



The Canadian Fire Alarm Association

Making a complaint

A public information guide to CFAA's complaints and discipline process

Issued December 1, 2017

The Canadian Fire Alarm Association

Complaints and Discipline Information

Established in 1973, the Canadian Fire Alarm Association (CFAA) is a not-for-profit organization that has remained focused on its mission "To maximize the effectiveness and use of fire alarms in the protection of life and property throughout Canada". Having enjoyed continual growth and recognition, CFAA operates from a national office in Markham, Ontario and through volunteer chapters across Canada. The CFAA serves more than 480 voting Members, 100 associate subscribers, 1,500 students and 3,800 Registered Trainees and Fire Alarm Technicians across Canada.

CFAA Member or Registered Technician Conduct

All CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall abide by and comply with the contents of **APPENDIX A: CFAA Policies and Principles** as shown in this document and the resolutions of the Association.

Requirements for Acceptance and Remaining as a CFAA member or Registered Technician in good standing include adherence to the association's Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Policy, Competition Law Policy and Guiding Principles. (See Appendix A)

The CFAA Complaints Process

The complaints process is designed to provide clear and transparent means for the association to guide the conduct of a CFAA Member or Registered Fire Alarm Technician in an expeditious manner.

Section A

An AHJ, or an owner working in conjunction with the AHJ, must complete the **CFAA Member/Registered Technician Complaint Report** (see Appendix C) to report a complaint.

The specific details of the incident, as well as references to the pertinent Code or Standard, or CFAA Policies and Principles as described in Appendix A, are to be described. Citing a specific excerpt of a particular CODE or STANDARD would greatly assist in eliminating ambiguity surrounding the infraction.

The CFAA is especially concerned with items pertaining to Part 3 of the [Provincial or National] Building Code as well as CAN/ULC-S524 Installation of Fire Alarm Systems, CAN/ULC-S536 Inspection and Testing of Fire Alarm Systems, and CAN/ULC-S537 Verification of Fire Alarm Systems.

The owner or their authorized representative of a job site where work has been performed, may initiate a complaint against a Member or a Registered Technician only with the support of an Authority Having Jurisdiction

NOTE: If the incident cited in a formal complaint pertains to items not covered by the items identified above, the CFAA may not be able to proceed with an investigation of the complaint.

Communication between the Parties

The CFAA encourages complainants to discuss their concerns directly with the CFAA Member or Registered Technician before filing a complaint. However, if no resolution of the complaint occurs, and a complainant wishes to proceed with a formal complaint, he or she should first contact the local AHJ to confirm that the particular incident in question serves grounds for complaint.

Once the AHJ has confirmed that the requirements in a particular CODE or STANDARD have been compromised, the complaint form must be signed by both the building owner/representative as well as the local AHJ and then forwarded to the CFAA Executive Director (see *How to File a Complaint* below).

All parties to any complaint will be notified of the complaint resolution.

Section B – Other Complaints - Reserved

How to File a Complaint

A formal complaint must:

1. Be made in writing and addressed to the CFAA Executive Director in an envelope marked ***Confidential***;
2. Include a copy of a completed **CFAA Member/Registered Technician Complaint Report** (see Appendix C)
3. Include sufficient information to clearly identify the Member or Registered Fire Alarm Technician against whom the complaint is made, such as the full name, mailing address, e-mail address, Registration or Membership number (if available) and telephone number;
4. Include sufficient information about any allegations contained in the complaint, including the date, times, as many details as possible about the concern(s), and wherever possible, the names of individuals to be contacted and/or documentation to be reviewed in investigating the complaint;
5. Include copies of any documents or other information pertinent to the complaint;
6. Include the complainant's name, title and affiliation, location where the issue occurred, mailing address, e-mail address and telephone numbers.
7. It is the intention of the CFAA to resolve all complaints within 95 days of filing. See Appendix B – CFAA Complaints Resolution Timeline

Note: If you have questions about the process, please contact the CFAA Executive Director at:

Canadian Fire Alarm Association
L 'Association Canadienne D'Alarme Incendie
85 Citizen Court, Units 3 & 4, Markham, ON L6G 1A8
1.800.529.0552 | 905.944.0030 | ext. 108 | Fax: 905.479.3639

If the evidence does not support a formal complaint, the CFAA Executive Director may suggest other ways to address your concerns.

