

CPAg or CPSS/CPSC Complaint Investigation Procedures

1. Complaints for ethics violations are filed with the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) and are delegated to the respective certifying Board's Standards and Ethics Committee (SEC). Anyone may file a complaint. A complaint must be written and signed to be considered.
 - a. The ASA or SSSA will notify the certifying board chair of the complaint. The board chair will be an ex-officio member of the SEC and will participate in all the activities related to the complaint investigation.
 - b. The ASA/SSSA Director of Certification and Licensing will notify by registered mail the person who filed the complaint (complainant) that it has been received.
2. The SEC must decide in fourteen days if the filed complaint has enough merit to warrant an investigation.
 - a. If yes, the SEC must establish the grounds for an investigation. They must decide which section of the Code of Ethics or other reason they will investigate. Go on to 3.
 - b. If no, they must notify complainant they found insufficient grounds to investigate. ASA/SSSA must also be notified.
3. Once the grounds are established for an investigation, the defendant and complainant are notified by registered mail.

Note: All correspondence to the defendant and complainant will be handled through the ASA/SSSA Director of Certification and Licensing.
4. The defendant will be provided a copy of the written complaint and be given 21 days to respond to the complaint and to provide rebuttal information in writing. Failure to respond within this time period shall be considered a waiver of the right to provide rebuttal information. During this period, the SEC will conduct an audit of the defendant's certification maintenance program.
5. The SEC upon review of the rebuttal information and the audit of the defendant's CEU maintenance program in 30 days must:
 - a. exonerate the defendant
 - b. write a letter of warning
 - c. suspend the defendant
 - d. revoke certification
 - e. extend the investigation
6. If b, c, or d, are selected, the defendant may request a hearing (personal appearance) by the full certification Board. The time and place will be set by ASA/SSSA.
 - a. To overrule the SEC, a two-thirds majority vote of the full certifying Board is required.
7. If 5e is selected, the committee may involve board members to assist the investigation which may be extended in 30 day increments. Funds may be requested from ASA/SSSA to assist the investigation.
 - a. Upon the completion of the investigation, a decision must be reached regarding 5a-d.