

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT REVIEW

Overseeing and upholding high standards of ethics and professionalism is a key function of PIBC as a self-regulating professional organization. As outlined in PIBC's bylaws, the Institute meets this obligation through upholding the Institute's Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct which all Corporate members are required to follow. The bylaws also establish and mandate the Professional Conduct Review Committee to undertake this role. Throughout 2025, Alex Taylor RPP, MCIP continued as Chair of the Committee, which is also supported by volunteer members who contributed to this valuable work throughout the year.

BYLAWS & COMMITTEE ROLE:

Significant portions of the Institute's bylaws (in particular Part 13) establish the structure and processes for professional conduct review and outline and guide the disciplinary process. These sections outline the processes for complaints, investigations, review hearings, and the imposition of discipline stemming from findings of misconduct against professional members. While the process is somewhat detailed, sometimes complex, and can be lengthy, it is designed to be fair, thorough, and deliberative while aiming to broadly uphold the principles of natural justice – taking complaints or allegations of misconduct seriously while also balancing and respecting the rights of members who are the subject of complaints.

The responsibilities of the Professional Conduct Review Committee include:

- Managing and administering the Institute's response to formal complaints and allegations of misconduct against Corporate members;
- Assisting the Institute in upholding the Code – seeking compliance by members; and
- Providing education or training to members regarding best practices of ethical and professional conduct.

The Committee remained active in 2025 and continued its efforts handling complaints, to ensure that investigations were completed efficiently and thoroughly. Both the Committee and staff focused on monitoring and refining our administrative processes and capacity in support of an effective, fair, and efficient disciplinary process.

Part 14 of the Institute's Bylaws contain the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (the Code). The Code is the key policy element that underpins the Institute's ethical standards and expectations for professional members.

Members are encouraged to review the Code on an ongoing basis to keep informed and aware – particularly if you are a new planner, an RPP who is mentoring a Candidate member, or if you find yourself facing potential ethical questions or challenges in the practice of your planning work.

For the complete current Bylaws, including the Code, visit: <https://www.pibc.bc.ca/official-documents>

ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS:

Upon receipt of any formal written complaint of alleged professional misconduct by a member, in accordance with the bylaws, the Committee Chair assigns two members of the Committee to act as the case officers for the complaint or case. The assigned case officers conduct an initial investigation which includes reviewing the complaint, notifying the subject member and requesting a response to the complaint from them, gathering information, assessing the merits of the complaint under the Code, and preparing and delivering a report and recommendation to the Chair in accordance with the bylaws. The Chair reviews the report received from the case officers and proceeds accordingly, based on the findings and determinations of the initial investigation.

Depending on the findings, next steps in the process could include: dismissing the complaint with no further action; confirming an agreed 'consent discipline action' resolution of the matter (where the subject member admits certain misconduct and accepts some agreed disciplinary action as a result); or proceeding to a formal disciplinary review hearing to fully adjudicate the matter in a formal quasi-judicial process. In the event of any finding of misconduct against a member, disciplinary measures would then subsequently be imposed in accordance with the bylaws.

Over the course of 2025 there was one new formal complaint received (and case file initiated) within the Institute's disciplinary process. Work from four previous complaints and case files also carried over into 2025. As of the end of the year, four of the active cases had been closed, while one case remained active. The new complaint initiated in 2025 was initiated by a member of the public. The continued caseload in 2025 required significant volunteer and staff time to manage over the course of the year. To help increase volunteer capacity, a process to recruit new volunteer members was completed in 2025. As a result of this recruitment process, three new members were appointed to the Committee in 2025.

Less formal inquiries to the Institute related to ethical matters such as providing and receiving gifts, offers of employment to individuals with family connections to existing professional relationships, etc. These inquiries are normally handled directly with the individuals involved without a formal complaint or professional conduct review process as appropriate (though circumstances raised through such inquiries may, in some cases, ultimately lead to formal complaints).

SUPPORT & POLICY WORK:

During 2025 there were no substantial policy and process changes (such as further revisions to the bylaws), however, the Committee updated the PCRC policies and procedures manual which was approved by the Board in June 2025. This formalized internal manual guides, supports and assists the Committee and staff in their work on professional conduct

and disciplinary matters. In tandem with the manual, a large number of templates for regular, recurring documents (letters, reports, etc.) used in PCRC processes continue to be utilized and are updated regularly.

The Professional Conduct Review Committee (PCRC) held a meeting in 2024 and determined to undertake a review of the existing Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (the Code) to explore if the current Code still meets the Institute's needs and the needs of the profession, and to identify any gaps and potential changes or additions to the Code. The PCRC established a working group to undertake the review of the Code. Chris Osborne RPP, MCIP (Chair), Jacqueline East RPP, MCIP, Lindsay Chase RPP, FCIP and James Stiver RPP, MCIP were appointed to the working group.

The working group has held several regular meetings in 2025, and work in a number of key areas has been completed during the year, including:

- An agreed approach to reviewing the existing Code with an aim to developing a new Code;
- Conducting background research including a review of other relevant external Codes of Ethics and Professional Conduct and emerging best practices;
- Developing an approach to member consultation and engagement with Institute members and interest holders, and the development of a work plan to complete the review of the Code, as it moves forward;
- The working group developed and issued a survey to seek the input of both members and non-members affected by, or involved in, the planning profession in areas such as the core values of the planning profession and feedback on the existing Code. Input to this survey will help inform the working group's review of the Code.
- Staying engaged and connected with the work of the national PSB on their work revising the national ethical standards, for consistency and coordination.

There was a strong level of participation in the survey, with over 250 responses received (partial and complete). Respondents provided a range of valuable feedback on the existing Code, ranked proposed core values, and provided details relating to potential additional core values for consideration. Among the top-ranked values identified were integrity, accountability, and fairness. The information gathered from the survey will continue to be analyzed and will be used to inform the working group's review and potential recommended revisions to the Code.

The working group would like to acknowledge and thank all who participated in the engagement survey on the review of

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. It is also noted that the Code is an important aspect of the planning profession at both local/provincial and national levels. As noted, PIBC is currently engaged with the national Professional Standards Board (PSB) as it updates and modernizes the current national ethical standards.

EDUCATION FOR MEMBERS:

In addition to its role in handling individual formal complaints of alleged professional misconduct, the Committee continued to support the ongoing education and training of PIBC members on matters of ethics and professionalism throughout 2025. As part of this work, volunteer members organize and deliver a session on ethics and professionalism at each PIBC annual conference. This took place as part of the 2025 annual conference held in June in Vancouver, BC. Additionally, the Committee delivered the latest offering of a free online webinar for members – 'Ethics & Professional Conduct for Planners', held in December 2025. This iteration of the annual webinar shifted slightly in focus and provided additional detail on the Institute's complaints and discipline process. Recordings of this and other previous online ethics and professionalism webinars delivered by PIBC continue to be accessible to all members via the Institute's YouTube channel as an ongoing resource.

The Committee continued in 2025 to provide support to individual members and others with specific inquiries on issues and questions related to ethics and professionalism via the Committee's ethical advisory group. This group of designated Committee members offered occasional confidential general ethical guidance and feedback regarding ethical questions or dilemmas raised with the Institute by members and others.

Additionally, to support the Committee's role and work, the Committee, with support from staff, now regularly holds internal and confidential case officer peer learning sessions. This assists with providing further support and training for case officers responsible for investigating complaints.

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS & THANKS:

The important and valuable work of the Professional Conduct Review Committee is made possible each year through the dedication and valuable contributions of volunteer members. Under the guidance of the Chair, and with the assistance of Institute staff and legal counsel as appropriate, members of the Committee continued work on the Committee's key activity areas such as:

- Acting as case officers (conducting initial investigations of complaints);
- Contributing to member education and training for members;

- Providing ethics and professionalism guidance in response to member inquiries throughout 2025; and
- Continuing the review of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

Professional disciplinary cases typically require significant time and effort throughout the various stages of the process. The commitment and contributions of all the volunteer members are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Looking ahead, the Committee will continue its work to: review of the Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct, further update its policy and procedures manual and templates as required, continue to share knowledge through case officer peer learning, and enhance other related administrative resources, while continuing to strengthen and train volunteer resources and the complaints and disciplinary processes. Sincere thanks are extended to those who have served (and continue to serve) on the Committee. Thank you again.

PIBC Professional Conduct Review 2025 Case Summary

Although the Institute fields various general professional practice inquiries each year, typically only a relatively small number result in formal complaints. In 2025, one new formal complaint was received, and four previous cases carried over into 2025. No other investigations were initiated in response to any information about potential member misconduct in the public domain. As of December 31, 2025, work on four formal cases had been fully concluded, and one remained actively open at the final stages of the process.

The following provides a general summary status update on cases addressed or under review at various stages in the professional conduct review process during 2024:

- A previous case from 2023 resulting from a formal complaint by a PIBC member regarding the conduct of another member in a professional context was concluded following successful completion of the initial investigation by the case officers. There was no further action with respect to the complaint.
- A previous case from 2023 resulting from a formal complaint by a local government regarding the conduct of a member was concluded at the beginning of the year, following successful completion of the initial investigation by the case officers. This case was resolved by consent discipline.
- A previous case from 2024 resulting from a formal complaint by a member of the public regarding the conduct and work of a member was concluded

following successful completion of the initial investigation by the case officers. There was no further action with respect to the complaint.

- A previous case from 2024 resulting from a formal complaint by a member of the public regarding the conduct and work of a member was near completion and remained at the final stages of initial investigation as of the end of the year. It was subsequently resolved in early 2025 with no further action with respect to the complaint.
- A new case in 2025 resulting from a formal complaint by a member of the public regarding the conduct and work of a member was concluded following successful completion of the initial investigation by the case officers. There was no further action with respect to the complaint.

Some of the general ethical and professional issues that have often arisen through some of the recent and ongoing cases include:

- Providing accurate professional information and advice;
- Professional responsibilities to the profession and other professionals;
- Ensuring conflicts of interest are disclosed and appropriately managed;
- Providing opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning process; and
- Exercising professional judgment independently and without bias.