

# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT RISK FAQ

## Q: WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT RISK”?

A: Complaints and concerns about professional practice can occur from the regulatory body, employer, or members of the public. Several reporting mechanisms exist that can result in investigations. Outcomes from investigations can result in limitations to a registered nurse’s ability to practice.

Professional practice is defined by the legislation delegated to regulatory bodies, the bylaws, standards of practice, code of ethics, and guiding documents required by regulatory bodies that determine minimum expectations for registered nurses to maintain. There is a mandatory reporting requirement for Employers to file a report with the regulatory body when a registered nurse’s employment is terminated for cause related to professional competence and/or conduct.

Employers have policy, procedure, and work standards that further define and explain how professional practice is applied within the practice setting, their expectations, and the employment contract. Employer policy, procedure, and work standards must be consistent with the regulatory standards, code of ethics, and scope of practice. The Employer cannot remove a registered nurses’ regulatory responsibilities and accountabilities.

There are other pieces of legislation and regulation that guide the healthcare system that can lead to issues or concerns within professional practice (i.e: HIPA) or may arise from workplace incidents, coroner’s inquests, or other types of legal proceedings. You can learn more about legislation, regulation, and requirements [here](#).

## Q: WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I AM HAVING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ISSUES OR CONCERNS?

A: SUN Provincial has Nurse Practice Officers (NPOs) assigned to all Locals. They are your expert consultants to assist with questions, concerns, and advice on professional practice. They can provide you with resources and information that will help to support your professional practice. You can contact [SUN Provincial](#) or contact your assigned [Nurse Practice Officer](#).

Resources that will be recommended to support your practice may include referral to nursing practice resources from your regulatory body or employer, Canadian Nurses Protective Society, best practices, and learning opportunities. You may also consider speaking with a trusted colleague or your Local for further support and local resources available to you.

## Q: WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I AM NOTIFIED ABOUT A CONCERN OR INVESTIGATION ABOUT MY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT WORK?

A: Contact your Local President to arrange for them or another representative to attend the meeting with you to provide support, help to protect your rights under the collective agreement, and collect additional information about the concern being addressed by the Employer.

The Local President can involve your Nurse Practice Officer (NPO) and Employment

Relations Officer (ERO) to assist in reviewing the concern, deciding on next steps, and managing potential outcomes like reports to the regulatory body.

Based on information obtained through the course of the investigation, always maintain privacy and confidentiality.

Q: WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I RECEIVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT MY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FROM MY REGULATORY BODY?

A: The regulatory bodies are tasked with the protection of the public, and a core obligation is conducting investigations into professional competence and/or conduct concerns when reported to them. If you are investigated by the regulatory body, they are obligated to notify you in writing, provide you with the complaint or sufficient information to provide an informed response to the allegations, and they will ask that you provide a written response.

When you receive a complaint about your professional practice, you should immediately contact either your [Employment Relations Officer](#) or [SUN Provincial](#). You have the right to obtain legal advice and to retain a lawyer to assist you with the complaint. Although you have the ability to waive your right to legal counsel, SUN does not recommend that you take this step. Legal support can be provided through SUN Provincial. Additional information and guidance will be provided to you by SUN Provincial and/or your Legal Counsel on the next steps.