

# **American Society of Agronomy (ASA) International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program Complaint Investigation Procedures**

The ASA ICCA Program complaint investigation procedures outline the process that the State/Province (Local) CCA Certifying Board will use in conducting a review of a CCA. It is based upon the potential violation of the ICCA Program's code of ethics. Anyone can file a complaint. The complaint and rebuttal must be written (electronic communication is acceptable) and include as much detail as possible including but not limited to pictures, video, lab reports and eye witness testimonials. The complaint investigation process is conducted by fellow CCAs. They will not know the complainant or defendant personally.

The complaint review process does:

- include an evaluation of whether or not the defendant should have been qualified to be involved with the agronomy work described in the complaint based on but not limited to the defendant's certification records, training, continuing education and work experiences.

The complaint review process does **not**:

- include an evaluation of the defendant's recommendation on a specific job or project site.
- determine fair pricing, how or how much the complainant should have been charged for the work done by the CCA.

**Steps that will be followed:**

- 1. Anyone may file a complaint for ethics violations. A complaint must be written and signed to be considered for investigation. Electronic communication (Email) is acceptable and considered valid.**
  - a. Complaints are filed with either the CCA's Local Certifying Board's office or the ICCA Board's office. The office receiving the complaint then notifies the other office that a complaint has been received. The CCA's Local Certifying Board's Standards and Ethics Committee (SEC) will investigate the complaint.**
  - b. The ASA will confirm the certifying board chair is aware 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. The full Local Certifying Board will not be involved in the initial investigation because they will serve as the appeal body if necessary.**
  - c. The ASA Director of Professional Development and Business Relations will notify the person who filed the complaint (complainant) that it has been received.**

2. The SEC must decide in 120 days if the filed complaint has enough merit to warrant an investigation. The SEC will base their decision on what the complainant has provided as evidence with the written complaint. It is strongly advised that the complainant provide as much detail about the potential violation as possible including but not limited to witness' written testimony, lab results, pictures and/or video.
  - 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. **Investigation stops here.**
3. Once the grounds are established for an investigation, the defendant (CCA) and complainant are notified.

*Note: All correspondence to the defendant and complainant will be handled through the ASA Director of Professional Development and Business Relations.*
4. The defendant (CCA) will be provided a copy of the written complaint along with all supporting materials and be given 60 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 60 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 Local Certification Board. The time and place will be set by ASA.
  - 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 ICCA to assist the investigation.
  - a. Upon the completion of the investigation, a decision must be reached regarding 5a-d.