

**Society of Ortho-Bionomy International
Conflict Resolution, Complaint & Grievance Handbook**

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Introduction

The purpose of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International® (“Society”) is to promote the practice, advancement and evolution of Ortho-Bionomy® education/practice. The Society has the responsibility of establishing professional standards and ensuring compliance with our Code of Ethics.

As Ortho-Bionomy Practitioners, we share a mutual interest in the practice and teaching of Ortho-Bionomy. We apply these universal principles of:

- gentleness
- movement away from pain and tension
- movement towards ease
- non-judgmental healing interaction in all relationships
- recognition of on-going pattern and when to interrupt it

These principles apply in their fullest measure whenever one of our trainees or members makes a complaint about another trainee, a teacher, a Society officer or anyone else associated with the Society.

While the complaint & grievance procedures are, of necessity, somewhat impersonal in their logic, the actual process is served best by the model of healing rather than that of legal retribution. It is of creating a sense of safety for all involved in the process. **This is a process of good faith.** Our hope is that, by following the procedures *with a caring and supportive attitude*, activities that have led to complaints can be corrected in such a way as to improve the overall functioning of our Society. It should be handled with integrity, fairness and active observation, including good listening skills.

If a grievance or complaint does not reach the level of a breach of the Code of Ethics or professional standards, then the Grievance Committee may recommend or assist in informal conflict resolution. The Board of Directors has created “Conflict Resolution Guidelines” which contain steps and recommendations to resolve conflicts between Society members. When possible, the Grievance Committee may assist in negotiation, mediation or arbitration between members.

Unfortunately, in some circumstances it will be necessary for the Board to take disciplinary action. We also recognize there may be actions, activities or behaviors that require the termination of a membership in the Society.

Glossary of Terms:

- **Complaint & Grievance Handbook** - Full document of forms and the process for a person (who may become the Complainant) to have support in an complaint or formal grievance
- **Complaint/Request for Conflict Resolution** – Person – member or non-member – completes form requesting conflict resolution support regarding a claim against a member. The complainant does not want to file a formal grievance that will go to the committee. This may be a request for conflict resolution third party support or mediation.
- **Grievance** – Person – member or non-member-completes form requesting a formal committee investigation on a complaint against a member.
- **Grievance Committee Handbook** - Full document of forms, the Grievance process, the Grievance Committee's role and responsibilities and the Board process
- **Grievance Packet** - complainant's grievance form, signatures and support documentation
- Signed Grievance form, support documentation
- **Grievance Committee**- Three-member committee who are neutral and impartial, that will review the current grievance
- **Board Grievance Liaison (BGL)**- Board member that is the point of contact for person filing grievance
- **Complainant** - Person/member filing the Grievance, complaint, or request for mediation support and conflict resolution.
- **Respondent** - Person/member the Grievance is against, person named in the Grievance, informal grievance or mediation.
- **Support Person** - Both parties may have a support person to help them through the Grievance process.
- **No hearing of Grievance investigation findings** - No further action required.
- **Mediation of Grievance investigation findings** - A mediator (neutral party) to mediate the Grievance between the complainant and respondent.
- **Hearing on Grievance investigation findings** - After the Grievance findings have been sent to both parties, if the Board votes that a hearing is necessary, a date is set for the Respondent to speak and be interviewed by the Board.
- **Procedural justice/fairness** - is the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. Procedural fairness is concerned with the procedures used by a decision-maker, rather than the actual outcome reached. It requires a fair and proper procedure be used when making a decision for all involved.

Suggestions for Conflict Resolution

When conflict arises within the Ortho-Bionomy community we encourage a process of resolution that preserves the integrity of all parties involved. Disagreement and conflict are a part of all communities and most relationships.

Turning away from conflict is likely to lead to negative feelings and disharmony, not only for those directly affected by the conflict but the community as a whole. Silence, rationalization, assigning of blame, minimizing what happened and an unwillingness to listen are some of the ways that leave conflict unresolved. Whenever possible, disputes and disagreements should be settled directly between the people concerned.

We recognize that some conflicts may require a formal resolution process and the Society has a formal grievance procedure. The formal process may be used for disputes concerning administrative actions, trademark violations and for member misconduct and or violations of our Code of Ethics.

For a formal grievance please contact the Board of Directors or the Society office as soon as possible. For clarification regarding a grievance, you may read through this handbook and if not clear, contact the SOBI Office.

There are many ways to achieve resolution, the following are some suggestions:

A) Preparing Yourself

Before contacting those involved in the conflict, we recommend that you prepare yourself and consider the following:

1) Timelines: While it is usually helpful to allow reactive emotions to settle before attempting resolution, it is important to attend to matters of dispute or misunderstanding without undue delays. If too much time passes, the other person may not accurately remember the event and unexpressed feelings may grow out of proportion, making resolution of the situation more difficult.

2) Reflection: Look within yourself and identify how your own actions, reactions and interpretations may have contributed to the conflict. Find out whether you are deriving benefit from the conflict even though it feels uncomfortable. Some questions you might ask yourself. Is there a “secondary gain” that you may not have been aware of? Is this situation a recurrent pattern in relationships for you? What fears do you have around the issue?

Keep in mind that misunderstanding can occur on many levels within us and between us and be willing to acknowledge that you may not know all there is to know about the situation.

As a practitioner of Ortho-Bionomy, remember what it is like to be curious, open and in the spirit of non-judgmental awareness to be willing to recognize that we all do the best we can at any given time. If we could do differently, we probably would and sometimes a conflict, illness or problem can be the doorway

to more choices, skills and understanding. Be curious, open and willing to recognize that we all do the best we can at any given time.

Exercise your ability to empathize and see the larger picture. Imagine yourself stepping into the other person's shoes and be curious about what happened for the other(s), how they may be feeling or viewing the situation.

Taking the time to reflect on the person(s) involved and the misunderstanding as separate and parts to the whole process towards resolution will exercise your ability to empathize and see the larger picture. Separate the people from the problem. Focus on interests, commonality, options for mutual gain rather than on positions. This may help you to put things in perspective and to soften your communication with the other person(s).

3) Imagining a Best-Case Scenario: Identify and then actively imagine resolution(s) of the situation. Imagine the best possible way a face-to-face meeting may take place and identify how you and the other person(s) involved could grow and learn from the experience.

B) Asking for Help and Receiving Support:

1) Seeking Advice: To gain perspective and inspiration about dealing with a conflict, it may be helpful to talk to someone and seek advice on how to resolve the conflict. Remember to accept responsibility for your role in the situation when you talk to friends or other Society of Ortho-Bionomy members so that you are seeking advice rather than simply gossiping about a fellow member. You may also contact the SOBI National office for assistance.

2) Achieving Resolution with Assistance: When a situation is emotionally charged, it may be helpful to invite one or more uninvolved persons to take part in the conflict resolution. A third party may simply be a silent witness, providing a sense of calm and neutral presence, or may be an active participant who helps to ensure that each person is given uninterrupted opportunities to speak and helps to clarify what has been said. This person may also help distinguish opinion/blame/interpretation from direct statements of what happened and what feelings were experienced. Facilitators can be anyone whom both parties trust and respect, such as friends, neutral acquaintances, Ortho-Bionomy Instructors or Practitioners, or someone trained to be impartial in mediation.

C) Resolution

To achieve resolution, it is usually necessary to get in contact with the person(s) involved in the conflict. This may happen in a face-to-face meeting, by telephone, by letter or a combination of the above. The following guidelines and suggestions are meant to support in the process of clarifying what happened, what interpretations and meanings the different parties have ascribed to the events and what may be needed to resolve the conflict.

A practice of applying the principles of Ortho-Bionomy with all persons involved in this dispute is a chance for everyone to be heard in an environment of respect, fairness and goodwill.

1) Stating the Facts: You may want to open the conversation by stating your hoped-for outcome, if that feels appropriate. Otherwise start with what happened as best as you remember. Share the events in chronological order so it is easy for the other persons to follow what you are saying. A crucial aspect of

conflict resolution is discerning between our interpretations and opinions of what took place and a factual description of events. Realize that another person may believe as strongly in their interpretation of what happened as you believe in yours. In this process, state the events as clearly and simply as possible. Then state how you felt about and interpreted those events. Specifics are essential. Focus on what occurred to create this conflict rather than on positions or personalities when possible.

2) “Active Listening” and the Opportunity of “Being Heard” It is important that everyone be given an opportunity to be heard, to recount the event as they remember it, to state their feelings regarding what happened, and to declare the goals they have for its resolution. In face-to-face meetings or phone conversations, preparing notes to help you stay focused on what you want to communicate or even having a written account that you can read is likely to reduce the emotional charge and ensure that you include everything that is important to you. Keep your statements factual rather than in a blaming or defensive way.

For instance, rather than saying: “You humiliated me by the way you talked to me in front of...” use the following formula for clear communication: "When you (said, did. .) _____, I felt (humiliated)___ rather than (how you wanted to feel, were hoping to feel) _____, because I _____.

When differences in perception, feelings of frustration and anger, and difficulties in communication are acknowledged and addressed, each party may then be able to better understand the interests and sensitivities of the other party. Separating the people from the problem allows you to deal directly and empathetically with the other person as a human being, hopefully making it possible to reach an amicable agreement. Then, the parties involved can generate options and goals that are mutually satisfying and come to an agreement that will not harm, may improve this particular relationship and the community in general.

Allow adequate time for a calm, deliberate and complete account of the situation from all parties concerned.

3) Restating What Was Said.

To facilitate understanding, it is helpful for each party to briefly restate or summarize what the other has said, highlighting what was most important. For this to work, the listener must have the opportunity to summarize after a few sentences rather than trying to remember a fifteen- or thirty-minute speech. After the restatement, the other party says whether the restatement is accurate and complete or clarifies it, if needed. Not only does this process make sure that the speaker has the listener's full attention, but it also helps to divide the issue into manageable chunks and allows for misunderstanding to be cleared up quickly rather than letting them influence the listener's perception of the whole issue.

This process of listening attentively and being understood may be the first and sometimes only step necessary to resolve the conflict, as it clears up any misunderstanding and brings to light sensitivities and prior history that the other person may have been unaware of.

4) Accepting Personal Responsibility.

When each person takes responsibility for her/his contribution to the conflict, resolution and reconciliation is greatly facilitated. Even when one person seems to be more responsible, it is important

for all parties to assess and own their contribution to the misunderstanding. Assuming personal responsibility is more likely to provide a safe, more trusting environment which allows everyone involved to open-up, speak their truth, gain understanding, and possibly apologize for their part of the conflict and move forward towards a desired outcome. In addition to improving the climate for the conversation, accepting personal responsibility for a situation is empowering. It provides the opportunity for each person to leave the "victim role" and to realize that they are 'in charge' of their own perceptions and change.

