

Geologist Complaint Information

Q: What constitutes a valid complaint?

A: Anyone who believes a Geologist has violated the Geologist Law or the Board's Rules (*Washington Administrative Code*) may file a written complaint with the Board. The Board can initiate its own complaint against licensees or for unlicensed practice upon receiving information from credible sources.

Q: How do I file a complaint against a Geologist for unlicensed practice?

A: Complete, sign and submit the Board's complaint form, along with any supporting information you might have, to the Board office. The more specific the information and documentation you can provide, the better it will be to evaluate the complaint. The complaint form may be obtained by calling or writing the Board office or by using the one on this website. You may also send a signed and dated letter stating your complaint or concern.

Q: What happens after a complaint is received?

A: The Board will notify the person of the complaint filed against them and request a response. The complaint is assigned to one of the Board members for review who will make the determination as to whether the complaint is within the Board's jurisdiction, and if so, what violation can be identified and should an investigation be conducted. The investigator acts as an impartial, fact-finding third party and does not "represent" you (*the complainant*) the Board or the licensee.

After all of the facts and evidence of the case have been gathered, the information is reviewed and evaluated by the reviewing Board Member who then makes further determinations. If the evidence shows there was no violation of the statutes or rules, the case is dismissed. If the evidence shows that violations have occurred, the Board Member will recommend disciplinary action. The Board has a wide range of sanctions available to it depending upon the severity of the violations including a letter of warning, a reprimand, levying a fine, suspension or revocation, or any combination of the above.

Q: How long does an investigation take?

A: There is no set time frame. Fairly straightforward complaints may be resolved within six months. More complex and difficult cases may take much longer. Many factors influence how quickly a case can be resolved. These include caseload, complexity of the case, budgetary constraints, and how readily an investigator can obtain the needed information.

Other Alternatives

A number of other resources are available to you as an aggrieved consumer. The agencies and offices listed below represent a partial list of those that may be helpful to you if you wish to seek a refund or adjustment to the charges, or if a licensing board does not have jurisdiction over your complaint.

- The Better Business Bureau
- Legal Aid Centers
- District Attorney's Consumer Affairs Offices
- Small Claims Court (*an attorney is not necessary*)
- Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs
- Professional Associations