The Complaints Process

Once a complaint is filed, the CFAA Executive Director reviews the description of the complaint and determines if further action is warranted. If further action is required, both the complainant and the Member or Registered Technician are notified of the complaint within 10 business days, and asked to respond in a timely basis.

The Member or Registered Technician must respond within 15 business days to provide a formal response to the complaint and substantiate their response with any pertinent information that may help resolve the complaint. The Executive Director will review all of the submitted data and if the material warrants action, convene a complaints committee.

If there is insufficient information to proceed then he will advise the parties that the CFAA is unable to proceed.

CFAA Complaints Committee

The CFAA Executive Director, in conjunction with the CFAA President or alternative member of the Executive Committee, will appoint a Complaints Committee to investigate and review the complaint. Members of the Complaints Committee are volunteers who assist the CFAA in assessing the ethical conduct and competence of CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians. The Complaints Committee will consist of a minimum of three (3) individuals selected from a pool of knowledgeable CFAA stakeholders representing Technicians, AHJ's, Service Providers, Engineers/Consultants, Manufacturer, Building Management or others as may be appropriate to evaluate the complaint. The selection of the committee members must take into account the geographic location of the complaint to ensure that all committee members are knowledgeable of local fire regulations.

The Complaints Committee may solicit and obtain assistance from outside parties as may be appropriate to the complaint. The Complaints Committee members will be bound by a non-disclosure agreement on the identity of the company or member involved with any complaint. The Complaints Committee members are bound by the CFAA Conflict of Interest Policy with respect to their participation on the committee (refer to Appendix D Non Disclosure Statement)

The CFAA Complaints Committee will investigate and determine the next course of action after 15 business days of notifying the Member or Registered Technician, regardless if those parties have responded with further information re: extenuating circumstances, etc.

Complaints Resolution

The Complaints Committee's function is to review complaints and decide whether a Member or Registered Technician has committed a breach of the CFAA Policies and Principles or lacks a clear understanding of the Codes and Standards governing the installation and service of fire alarm systems in Canada. To expedite communications between all parties, and uncover further details in regards to a complaint, the Complaints Committee may opt to call a Discovery Conference Call for all parties named in the complaint form to voice their position and reasons as to what caused the complaint to be filed.

Upon the completion of its investigation, the Complaints Committee provides a recommendation, with justification based on the facts of the complaint and the details revealed during their investigation, in writing, to the CFAA Executive Director within 90 business days from the date upon which the complaint was filed.

The CFAA Executive Director sends the decision to all parties named in the complaint and the Member or Registered Technician under review within 95 business days from the date upon which the complaint was filed.

Based on the outcome of the Complaints Committee investigation, the Member and/or Registered Technician may be required to alleviate gaps in their CODES and STANDARDS knowledge by completing additional training courses in order to maintain their CFAA Member Status or Registered Technician Status. Further violations of a similar nature may contribute to the Member or Registered Technician having their CFAA Association status revoked.

Note: the findings and orders of the Complaints Committee may be published, without the name of the Member or Registered Technician(s) involved, in the official publication of the association or in any other manner or medium that the Committee considers appropriate to foster greater learning within the CFAA community.

Appeal Process

The Member or Registered Technician may appeal the decision of the Complaints Committee within 30 business days of being notified of the decision by the CFAA.

The appeal must be launched by a Notice of Appeal in writing and delivered to the CFAA Executive Director. The Notice of Appeal must describe the grounds for appeal and must include the evidence or record upon which the Member or Registered Technician bases the appeal. During the review of a Complaint Decision Appeal, a new "Appeals Review Committee" will be formed and no former members of the original Complaints Committee will form part of the Appeals Review Committee.

APPENDIX A: CFAA Policies and Principles

CFAA Code of Ethic Policy

Each Canadian Fire Alarm Association Member and Registered Technician shall:

1. Be dedicated to safety of the public from fire, in all aspects of their fire alarm work;
2. Adhere to all applicable fire alarm codes, standards, and by-laws in all areas of fire protection including design, manufacture, application, installation, verification, maintenance servicing and promotion of fire alarm systems;
3. Only perform fire alarm services and/or render opinions for which they have qualification and experience;
4. Be honest and truthful in all dealings;
5. Behave in a manner that upholds the principles and integrity of the Canadian Fire Alarm Association;
6. Support the education of industry participants concerning advances in Life Safety and Fire Alarm;
7. Promote the Goals and Objectives of the Canadian Fire Alarm Association, and both refrain from and discourage others from the misuse of its name and logo.