Rather than making resolution dependent upon an outside force or person, we can decide on the changes we need to make within ourselves to accept personal responsibility and therefore diminish the pressure for the other person to act differently than they do.

D) Documenting a Dispute.

If you have gone through the above steps and have not been able to arrive at an agreeable resolution or if you feel it is important to file the complaint even though the conflict was resolved, use the enclosed form to report your general "Conflict or Dispute" to the Board of directors (c/o SOBI National Office).

Your report will be recorded and filed. Someone representing the Board will contact you to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, make suggestions or offer further support for resolution, as needed.

If it is requested, or if the Board deems the situation beyond the level of a general "Conflict or Dispute", "Guidelines for Filing a Formal Grievance" will be sent to you and the case will be forwarded to the Grievance Committee for formal investigation.

Disagreement and conflict are a part of all communities and most relationships. When resolution is not easily achieved, we can imagine that learning and healing needs to take place on a deeper level. We offer this process in the hope of facilitating healing and learning for all concerned.

**Filing: File a Complaint/Request for Conflict Resolution or File a formal Grievance
- How complainants (members and nonmembers) file**

Complaint or Request for Conflict Resolution Support filing:

A complainant, member or non-member, requires conflict resolution support with a member (Respondent). The complainant does not want to file a formal grievance that would go to the Grievance Committee and feels it can be resolved in a less formal manner.

This may be a request for conflict resolution third party support or mediation. The process includes completing the form requesting conflict resolution support on a complaint and providing support documentation regarding the complaint. Complainant has an issue or challenge with a member that requires support to address.

A. Complaint/Request for Conflict Resolution Filing & Follow On Process:

- Complainant downloads the Complaint and Grievance handbook on SOBI website, and chooses an option of Complaint
 - Complainant obtains and submits a Complaint packet
 - Complaint/Grievance form -with Complaint selected
 - Support documentation for Complaint
 - Complainant release of information form
 - Sent via email to office@ortho-bionomy.org
 - See appendix for Complaint packet forms
- By choosing Complaint, complainants are supported by the Board Grievance Liaison without the formal Grievance and Grievance Committee process.
- The Board Grievance Liaison emails the complainant
 - to confirm the next steps and support, which could include
 - setting up a conference call
 - a mediator
 - an inquiry
 - a support person for the complainant
 - Contact with Respondent will be set up accordingly

B. Grievance filing

A complainant, member or non-member, believes there has been a breach in Code of Ethics, and requires a formal Grievance to go to a Grievance Committee. They have read through the Conflict Resolution and Complaint option, and feel their complaint better meets the formal Grievance process. The process includes completing the form requesting Grievance filing and providing support documentation and forms regarding a potential Grievance against a member.

The process to file a complaint or grievance packet:

- Complainant obtains and submits a Complaint/Grievance packet
 - Complaint/Grievance form -with either Complaint or Grievance selected
 - Support documentation for Complaint or Grievance
 - Complainant release of information form
- Sent by email to office@ortho-bionomy.org or certified U.S mail to the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International®, 911 E 86th St Ste 5, Indianapolis, IN 46240.
- See Addendum for Complaint/Grievance packet forms

The Role of the Grievance Committee

- The committee embodies neutrality and impartiality.
- Support and take the parties, in the grievance, from the past issues to some sort of resolution in the future for the Board to review.
- Equal support to both parties in their recommendation to the Board.
- Conduct preliminary investigation and determine breach of Code of Ethics
- Recommend or assist in conflict resolution.
- Complete a full investigation if it feels warranted.
- Provide a full report in writing at the conclusion of the investigation.
- Keep confidentiality around the Grievance process.

The Role of the Board Grievance Liaison

- The Grievance Board Liaison embodies neutrality and impartiality.
- Equal support and communication to both parties.
- Outlines the possible ways a complaint can be processed - Informal & Formal.
- Recommend or assist in conflict resolution.
- Keep confidentiality around the Grievance process.
- Follows up with the Grievance committee to support a timely response.
- Responds in a timely manner to all parties:
 - Even if the response is we have received your question and will get back to you
 - Try to include a date/range of time for response i.e. by next week
 - If can't respond in the timeline given, email to let them know of the new timeline
- Throughout the process - the Board Grievance Liaison communicates with the Board:
 - Status/Timing of the Grievance process
 - Informs Board of Requests for Board documents and gets approval from the Board to send
 - Requests for Board Response from committee, respondent or complainant on behalf of the Board need to be approved by the Board prior to being sent
 - Follows up with Board to assist with a timely response
 - Does not share details of the Grievance or prior Grievances outside of the Board

Timeline and Outline of Steps in the Complaint & Grievance Process

This is an outline of the steps of the Grievance process. The goal is to be a process of seventy-five days or less, with the understanding that it will not be a process that is rushed. Details on the sections of this process are outlined in this document.

Stage One – Complainant Reviews Complaint and Grievance Handbook, reviews the Conflict Resolution suggestions, and choose to File a Complaint or Grievance

- Complainant has an issue or challenge with a member (Respondent) that requires support to address.
- Complainant opens Complaint and Grievance handbook link on the SOBI website. The complainant:
 - reads through and processes the Conflict Resolution suggestions
 - If they feel they need additional support:
 - fills out the Complaint and Grievance form
 - compiles support documentation
 - and chooses the option of Complaint, or option of a formal Grievance
- If the complainant chooses Complaint, they are supported by the Board Grievance Liaison without the formal Grievance and Grievance committee process as outlined in Complaint section of this handbook
- If the complainant chooses Grievance, they are requesting the formal Grievance process, with Grievance committee as outlined in this handbook.

