



Ethics Complaint Guidelines and FAQ's

To file an Ethics Complaint, you will need to complete the Ethics Complaint Form, citing the article(s) of the Code of Ethics you believe have been violated. In addition, please attach a supporting narrative or chronological summary of the events that occurred, along with copies of any documentation you feel will support your complaint.

When your Complaint is received, all related case materials are forwarded to the Grievance Committee for their review. The Grievance Committee's responsibility is to determine if the allegations are taken as true, is there a possible violation of the Article(s) cited in the complaint.

The REALTOR® Association of Prince William (PWAR) cannot require REALTORS® to pay money to parties filing ethics complaints, award "punitive damages" for violations of the Code of Ethics or suspend or revoke a real estate professional's license. Complainants wishing to pursue these types of remedies should do so through the legal system or the appropriate licensing authority or regulatory or administrative agency. The primary emphasis of discipline for ethical lapses is educational. It is intended to create a heightened awareness of and appreciation for the duties that the Code imposes.

Ethics FAQs

Is there a statute of limitations for filing ethics complaints? Yes. An ethics complaint must be filed within 180 days after the facts constituting the matter could have been known in the exercise of reasonable diligence or within 180 days after the conclusion of the transaction or event, whichever is later.

Is there a fee to file an ethics complaint? No.

Do I have to appear at an ethics hearing? Yes. The complainant must appear at the hearing. Ethics complaints cannot be made anonymously.

Who can file an ethics complaint? An ethics complaint may be filed by any person, whether a member of the REALTOR® Association of Prince William or not. However, complaints may only be filed against those that are REALTOR® members of the Association.

I'd like to file an ethics complaint, but what about confidentiality? All complaints are kept strictly confidential. Only staff involved in the administration of cases, members of the Grievance Committee, and those members of the Professional Standards Committees assigned to the hearing panel have access to ethics complaint cases.

Is there a special form I should use when filing an ethics complaint? Yes. The Ethics Complaint form, which must be completed online. This form should cite the article(s) you believe have been violated and be accompanied by a supporting narrative or chronological summary of the events that occurred.

Can I file an arbitration request and an ethics complaint at the same time? Yes. Both case types can be filed at the same time. If both cases are determined by the Grievance Committee to warrant hearings, the arbitration is held first.

Who establishes the rules that PWAR follows in handling complaints? PWAR is required to follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the National Association of REALTORS®.

How long does the process take? If the ethics complaint goes to hearing, the process may take 2-3 months, allowing for the time for receiving responses, proper notification, review by the Grievance Committee and scheduling of a hearing.

Who can I talk to if I still have questions concerning the ethics complaint process?
You may contact April Thomas at 703-565-0033 or email ProStandards@pwar.com