

# APPNA Ethics & Grievance Committee (EGC) Standard Operating Procedures

December 2025

## 1. Roles and Responsibilities

Chair – Convenes and presides over meetings, sets agendas, maintains confidentiality, and represents the Committee to the Board and Council.

Co-Chair – Assists the Chair, presides in their absence, and ensures continuity.

### 1.1 Member Obligations

- Uphold the highest standards of ethics and professionalism.
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing agendas and supporting materials in advance.
- Make objective decisions based on the best interests of APPNA and its members while upholding the primacy of APPNA Bylaws.
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interest.

## 2. Meetings and Quorum

- Regular online, or in-person meetings require at least seventy-two (72) hours written notice.
- Urgent meetings may be called with shorter notice.
- For regular meetings, the Chair shall distribute the meeting agenda no less than forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled meeting.
- A quorum is a majority of total committee members, including the Chair or Co-Chair.
- Meetings may also be conducted through discussions on the EGC WhatsApp group or via email correspondence. In such cases, quorum shall be deemed established if majority of total members, including Chair or Cochair actively participate in the discussion or email exchange.
- Decisions require five (5) affirmative votes; punitive actions require seven (7).
- All Committee decisions and approved minutes shall be sent to the Director of Operations (DOO) and the APPNA Secretary for posting on the password-protected members' section of the APPNA website and for distribution to the APPNA Council. Minutes shall also be submitted to the APPNA Central office within fourteen (14) days of each meeting for official recordkeeping.

## 3. Complaint Process

### 3.1 Filing of Complaint

- Complaints must be in writing and filed within thirty (30) days of the event.
- Complaints may be submitted either by email to the Director of Operations (DOO) or through the official complaint form available on the APPNA website.

- The DOO verifies that the complainant is a bona fide APPNA member in good standing **and** forwards the complaint to EGC Chair and Committee members within forty-eight (48) hours using a secure electronic platform for initial review.
- Complaints regarding procedures or organizational occurrences that only became known later may be filed within 30 days of discovery. The EGC may, by simple majority, accept a delayed filing if the complainant could not have known earlier

### **3.2 Confidential Identity Option**

- A complainant may request that their identity remain confidential.
- Such complaints are submitted through the Director of Operations (DOO) or the EGC Chair.
- The DOO verifies that the complainant is a bona fide APPNA member in good standing and forwards the redacted complaint to the EGC.
- The EGC may reveal the complainant's identity only if legally required or if it is deemed essential for due process by at least 7 votes of the Committee.
- In the latter case, the complainant shall be given the option to withdraw the complaint before their identity is disclosed.

### **3.3 Preliminary Review and Admissibility**

- The Chair, or in their absence the Co-Chair, reviews each complaint for admissibility (jurisdiction, timing, and sufficiency).
- The Chair presents a written recommendation to the Committee.
- The Committee may overturn the determination by simple majority vote.
- Admissible complaints proceed to mediation or adjudication; inadmissible ones are closed with written notice.

### **3.4 Adjudication and Fact-Finding**

- The Committee may request a written statement, send a questionnaire, or conduct interviews.
- EGC members shall maintain neutrality during the interview process.
- The Committee may appoint a mediator to facilitate resolution between parties before proceeding to adjudication. If mediation is unsuccessful, or not initiated, the Committee shall issue a written decision within forty-five (45) days of receiving the complaint.
- The Chair or a designee drafts questions and presents them to the Committee for approval.
- Any member may propose additional questions.
- All correspondence and responses by the Chair or Cochair are copied to the full Committee.
- At least two members must attend any interview.
- Summaries of communications and interviews are circulated to all members before deliberation.
- During any active investigation, adjudication or deliberation, no member of the APPNA Board of Directors including the President may initiate or engage in any verbal, telephonic, electronic or private communication with any member of the EGC regarding the substance,

direction, or anticipated outcome of the complaint. All communication must occur through the formal written process and will be considered part of the record of the complaint.

### **3.5 Committee Communications and Electronic Voting**

- The Committee may deliberate or vote via its official APPNA WhatsApp group or another authorized secure platform.
- Votes via WhatsApp have the same validity as meeting votes if quorum is met.
- The Chair certifies all outcomes in the minutes.
- Informal exchanges remain confidential.
- No decisions shall be made without formal voting.
- Decisions and minutes shall be approved by majority vote of the committee before any external communication.
- Chair or Cochair copies all EGC members on **all** relevant external communications.

