Complaints, investigations and discipline at CRPO

What happens after a complaint about a Registered Psychotherapist: who decides, telling clients about CRPO (Standard 3.6), the notice and your 30 days, how long it takes, what the ICRC can decide, review by HPARB, discipline and its penalties, and what the process cannot do.

Study aid, not legal advice. Last verified against the official sources linked below on 11 November 2026.

1 Who decides

- The Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (**ICRC**): members of the profession and public members of CRPO's Council; a panel investigates each complaint (Code s. 25).
- The investigator, staff or contracted, interviews witnesses and collects documents and is **not a decision-maker**.
- The Ontario Registered Psychotherapists Discipline Tribunal (**ORPDT**) is CRPO's Discipline Committee.
- The Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (**HPARB**) is an independent tribunal.

2 The first steps

- A complaint must be **in writing or recorded** (s. 25 (4)); CRPO accommodates anyone who cannot write it.
- You get notice within **14 days**, and in general a copy of the complaint (s. 25 (6)). CRPO discloses the complainant's name: fairness requires it.
- You may make written submissions within **30 days** of the notice (s. 25.2).
- A member shall **co-operate fully** with an investigator (s. 76 (3.1)).

3 How long

- The law: a panel disposes of a complaint within **150 days** (s. 28 (1)).
- If not, the complainant gets written notice and an expected date no more than **60 days** later (s. 28 (3)).
- In practice: CRPO's current average for the ICRC's written decision is about **270 days**.

4 What the ICRC can decide (by risk, CRPO's words)

Outcome	When
Take no action	No risk or minimal risk to the public.
Written advice	Some room for improvement; CRPO does not follow it up.
Remedial agreement	Low risk: self-directed learning and an assignment.
SCERP	A practice deficiency posing moderate risk: a specified continuing education or remediation program.
Oral caution	A serious concern posing moderate risk: cautioned in person.
Undertaking	Medium to high risk: you agree to restrict practice or resign.
Referral to discipline	High risk, and evidence enough for a hearing (relatively rare).

5 Also

- Where a risk needs it now, the ICRC can make an **interim order** suspending or restricting your certificate (s. 25.4).
- Since 1 April 2017, an oral caution, a SCERP or an undertaking adds a notation to your **Public Register** profile.
- A complaint the panel finds **frivolous**, vexatious or in bad faith: both sides may make written submissions within 30 days, then no action (s. 26 (4), (5)).

6 Review by HPARB (s. 29)

- **Either side**, complainant or member, may ask HPARB to review an ICRC decision within **30 days** of the notice of that right.
- But **not a referral** to discipline or to incapacity proceedings.
- HPARB asks whether the investigation was adequate and the decision reasonable (CRPO).

7 Discipline (Code s. 51)

- A hearing is a formal legal process, **generally held in public**.
- Misconduct includes a relevant offence, another regulator's finding, sexual abuse of a client, or misconduct as defined in O. Reg. 317/12.
- Orders: **revoke**, suspend or impose terms, conditions and limitations; a reprimand; a fine of up to **$35,000**.
- **For sexual abuse**: a reprimand and a suspension, and revocation for the acts s. 51 (5) lists.

8 What the process cannot do (CRPO)

- Be used as evidence in **civil proceedings** such as family court (RHPA s. 36 (3)).
- **Order payment** for a financial loss; resolve employment disputes; change a professional opinion or report.
- Direct a registrant to give a formal **apology**.

9 Telling clients about CRPO (Standard 3.6)

- **As part of consent**, tell clients you are registered with CRPO, which sets the rules for and considers complaints about RPs (3.6.1).
- **If asked**: their right to complain to CRPO, CRPO's contact information, and that CRPO regulates RPs in the public interest, with standards and policies on its website (3.6.2 to 3.6.4).

10 If you receive one

- CRPO advises RPs to **use a lawyer**, as the outcome can affect your practice and career; no one is required to have one.
- Records you provide stay **confidential** to the process, but may be presented at an HPARB review or a hearing, which are **open to the public**.

Every complaint is answered and decided on risk: your 30 days to respond, 150 days in law, and discipline only for the serious few.

Official sources: CRPO, Filing a Complaint and CRPO, Discipline and CRPO Standard 3.6, Complaints Process and RHPA, 1991, with the Code. Condensed from The Legal Framework. Independent study aid, not legal advice, not affiliated with CRPO or COMPASS.