

What happens once a decision is made?

Once the panel of the Complaints Committee reaches a decision, both you and the dentist will be sent a copy of the decision.

Is there an appeal process?

In most cases, there is an appeal process available that provides additional protection for both the patient and the dentist. On request of either party, an arms-length provincial board called the [Health Professions Appeal and Review Board](#) may review the Committee's decision. The only exception to this right of review is in cases where the Committee has referred the matter to the Discipline Committee for a hearing or to the Executive Committee for Incapacity Proceedings.

Is there another option instead of the complaints process?

The College offers a voluntary and confidential program for the resolution of some complaints by a negotiated settlement, as an alternative to the formal investigation process. This option is called Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

How does ADR work?

Staff or committee members will work with you and the dentist in a respectful and confidential way to simplify the issues and enhance your ability to reach a settlement that is agreeable to both of you. If, for some reason, the ADR process does not result in a negotiated settlement, your complaint will be processed in the usual way through the normal complaints process.



**COLLEGE OF DENTURISTS OF
ONTARIO**

180 Bloor St W #903

Toronto ON M5S 2V6

Phone: 416-925-6331

Toll Free: 1-888-236-4326

Fax: 416-925-6332

Email: info@denturists-cdo.com

Website: www.denturists-cdo.com

**COLLEGE OF DENTURISTS OF
ONTARIO**

The Complaints Process



Tel: (416) 925-6331

THE COLLEGE OF DENTURISTS OF

ONTARIO (CDO) is one of Ontario's 21 self-governing health-care regulatory colleges and operates under the *Regulated Health Professions Act 1991*, legislation which sets out the processes that must be used in dealing with the investigation of complaints.

The CDO has a formal complaints process which gives everyone the right to have their complaint investigated by the Complaints Committee. Each step of the process is designed to ensure fairness to both the person filing the complaint, and the dentist who is named in the complaint. Every complaint that is received by the College is thoroughly and objectively investigated to determine if there is any evidence of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity.

What should I do if I have a problem with my dentist?

Before you make a formal complaint to the College about unsatisfactory dental care, it is highly recommended you discuss your concerns directly with your dentist. If you are unsure of the quality or appropriateness of care a patient has a right to expect from a dentist, you can contact the College.

How do I make a complaint?

A formal complaint must be sent to us in writing, by e-mail, surface mail, or on audio or videotape. We cannot accept a complaint by telephone.

We will require the following information:

- a clear statement that you are submitting a complaint;
- your mailing address and telephone contact info;

- the full name of the dentist;
- as much detail as possible about your concerns;
- type of complaint (denture problem, conduct problem, other)
- type of denture (full/partial/both, upper/lower/both)
- the names of other dentists, health-care practitioners or persons that may have relevant information;

Once we have received a formal complaint, we will forward a letter acknowledging receipt of your formal complaint.

Is there a time limit for making a complaint?

While there is not typically a time limit on complaints, the College recognizes the diverse nature of complaints and maintains that certain complaints must be made within a reasonable time frame.

Who deals with the complaints?

The Complaints Committee will consider your complaint. The Committee consists of two dentists who are elected to Council, one dentist who is appointed by Council and two public representatives appointed by the provincial government.

How does the process begin?

When the College receives your complaint, a copy is forwarded to the dentist. Then the dentist has 30 days to submit a written response to the College. The complainant usually has an opportunity to review the dentist's response. Your name and the nature of your complaint will be shared with the dentist, unless there is a question of personal safety or risk involved.

What happens next?

Investigation of the complaint includes written submissions from the dentist and any other dentists or health care providers who have treated or consulted with the patient. The CDO may request relevant records, charts and other information from the dentist, who has a duty to co-operate during the investigation. The Committee strives to complete the investigation and render a decision on every complaint within 120 days of having received the original complaint.

How will the Complaints Committee deal with my complaint?

There are a number of options available to the Committee under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) including:

- Taking no further action regarding the complaint.
- Requiring the dentist to appear before the panel to be cautioned.
- Referring specified allegations of professional misconduct or incompetence to the Discipline Committee.
- Referring the dentist to the Executive Committee for Incapacity Proceedings.
- Taking such other action that the panel considers appropriate.

Can the Complaints Committee award money or damages?

The law governing health professions only permits the Complaints Committee to make a decision about the dentist's conduct and actions. The Committee cannot award compensation of any kind. Only the courts have that authority. If you are considering suing your dentist for compensation, be aware that there is a time limit for civil litigation. Your legal advisor can answer any questions that you might have about your rights to sue a dentist.