



**CERTIFIED ORGANIC ASSOCIATIONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
ACCREDITATION BOARD**

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APPEALS ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the document is to outline procedures for submitting and handling appeals by the Certification Body against BCCOP accreditation decisions and COR recommendation decisions to the CFIA made by the Accreditation Board (AB).

SCOPE

This procedure is intended for the AB, staff and Certification Bodies. Other interested parties can obtain a copy on request.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the AB Director to amend this procedure as needed. This procedure is approved by the AB.

RELATED POLICY/DOCUMENTS

- See Appeals Policy
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1. SUBMITTING AN APPEAL

- 1) If the Certification Body does not agree with an accreditation decision or recommendation made by the AB, and the appeal is valid as per the Appeals policy, the CB may submit an appeal to the COABC Office.
- 2) All appeals should be sent to the COABC office via accreditation@certifiedorganic.bc.ca, and must be received within 30 working days from notification of the decision.

2. TWO-STEP APPEAL PROCEDURE

2.1. STEP 1: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

- 1) