

CHAPTER 6
DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST LICENSEES

[Previously Ch 4; Ch 5, IAB 3/2/83]

[Prior to 7/13/88, see Architectural Examiners, Board of[80]]

[Prior to 10/3/01, see 193B—Chapter 5]

193B—6.1(544A,272C) Disciplinary action. The architectural examining board has authority in Iowa Code chapters 544A, 17A and 272C to impose discipline for violations of these chapters and the rules promulgated thereunder.

193B—6.2(544A,272C) Investigation of complaints. The board shall, upon receipt of a complaint in writing, or may, upon its own motion, pursuant to other evidence received by the board, review and investigate alleged acts or omissions which the board reasonably believes constitute cause under applicable law or administrative rules. In order to determine if probable cause exists for a hearing on a complaint, the investigators designated by the president shall cause an investigation to be made into the allegations of the complaint. If the board determines that the complaint does not present facts which constitute a basis for disciplinary action, the board shall take no further action.

193B—6.3(544A,272C) Peer investigative committee. A peer investigative committee may be appointed by the president to investigate a complaint. The committee members will consist of one or more architects, serve at the discretion of the president, and shall have been licensed to practice in Iowa for at least five years. The committee will review and determine the facts of the complaint and make a report to the board in a timely manner.

[ARC 3336C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

193B—6.4(544A,272C) Investigation report. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) shall prepare for the board's consideration a report containing the position or defense of the licensee to determine what further action is necessary. The board may:

1. Order the matter be further investigated.
2. Allow the licensee who is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to appear before a committee of the board for an informal discussion regarding the circumstances of the alleged violation.
3. Determine there is no probable cause to believe a disciplinary violation has occurred and close the case.
4. Determine there is probable cause to believe that a disciplinary violation has occurred.

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193B—6.5(544A,272C) Informal discussion. If the board considers it advisable, or if requested by the affected licensee, the board may grant the licensee an opportunity to appear before the board or a committee of the board for a voluntary informal discussion of the facts and circumstances of an alleged violation. The licensee may be represented by legal counsel at the informal discussion. The licensee is not required to attend the informal discussion.

Unless disqualification is waived by the licensee, board members who personally investigated a disciplinary complaint are disqualified from making decisions at a later formal hearing. Because board members generally rely upon staff, investigators, auditors, peer review committees, or expert consultants to conduct investigations, the issue rarely arises. An informal discussion, however, is a form of investigation because it is conducted in a question-and-answer format. In order to preserve the ability of all board members to participate in board decision making, licensees who desire to attend an informal discussion must therefore waive their right to seek disqualification of a board member or staff based solely on the board member's or staff's participation in an informal discussion. Licensees would not be waiving their right to seek disqualification on any other ground. By electing to attend an informal discussion, a licensee accordingly agrees that participating board members or staff are not disqualified from acting as a presiding officer in a later contested case proceeding or from advising the decision maker.

Because an informal discussion constitutes a part of the board's investigation of a pending disciplinary case, the facts discussed at the informal discussion may be considered by the board in the event the matter proceeds to a contested case hearing and those facts are independently introduced into evidence. The board may seek a consent order at the time of the informal discussion. If the parties agree to a consent order, a statement of charges shall be filed simultaneously with the consent order.

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193B—6.6(544A,272C) Decisions. The board shall make findings of fact and conclusions of law and may take one or more of the following actions:

6.6(1) Dismiss the charges.

6.6(2) Revoke the architect's license. In the event of a revocation, the licensee shall not be allowed to remain a partner or shareholder of a business entity if the law requires all partners or shareholders of such entity to be licensed architects.

6.6(3) Suspend the licensee's license as authorized by law.

6.6(4) Impose civil penalties, the amount which shall be set at the discretion of the board but which shall not exceed \$1000. Civil penalties may be imposed for any of the disciplinary violations specified in Iowa Code sections 544A.13 and 544A.15 and these rules. Factors the board may consider when determining whether to assess civil penalties and the amount to assess include:

- a. Whether other forms of discipline are being imposed for the same violation.
- b. Whether the amount imposed will be a substantial deterrent to the violation.
- c. The circumstances leading to the violation.
- d. The severity of the violation and the risk of harm to the public.
- e. The economic benefits gained by the licensee as a result of the violation.
- f. The interest of the public.
- g. Evidence of reform or remedial action.
- h. Time lapsed since the violation occurred.
- i. Whether the violation is a repeat offense following a prior cautionary letter, disciplinary order, or other notice of the nature of the infraction.
- j. The clarity of the issues involved.
- k. Whether the violation was willful and intentional.
- l. Whether the licensee acted in bad faith.
- m. The extent to which the licensee cooperated with the board.
- n. Whether the licensee practiced architecture with a lapsed, inactive, suspended or revoked certificate of licensure.

6.6(5) Impose a period of probation, either with or without conditions.

6.6(6) Require reexamination, using one or more parts of the examination given to architectural licensee candidates.

6.6(7) Require additional professional education, reeducation, or continuing education.

6.6(8) Issue a citation and a warning.

6.6(9) Issue a consent order.

Voluntary surrender of licensure is considered as disciplinary action.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 544A.13 and chapter 272C.

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