

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is there anyone I can speak to before deciding to file a complaint?

A: Yes. You can contact the Board office at (919) 850-9669. Board staff will not be able to “prejudge” a case for you, but can generally provide you information about what types of matters the Board will investigate and the information that will likely be needed to initiate the investigation.

Q: Where do I find the statute and rules governing the procedures used to handle complaints?

A: N.C. Gen. Stat. § 89E-17, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 (The Geologists Licensing Act) and the rules set forth at 21 N.C.A.C. 21 .0500 *et seq.* explain procedures for handling complaints and disciplinary actions.

Q: Will the Board accept an anonymous complaint?

A: No. Per N.C.G.S. §89E-17, the complaint must be in writing and sworn to by the person making the complaint. A complaint may be submitted online or by mailing the Board a hard copy of the notarized complaint. These forms can be found on the Board’s [website](#).

Q: Are complaints confidential?

A: Investigations of complaints by the Board are confidential and remain confidential until there is a final disciplinary action against the licensee or corporate registrant except that notice of the complaint is provided to the person complained against. Documents containing information collected or compiled as a result of the investigation are not considered public records within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes, except any notice of hearing in any proceeding conducted by the Board and documents admitted as evidence in a hearing are public records. N.C.G.S. §89E-17(c).

Q: What happens after I file a complaint?

A: You will receive an acknowledgment letter from the Board. The letter will identify the investigator assigned to the case and whether additional information is required.

Q: If I get a letter of notice that a complaint has been filed against me, what should I do?

A: You have a duty to cooperate fully with the investigation by the Board. You may submit a written response to the complaint. You may consult with and/or hire an attorney to represent you.

Q: How long will the investigation take?

A: It is difficult to predict how long an investigation will take. In most cases, the investigator will complete his or her investigation within six months. After the investigation is complete, the investigator’s report is reviewed by a peer review committee and their evaluation is forwarded to the Chair for a recommended action. The Chair’s recommendation is forwarded to the Board for approval. In addition, the licensee is notified of the recommended decision and given an opportunity to request a hearing. If a disciplinary action is recommended, the case could take a year or more before the outcome of the investigation is reported. If there is an appeal, it may take even longer before the matter is resolved.

Q: Will I be notified of the outcome of the case?

A: Yes. The complainant is always notified of the outcome of the case in writing.