Stage Two-The set-up of the Grievance process

- Grievance is received from Complainant by the SOBI Office.
- SOBI Office replies to the complainant that their grievance was received by the Office, confirms that it is complete, and will forward the grievance confidentially to the Board Grievance Liaison.
 - SOBI Office includes within the email response, a receipt of the email, the full complaint or grievance packet submission received from the complainant, having the complainant confirm the packet includes:
 - the complaint or grievance request form
 - support documentation of the complaint or grievance
 - If it is multiple documents or emails, the Office will combine the documents into a PDF and have the complainant confirm the packet is complete.
 - The complainant confirms that the packet is complete and ready to go to the Board Grievance Liaison
 - This is a confidential communication, and will be forwarded to the Board Grievance Liaison
- The Board Grievance Liaison informs the complainant that they have received the complaint or grievance. The Board Grievance Liaison will request that the complainant reconfirm they have received the complete Grievance packet.
- The Board Grievance Liaison informs the Board that there is a grievance filed
- Board votes for the Board Grievance Liaison to have permission to
 - start the Grievance process
 - contact the parties
 - contact Ombudsman/Grievance Committee Chair
- The Board Grievance Liaison emails both parties, the complainant and respondent,
 - to inform them that a Grievance has been filed
 - that a Grievance Committee is being formed.

- The email from the Board Grievance Liaison will include a copy of the Grievance handbook, the grievance, which the complainant has confirmed is the complete packet - grievance filing and support documentation
- If there is not a current Grievance Committee, the Board will vote for the Board Grievance Liaison to have permission to begin the process to gather a Grievance committee, using the Guidelines in this document
- Board Grievance Liaison sends the Grievance Committee form and letter of confidentiality for their signatures
- Board votes to approve the Grievance Committee members
- Board Grievance Liaison accepts, signs and returns the executed document on behalf of the Board

Stage Three- The Grievance Committee

- Grievance Committee designates the Chair.
- The Grievance Committee will implement the Grievance process with procedural fairness/justice which includes the principles of Ortho-Bionomy.
- Chair sends an email to both parties (complainant and respondent), letting them know the committee is formed and will be in contact. Chair lets the complainant know the committee has the grievance. The Chair has the complainant reconfirm the committee has the full and complete Grievance packet.
 - Chair lets the respondent know the committee has the grievance. The chair confirms that they received the Grievance Packet.
 - The Chair confirms both parties have a support person. If they do not have a person to support them, the Grievance Committee will assist them to find a support person to help them through the Grievance process. Ex. Be silent witness when the party is being interviewed by the Committee. Person for both parties to have as a sounding board. It is not up to the Support person to resolve the issue.
- The Grievance Committee has a neutral and impartial discussion of the Grievance packet.
- The Committee interviews both parties, and the parties provide their responses in writing.
- Throughout the process - the Board Grievance Liaison communicates with the Board
 - Requests for Board documents has to be approved by the Board to send
 - Responses on behalf of the Board need to be approved by the Board
- If after the initial interviews, the Committee determines the Grievance does not need to move forward, the Board Grievance Liaison alerts both parties of the finding.
- The Chair alerts the Board Grievance Liaison whether the investigation will or will not need to proceed.
- The Committee may conduct additional interviews and continue to investigate the Grievance.
- The Chair notifies the Board Grievance Liaison that the investigation is complete.
- The Committee discusses and compiles their recommendations for the Board in a report including response to the questions in the Grievance Committee handbook listed in detail in the Grievance Committee handbook.
- The report from the Grievance Committee to the Board includes the following:
 - Grievance committee report form, a summary which includes:
 - the complainant and respondents' names
 - a brief description of the original Grievance
 - Committee conclusions and recommendations
 - Details of the Grievance process that back up the findings
 - the issues underlying Grievance
 - the agreed common facts

- the information gathered from the interviewing process
- the conclusions and the recommendations to the Board from a neutral and impartial perspective.

The Grievance Committee will state and sign that this Grievance has been implemented with procedural fairness.

- The Committee forwards a PDF version of their report to the Board Grievance Liaison with a copy to the Office for file.

Stage Four-The Board

- Board Grievance Liaison forwards the report to the Board.
- Board members will review the report.
- Board can ask questions or inquiries to the Grievance Committee through the Grievance Committee Chair.
- Board votes for the report to be sent to both parties (complainant and respondent), informing both parties that the Grievance Committee portion of the investigation is complete, and the Board review has begun.
- Board discusses the Grievance Committee findings, and next steps.
- Board can again ask questions or inquiries of the Grievance Committee through the Grievance Committee Chair.
- When the Board discussion is complete, the Board votes on next step - Mediation, Hearing, No Action.
 - Board alerts both parties of next step - No Hearing Required, Mediation, Hearing, No Action. See below for more details regarding these three possibilities.
 - Board Decision, no Hearing required,
 - Hearing, the Board votes on the date of hearing,
 - Board Grievance Liaison provides minimum of 15 days notice of the hearing date via email and mail.
 - Mediation
 - No Action
- Board compiles final recommendations.
- Board votes on final recommendation.
- Board Grievance Liaison forwards formal recommendation to both parties.
- Board of Directors shall decide whether or not a member has engaged in conduct seriously prejudicial to the interests of the Society and should be expelled, or whether some lesser course of action or redress would be best for all involved.
- Party has right to appeal within 15 days of the Finding by mail or email.
- The Appeal may require a second investigation.
- Within 30 days of received appeal, the Board will appoint an ad hoc committee. This ad hoc Grievance Committee will address both the findings of the Grievance Committee and the action taken by the Board in response to the original Grievance Committee's report.
- The Grievance Ad Hoc Committee will follow the same procedure as the Grievance Committee.
- The Grievance Ad Hoc Committee will report their findings to the Board.
- No more than one appeal may be made for any investigation.
- The Board votes on the final decision.
- Board notifies both parties of their decision.
- The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

