



Client Notification of Complaints Process

Approved	Revised	Related Policy	Supporting Documents
<p>June 2023</p>	n/a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCPA Code of Ethics A5; A6 (2020) • CCPA Standards of Practice A5; A6 (2021) • NS Mass Casualty Commission Report, Recommendation C.19

Background

The perpetrator of the 2020 killing of 22 people in Nova Scotia was a registrant of a provincial healthcare regulatory body. The Report of the Nova Scotia Mass Casualty Commission (2022) examined the role of healthcare profession regulators in identifying and limiting the potential for healthcare professionals to cause intentional harm to clients. In Recommendation C.19 the MCC outlines several proactive steps that regulators should take to enhance efforts to educate clients about how to file a complaint.

These efforts must acknowledge that members of groups rendered vulnerable through socio-economic marginalization and systemic racism are particularly at risk of being subjected to poor treatment, unethical or illegal behaviour, and are especially vulnerable to abuse. Such individuals can also be hesitant to file a formal complaint or to participate fully in a process operating within a system they have learned to mistrust.

In response to Recommendation C. 19 of the Nova Scotia Mass Casualty Commission Report (MCC) the College is committed to reducing barriers to reporting concerns about a Registered Counselling Therapist from members of marginalized communities. This begins with efforts to create awareness of the potential for counselling therapists to cause intentional harm to clients.

Policy Requirements

NS-MCC-Report Rec C. 19(c) advocates regulators, "take steps to promote awareness of complaints mechanisms, *including by requiring that licensees prominently display the Code of Ethics and information about the complaints process in their offices/clinics and online.*"

On or before **September 1, 2023**, all Registered Counselling Therapists and Registered Counselling Therapist-Candidates, shall:

- provide all new (in-person) clients with a physical copy of the ***NSCCT Complaints Process Infographic*** as part of their standard consent materials and process;
- provide all new (virtual) clients with an electronic copy of the ***NSCCT Complaints Process Infographic*** as part of their standard consent materials and process;
- as part of the initial consent process,
 - a) obtain the signature or initials of the client confirming receipt of the ***NSCCT Complaints Process Infographic***
 - b) obtain the signature or initials of the client confirming that the counselling therapist discussed the NSCCT complaints process and provided an opportunity to have their questions addressed
- prominently display within the office setting, a hard copy of the ***CCPA Code of Ethics***
- where applicable, make available on their business website,
 - a) a copy of the ***NSCCT Complaints Process Infographic***
 - b) a link to the **File a Complaint** page of the NSCCT website
 - c) a link to the ***CCPA Code of Ethics***
 - d) a link to the ***CCPA Standards of Practice***
- Encourage clients to contact the College if they require further information

Purpose

- To make clients and the public aware of the potential for counselling therapists to cause intentional harm to clients
- To inform clients about the NSCCT complaints/professional conduct process
- To provide clients with a number of easily accessible resources to facilitate the filing of a complaint
- To reduce systemic barriers to filing a complaint among members of marginalized communities
- To encourage open dialogue between counselling therapists and their clients regarding the complaints/professional conduct process