



General Instructions for Filing Ethics Complaints and Requests to Arbitrate

1. Ethics Complaints and/or Requests to Arbitrate (both hereafter referred to as Complaints) must be typewritten and submitted on 8 1/2 x 11 sized paper stating which article(s) you feel was violated and how.
2. Complaints are filed with Executive Officer who will refer the Complaint to the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee. If the Grievance Committee finds the matter to constitute a proper cause of action, the Executive Officer will arrange a hearing with the Professional Standards Committee. If the Complaint is not found to constitute a proper cause of action, it will be returned to the Complainant with the decision of the Grievance Committee. Additional information is then provided advising the Complainant of the procedures by which the Grievance Committee's decision may be appealed to the Board of Directors.
3. If a hearing is scheduled, the Respondent will have fifteen (15) days from receipt of the copy of the Complaint to respond. A copy of the reply will be sent to Complainant, the Board President, and the Professional Standards Committee Chairperson. Once the date for the hearing is set, all parties will be notified of the date and place of hearing at least twenty-one (21) days in advance.
4. If no reply is received from the Respondent within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the copy of an Ethics Complaint, the date and place of hearing will be set and the charges may be taken as true. If no response is received from the Respondent within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the copy of the Request to Arbitrate, the Grievance Committee shall decide if a hearing should be scheduled based upon the information set forth in the Request to Arbitrate. The Complainant, the Board President and the Professional Standards Committee Chairperson will be advised that no reply has been filed.
5. The notice of hearing will contain names of members of the Hearing Panel who will hear the case and should be accompanied by an "Outline for Procedure for Ethics or Arbitration Hearing."
6. Either party may file with the Executive Officer, within ten (10) days from the date the names of the members of the Professional Standards Committee are mailed to the parties, a written request for disqualification of any potential member of the Hearing Panel for any of the following reasons:
 - (a) Is related by blood or marriage to either Complainant or Respondent.
 - (b) Is an employer, partner, or employee, or in any way associated in business with the Complainant or Respondent.
 - (c) Is a party to the hearing, or a party or a witness in another pending case involving the Complainant or Respondent.
 - (d) Knows any reasons acceptable to the Hearing Panel which may prevent them from rendering an impartial decision.
7. All parties may be represented by legal counsel provided that the notice of intention to be represented is transmitted to all parties and to the Hearing Panel at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing. Failure to provide timely notice may result in a continuance of the hearing.
8. It is the responsibility of the parties to arrange for their witnesses to be present at the hearing. Notification shall be given that witnesses will be present at the hearing at least fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing.
9. The parties shall not discuss the case with any member of the hearing Panel or the Board of Directors at any time prior to the announcement of a decision in the case.
10. No hearing will be held in the absence of a Complainant. Hearings may be held in the absence of a Respondent.

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