Grievances - Prior or Concurrent Complaints

If there is Grievance and a Counter Grievance, or if there is a prior Grievance between both parties, the findings, recommendations and outcome of the prior Grievance will not be available, so the current Committee can remain impartial and work based on the current complaint. All the information of the prior Grievances is private and confidential, to protect all parties involved.

If one of the parties wants to submit the same documentation for a subsequent complaint, they can, but they cannot provide the findings of the prior committee or communication from the previous committee.

The Grievance Investigation Phase

The explicit goals of any investigation include establishing the facts (i.e., what happened). Open communication among all parties will facilitate an investigation and enable the committee to make solid recommendations to the Board of Directors.

A grievance investigation will consist of the following:

1. Providing a copy of these guidelines to all parties involved. To the complainant by the Office and the respondent by the Grievance Committee.
2. Direct communication with each party (Complainant and Respondent) involved in the Grievance by a member of the Committee. Each new piece of information and each separate complaint must be communicated in a timely fashion to the Respondent. Whenever possible, any specific plans to obtain corroboration or refutation of the complaint(s) should also be communicated to the Respondent.
3. As part of every investigation, an effort must be made by the Committee to clarify the history of the relationship(s) among the parties. Have there been other conflicts? Is there a long-standing problem, or is this a recent development? The Committee will confirm and continue to check in that grievance interviews and process are keeping to the pieces and issues in the original grievance.
4. The Committee will attempt to identify what steps already have been taken to address the situation. If there is Grievance and a Counter Grievance, or if there is a prior Grievance between both parties, the findings, recommendations and outcome of the prior Grievance will not be available, so the current Committee can remain impartial. All the information of the prior Grievances is private and confidential, to protect all parties involved.
5. All complaints and information must be documented in writing, to be considered part of any investigation. Anything told to a committee member either casually or in the course of a deliberate investigative effort must be documented in writing in order to bear any weight in the matter. The source of the information (interviewee) will be asked to put it in writing.
6. Finally, it is the task of the Grievance Committee to make a decision, regarding their findings, as to the validity of the complaint(s), based on the corroborating information gathered.
7. After the Grievance Committee has finished their investigation it sends a report and recommendations to the Board. If there is a breach of the Code of Ethics by the complainant or the respondent or both, then the Board may have a hearing with either the complainant or the respondent or both if they feel it

is warranted. If the Grievance Committee finds the grievance to be unsupported, no hearing or further action is required.

Mediation -Mediation of Grievance investigation findings - A mediator (neutral party) is found by the Board Grievance Liaison.

- The Mediator is agreed to by both parties, to mediate the Grievance between the complainant and respondent.
- The Mediator is neutral and impartial and keeps the process confidential.
- The Mediator can use the Grievance committee questions included in this handbook.
- The Mediator follows the process of mediation, looking for resolution with a written or verbal agreement between the parties made in good faith.
- The Mediator reports to the Board Grievance Liaison.
- The Mediator sends a copy of the written agreement between the parties.
- The agreement is included in the members' file. If they are not a member, a file is created in the Grievance file.
- The agreement is made in good faith, and both parties are responsible for the specific steps that are required to be completed by each party.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the Mediator report, and the complainant may choose to file a formal Grievance.

Board Decision, No Hearing Required - The Board finds the Grievance committee report was clear, the material presented, and the findings were clear and complete. No additional hearing or interviews required for Board to make decision on Grievance.

The Hearing Process

1. If the Grievance Committee finds there is an indication of behavior that constitutes a possible breach of ethical or professional standards, the Board of Directors will then go through the committee's findings, make a decision if a hearing is warranted, and schedule a hearing. Notice shall be given to such a member, by email or by certified first class mail, setting forth the reasons for the hearing as included in the original grievance and the investigation. The notice shall be given or mailed at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting of the Board of Directors to consider the Grievance Committee's findings and shall state the time and place of the meeting and notify the member of his or her right to be heard.
2. The member in question shall be permitted to be heard personally or in writing before any action is taken by the Board of Directors. The member may also present statements of others, orally or in writing on his or her behalf.

Basic Guidelines in the Hearing Process:

- ***The hearing is about achieving resolution.***
- During the process, the Board will confirm that grievance interviews and process are keeping to the dispute & issues in the original grievance, that the process does not stray away from the original grievance
- The Board gives space for respondent to be heard
- The Board will use the Grievance committee questions
- The Board will ask for additional clarity on what the respondent shares
- The Board will thank the respondent for their time

3. Following the hearing, the Board of Directors shall decide whether or not a member has engaged in conduct seriously prejudicial to the interests of the Society and should be expelled, or whether some lesser course of action or redress would be best for all involved.