“Conflict of Interest” Policy

“Conflict of Interest” means a situation where an individual or a close relative of the individual has a personal stake in a particular decision or direction being taken and has some degree of influence over that decision or direction. Members and Registered Technicians shall exercise due diligence to verify that they have no conflict of interest in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. Where other interests or concerns may, or may be perceived to, result in a conflict with their roles during a discussion, the Member(s) and Registered Technician(s) shall declare a conflict and withdraw from the discussion and or decision on the item concerned.

Competition Law Policy

Every Member and Registered Technician of the CFAA must be aware of competition law and must not behave in any way that would lead to an improper restriction of competition, for example an agreement between competitors to sell their products at agreed price levels (price fixing), to allocate their customers or markets.

Guiding Principles:

In accordance with their commitment to the Life Safety, the safety and welfare of the public, Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technician shall adhere to the following principles:

1. Public

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall act consistently with the public interest. As such, they shall be dedicated to safety of the public from fire, in all aspects of their fire alarm work.

2. Judgement

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgment while adhering to all applicable fire alarm codes, standards, and by-laws in all areas of fire protection including design, manufacture, application, installation, verification, maintenance servicing and promotion of fire alarm systems.

3. Clients and Employer/Employees

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall act in a manner that is in the best interests of their client and employer/employees consistent with the public interest. CFAA Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall only perform fire alarm services for which they have qualification and experience.

4. Product & Project Coordination

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall ensure that their products and related modifications meet the highest professional standards possible, in conjunction with relevant ULC Standards and the manufacturer's recommended installation instructions. As such, they shall be honest and truthful in all dealings.

5. Management

CFAA Member and Registered Fire Alarm Technician managers and leaders shall subscribe to and promote an ethical approach to the management of Fire Alarm System training, development and maintenance. Managers and Technicians shall behave in a manner that upholds the principles and integrity of the Canadian Fire Alarm Association.

6. Profession

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall advance the integrity and reputation of the profession consistent with the public interest. They shall support the education of industry participants concerning advances in Life Safety and Fire Alarm.

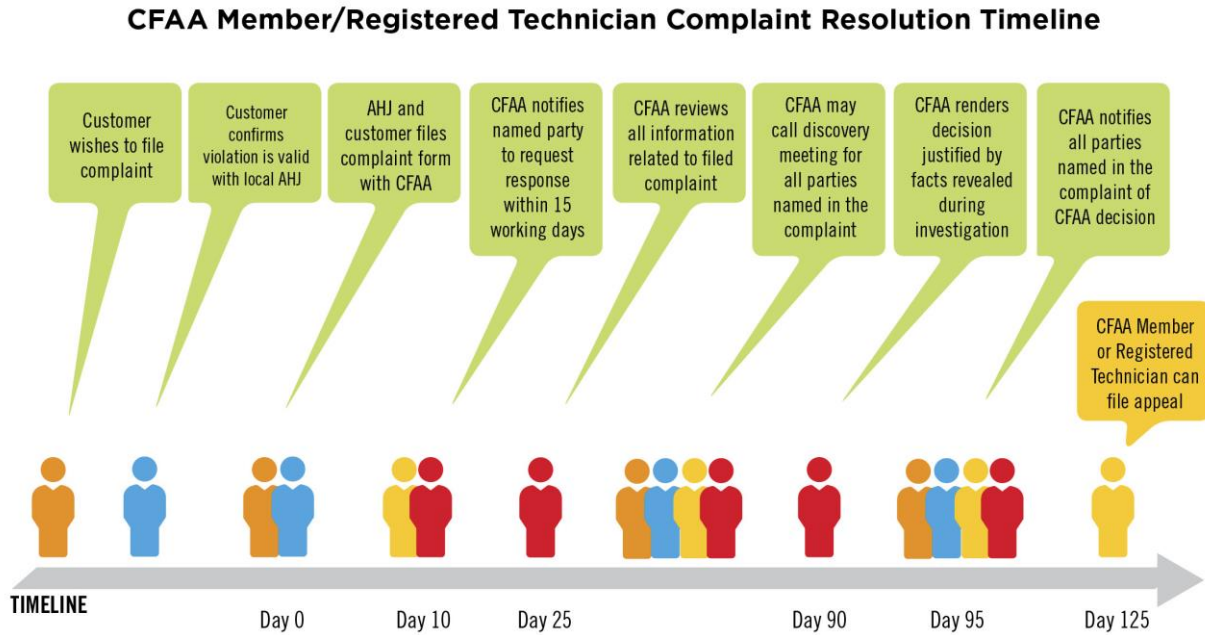
7. Colleagues

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall be fair and supportive when interacting with their colleagues. They shall promote the Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives of the Canadian Fire Alarm Association, and both refrain from and discourage others from the misuse of its name and logo.

