



What do I do if a complaint is made against me?



A complaint is made

The Social Workers Registration Board receives a notification about you.

Complaints usually allege unprofessional, unsafe, or unethical practices.

Most complaints come from clients, whānau, or employers (mandatory reports).

Note: Not all notifications are treated as complaints.

If a complaint, SWRB will inform you

Employer

Keep a record of any steps you and your employer take to address the issues raised.

Transparency is critical to maintaining professional trust and accountability.

Tell the right people

You need to inform your employer and supervisor as soon as possible.

Supervisor

Discuss the complaint with your supervisor. Reflect on any underlying personal/professional issues and consider how these may be addressed, e.g. cultural guidance or professional development.

Legal advice

You may wish to seek legal advice. You can contact your professional body e.g. ANZASW, a lawyer or your union.



Get some support

Consider what other support you will need to help you address the context of the complaint e.g. EAP, whānau and friends, private counselling.

Cooperate

Cooperate fully with any part of a complaint process. This may include providing written documentation or attending face-to-face discussions.

The Social Workers Registration Board will clarify when and how you can respond to the complaint.

