

Regulatory Panels

Guidelines

April 1, 2026



College of

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONALS OF BC



Table of Contents

Background.....	3
Summary of Bylaws	3
Board and Committee Code of Conduct.....	4
Conflict of Interest.....	4
Committee Policies	5
Panel Duration	5
Selecting Panel Members: Important Considerations	5
Indigenous perspectives.....	5
Diverse perspectives.....	6
Profession-specific perspectives.....	6
Number of panel members.....	6
Related Documents	6
Definitions	7



Background

In accordance with Bylaw 3.28, the following committees may meet in panels:

- Licence Committee
- Investigation Committee
- Permit Committee
- Professional Practice and Standards Advisory Committee

These Guidelines have been developed for committee chairs to reference when establishing panels in consultation with the Registrar, College and/or staff who support them. The Guidelines summarize the panelling requirements in the bylaws, make reference to the *Board and Committee Code of Conduct*, and offer suggestions and considerations for the selection and appointment of panel members in accordance with the requirements. The Guidelines are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

- A consistent approach is applied across regulatory committees when selecting and appointing members of panels established to conduct committee business.
- Committee chairs and support staff understand and apply key governance principles when selecting panel members, including but not limited to:
 - ensuring the credibility of decisions is upheld through the consistent management of conflicts of interest
 - ensuring panel members have access to the information, knowledge and expertise needed to make good regulatory decisions
 - ensuring panel members value and engage with diverse perspectives and lived experiences to support decisions
 - ensuring panel members and chairs have the knowledge, skill and experience to create culturally safe and inclusive spaces for panel discussions
- Panel membership aligns with the fundamental principle of health profession regulation that practitioners should be engaged directly in the oversight of their own Designated Health Profession in a way that meets the College's mandate to protect the public from harm and discrimination.

Summary of Bylaws

As outlined in Bylaws 3.28-3.37 and the committee terms of reference:

- The committee chair appoints members to the panel and designates the panel chair.
- All panels must have a minimum of three committee members and include at least one public committee member.
- In the case of the Public Practice and Standards Advisory Committee (PPSAC), the committee chair is the Registrar or designate and will assign staff member(s) or themselves as a panel chair(s).
- The Board may remove (and appoint a replacement for) the panel chair from office or a panel member from a panel.
- A panel has all the authority of the committee itself, subject to any exceptions set out by the Board in policy, procedures, guidelines or rules, except the authority to



- appoint a panel chair.
- Panel meetings may be held in person, by telephone, by videoconference or by any other method of telecommunication.
- If the panel has fewer than four members, quorum is all members. If the panel has four members or more, quorum is the majority of the panel as long as at least one public member is present.
- Ideally panel decisions will be achieved through consensus whenever possible; should consensus not be reached, a vote will be held. When voting, decisions are made by majority vote.
- In the case of the PPSAC, a panel will provide advice and/or recommendations rather than put forward a motion. See the PPSAC Terms of Reference.

Board and Committee Code of Conduct

Panel members (as committee members) review and sign the Confirmation of Understanding and Acceptance form of *Board and Committee Code of Conduct* annually.

Panel members are expected to fulfill their duties, obligations and shared commitments with panel colleagues. This includes being familiar with the bylaws, the Health Professions and Occupations Act (HPOA, the Act), the regulations relevant to their work, committee policies, and any guidelines established by the board to govern the panel's activities.

The Guiding Principles in the Act require panels to conduct themselves in a way that includes (but is not limited to):

- protecting the public from harm and discrimination
- supporting and promoting awareness of reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- addressing racism and anti-racism issues that are specific to Indigenous peoples, including acknowledging the rights, interests, priorities and concerns that are specific to First Nations peoples, Métis peoples and Inuit peoples, based on distinctions among them
- taking and promoting anti-discrimination measures
- respecting the principles of procedural fairness
- respecting the privacy of those participating in regulatory processes

These Guiding Principles must be applied not only into the final decisions themselves but also into meeting practices, deliberations, oversight, and decision-making processes.

Conflict of Interest

Panel members are expected to review the *Board and Committee Conflict of Interest* policy and Guidelines and to complete and sign the *Declaration of Interests* annually. It is important to read the conflict of interest obligations carefully. Panel members are expected to disclose interests that reasonably relate to a specific matter or agenda item under consideration, or that relate to their participation as a member of the panel in general, understanding that such disclosure does not immediately imply wrongdoing or impartiality.



Committee Policies

The Code of Conduct outlines these policies that panel members are held to, listed here as a reminder:

- Board and Committee Compensation Policy
- Breach Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines
- Gender Diversity Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Records and Information Management Policy
- Regulatory Panel Guidelines (these guidelines)
- Territorial Acknowledgement Policy
- Travel and Business Expenses Policy

Panel Duration

Panels exist to ensure the work of their respective committee is completed in the most effective and informed way. The required number, nature and duration of panels is not defined in the bylaws. Committee chairs, in consultation with their committee liaisons on staff determine how many, what size and what type of panels best serve to meet the needs of the committee.

Panels may be:

- long standing; if so, they may benefit from development of terms of reference which would include the ideal composition of the panel; or
- composed on an ad hoc, short-term basis to serve a specific purpose and would not require terms of reference.