Appeals of the Boards Decisions

An individual against whom an action has been taken may appeal the Board's decision by submitting a formal request in writing by certified U.S mail to the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International®, 911 E 86th St. Ste 5, Indianapolis, IN 46240, by e-mail to office@ortho-bionomy.org

1. This request for an appeal must be received by the Society office within (15) days after the Board's decision has been mailed to the member.
2. The appeal may require a second investigation for which the Board will appoint an ad hoc committee. This ad hoc grievance committee will address both the findings of the Grievance Committee and the action taken by the Board in response to the Committee's report. No more than one appeal may be made for any investigation.

Actions taken by the Board

1. Action taken by the Board may include, but are not limited to: a verbal reprimand, a written reprimand to be placed in the member's file, publishing of a reprimand to the voting members or in the Society newsletter, a probationary period or expulsion from the Society. Any action which would result in expulsion from the Society will require a special Board hearing. If the party is a board member, immediate removal from the board could be an option.
2. If the respondent is a Board member, the Board may vote to request the Board member be temporarily suspended during the Grievance process.
3. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final and shall be effective immediately.

Confidentiality

All investigations are sensitive and must be kept confidential. Only the Grievance Committee members, the Board of Directors and Legal Counsel (when appropriate) will have access to the records regarding a grievance.

Conflicts of Interest

Anyone who is a party to any of the investigated activities or with any direct involvement in the case or personal ties to the parties in the case will not serve in the investigation or resolution of the grievance.

Board Member Involvement

If a Board member is a party to any of the investigated activities or has any direct involvement in the case or personal ties to the parties in the case, they will not serve in the investigation or resolution of the grievance.

They will recuse themselves and are not involved in process or vote.

If the board member is the respondent, i.e. has the Grievance filed against them, they will voluntarily remove themselves temporarily from the Board. If the Board member does not voluntarily remove

themselves, the Board may decide that due to the complaint, it would be best for the organization to direct them to be temporarily inactive until the Grievance process is complete.

Legal Issues - As an investigation proceeds, any party involved in a grievance or its investigation who recognizes a potential legal impact on the Society due to the activities under investigation will notify the Board of Directors as soon as possible.



Grievance Investigation Procedures for Grievance Committee

Mission Statement: To follow the Principles of Ortho-Bionomy in reaching resolution in an impartial and neutral manner.

Role of the Grievance Committee: The Grievance Committee will mediate between the parties, in an impartial, neutral and confidential manner, and attempt to resolve the issues. If the committee is unable to do so, the Board will assist in the mediation.

- The committee embodies neutrality and impartiality.
- Support and take the parties, in the grievance, from the past issues to some sort of resolution in the future for the Board to review.
- Equal support to both parties in their recommendation to the Board.
- Conduct preliminary investigation and determine breach of Code of Ethics
- Recommend or assist in conflict resolution.
- Complete a full investigation if it feels warranted.
- Provide a full report in writing at the conclusion of the investigation.
- Keep confidentiality around the Grievance process.

A grievance investigation should consist of:

- Providing a copy of these regulations to all parties involved so that everyone will know what to expect.
- Communicating with all parties to clarify and outline all disagreements, charges and assertions, including written position papers from each of the parties providing a clear overview of the issues.
- Listing all information on which charges are based and including corroborations of the information presented.
- Going through the list of questions with both parties
- Identifying what all parties wish to accomplish with their assertions/charges--what are their desired results.
- Clarifying the history of the relationship between the parties--has this been a long-term problem or a recent development, are there other areas of conflict, etc.
- Identifying what steps have already been taken to address the situation.
- Determining the validity of the charges/complaints.
- Offering support to both parties--the complainant and the respondent

Contact Guidelines:

- One individual from the Grievance Committee will be chosen to set up the conference call (video or phone) with each party (and their support person) and other sources, to schedule for the Grievance Committee. It is suggested that these communications be recorded, with permission.
- Committee members will need to use active listening skills, maintain an objective, impartial perspective, model and maintain integrity and detachment, and identify needs vs. wants.
- Once the Grievance investigation begins, the Grievance committee operates independently of the SOBI Board of Directors; the Board of Directors do not direct the process. The Board is not involved in the Grievance process unless an individual on the Board is called to be witness or is directly involved in the Grievance. The Board receives the completed findings/recommendations of the Grievance committee. Then the Board makes decisions based on that material or requests additional information.

Questions for the Investigation of the Complainant and Respondent by the Grievance Committee:

What was the dispute about which led to the grievance?

How long have you known the complainant/respondent?

Previous to the dispute, what was your relationship with the complainant/respondent like?

Have you had other disputes with the complainant/respondent?

What was the timeframe of the dispute?

What do you think are the underlying issues of the dispute?

Were other people involved in this dispute? Who are they and what was their relationship to the dispute?

If you could put yourself in the position of the other person involved, what do you think are the issues and position they are holding?

What principles do you think were absent from this dispute?

Reality Checking (Coming present with the process)

What do you think would be the best outcome from this Grievance process?

What do you think would be the worst outcome from this Grievance process?

What do you think is the most likely outcome of this Grievance process?

The Committee will present a written report outlining the case including:

- All of the charges/disagreements/assertions.
- A list of all information and any corroboration.
- Identifying any issues that may have a direct legal impact on the Society.
- Rebuttals from each party.

