

INSTRUCTIONS & FORM FOR FILING A COMPLAINT OF ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE ASHA CODE OF ETHICS

Enforcement of the Code of Ethics

The Board of Ethics (BOE) is charged by the Bylaws of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association with the responsibility to interpret, administer, and enforce the Code of Ethics of the Association. A fundamental precept that guides the BOE in the discharge of its responsibility is that an effective Code of Ethics requires an orderly and fair administration and enforcement of its terms and requires full compliance by all members of the Association and all holders of Certificates of Clinical Competence. The BOE recognizes that each case must be judged on an individual basis, and that no two cases are likely to be identical. Thus, the Board of Ethics has the responsibility to exercise its judgment on the merits of each case and on its interpretation of the Code.

ASHA's Code of Ethics, Statement of Practices and Procedures of the Board of Ethics, and other ethics-related information are available at www.asha.org/about/ethics.

Filing a Complaint

Complaints must be submitted in writing using the [Complaint of Alleged Violation of the ASHA Code of Ethics form](#) that follows these instructions. The completed complaint form must include a written attachment that includes the information and facts on which the complaint is based and any additional documentation and other evidence that corroborates and supports the allegations. The complaint must be in writing and mailed to the address provided on the complaint form. The BOE does not accept anonymous complaints, nor does it accept complaints filed via e-mail or facsimile.

A copy of the complaint, including all attachments, will be provided to the individual against whom the complaint is filed (Respondent), as well as to members of the BOE. The BOE relies on the information provided by the Complainant and Respondent in its consideration of complaints, so it is imperative that you provide the board with all the facts and evidence you have to support your allegations and wish the board to consider in its deliberations.

Note: If documents containing confidential information, such as client/patient/employment records, must be submitted to substantiate your complaint, be sure to redact any identifying information (names, social security numbers, etc.). If you need to refer to a specific record you may assign letter or number codes in place of the redacted identifying information (for example, Client A, Patient B).

In order to facilitate our copying of complaint materials to be provided to the Respondent and members of the Board of Ethics, please

- do not use staples;
- do not use colored fonts, or highlighting/shading (to emphasize specific content, we suggest you underline, circle, or box the facts or evidence you wish to draw to the board's attention);
- do not hole-punch the materials;
- do not submit two-sided documents (if you have material that is printed on both sides, please re-copy as single-sided pages).

What to include in the complaint

Facts and evidence to be provided in your complaint may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Date(s) of incident(s);
- Your relationship to the Respondent (for example, employer, employee, colleague, clinical fellowship supervisor, client/patient or caregiver);
- Location/occasion of incident;
- How and when you observed/discovered the alleged violation;
- The Respondent's actions, practices, and/or behavior you think were violations of the Code of Ethics;
- Descriptions and copies of any communications with others regarding this incident;
- Descriptions and dates of actions taken, if any, to try to rectify the situation prior to submitting this complaint;
- Descriptions and dates of any communications with the Respondent regarding your concerns and any responses received;
- Signed and dated witness statements;
- Copies of all other materials and evidence that corroborate and support the allegations;
- Information about facts and circumstances in your complaint that are also the subject of any complaints to other regulatory entities (e.g. licensure board) or a legal cause of action.

Although not required, the Board of Ethics appreciates Complainant's citing each provision of the ASHA Code of Ethics that he/she believes has been violated, followed by a nexus to the facts and evidence provided to support each allegation. The Code of Ethics is available on ASHA's website at <http://asha.org/docs/html/ET2010-00309.html>.

Complaint Follow-Up

The Director of Ethics sends the Complainant an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received. The BOE meets three times a year, so depending on the complaint submission date, the board's meeting schedule, and whether the Respondent takes advantage of the appeals process available to him/her,

4–12 months may pass before the BOE reaches its final decision. No information about the matter will be provided to Complainants before the BOE renders its final decision.

If you have questions about the complaint filing process, please contact Heather Bupp, Director of Ethics, at 800-498-2071, ext. 5785 (members) or 800-638-8255, ext. 5785 (consumers), or Lorraine Lennon, Ethics Program Manager, at 800-498-2071, ext. 5763 (members) or 800-638-8255, ext. 5763 (consumers). General questions about the process may be e-mailed to hbupp@asha.org.

Scroll down to next page for [Complaint of Alleged Violation of ASHA Code of Ethics form](#).

**AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF ETHICS**

COMPLAINT OF ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE ASHA CODE OF ETHICS

A copy of this complaint form and any attachments will be provided to the individual against whom the complaint is filed. The complaint must be in writing and mailed to the address provided below. The Board of Ethics does not accept anonymous complaints or complaints filed via e-mail or facsimile. ASHA's *Code of Ethics, Statement of Practices and Procedures of the Board of Ethics*, and other ethics-related information are available at <http://www.asha.org/practice/ethics>.

DATE: _____

COMPLAINANT: (Individual filing the complaint)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

RESPONDENT: (Individual against whom the complaint is directed)

Name: _____

Address (if known): _____

Telephone (if known): _____

E-mail (if known): _____

COMPLAINT DOCUMENTATION: Summarize in a written attachment the facts on which this complaint is based and enclose copies of all materials and other evidence that corroborate and support the allegations. (See the "[Filing a Complaint](#)" section of the "[Instructions for Filing a Complaint](#)" above for detailed information on what to include—and what not to include—in your complaint.

REPORTS TO OTHER ENTITIES: If you have filed a complaint about this same matter to another agency (for example, a state licensure or other regulatory board; an organization; an academic institution; any federal, state, or local official or agency), add an attachment showing to whom it was submitted, the approximate date(s), and whether/how the matter was resolved.

COMPLAINANT'S SIGNATURE:

I affirm that the statements/information within this complaint are correct and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Complainant

Date

Note to Complainants who are ASHA members and/or holders of the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC): It is the duty of all ASHA members and CCC holders to come forward with evidence of perceived violations of the Code of Ethics. However, each ASHA member/CCC holder should be mindful of his or her professional obligations regarding confidentiality and possible sanctions for abuse of the complaint procedures. Your signature above signifies that the complaint is brought to the Board of Ethics in good faith and not for the purpose of resolving private business, legal, or other disputes for which more appropriate forums exist.

Send completed and signed complaint form and accompanying documentation in an envelope marked **CONFIDENTIAL**, to:

Heather Bupp, Esq.
Ethics
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard, #309
Rockville, MD 20850-3289

If you have questions about filing a complaint or the policies and procedures of the Board of Ethics, please contact Heather Bupp, Director of Ethics, at 800-498-2071, ext. 5785, hbupp@asha.org; or Lorraine Lennon, Ethics Program Manager, 800-498-2071, ext. 5763, llennon@asha.org.

ASHA Office Use Only:

Respondent's Membership/Certification Status Verified? ___ yes ___ no

Respondent's ASHA ID # _____