained to provide a listening, non-judgmental and supportive ear. They will refer callers with a legal question or problem to legal staff. Callers who are age 50+ and are victims of abuse or family and sexual violence, and who need practical and emotional support may be referred to the Victim Services Program which also provides information, support and referrals to services in the community. Language interpretation is available for SAIL callers from Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Contact:

(604) 437-1940
Toll-Free: 1-866-437-1940
TTY: 604-428-3359
TTY Toll-Free: 1-855-306-1443
<http://bcceas.ca/programs/sail/>

BC Association of Community Response Networks (BCCRN)

The BCCRN works to promote a coordinated, community response to adult abuse and neglect through small project funding, materials, training, and information. It also maintains a website to assist Community Response Networks (CRNs) in their work at the local level. The CRNs comprise individuals, groups and agencies that work together at a community level to promote a coordinated community response to adult abuse and neglect. CRN members can be anyone in the community concerned about adult abuse and neglect, including designated agencies, police, community organizations serving specific groups, faith communities, financial institutions, advocacy organizations and concerned citizens. CRNs assist the BCCRN and each other in identifying common themes, barriers and issues that require work at the regional, provincial and national level.

Contact:

To find a Community Response Network near you, visit:

<http://www.bccrns.ca/generated/homepage.php>

Law Society of British Columbia

The Law Society of British Columbia is the regulatory body for the BC legal profession. The primary responsibility of the Law Society under the provincial *Legal Profession Act* is to protect the public interest in the administration of justice. The Law Society considers all complaints about lawyer conduct or competency.

Contact:

Phone: 604-669-2533

Toll-free: 1-800-903-5300

TTY: 604-443-5700

<http://www.lawsociety.bc.ca/>

BC Human Rights Tribunal

The BC Human Rights Tribunal is an independent, quasi-judicial body created by the BC Human Rights Code. The Tribunal is responsible for accepting, screening, mediating and adjudicating human rights complaints. Note: discrimination complaints may only be made on certain grounds, including age.

Contact:

BCHumanRightsTribunal@gov.bc.ca

Phone: 604-775-2000

Toll-free: 1-888-440-8844

TTY: 604-775-2021

<http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/>

HOUSING

Residential Tenancy Branch

The Residential Tenancy Branch provides landlords and tenants with information and dispute resolution services, under the *Residential Tenancy Act* and *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act*. A dispute resolution proceeding is a quasi-judicial process for the resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants. Under the authority of the MHPTA and the RTA, the director may appoint an independent dispute resolution officer (DRO) to help the parties resolve their dispute without a formal hearing or to conduct a hearing and make an impartial, binding decision on the parties.

Contact:

HSRTO@gov.bc.ca

Lower Mainland: 604-660-1020

Victoria: 250-387-1602

Elsewhere in BC: 1-800-665-8779

<http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca/default.aspx>

The Condominium Home Owners Association of BC

CHOA is a non-profit association that promotes the understanding of strata property living and the interests of strata property owners by providing advisory services, education, advocacy, publications and resources and support for its members.

Contact:

Lower Mainland: 604-584-2462

Vancouver Island: 250-381-9088

BC Interior and North: 250-868-1195

<http://www.choa.bc.ca/>

Real Estate Council of BC

The Real Estate Council of British Columbia is a regulatory agency established by the provincial government. Its mandate is to protect the public interest by enforcing the licensing and licensee conduct requirements of the *Real Estate Services Act*. The Council is responsible for licensing individuals and brokerages engaged in real estate sales, rental and strata property management. The Council also enforces entry qualifications, investigates complaints against licensees and imposes disciplinary sanctions under the *Act*.

Contact:

info@recbc.ca

Phone: 604-683-9664

Toll-free: 1-877-683-9664

<http://www.recbc.ca/>

INSURANCE

Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC)

Complaints about ICBC services should first be made to the manager or supervisor at the ICBC office involved. Customers who are not satisfied with the resolution provided by an ICBC manager or appeal process can contact the customer relations department. If all other internal ICBC remedies have been tried and the customer is still not satisfied, they may want to write to ICBC's Fairness Commissioner. Finally, if the Fairness Commissioner is unable to address the concerns or complaints, the BC Ombudsperson may look at the issue and may make recommendations to ICBC.

Contact:

Lower Mainland: (604) 661-2800
Toll-free: 1-800-663-3051
<http://www.icbc.com/>

Insurance Council of British Columbia

The Insurance Council of BC provides a level of protection to the public and support for complainants pertaining to the sale of insurance products and services under the framework provided by the *Financial Institutions Act*.

Contact:

info@insurancecouncilofbc.com
Lower Mainland: 604-688-0321
Toll-free: 1-877-688-0321
<http://www.insurancecouncilofbc.com/PublicWeb/Home.html>

TRANSPORTATION

Review of a Driver Medical Fitness Decision

Drivers who have had their medical fitness assessed and were not satisfied with the outcome of the decision may request a review of the decision (called an Administrative Justice Decision) that denied, cancelled or placed restrictions on their driver's licence. Also, should their medical condition improve later, they may request a review of the decision.

Driver fitness reviews are final and binding, but are subject to judicial review. This means a court of law may be requested to rule on the appropriateness of the administrative justice decision. Drivers dissatisfied with the outcome of their review may also make an application under the *Judicial Review Procedure Act* to have the decision reviewed by the Supreme Court. They are responsible for the costs of the appeal.

Contact:

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/osmv/medical-fitness/index.htm#reconsideration>