Selecting Panel Members: Important Considerations

Indigenous perspectives

When a panel is being selected for a topic related to Indigenous-specific racism or discrimination, or Indigenous practices, or involves an Indigenous complainant, an Indigenous respondent, and/or an Indigenous licensee, it is critical that the panel include at least two panel members who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuk/Inuit. Ensuring at least two Indigenous panel members allows for diversity of Indigenous perspectives, mitigates the risk of harm inherent when an Indigenous member participates alone, and contributes to ensuring a culturally safe space.

Always, when considering any panel composition, the College will work towards ensuring there is never only one Indigenous member in any setting (i.e. a minimum of two Indigenous members) to protect from harm as identified in Safe Spaces Expectation 6.3. Success will be dependent, in part, on the number of Indigenous applicants and the number of Indigenous members appointed to the committee. This will be balanced with recognizing the burden placed on very few Indigenous committee members to meet panel needs. If committee member competencies and lived experiences do not include the needed expertise, lived experience or knowledge regarding a matter being discussed or



decided, outside cultural, legal or other professional advice can be engaged. This approach should be used to avoid only one Indigenous person being present.

Diverse perspectives

Committee chairs are expected to give careful attention to the collective diversity of panels. The Board supports bringing diverse experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds to decision making as this results in more relevant and appropriate decisions. Diversity in this context is broader than professional background, qualifications, and relevant committee and regulatory decision-making experience; it must also include characteristics such as race, cultural heritage, disability, neurodiversity, geography, age, socio-economic background, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, and lived experience.

Operationally, it is therefore critical that regulatory committees include an adequate number and diversity of members to ensure capacity for panel member diversity.

Profession-specific perspectives

When a panel is considering an issue, making a decision, or exercising the power or duty of the committee which requires profession-specific advice, the panel must include at least one panel member who is a licensee from the same Designated Health Profession connected with or affected by the issue. More than a single panel member from the Designated Health Profession may be necessary or preferred in many circumstances to incorporate adequate representation from diverse perspectives, practice contexts, expertise is an important consideration.

Whether a matter requires profession-specific advice is for committee chair to determine in consultation with, or upon the recommendation of, staff.

Number of panel members

The number of panel members to be appointed will vary by regulatory committee and by panel in recognition of different committee and panel roles and responsibilities, volume of files, types and volumes of decisions to be made, matters to be addressed, and panel membership requirements. Panels must have a minimum of three committee members, must include one public member, must include at least two Indigenous members when needed, must meet the Designated Health Profession specific requirements, must ensure diversity of perspectives and ensure that collectively the panel holds varied skills, experience, knowledge and lived experience. The number of members and diversity of committee members will need to be adequate to ensure capacity for panel membership. Particular attention will need to be paid to the number of public members to meet the requirement to include one public member on each panel.

While the bylaws require a minimum of three panel members, there is no maximum number, and panels can be any size that allows for the necessary diversity of perspectives and lived experiences.

Related Documents

- Committee Composition Matrices (found in BoardEffect and the website)



- Bylaws (found in BoardEffect library and the website)
- Health Professions and Occupations Act
- Safe Spaces Playbook (in BoardEffect library)

Definitions

Act means, unless the context requires otherwise, the *Health Professions and Occupations Act*.

Bias means a favourable or unfavourable predetermined inclination, preference, tendency, or perspective (“perception of bias” means the belief of others that bias will occur or has occurred).

Bylaws means the bylaws for the College made under the Act.

Cultural safety is an outcome. A culturally safe environment is physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually safe. There is recognition of, and respect for, the cultural identities of others, without challenge or denial of an individual’s identity, who they are, or what they need. Culturally unsafe environments diminish, demean or disempower the cultural identity and well-being of an individual.

Discrimination means targeting an individual or group of people for negative treatment because of specific characteristics such as race, religion, gender, disability, or other protected characteristics as defined by the BC Human Rights Code. Discrimination can occur at an individual, organizational, or societal level. It occurs when a particular social group is denied access to goods, resources, and services, either through action or inaction.

Diversity refers to individual and unique lived experiences and human differences, dimensions, qualities, and characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, race, etc.

Equity is a term that describes fairness and justice in outcomes, recognizing diversity and disadvantages, and directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all.

First Nations are one of the three distinct recognized Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and their descendants, who self-identify as neither Inuit nor Métis.

Indigenous refers to the first peoples who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.

Indigenous-specific racism means the unique nature of stereotyping, bias, and prejudice about Indigenous Peoples in Canada that is rooted in the history of settler colonialism, and ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustices experienced by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples that perpetuate power imbalances, systemic discrimination and inequitable outcomes stemming from the settler-colonial policies and practices.

Inuit are one of the three distinct recognized Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and their descendants, who self-identify as neither First Nations nor Métis.

Métis are one of three distinct recognized Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and their descendants, who self-identify as neither First Nations nor Inuit.



Panel means a panel established in the bylaws.

Racism refers to systems, structures, policies, practices, and beliefs that create and maintain inequities between racialized groups, often privileging whiteness and disadvantaging Indigenous Peoples and People of Colour. Racism can be enacted consciously or unconsciously and occurs at individual, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic levels.

Staff means the employees, contractors, assessors, and inspectors of the College.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. This is a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world and elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous peoples.

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