Guidelines for the Written Grievance Committee Report (Committee Only) A report should contain the following elements:

1. A clear statement of all the charges/complaints/disagreements, etc. pertaining to the grievance.
2. A description of all relevant information along with corroboration. Statements or reports obtained in the course of the investigation must be documented in writing with a strong preference for documentation by the original source.
3. Identification of any issues that may have a legal impact on the Society.
4. Rebuttal statements in writing by each party or documentation of an individual party declining to make a statement.
5. Every statement by an individual witness or party to the investigation must bear that person's signature and be dated.

6. A specific statement regarding whether or not the grievance involved a violation of the Society's Code of Ethics.
7. A full report of any and all efforts made to negotiate or mediate the conflict and the results of such efforts.
8. The report must bear the signatures of all members of the Grievance Committee.
9. Copies of the full report must be sent to both parties (the complainant and respondent)

Board Review of Committee Report

- The Board shall review information gathered from the complainant and respondent, and information gathered by the Grievance Committee. The Board may then gather further information, for clarification or input, from the Grievance committee.

All other duties as assigned:

Any questions, procedures, actions, etc., not covered by this handbook and procedure, will be handled by a decision of the Board on how to proceed.

Addendum: Grievance Forms

- I. Complaint/Grievance Complainant Filing Form**
- II. Code of Ethics**
- III. Code of Conduct for Committee Members**
- IV. Grievance Committee Member & Letter of Confidentiality Form**
- V. Interviewee in Grievance Process & Letter of Confidentiality Form**
- VI. Grievance Committee Report Summary and Report**

I.



Society of Ortho-Bionomy International

PO Box 40937, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

E-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org www.ortho-bionomy.org

Complaint and Grievance Form

I wish to file an:

- Complaint** – Request for Conflict resolution/mediation support
- Grievance - Formal** – Request will go to Grievance Committee

Important: Please Print or Type

Date:

Complainant Name (person filing):

Address:

Telephone:

E-Mail:

Best time to reach you: daytime _____ evenings _____

Name of Subject of this Complaint (Respondent):

Contact information of respondent (if known)

Code of Ethics perceived to be breached:

Nature and outline of the Complaint (attach additional sheets if necessary). Please be specific.

The information given above (and attached) is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I realize the serious nature of filing a Complaint or Grievance. I recognize that the Grievance Committee will not be able to take action without my cooperation to provide additional information if needed. I understand that a copy of this complaint will be sent to the individual named above as the subject of this grievance in accordance with his/her legal rights.

Signed _____ Date _____

II.

Society of Ortho-Bionomy International®

The logo for Ortho-Bionomy, featuring the brand name in a stylized, cursive font with a registered trademark symbol.

Member Code of Ethics – to be followed by the Grievance Committee

As a registered member of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International® I agree to uphold the highest standards of professional behavior, guided by the Code of Ethics stated below.

1. The philosophy and concepts of Ortho-Bionomy shall be the guiding principles in my work with clients.
2. I will at all times render the highest quality of services possible for the wellbeing and benefit of my client.
3. I will only offer skills or services in which I have specifically been trained. For issues that fall beyond the scope of my practice, I will refer clients to other qualified professionals.
4. To protect the privacy of my clients, I will keep all communications, clients' records and client identity confidential.
5. Recognizing the vulnerability of the client in a therapeutic relationship, I will maintain the highest standard of professional conduct. I will show regard for common legal, moral and ethical standards.
6. To preserve the integrity of Ortho-Bionomy®, I will make a clear distinction between Ortho-Bionomy and other modalities that I use.
7. I will bring to the notice of the Society any action of another member that appears to be ethically inappropriate or contrary to standards set by the Society.
8. I will use all Society trademarks only in accordance with the current established guidelines. Failure to follow guidelines will lead to suspension of said trademark use.
9. I will endeavor to improve my technical skills and professional standards through continuing educational training.
10. I will uphold professional relationships, never slandering a member of the Ortho-Bionomy® community or the allied professional community.
11. Anyone in my employment will abide by the policies and trademark regulations set by the society of Ortho-Bionomy®.
12. I will display a copy of this code of ethics in my work area where it is clearly visible.
13. I understand that transgression of the Codes of Ethics may result in the surrender of my membership.

Society of Ortho-Bionomy International®

PO Box 40937 Indianapolis, IN 46240 Phone (317)-426-1261

Website: www.ortho-bionomy.org

E-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org

III.



Society of Ortho-Bionomy International→

PO Box 40937, Indianapolis, IN 46240

Phone: 317-536-0064 E-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org www.ortho-bionomy.org

Code of Conduct for Grievance Committee Members

As a member of a Society Grievance Committee, I will:

- Follow the philosophy of Ortho-Bionomy®
- Follow the Society Code of Ethics
- Listen carefully to my fellow committee members.
- Carefully consider and respect the opinions of my fellow committee members.
- Keep well-informed of developments relevant to issues that may come before the committee.
- Participate actively in committee meetings and actions. I will not discuss off-line what I am unwilling to discuss in committee meetings.
- Bring to the attention of the committee any issues I believe will have a significant effect on our organization or those we serve.
- Refer complaints directly to the proper person i.e., Committee chair, Board committee liaison.
- Represent all those whom this organization serves vs. geographic or special interest groups.
- Work to learn how to do my job better; acknowledge conflicts of interest between my personal life and my position on the committee.
- Declare any potential conflict of interest in writing before nomination to committee and during the term of service. I will abide by the ruling of an ad hoc committee appointed by the President concerning any conflicts of interest that are not readily resolved.
- Abstain from voting or attempting to influence issues in which I have a conflict of interest.
- Review and sign this Code of Conduct annually.
- Respect and support majority decisions of the Board of Directors.
- Recognize the authority vested in the Board of Directors.

