



Ethics Complaint Procedure Overview

Revised August 2015

1. The program of certification for organizational ombudsman practitioners exists to foster the development and growth of organizational ombudsmanry, to promote high ethical standards and practices in the organizational ombudsman profession, and to establish and maintain public confidence in the integrity and professionalism of the Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner® (CO-OP®).
2. An Ethics Complaint Procedure¹ provides for an objective review of a certified practitioner's compliance with the International Ombudsman Association's Code of Ethics² and Standards of Practice³. Any CO-OP® engaging in acts found to be in violation of the Code of Ethics or the Standards of Practice, or in other unprofessional acts as defined in Section 3.01 of the Ethics Complaint Procedure, is subject to sanction.
3. A complaint of professional misconduct may be submitted only by a CO-OP® about a CO-OP®. Any individual who is not a CO-OP® but who has knowledge and non-confidential, publicly available evidence of such a violation may take that information to a certified practitioner⁴ for him/her to review and report as appropriate (Section 4.01) to the Professional Practices Committee (PPC).

[Note: If your complaint is against an organizational ombudsman who is not a CO-OP® you may seek resolution by: 1) discussing the situation with the Ombudsman or writing the Ombudsman a letter outlining your concerns and stating your suggested redress; 2) contact the supervisor of the Ombudsman with the same information.]

4. A complaint of professional misconduct by a CO-OP® must be in writing (via this Ethics Complaint Form), signed, and accompanied by substantiating, publicly available, non-confidential documentary evidence. The complaint must include a detailed description of the nature of the alleged professional misconduct as well as all pertinent facts and circumstances.

Examples of publicly available, non-confidential evidence are printed documents that were intended for a public audience; website information; presentation material from a workshop, etc.

5. Please be advised that the proceedings as a whole shall be treated confidentially, except to the extent required to complete the investigation, and except as provided in the Ethics Complaint Procedure in the event that certain disciplinary sanctions are imposed by the Board of Directors.
6. Upon receipt of the ethics complaint form, the PPC will determine whether there is sufficient documentation to warrant an investigation. If so, the PPC shall provide a copy of the complaint and all supporting documentation and evidence to the respondent. The identity of the complainant shall be revealed. Upon receipt, the respondent shall have 30 days respond to the allegations. Within 90 days from receiving all relevant evidence, the PPC will issue one of three decisions in writing: a) there is insufficient evidence to make a determination; b) the complaint is not substantiated; or c) there is enough clear and convincing evidence of misconduct to substantiate the complaint. If substantiated, the PPC will recommend to the CO-OP® Board of Directors an appropriate sanction, which may include censure, probation, revocation, or other disciplinary sanction. The Board will vote on a sanction by two-thirds majority within 30 days. Public notification of suspensions and revocations is standard procedure, including the identity of the CO-OP® involved. The Ethics Complaint Procedure describes limited appeal rights at Section 6.01.

¹ Ethics complaint procedure - <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/ethics-complaint-procedure>

² IOA Code of Ethics - <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/standards-of-practice-code-of-ethics-3>

³ IOA Standards of Practice - <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/standards-of-practice-code-of-ethics-3>

⁴ CO-OP® Directory - <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/directory-of-co-op-practitioners>



Board of Certification for Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioners

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Section 1: Complainant

Please print the contact information of the CO-OP® submitting the complaint.

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Section 2: Respondent

Please print the contact information of the CO-OP® against whom the complaint is filed.

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Section 3: Complaint Details

Please provide a detailed description of the nature of the alleged professional misconduct as well as all pertinent facts and circumstances. Feel free to submit separate documentation.

Section 4: Supporting Documentation

Please list all documentation that you have included:

Signature of Complainant: _____ Date: _____

This form and supporting documents should be mailed to:

Professional Practices Committee

IOA Board of Certification

2150 N 107th St, Suite 205

Seattle, WA 98133

FAX: +1-206-367-8777

Email: certification@ombudsassociation.org