

Peaceworks Complaints Procedure

I. PURPOSE

Peaceworks will be responsible for receiving and responding to complaints about mediators. The following guidelines are to ensure that complaints are handled consistently, fairly and in the public interest.

II. SCOPE

The parties to a mediation have a right to make a complaint regarding the conduct of a mediator.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Peaceworks may appoint a Complaints Officer to respond to complaints in accordance with this complaints procedure.

A complaint shall be made in writing to Peaceworks.

Peaceworks shall maintain records of all complaints received and any records related to a complaint for a period of two years following the resolution or conclusion of the complaint.

Peaceworks has the discretion to extend the time limits set out in these procedures where appropriate.

IV. MAKING A COMPLAINT

At any time during a mediation, and up to 60 days after the last day of a scheduled mediation, either or both parties may make a written complaint to Peaceworks about the conduct of the mediator.

Peaceworks will advise the mediator in writing of the nature of the complaint within 15 days of its receipt.

The mediator will have 15 days to respond in writing to the complaint.

Peaceworks will attempt to facilitate an informal resolution of the complaint and take appropriate action in a timely fashion.

V. INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS

Peaceworks will review any available documents. They may request information from the complainant, the mediator and any other appropriate person, but have no authority to require that such information be provided. Peaceworks may invite the complainant and the mediator to present information by telephone, in writing or at

an informal meeting.

Following the investigation, Peaceworks will make a recommendation and based on the recommendation decide whether or not further action is required. Peaceworks will notify the complainant and the mediator in writing of this decision.

VI. REVIEW BY COMPLAINTS PANEL

If Peaceworks decides that further action is required they will appoint a Complaints Officer to review the complaint.

The Complaints Officer will review the results of the investigation and may give the complainant and the mediator an opportunity to present additional information concerning the complaint. The Complaints Officer may conduct the review in any manner s/he deems appropriate.

Following the review, the Complaints Officer may make one or more of the following recommendations to the Peaceworks Board:

- take no further action, if the complaint is without merit or has been dealt with appropriately;
- counsel the mediator verbally or in writing;
- reprimand the mediator verbally or in writing;
- remove the mediator from the Peaceworks panel.

The Complaints Officer will inform the complainant and mediator of the decision, with reasons in writing.

The Peaceworks Board will determine if they will uphold or quash the Complaint Officer's recommendation and confirm its decision in writing to the mediator. They will also write to the complainant with the reasons for the decision.