

## COMPLAINT PROCESS

---

Environmental Public Health staff will respond to public complaints in a transparent, courteous, fair, impartial, and timely manner. We track and report on how we respond to complaints to ensure appropriate and timely response and to develop and monitor performance.

Personal information and client confidentiality is handled and protected by privacy laws (FIPPA) and is only disclosed in the event of court action or with authorization.

Complaints resolution will be done at the local level for a fair and rapid resolution. The intent of this practice is to promote an unencumbered process, and professional accountability of staff. See Interior Health's webpage [Submit Environmental Public Health Feedback](#) or [How to Submit a Complaint](#) below. Interior Health can only address complaints that fall within our mandate.

### HOW TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT

- An online [EH Direct feedback portal](#) can be used to document your complaint information. The portal form is located on the Interior Health Public Website [Submit Environmental Public Health Feedback](#) (<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/environmental-health-and-hazards/submit-environmental-public-health-feedback>).
- You will be contacted as soon as possible to obtain more information about your complaint. The severity of the public health hazard will then be determined and will dictate the appropriate response by our staff.
- Those who are challenged by language, literacy, or other inequality barriers can contact [Environmental Health](#) and will be assisted by staff to ensure that their concerns are understood, recorded, and appropriately acted upon.
- Anonymous complaints will be treated and processed in the same manner as other complaints; however, without contact information we have no means to obtain clarification or additional information.
- If the complaint is not within the Environmental Public Health mandate, we will try to refer you to the appropriate authority.

The following review protocol is for complaints and reviews that do not have a specific process set out in law (i.e. Act or Regulation). For the formal decision review process, please see [HP-AD-9076 Decision Reviews and Reconsiderations](#) handout.

## STEPS TO FOLLOW if you feel that your complaint has not been addressed appropriately:

### Step 1: Raise your concerns with the staff member:

If possible, please first contact the involved staff member, and try to resolve your concerns directly with them. You may wish to ask for a response or clarification of the matter you are concerned about and raise any specific concerns you have.

In following this process, clients should be aware that officers including health officers, drinking water officers and their delegates cannot be directed by any officials within the health authority in the exercise of their statutory discretion in particular cases. Similarly, their decisions cannot be modified by other officials.

### Step 2: Raise your concerns with Supervisor:

If resolution cannot be achieved with the staff member, ask that the supervisor review the matter. The Supervisor will review the complaint and resolution with both the client and staff member involved.

### Step 3: Raise your concerns with a Manager:

If you find reasonable grounds to disagree with the Supervisor, refer the matter to the Manager. Provide a written statement of the issue, including the information provided to you by the Supervisor and any other relevant material. Include an explanation for the grounds for review and the remedy sought. The Manager will inform you of the decision, in writing.

### Step 4: Raise your concerns External agencies:

You may seek remedies through external agencies including the Ombudsperson's office, or in the case of Community & Home Care Licensing, the [Patient Care Quality Review Board](#).

*If you believe Interior Health's response is unfair, unreasonable or inconsistent with relevant policy, procedures or legislation, you may wish to raise your concerns with the Office of the Ombudsperson. The Ombudsperson is an independent Officer of the B.C. Legislature who impartially investigates complaints from the public to ensure people are treated fairly in the delivery of government services. For more information, visit their website [www.bcombudsperson.ca](http://www.bcombudsperson.ca) or call 1-800-567-3247.*