As a member of a Society Grievance Committee, I will not:

- Criticize fellow committee members or their opinions, outside of committee meetings.
- Use the organization or my position for my personal advantage or that of my friends, relatives, or associates.
- Discuss the confidential proceedings of the committee outside of committee meeting other than to conduct committee business, i.e., requests of additional information from advisors, instructors or trainees.
- Promise how I will vote on any issue before hearing the discussion and becoming fully informed on that issue.
- Interfere with the duties of staff or undermine the committee chairperson to perform his/her duties.
- Speak for the organization unless specifically asked to do so.

IV.



Society of Ortho-Bionomy International→

PO Box 40937, Indianapolis, IN 46240 Phone (317) 426-1261

E-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org www.ortho-bionomy.org

Grievance Committee Member Form & Letter of Confidentiality

Name:

Email:

Phone:

I have read and understand the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International® Compliant & Grievance handbook, including process, code of conduct, SOBI code of ethics and confidentiality.

I am aware that, as a committee member, I am investigating Grievances that have been filed within the scope of the Grievance Process outlined above. I, along with the Grievance committee members, will conduct interviews and gather information. I will work with the committee to compile a report of recommendations to the Board of Directors of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International®. I recognize the Grievance committee does not make a final decision, but does provide recommendations to the Board of Directors, and the Board makes the final decision regarding actions on the parties included in the Grievance.

I agree to keep all matters related to Grievance Committee Process and any parties involved in their process confidential, included but not limited to, all correspondence, communications, and recommendations resulting from the Board/committee meetings. I will also keep confidential any discussion between myself, Board members or Officers of the corporation that occur as a result of this committee/ Board process. I will keep everything confidential regarding the committee/Board process and will continue to maintain this confidence unless directed otherwise by the President of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International® or by the Society’s attorneys.

If I have a conflict of interest, or if one arises during the process of this Grievance, I will notify the other members of the Grievance committee and Board of Directors.

I agree to be a member of the Grievance Committee.

Signature of Grievance Committee Applicant

Date

Received and accepted by Board Representative:

Board Member Signature

Date

V.



Society of Ortho-Bionomy International→

PO Box 40937, Indianapolis, IN 46240

e-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org www.ortho-bionomy.org

Grievance Committee Interviewee Form & Letter of Confidentiality

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Parties in Grievance:

I have been asked to be interviewed, and document in writing, my responses to questions posed by the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International[®] Grievance Committee, regarding a current Society Grievance. I recognize that information is being gathered regarding the persons named in the Grievance, and that a Grievance does not mean they have done what has been listed in the Grievance.

I recognize that my interview, or portions of my interview, may be shared with both parties in the Grievance, and the Society Board of Directors. This includes, but is not limited to, all correspondence, communications, and recommendations resulting from the Board/committee meetings. I will also keep confidential any discussion between myself, Board members or Officers of the corporation that occur as a result of this committee/ Board process. I will keep everything confidential regarding the committee/Board process and will continue to maintain this confidence unless directed otherwise by the President of the Society of Ortho-Bionomy International[®] or by the Society's attorneys.

In addition, I will promptly declare any potential conflict of interest to the Committee.

I understand the Grievance Committee is investigating a Grievance, and it will provide information and recommendations to the SOBI Board of Directors. I understand the Board of Directors will receive the recommendations and make decisions on the outcome of the Grievance.

Received & Signed by Interviewee:

Signature

Date

Interviewee Printed Name:

Received & Accepted by Grievance Committee Member:

Signature

Date

Grievance Committee Member Printed Name:

VI.



Society of Ortho-Bionomy International→

PO Box 40937, Indianapolis, IN 46240

e-mail: office@ortho-bionomy.org www.ortho-bionomy.org

Grievance Committee Report Summary

This is a summary/cover page of the Grievance Committee Report.
Support documentation is included in the pages following the summary.

Date:

Name of Complainant:

Name of Respondent:

Support persons involved:

Date Grievance was Received by SOBI Office:

Names of Committee Members:

Name of Grievance Board Liaison:

Brief description of Grievance:

Findings of Committee:

Recommendations of Committee:

Does the Grievance involve a violation of the Society's Code of Ethics? Yes No

If yes, which of the Code of Ethics?

Are there issues that may have direct legal impact on the Society? Yes No

If yes, please list.

The Grievance Committee agrees that this Grievance has been implemented with procedural fairness.

Signed by the Grievance Committee members

Grievance Committee Report _____ **Date:** _____

- Details of the Grievance process that back up the findings
- the issues underlying Grievance
- the agreed common facts
- the information gathered from the interviewing process
- the conclusions and the recommendations to the Board from a neutral and impartial perspective.
- Identifying any issues that may have a direct legal impact on the Society;
- Rebuttals from each party in writing or documentation of individual declining to make a statement. Dated and signed or e-signed.
- A specific statement regarding whether or not the grievance involved a violation of the Society's Code of Ethics.
- A full report of any and all efforts made to negotiate or mediate the conflict and the results of such efforts.