

In accordance with section 34(1) of the Security Services Act, the process for dealing with complaints from the public on matters that relate to that Act are established below.

Background

Security Programs and Police Technology Division (“SPPTD”) licenses individuals and businesses providing the following security services:

- armoured car guard services
- locksmith services
- private investigator services
- security alarm services, including
 - o installation, monitoring and response services
 - o closed circuit television installation and electronic locking device installation
- security consultant services
- security guard services.

Individuals and businesses, including non-security businesses employing security workers, must comply with the provisions of the *Security Services Act* and regulations.

Purpose of this policy

This policy provides a structured complaints process for members of the public and others who wish to complain about a matter relating to the *Security Services Act*.

The policy clarifies how complaints will be handled by the Registrar of Security Services and provides timelines within which complainants may expect a response from the Registrar.

Guiding principles

1. The complaints process is guided by the following principles:
 - (a) *Accessibility*: Information about the complaints process will be readily accessible to members of the public and easy to understand and use. The Registrar will facilitate the awareness of the complaints process through various means of communication.
 - (b) *Timeliness*: Complaints will be dealt with in reasonable timeframes.
 - (c) *Transparency*: The Registrar’s decisions relating to the complaint will be communicated to the complainant.

Informing the public and others about the complaints process

2. The Registrar will create an outreach and awareness program to inform the public of the complaints process.
3. The Registrar will facilitate the submission of complaints by:
 - (a) providing information and materials regarding the complaints process to members of the public who contact the SPPTD with a complaint
 - (b) posting and maintaining a complaint form and information about the complaints process on the SPPTD’s website, www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/securityindustry, and

- (c) informing industry and stakeholder organizations of the complaints process.

Submitting complaints

4. A person may make a complaint to the Registrar on any matter that relates to the *Security Services Act*. This includes complaints against individuals and businesses performing security work.
5. Whenever possible, a complaint should be in writing and submitted on the SPPTD's complaint form.
6. A complaint must:
 - identify the complainant,
 - provide the contact information of the complainant, and
 - if the complaint is submitted by someone other than the complainant, the contact information of the person who submitted the complaint.

Investigating a complaint

7. Upon receiving a complaint, the Registrar will review the matter to determine whether to investigate the complaint.
8. If the Registrar decides to investigate the complaint, the Registrar will assign the complaint to a SPPTD employee for investigation.
9. During the investigation, the SPPTD employee may contact the complainant to discuss the matter in more detail.

Responding to a complaint

10. Within 30 days of receiving the complaint, the Registrar will send a letter to the complainant acknowledging receipt of the complaint and indicating whether the complaint has been accepted for investigation.
11. The Registrar may determine not to investigate a complaint if any of the following apply:
 - (a) more than one year has elapsed between the date the complainant knew of the facts on which the complaint is based and the date the Registrar receives the complaint
 - (b) there is a remedy available in law that is adequate for the complainant and there is no reasonable justification for the complainant's failure to take advantage of the remedy
 - (c) the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith
 - (d) further investigation is not necessary in order to consider the complaint, or
 - (e) investigation would not benefit the complainant.
12. If the complaint has not been accepted for investigation, the Registrar will outline the reason for this decision in the letter and indicate any other recourse that may be available to the complainant. Depending on the circumstances, other recourse may include an offer to assist the parties in the informal resolution of a complaint that does not require an investigation.

Requesting a review of a decision not to investigate

13. Within 30 days after the receipt of a letter from the Registrar informing the complainant that a complaint has not been accepted for investigation, the complainant may request that the Registrar review the decision not to investigate.

14. A request to the Registrar to review a decision not to investigate a complaint must be in writing and must state the reason why the complainant would like the Registrar to review the decision.
15. Within 30 days of receiving the request, the Registrar will send a letter to the complainant acknowledging receipt of the request and indicating whether the complaint has been accepted for investigation.

(Among the reasons the Registrar may decide to investigate a complaint that was previously not accepted for investigation are:

- *when the nature of the complaint was misunderstood, or*
- *when information, not available at the time the complaint was first considered, becomes available.)*

Determining whether to proceed with a sanction

16. Following an investigation, the Registrar will determine:
 - (a) whether the conduct that formed the basis of the complaint was a contravention of the *Security Services Act*, the regulations or a condition of a licence, and
 - (b) in the event of a contravention, whether to proceed with a sanction.
17. A sanction may include any of the following:
 - (a) verbal warning
 - (b) written warning
 - (c) issuance of a violation ticket
 - (d) imposition of conditions on a licence
 - (e) imposition of an administrative penalty
 - (f) suspension of a licence
 - (g) cancellation of a licence
 - (h) application for an injunction, and/or
 - (i) prosecution for an offence.

Informing the complainant of the results of the investigation

18. The Registrar will send the complainant a letter at the conclusion of the investigation to inform the complainant of the outcome of the investigation.
19. If the investigation is not concluded within 60 days from the start of the investigation, the Registrar will send a letter to the complainant that informs the complainant of the status of the investigation. The Registrar will continue to update the complainant every 60 days thereafter until the conclusion of the investigation.

Record-keeping

20. The Registrar will establish and maintain a record of complaints, including the results of complaints, and will compile statistical information respecting all complaints.