



NSCCT IS THE PUBLIC-INTEREST REGULATOR FOR ALL  
COUNSELLING THERAPISTS IN NOVA SCOTIA

# COMPLAINT PROCESS

NSCCT registers and licenses counselling therapists and is mandated by legislation to ensure the public has access to a robust and objective Complaint and Professional Conduct process to investigate complaints against counselling therapists and impose discipline where appropriate.

## ANYONE CAN FILE A COMPLAINT

A **COMPLAINT** is an expression of concern about the conduct or actions of a Registered Counselling Therapist related to the care provided or other aspects of the professional counselling relationship. Complaints allege that the counselling therapist did not meet the standards expected by the College, other members of the profession or the public.

The Complaints Committee reviews complaints about:

- Professional Misconduct (e.g., not acting according to the *Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice*)
- Incapacity (e.g., counselling while under the influence of drugs or alcohol)
- Incompetence (e.g., failing to provide proper care)
- Conduct Unbecoming the Profession (e.g., behaving unprofessionally outside of their place of work)

There is **NO FEE** for filling a complaint with the College.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN ABOUT A COUNSELLING THERAPIST

For further information on the complaints process and to access the complaint form visit

[www.nscct.ca/public](http://www.nscct.ca/public)



[registrar@nscct.ca](mailto:registrar@nscct.ca)



902-225-7531

### SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTING LINE

NSCCT provides a dedicated confidential reporting line to assist in reporting sexual misconduct by a Registered Counselling Therapist. Please leave a voicemail and our trained *Sexual Assault Complaint Navigator* will contact you within 48 hours. Call 902-579-8119.

#### How to File a Complaint



Please take time to review this Infographic with your Registered Counselling Therapist and to work with them to ensure your questions are answered.

## FILING A COMPLAINT

You can submit a formal complaint by filling out the complaint form.

It is **NEVER TOO LATE** to file a complaint. Although it is always better to file a complaint close to when the events occurred there is no legal time-limit.

**IF YOU ARE UNCERTAIN** whether a concern you have is grounds for a complaint, please contact the **Executive Director & Registrar** for advice. Please reach out to the College if you require assistance in filling out the Complaint Form, or with any other aspect of filing a complaint.

After a complaint is filed the respondent will be notified and given 30-days to respond. The Complaints Committee may order an investigation.

## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

The Complaints Committee will meet to **REVIEW** all the evidence available concerning the complaint, including the investigator's report, and to determine an appropriate outcome, which may include any of the following:

- Dismiss the complaint
- Informally resolve the complaint
- Consider a proposed settlement agreement
- Counsel the counselling therapist
- Caution the counselling therapist
- Reprimand the counselling therapist
- Suspend the license of a counselling therapist or their ability to obtain a license
- Impose conditions or restrictions on a counselling therapist's license
- Refer the complaint to the Professional Conduct Committee if a hearing is needed

You can review the NSCCT **Code of Ethics** and **Standards of Practice** by visiting [www.nscct.ca/public](http://www.nscct.ca/public)

## ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY?

Individuals who experience marginalization, socio-economic disadvantage or systemic racism can be hesitant to file a formal complaint or to participate fully in a process operating within a system they have learned to mistrust.

NSCCT is committed to reducing barriers to reporting concerns about a Registered Counselling Therapist from members of marginalized communities.

NSCCT acknowledges that members of marginalized communities are particularly at risk of being subjected to poor treatment, unethical or illegal behaviour and are especially vulnerable to abuse.

Our complaints/professional conduct policy and procedures also reflect this possibility.

**Please take time to review this Infographic with your Registered Counselling Therapist and to work with them to ensure your questions are answered.**