



Ethics Committee Physician Submission Form

(THIS FORM IS NOT FOR EXPERT WITNESS TESTIMONY)

Please complete this form carefully and submit all the material that you wish the Committee to consider. As the submitter of this challenge, the onus is on you to provide all information and supporting material needed to comprehensively review the challenge. The Committee will not review your challenge if you do not provide complete answers below and de-identify all protected health information in your answers and supporting materials. The Ethics Committee will return to you any supporting material that is not consistent with [HIPAA de-identification requirements](#).

Confidentiality

The process by which the Ethics Committee reviews all challenges is designed to ensure fundamental fairness, objectivity, and confidentiality to all parties before a final decision is reached. The process is confidential. Please do not discuss or make public the fact that a challenge has been filed or is ongoing. Unauthorized oral or written communications with any member of the Ethics Committee or the Academy's Board of Trustees prior to the final resolution of a challenge (including the completion of any appeal) are strictly forbidden. Any such unauthorized communications by the challenged Fellow or Member, or by the submitter of the challenge, either directly or by proxy, shall be considered as non-cooperation with the Ethics Committee and shall be subject to the same sanctions as the failure to observe the Rules of Ethics.

Investigative Timeline

The initial review process typically occurs within 30 days. The timeline for investigating and rendering a decision on a challenge varies from several weeks to over about a year depending on multiple factors, including timeliness of responses to correspondence, and general cooperation and complexity of the issue in the challenge. Prior to the completion of the review process, no information will be provided to the submitter.

Investigative Limitations

Lacking the powers of investigation that governmental bodies and other entities possess means that some challenges cannot be adequately resolved by the Ethics Committee.

By submitting this form, you are acknowledging that:

1. Your name and complete submission will be revealed to the challenged AAO Fellow or Member.
2. You have an ethical obligation to include only information that is truthful, accurate, complete, and is not based on personal grievance, as well as to assure that no information has been concealed.

3. Your presence at an administrative hearing may be needed to resolve this challenge.
4. If you wish to be represented by counsel during the pendency of this investigative proceeding, you will bear the costs associated with that representation.
5. You understand and respect the AAO Ethics Committee's investigative process and its limitations.

Part I. Your Contact Information

Provide your name and complete contact information, including your phone number, street address, and email address:

Part II. Information about the Challenge

1. Name and contact information of the AAO Fellow or Member who is the subject of your challenge:

2. What are the dates involved with the subject matter of your challenge? _____

3. Has the matter been before a court, state medical board or other state or federal administrative body? Yes/No If yes, please attach an order from the appropriate authority, referencing all parties and indicating the current status of the matter. The Ethics Committee reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to decline acceptance of the submission or to defer its investigation of the submission pending proceedings in any court, state medical board or other state or federal administrative body.

4. Is there a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement or a protective order related to this matter? Yes/No If yes, please attach a copy of the agreement or protective order.

You should consult your attorney before answering this question or sending any material to the Ethics Committee.

Part III. Specific Allegations

1. The Ethics Committee requires that you provide a detailed description of the alleged unethical conduct that you assert has violated the Rules of the AAO Code of Ethics, in addition to identifying which specific [Rule\(s\) of the Code](#) are pertinent. If you are

describing more than one action or statement, please separate the allegations by numbered paragraphs. Supporting materials must be attached, with relevant portions cited with specificity. If a large amount of supporting material will accompany your challenge, please scan it, and send it electronically. You may provide your answers as a separate document using paragraph numbers that pertain to question 1 and 2 of Part III, as necessary.

2. Please state whether you assert that the action or statement violated any of the Academy's ethics Advisory Opinions, which provide additional information to reinforce the Rules of the Code. If applicable, please identify the Advisory Opinions by name and cite the specific portion(s) you assert to be pertinent. All Advisory Opinions can be viewed at this link: <https://www.aao.org/clinical-education/redmond-ethics-center>.

Submitting Your Challenge

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Check here to agree to communicate with the Ethics Committee by email. Do not send any protected health information in an e-mail message. All initial submissions about information not in the public domain must be accompanied by this completed form.

Electronic communications to the Ethics Committee may be sent to ethics@aao.org. The street address for sending printed submission forms and supporting materials is:

The Ethics Committee
American Academy of Ophthalmology
655 Beach Street
P.O. Box 7424
San Francisco, CA 94109-1342

The Code of Ethics may be reviewed at: <https://www.aao.org/ethics-detail/code-of-ethics>.