

FAQS for SWE related complaints

- Heading for the FAQ
 - The Ethics Committee is responsible for administering the Procedures for Review of Member Conduct for the Society
- When should I file a complaint?
 - After reviewing the SWE Formal Ethics Complaint Initiation Form (link) to help you determine if your issue rises to the level of a Code of Conduct violation.
 - If unable to get resolution on you own.
 - Complaint must be filed within 1 year of the occurrence.
- How do I file a complaint?
 - Fill out the SWE Formal Ethics Complaint Initiation Form (link) and submit to the Ethics Committee.
- What happens when I file a complaint?
 - An Ethics Committee member will contact you to review the complaint form via email to start the process..
 - The complainant will be anonymous until the formal charges are filed. Information is provided to the complaint target when Formal charges are filed, and the committee will move forward with a hearing.
 - The Ethics Committee will investigate the issue and determine if the issue rises to the level of formal charges. This may result in a hearing. Refer to the Ethics Committee procedure for possible results.
- What happens if I submit a complaint and it is determined there is no violation of the Code of Conduct?
 - The Ethics Committee will notify you that the complaint has been dismissed and that the complaint has been closed.
 - SWE tolerates no retaliation against an individual who has filed a complaint.
- Who can file a complaint?
 - Complaints may be made and transmitted in writing by any person, committee, or SWE group.

- Please refer to the Ethics Complaint Resolution Flowchart (<https://swe.org/about-swe/governance/committees/ethics-committee/>) for the flow of the complaint through the process. A complaint may be filed by submitting completed SWE Formal Ethics Complaint Initiation Form.
- Will I be anonymous?
 - While the complainant remains anonymous at the time of filing, at the point that the complaint is accepted, the subject of the complaint will have visibility of who filed the complaint when Formal Charges are filed and the Committee moves forward with a hearing. The proceedings of the Ethics Committee are kept confidential within the Committee; however, others, such as SWE Legal Counsel, may be engaged as necessary. The determination of the committee/decision is provided to the BOD, Executive Director, subject of the complaint, and complainant. The decisions/proceedings remain confidential to the Society as a whole.
- Will I be subject to retaliation for filing a complaint?
 - Direct or indirect retaliation of any kind by SWE or its officers, directors, employees, members, or agents against any individual that initiates or is involved in the making of a complaint is strictly prohibited.
- How long does it take to settle/resolve a complaint?
 - The time to resolve a complaint will depend on how long the investigation of the complaint takes and if the complaint is determined to warrant the bringing of charges or dismissed. If charges are brought the complaint will then move to the hearing stage and be resolved in a timely manner.
- What are the consequences if a violation of the ethics code has occurred?

- Penalties vary with respect to the severity of the ethics violation. Please refer to Section IX. Sanctions, in the Ethics Committee procedure.
- Is there a time limit on filing the complaint?
 - Complaints must be made within one year of the occurrence or of the discovery of the occurrence.
- What if the target of the complaint does not respond?
 - If the target of the complaint does not acknowledge the notice of the complaint, the investigative process will continue.