

Frequently asked questions

How long will an investigation take?

The time an investigation takes to complete depends on its nature and complexity. Straightforward complaints are expected to be finished within 2–3 months. Complaints of a complex nature and cases that require information from third parties may take longer. In these situations the Complaints Board will keep you updated on the progress of the investigation.

Can I have legal representation?

Legal representation is not required to make a complaint and in most instances complainants are not represented by legal counsel. However, you are entitled to have legal representation should you wish, at your own cost.

What result can I expect?

If the Complaints Board determines there has been a breach of the NZAS Code of Ethics, and depending on its nature and severity, there are wide-ranging remedies and sanctions. These can include requiring the audiologist or audiometrist to pay costs; undertake supervision; or have their NZAS membership suspended or cancelled.

Consumers may also lodge complaints with the Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC). Please see the HDC website for more information: www.hdc.org.nz.

How is a complaint processed?



If you require further information about the NZAS Complaints Procedure please visit: www.audiology.org.nz/code-of-ethics.aspx



Complaints Guide

The New Zealand Audiological Society's Complaints Process

New Zealand Audiological Society Inc.
PO Box 36-067, Northcote, Auckland 0748

Phone: 0800 625 166
Email: admin@audiology.org.nz

Promoting excellence in hearing care

The New Zealand Audiological Society (NZAS) promotes excellence in hearing care for all New Zealanders. If you feel you have received unsatisfactory service or that your audiologist or audiometrist has acted in an unprofessional or unethical manner, you can submit a formal complaint to the NZAS Complaints Board.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone can make a complaint to the NZAS Complaints Board. If the person who wishes to lodge a complaint is unable to do so themselves (e.g., they would find the process too stressful), a family member or other support person can act on their behalf.

Who can I make a complaint about?

The NZAS Complaints Board can only investigate complaints about NZAS members:

The complaint must identify a specific member (or members) of NZAS in order for the Complaints Board to



NZAS can only investigate complaints against its members, not the company or practice the member is associated with.

investigate. The Board cannot investigate complaints about the company or practice that members are associated with.

When can I make a complaint?

Audiologists and audiometrists, or the company they work for, must have their own complaints procedure, so in the first instance we recommend that you try to work through the issues with them.

If you are unsatisfied with the way your initial complaint is handled, or you feel the complaint is of a serious nature, then submitting a formal complaint to the NZAS Complaints Board is your next step.

What can I make a complaint about?

The NZAS Complaints Board will consider and investigate the following complaints about its members:

- poor service (e.g., they have not done what they said they would, or have given you incorrect or incomplete information)
- failure to take into account the suitability of the devices prescribed (e.g., ease of use)
- failure to treat you with respect
- failure to provide you with sufficient information so you are able to make an informed choice about your treatment (e.g., information must be relevant and easy to understand)
- failure to maintain their professional independence
- failure to comply with any part of the NZAS Code of

Ethics (these documents are available on the NZAS website).

What if my hearing device is not working?

If you are experiencing issues with your hearing device you will need to contact your audiologist or audiometrist directly. If they do not take appropriate or reasonable action to resolve the situation, you can then submit a formal complaint to the NZAS Complaints Board for investigation.



How do I make a complaint?

- A copy of the Complaints Form is available on the NZAS website: www.audiology.org.nz/code-of-ethics.aspx,
- You can contact NZAS on 0800 625 166, or email admin@audiology.org.nz

There is no fee to lodge a complaint, and no costs to the person making the complaint.

Who are the NZAS Complaints Board (Poari Whakapae)?

The Complaints Board members include a minimum of one consumer representative, two NZAS members, and a lawyer.

Their role is to investigate complaints about alleged breaches of the NZAS Code of Ethics. They make the final decision on the outcome of the investigation and on any penalty, except in circumstances where the penalty is such that the Executive Council makes the final decision, for example, suspension of membership.