### **3.6 Meetings, Recordings, and Minutes**

- All meetings conducted by the EGC shall be governed by the principles and procedures set forth in Robert's Rules of Order to ensure fair, orderly, and efficient deliberation.
- All Committee meetings are held exclusively through the official APPNA Zoom account and are recorded unless suspended by a majority vote. Recording begins when the meeting is called to order.
- The Chair ensures accurate minutes for each meeting, including date, attendance, agenda, motions, votes, and decisions. The Chair may designate a committee member to draft the minutes. Draft minutes are circulated within seven (7) days, with members allowed five (5) days to propose edits. Minutes are approved by majority vote and signed by the Chair and Co-Chair.
- Follow-up actions related to reports or complaints not discussed in the original meeting or deliberations shall be documented separately in the minutes under "Follow-Up Actions," including relevant details, decisions, and next steps.
- All recordings and approved minutes are archived by the DOO as APPNA property for at least ten (10) years, and the DOO maintains a master index of all EGC records.
- By majority vote, the Committee may release non-confidential portions of recordings or minutes to the BOD, Council, or members-only section of the APPNA website. Confidential case details remain restricted.

### **3.7 Follow-Up on Decisions with the Board of Directors**

- The Secretary of the Board of Directors (BOD) shall acknowledge receipt of each EGC decision and confirm that it has been formally presented to the BOD and Council immediately via email.
- The BOD shall notify the EGC of the actions taken or planned in response to the Committee's recommendations within fifteen (15) days or in accordance with the time frame specified by the EGC.
- If no response is received within the prescribed time frame, the Chair shall issue a written reminder to the BOD and Director of Operations (DOO)

- The DOO maintains a follow-up log of all cases, actions, and closures.
- When an EGC decision is appealed to Council, the EGC Chair or in their absence, Cochair ~~is~~ maybe invited to the Council meeting to hear the appeal. However, the EGC Chair or Cochair may elect not to attend the meeting unless invited by a majority of the total Council members.
- Anyone intending to appeal an EGC decision must file the appeal with the Council immediately; otherwise, the actionable item remains in force and must be carried out within the prescribed timeframe.
- To maintain transparency in governance and strengthen processes within APPNA, at the year's end, the EGC Chair may enumerate all its decisions and action items for the said year and request the BOD to provide a listing of whether the action items of the EGC were completed or not.
- The EGC may include compliance-status summaries in its periodic reports to the Council, without disclosing confidential details.

#### **4. Confidentiality**

All deliberations, documents, and communications of the EGC are confidential unless disclosure is required by law or approved by appropriate vote. Breach of confidentiality by any member constitutes grounds for removal from the Committee.

#### **5. Reporting and Accountability**

The EGC submits a report to the APPNA Council at each of its meetings and as requested by Council.

#### **6. Amendments**

- These SOPs may be amended by a majority vote of the EGC.
- Amendments shall not apply retroactively to cases or actions initiated prior to their adoption.

#### **7. Conflict of Interest and Recusal**

- All EGC members must annually review and sign APPNA's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Members who perceive a potential conflict must recuse themselves from related discussions or voting.
- The Committee may, by majority vote, determine if recusal is required.
- Recused members shall not participate in or receive communications about that case.

#### **8. Orientation and Training**

- New members must complete mandatory training within thirty (30) days of appointment.
- Training shall include review of these SOPs, APPNA Bylaws and APPNA's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Members are encouraged to pursue independent training on ethics and conflict resolution.

## **9. Resignation and Replacement**

- A member unable to perform their duties must notify the Chair in writing.
- If the Chair resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Co-Chair shall notify APPNA Council and preside until a new Chair is elected.
- The Committee shall elect a new Chair by simple majority within two (2) weeks of notification.
- If a resignation or removal occurs within the first six (6) months of the year, the BOD shall request the Council to elect a replacement member within thirty (30) days. If the vacancy occurs during the last six (6) months of the year, the replacement member may be elected as part of the regular annual elections for the Committee.