

193D—4.4 (544B,272C) Investigation report of complaints.

4.4(1) *Board consideration of report to determine further action.* 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 so the board may determine what further action is necessary. The board may:

- a.* Order the matter be further investigated.
- b.* Allow the licensee who is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to appear before the designated discipline committee for an informal discussion regarding the circumstances of the alleged violation.
- c.* Determine there is no probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred and close the case.
- d.* Determine there is probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred.

4.4(2) *Informal discussion.*

a. An informal discussion is intended to provide a licensee an opportunity to share the licensee's account of a complaint in an informal setting before the board determines whether probable cause exists to initiate a disciplinary proceeding. A licensee is not required to attend an informal discussion. Because disciplinary investigations are confidential, the licensee may not bring other persons to an informal discussion, but licensees may be represented by legal counsel.

b. Unless disqualification is waived by the licensee, board members or staff who personally investigate a disciplinary complaint are disqualified from making decisions or assisting the decision makers at a later formal hearing. Because board members generally rely upon investigators, 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 and to receive the advice of staff, a licensee who desires to attend an informal discussion must therefore waive the 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. A licensee would not waive the 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.

c. 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.