8. Self

CFAA Members and Registered Fire Alarm Technicians shall participate in lifelong learning regarding the practice of their profession.

APPENDIX B: Complaints Process Resolution Timeline:



APPENDIX C: CFAA MEMBER OR REGISTERED TECHNICIAN COMPLAINT FORM

The following information is required to enable the CFAA to investigate and take appropriate action with respect the reported incident. In order for the CFAA to respond, the specific details of the incident as well as references to the Codes or Standards which were allegedly compromised is essential. We request that a Code or Standard excerpt be cited in the Description below to eliminate ambiguity surrounding the infraction. The CFAA is especially concerned with items pertaining to Part 3 of the applicable Building Code as well as CAN/ULC-S524, CAN/ULC-S536 and CAN/ULC-S537. If the incident does not pertain to items covered by these codes and standards, the CFAA may be unable to investigate this complaint.

Prior to lodging a formal complaint; you must contact your local AHJ Fire Inspection Officer to discuss the nature of your concern to ensure it is valid. Once they agree that your concern is legitimate, they must co-sign this document in the space provide below.

IDENTIFY PARTIES YOU WISH TO LODGE COMPLAINT AGAINST				
CFAA Member or Registered Technician Name		CFAA ID #		
INFRACTION				
Date incident occurred		Time of incident		am pm
LOCATION				
Please provide building name, address and building owner/plaintiff where incident occurred				
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT AND/OR CODE/STANDARD VIOLATION				
Specific reference to Part 3 of the applicable Building Code as well as CAN/ULC-S524, CAN/ULC-S536 and CAN/ULC-S537 are essential to describe the nature of the infraction				
REPORTED BY				
Name of AHJ Fire Inspection Officer		Date		
Jurisdiction (e.g. City of Toronto)				
Address				
Phone / email				
Name of AHJ Supervisor				
Supervisor Phone / email				
INVESTIGATION RESULTS AND ACTION TAKEN				
To be filled out by CFAA team				
CFAA Team chair				
Phone / email				

Appendix D

CFAA Complaints Policy

CFAA Complaints Committee Member Non-Disclosure Statement

The Canadian Fire Alarm Association (CFAA), has created a Complaints Policy whereby a Complaints Committee must be struck as defined within the policy to review each complaint on a case-by-case basis adherent to the guidelines. Accordingly, each member of the Complaints Committee must acknowledge and sign this non-disclosure statement prior to commencement of the complaint investigation. This statement will only be applicable to the specific complaint to which it is assigned and shall remain part of the specific complaint filed documents until such time as the case is deemed resolved and no further archiving is required.

It is understood that in addition to the specific items noted below, members of the Complaints Committee will also behave respective of the CFAA Code of Ethics as well as the requirements within the Complaints Policy.

As a member of the Complaints Committee the appointed undersigned does agree to adhere to the following:

1. Shall adhere to all principles and standards of the CFAA Code of Ethics.
2. Shall be familiar with the Codes and Standards within the Jurisdiction they are adjudicating within.
3. Shall undertake only those assignments for which they are competent by way of their education, training, and experience.
4. Shall perform their duties in an efficient and competent manner with fidelity and honesty without benefiting financially from their participation.
5. Shall avoid conflicts of interest. When unavoidable, they shall disclose to the CFAA prior to commencement of and during the process, in writing, any action that might create the appearance of a conflict of interest.
6. Shall not benefit financially or otherwise from their participation in the Complaints Committee

7. Shall work within the Complaints Committee mandate, avoid any contact with the party whom the complaint has been made unless completely unavoidable. Should contact be made then it must be reported to the CFAA Executive Director immediately.

8. Shall not reveal facts, data, information or complaint resolution obtained in connection with the investigation process, without prior consent of the CFAA Executive Director, to any persons other than the Executive Director or other members of the Complaints Committee except as authorized or required by law.

I _____, having read the Complaints Policy and the above noted items in Appendix D, do hereby acknowledge and accept the requirements as a member of the Complaints Committee.

Signature _____

Dated _____

Complaint Number: _____

Witnessed by _____ CFAA Executive Director

Signed _____

Dated _____