

23.10 Enforcement.

1. If any party declines informal assistance or if informal assistance fails to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all parties, the board shall initiate a formal investigation concerning the facts and circumstances set forth in the complaint. The board shall, after an appropriate investigation, make a determination as to whether the complaint is within the board's jurisdiction and whether there is probable cause to believe that the facts and circumstances alleged in the complaint constitute a violation of [chapter 21](#) or [22](#).

2. If the board finds the complaint is outside the board's jurisdiction or there is no probable cause to believe there has been a violation of [chapter 21](#) or [22](#), the board shall issue a written order explaining the reasons for the board's conclusions and dismissing the complaint, and shall transmit a copy to the complainant and to the party against whom the complaint was filed.

3. *a.* If the board finds the complaint is within the board's jurisdiction and there is probable cause to believe there has been a violation of [chapter 21](#) or [22](#), the board shall issue a written order to that effect and shall commence a contested case proceeding under [chapter 17A](#) against the respondent. If there are no material facts in dispute, the board may order that the contested case procedures relating to the presentation of evidence shall not apply as provided in [section 17A.10A](#). The executive director of the board or an attorney selected by the executive director shall prosecute the respondent in the contested case proceeding. At the termination of the contested case proceeding the board shall, by a majority vote of its members, render a final decision as to the merits of the complaint. If the board finds that the complaint has merit, the board may issue any appropriate order to ensure enforcement of [chapter 21](#) or [22](#) including but not limited to an order requiring specified action or prohibiting specified action and any appropriate order to remedy any failure of the respondent to observe any provision of those chapters.

b. If the board determines, by a majority vote of its members, that the respondent has violated [chapter 21](#) or [22](#), the board may also do any or all of the following:

(1) Require the respondent to pay damages as provided for in [section 21.6](#) or [22.10](#), whichever is applicable, to the extent that provision would make such damages payable if the complainant had sought to enforce a violation in court instead of through the board.

(2) Void any action taken in violation of [chapter 21](#) if a court would be authorized to do so in similar circumstances pursuant to [section 21.6](#).

(3) Require the respondent to take any remedial action deemed appropriate by the board.

c. The board shall not have the authority to remove a person from public office for a violation of [chapter 21](#) or [22](#). The board may file an action under [chapter 21](#) or [22](#) to remove a person from office for violations that would subject a person to removal under those chapters.

d. A final board order resulting from such proceedings may be enforced by the board in court and is subject to judicial review pursuant to [section 17A.19](#).

[2012 Acts, ch 1115, §13, 17; 2013 Acts, ch 135, §61, 62](#)