



COMMITTEE ON
PROFESSIONAL
ETHICS

The NATA Ethics Complaint Process

Step by step process of adjudicating an
ethics complaint by the Committee on
Professional Ethics (COPE)

The complaint process is initiated when an ethics complaint is received by the NATA office through the online ethics complaint form or based upon media report(s) or other publicly available sources.

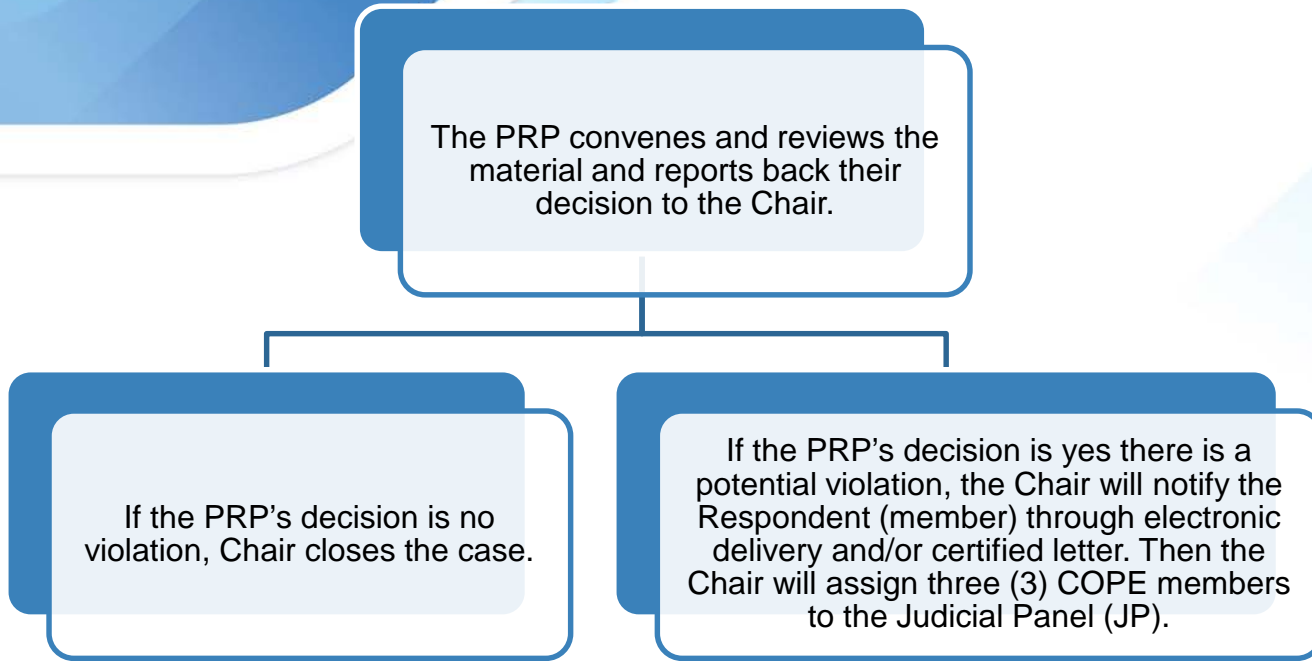
Complaint is sent to the COPE Chair, who will determine if the complaint warrants a Preliminary Review Panel (PRP) assignment

If no, the case is closed.

The case can be reopened, if new or additional evidence comes to light.

If yes, two (2) COPE members are assigned to the PRP by the Chair.

The PRP's responsibility is to review the information provided in the ethics complaint or media report and decide **IF** the allegations were true, would it be a violation of the NATA Code of Ethics and/or NATA Membership Standards.



The JP's responsibility is to conduct a thorough and fair investigation of the allegations.

The investigation may include:

- Collection of additional evidence (ex: police reports, court documents, etc.)
- Interviewing of individuals with personal knowledge
- Interview the Complainant and/or Respondent
- May consult with NATA legal counsel, if determined to be necessary

The JP will convene and adjudicate the allegations. The JP will render its decision to the Chair at the conclusion of the investigation.

If the JP's decision is that the evidence does NOT establish a Code of Ethics and/or Membership Standards violation, no sanctions are applied. Case is closed.

The case can be reopened if new or additional evidence comes to light. .

If the JP's decision is that the preponderance of the evidence establishes that a NATA Code of Ethics and/or Membership Standards violation exists, the JP will assign appropriate sanctions.

The Chair of COPE communicates the decision to the Respondent (member) via electronic delivery and/or certified letter.

The Chair will communicate:

- The Code of Ethics and/or Membership Standards violated
- The facts establishing the violations
- The imposed sanctions
- Other relevant information (ex: the right to appeal, etc.)

**Sanctions
can include:**

Denial of
Membership

Expulsion of
Membership

Suspension
of
Membership

Cancellation of
Membership

Public Censure

Private
Reprimand

All public sanctions are listed on
the COPE Disciplinary Action
Database and/or *NATANews*.

SANCTIONS

Denial of Eligibility of Membership

Applicants for membership may be denied eligibility if they have been convicted of a felony which would affect the practice of athletic training.

Membership Expulsion

Revocation of membership. Action would be taken after an investigation and is considered to be permanent unless reinstatement is granted.

Non-Renewal of Membership

Revocation of membership. Action would be taken after an investigation and is considered to be permanent unless reinstatement is granted.

Suspension of Membership

Suspends membership due to ethics violations that do not meet the burden of a permanent revocation of membership. Considered temporary for an established amount of time or until a certain criteria is met

Public Censure

When the COPE determines that a member should be censured publicly, a notice of the disciplinary action will be placed in the *NATA News* and COPE Disciplinary Action Database, along with a statement of the reasons for the actions. Other “public” censure may involve notification of the district and state of membership that disciplinary action has been taken.

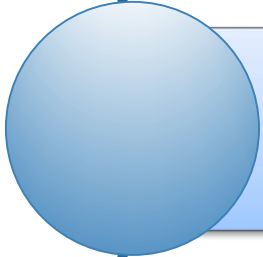
Private Reprimand

Private reprimands are made in writing to a member.



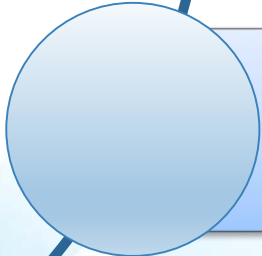
If a violation has been found, the Respondent (member) has the right to an appeal.

- Respondent has 10 days to file an appeal to the JP decision.
- Respondent must file a written appeal and include the specific grounds for appeal (as specified in the Complaint Process for Ethical Violations).



If Respondent (member) appeals, the Chair of COPE will assign three (3) Appeals Panel (AP) members.

- AP consists of a NATA Board of Director, a COPE member, and a NATA member at-large.




The AP's responsibility is to review the case records and the grounds the Respondent is appealing.

- The AP may seek additional information or conduct interviews.
- After convening, the AP will render its decision to the COPE Chair.



The decision of the AP is final and binding.



It is the NATA's discretion to notify appropriate state and/or regulatory agencies and/or the Board of Certification, Inc., in cases where sanctions have been levied against a member.

Each case is confidential (unless required otherwise by law).

COPE members are never assigned cases in their own district.

There are 22 members of COPE: one voting member and one at-large member from each district.



COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

For additional information, please refer to
the COPE Procedures for Processing
Complaints of Ethical Violations.