

## Referrals to Professional Colleges – Protection for Persons in Care

### Overview:

Protection for Persons in Care (PPC) may work in collaboration with professional colleges at various stages of an allegation of abuse. The allegation may be reported directly to the college or at any time during an investigation.

### Legislative source:

*Protection for Persons in Care Act*

*2(1) Every individual or service provider who has reasonable and probably grounds to believe and believes that there is or has been abuse against a client shall report such abuse to the Minister of Community Development or a police service or a committee, body or person authorized under another enactment to investigate such an abuse.*

*10(1) The Minister may refer a complaint to a committee, body or person authorized under another enactment to investigate the complaint if the matter also falls within the jurisdiction of that committee, body or person.*

*10(2) If a complaint has been referred to a committee, body or person under this section, that committee, body or person has the powers under section 7, in addition to any other powers, duties and responsibilities the committee, body or person may have.*

### Policy Statement:

**PPC will work collaboratively with committees, bodies, or persons (such as professional colleges) in conducting investigations involving their members.**

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**Reporting line 1-888-357-9339**

Website:

[www.cd.gov.ab.ca](http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca)

### Initial report of abuse under section 2(1):

- During the initial reporting and discussion of an allegation of abuse to the reporting line, the intake officer completes an assessment to determine the classification of the alleged abuser.
- If the alleged abuser is identified as a professional, the intake officer inquires if the incident has been reported to the professional college.
  - If yes, the reporter is assured that the reporting requirements of the *Act* have been met by reporting directly to the college. No further information will be taken and a file number will not be assigned to the report. A notation is

made in case proof of reporting is required at a later time.

- If *no*, the intake officer will take the details like any other reported incident of alleged abuse.

#### **PPC Unit's role:**

- The investigation coordinator will further discuss the matter with the reporter and/or the college. If it is determined, by confirming registration, that the alleged abuser is a member of the particular professional college and is acting in the capacity of their professional designation, the case is referred to the college in accordance with section 10.
- Note: the first and last name of the alleged abuser must be known to make this referral.
- The reporter and the facility/agency are verbally informed of the referral and the file number.

#### **Discovery during the investigation by a PPC investigator:**

- If a report/file has been assigned to a PPC investigator and during the investigation it has been determined that the subject matter involves a member of a professional college whose professional practice is a concern, the investigator should make a recommendation that the person (name of the member and their professional designation) be referred to their professional college.
- The investigator can provide evidence on whether the allegation of abuse is considered upheld or dismissed and make any appropriate recommendations relating to management, administration or the operation of the facility. They cannot make a determination on the professional member's registration or license.

- The Deputy Minister informs the College of the concerns related to its member so the College can take whatever action is required under the College's legislation.
- The College is given the opportunity to review the investigation report compiled by the PPC investigator and copy any information pertinent to its member.

#### **Follow-up of a PPC allegation of abuse referred to a College as a recommendation rather than to the College as an investigating body for PPC:**

- While the file is considered closed from the perspective of the *Protection for Persons in Care Act* and the College is not required to provide the Minister with results of its practice review, the Colleges usually do provide follow-up in accordance with their own legislation.
- Alberta Community Development takes no further action.

#### **Cooperation by professional members during investigations:**

It is expected that in keeping with their professional ethics, professional members will cooperate with external investigators during Protection for Persons in Care investigations as evidence is gathered. This usually involves providing witness statements.

#### **Purpose**

*PPC Bulletins* are intended to provide individuals with more detailed information for interpreting the *Protection for Persons in Care Act (PPC Act)*. These Bulletins supply information concerning procedures and practices to aid in the effective and consistent administration of the *PPC Act*. PPC Bulletins are not a substitute for legal advice.

