

657—36.3(147,155A,272C) Complaints, investigations, and board action.

36.3(1) General. The board may, upon receipt of a written or verbal complaint or upon its own motion pursuant to other evidence received by the board, review and investigate alleged acts or omissions that may violate the board's rules or that are related to the ethical or professional conduct of a licensee.

36.3(2) Confidentiality of investigative files. Complaint files, investigation files, and all other investigation reports and investigative information in the possession of the board or its employees or agents that relate to licensee discipline shall be confidential pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

36.3(3) Investigation of allegations. In order to determine if probable cause exists for a disciplinary hearing, the board, the executive director, or someone designated by the executive director shall cause an investigation to be made into the allegations of the complaint. The licensee that is the subject of the complaint shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present to the investigator a position or defense respecting the allegations of the complaint prior to the commencement of a contested case.

36.3(4) Investigatory subpoena powers. The board is authorized by law to subpoena books, papers, records, and any other real evidence, whether or not privileged or confidential under law, which are necessary for the board to decide whether to institute a contested case proceeding. The issuance of investigative subpoenas is governed by rule 657—36.4(17A,147,152,272C).

36.3(5) Investigative report. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) shall prepare a report for the board's consideration. The report may contain evidence gathered by the investigator, findings made by the investigator, the licensee's response to the allegations, and the applicable laws or rules alleged to have been violated.

36.3(6) Board consideration. The board shall review all investigations. Participation in the review of investigative materials shall not bar any board member from participating in any subsequent disciplinary proceeding.

a. Board action. After reviewing an investigation, the board may institute a disciplinary proceeding by filing one or more statements of charges, approve a combined statement of charges and settlement agreement, send a confidential letter of education or administrative warning to the licensee, request additional investigation, including peer review, refer the case to another regulatory authority with jurisdiction over the issue, or close the case without further investigation.

b. Confidential action. If the board determines that formal disciplinary action is not warranted, the board may send a confidential letter of education or administrative warning to the licensee. The purpose of a confidential letter of education or administrative warning is to alert the licensee to possible violations of Iowa law or board rules so that the licensee may address the issues. Confidential letters of education and administrative warnings do not constitute formal disciplinary action and are not open for inspection under Iowa Code chapter 22. The board shall maintain a copy of the confidential letter of education or administrative warning in the confidential investigative file regarding the licensee. Confidential letters of education and administrative warnings may be used as evidence against a licensee in future administrative hearings.

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