

523C.23 Investigations and subpoenas.

1. *a.* In enforcing this chapter, the commissioner may conduct a public or private investigation in order to do any of the following:

(1) Determine whether a person has violated or is about to violate a provision of this chapter or a rule or order under this chapter.

(2) Aid in the enforcement of this chapter or in the prescribing of rules and forms under this chapter.

b. In carrying out this subsection, the commissioner may do all of the following:

(1) Conduct the investigation within or outside of this state.

(2) Require or allow a person to file a statement in writing regarding the facts or circumstances concerning a matter to be investigated. The commissioner may require that the statement be made under oath.

(3) Apply to the district court for the issuance of an order requiring a person's appearance before the commissioner or the attorney general. The person may also be required to produce documentary evidence germane to the subject of the investigation. The failure to obey an order under this subsection constitutes contempt of court.

c. Information obtained in the course of an investigation is confidential as provided in section 22.7. However, upon a determination that disclosure of the information is necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of consumers, the commissioner may do any of the following:

(1) Share information obtained during the course of the investigation with another regulatory authority or government agency.

(2) Publish information obtained during the course of the investigation which concerns a violation of this chapter or a rule or order under this chapter.

2. Except as provided in section 523C.19, a proceeding instituted under this chapter shall be conducted pursuant to chapter 17A and rules adopted by the commissioner pursuant to chapter 17A.

3. In an investigation or proceeding conducted under this chapter, the commissioner or any designee of the commissioner may administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any records which the commissioner deems relevant or material to the inquiry.

4. A person is not excused from attending and testifying or from producing a document or record before the commissioner or in obedience to a subpoena of the commissioner or an officer designated by the commissioner, or in a proceeding instituted by the commissioner, on the grounds that the testimony or evidence, documentary or otherwise, required of the person may tend to incriminate or subject the person to a penalty or forfeiture. However, a person shall not be prosecuted or subjected to any penalty or forfeiture due to a transaction or matter about which the person is compelled, after claiming privilege against self-incrimination, to testify or produce evidence, documentary or otherwise. The person testifying, however, is not exempt from prosecution and punishment for perjury or contempt committed while testifying.