

INVESTIGATIONS IN CARE FACILITIES

Licensing Officers will investigate every complaint about:

- an unlicensed care facility, or
- a care facility that does not comply with the legislation or the terms or conditions of its license

Investigations may also be initiated when an incident report is received alleging that abuse or neglect has occurred.

Frequently asked questions about the investigation process

Why conduct an investigation?

Conducting an Investigation is to determine if an alleged event occurred and to identify whether or not a facility is operating in compliance. The criteria used in an investigation are different than criteria for criminal law, where proof must be beyond a reasonable doubt. Rather, investigations are based on the balance of probabilities, which means determining if it is more likely than not that an event occurred or a facility failed to comply.

What is a health and safety plan?

A health and safety plan may be requested at the beginning of an investigation to ensure that the health and safety of persons in care are assured while the investigation is underway. Licensees can submit a revised health and safety plan for review at any time during the investigation. The licensee will be advised as soon as the health and safety plan is no longer required.

Have you been required to provide a health and safety plan?

[Learn more.](#)

What happens during an investigation?

- Complaints and incident reports are assessed and the extent of the investigation is determined based on their nature and severity
- The licensee is advised and a health and safety plan is requested, if required.
- Information is gathered, which may include:
 - Facility inspections
 - Facility policies, staff records and records of persons in care
 - Interviews of staff, persons in care and their families
 - Facility operational history
- Investigation findings are documented and the licensee is given the opportunity to review and respond to the information

- Further information, including a compliance plan, may be requested at the conclusion of the investigation. Additional compliance activities may also take place.

What is the licensee role during an investigation?

Licensees are responsible for the performance of their staff and as such may need to investigate to satisfy obligations as an employer. A licensee may wish to participate in an investigation to discharge this obligation, and participation is encouraged. This should be discussed with the investigator as early as possible.

We are committed to working with licensees, but a joint investigation may not be appropriate in all cases.

What about other agencies?

- Allegations involving conduct that is potentially criminal are immediately referred to police
- Other expertise may be consulted as necessary, including social workers and dieticians

Our Commitment

We recognize that investigations are unsettling for everyone involved and can be especially difficult for persons in care and an implicated staff person. We commit to being transparent and fair, and to concluding the investigation as quickly as possible.