How to File a Complaint with NARM

If you received care from a CPM or CPM applicant and you believe you were not offered competent care, or if you were a witness to care you believe was concerning, please follow these steps:

- The person making the complaint must write a complaint describing the care received and the reasons for believing the care was incompetent and email or fax it to the address below.
- The client must be a participant in the NARM Disciplinary Process.
- The client must sign and return a Records Release Form and a Confidentiality Agreement within two weeks of submitting the complaint in order for the complaint to be processed. If these forms are not received in that time period, the complaint is closed.
- Complaints must be received in writing.

Complaints may be sent to:
North American Registry of Midwives Accountability Committee
888-842-4784 (fax)
accountability@narm.org.

Please note we cannot guarantee security if complaints or files are sent through email.

Important Information for Complaint Review or Grievance Mechanism

- A complaint against a CPM or CPM applicant may only be made by a client or a party with direct knowledge of the cause for concern.
- Complaints must be received by NARM within 24 months of the date of the last care provided by the CPM or CPM applicant.
- A signed Records Release from the client must be received before a complaint can be processed. If a records release is not received, the complaint will be closed.
- A CPM or CPM applicant is required to participate in the NARM Accountability Process. Failure or refusal to participate will result in loss or denial of the CPM credential.
- NARM can only review complaints against a CPM or CPM applicant that are specific to concerns regarding competent care.
- If a second complaint against a CPM is received, the complaint immediately enters the NARM Grievance Mechanism.
- NARM cannot address any of the following:
  - A complaint against a CPM or CPM applicant who is under regulatory or criminal investigation or in civil or criminal litigation.
  - A complaint against a midwife who is not a CPM.
  - A complaint regarding financial or personal disputes between a client and a CPM.
What to Expect
Once the complaint and records release are received, this is what a client can expect from the NARM Disciplinary Process:

Complaint Review
- The client will be contacted by the Director of NARM Accountability.
- The Director of NARM Accountability will notify the midwife and request relevant records.
- A Complaint Review chairperson will be selected, who will then appoint members to a Complaint Review Committee.
- The chairperson will arrange a location and schedule a day and time in which both the client and the midwife can attend the Complaint Review. All participants will be notified of the date, time, and address of the meeting.
- The committee will review the client’s chart before the Complaint Review meeting.
- The client and the midwife may have one support person (spouse, significant other, parent, close friend, family member, or clergy) present who does not testify.
- The client and the midwife may have witnesses testify who have first-hand knowledge of the incident.
- The support person and witnesses of the client and the midwife will be identified to the Committee Chair before the Complaint Review.
- Complaint Review process:
  - Client’s testimony
    - The client will give an account of the care received and reasons for dissatisfaction with that care, to include any witnesses or evidence.
    - Committee members may question the client; however, the midwife is not allowed to speak at this time.
    - When this process is complete, the client, witnesses, and support person will leave.
  - Midwife’s testimony
    - The midwife will describe the care provided, to include any witnesses or evidence.
    - Committee members may question the midwife regarding the care provided and the notes in the chart.
    - Once this process is complete, the midwife, witnesses, and support person will be dismissed.
  - Committee Deliberation
    - The committee will discuss the case and determine what disciplinary steps may or may not be necessary to help the midwife improve care and/or correct areas of concern.
    - The Committee Chair will summarize the Complaint Review session and will send a report to the NARM Accountability Committee, to include the recommendations of the Complaint Review Committee.
  - NARM Accountability will notify both the client and the midwife of the recommendations in an Outcome Letter.
  - Recommendations resulting from NARM Complaint Review may be binding at the discretion of the NARM Board.
  - If the client is not satisfied with the committee’s recommendations, the NARM Grievance Mechanism may be initiated. A letter or email describing the areas of concern must be sent to NARM Accountability within 3 months of the date of the Outcome Letter.
Grievance Mechanism
This mechanism may be triggered as a result of the Complaint Review, or it may be initiated directly from a complaint as determined by the NARM Accountability Committee.

- The client will be contacted by the Director of NARM Accountability after receipt of the written complaint and records release.
- The Director of NARM Accountability will notify the midwife and request relevant records.
- Current and former NARM board members will be chosen for the NARM Accountability Committee, and a day and time in which both the client and midwife can attend the Grievance call will be identified. All participants will be notified of the date, time, and access information.
- NARM Accountability Committee members will review the client’s chart before the Grievance call.
- The client and the midwife may have one support person (spouse, significant other, parent, close friend, family member, or clergy) on the call who does not testify.
- The client and the midwife may have witnesses testify who have first-hand knowledge of the incident.
- The support person and witnesses of the client and the midwife will be identified to the Committee Chair before the Grievance Mechanism.

Grievance Mechanism process:
- Client's testimony
  - The client will give an account of the care received and reasons for dissatisfaction with that care, to include any witnesses or evidence.
  - Committee members may question the client; however, the midwife is not allowed to speak at this time.
  - When this process is complete, the client and witnesses and support person will be excused from the call.
- Midwife’s testimony
  - The midwife will describe the care provided, to include any witnesses or evidence.
  - Committee members may question the midwife regarding the care provided and the notes in the chart.
  - Once this process is complete, the midwife, witnesses, and support person will be dismissed from the call.
- The NARM Accountability Committee will deliberate and determine what disciplinary steps may or may not be necessary to help the midwife improve care and/or correct areas of concern.
- The Director of NARM Accountability will send a Notification of Outcome with this information to both client and midwife.
- The Notification of Outcome may dictate binding recommendations and/or probation, suspension, or revocation of a CPM credential, or suspension or denial of a NARM application.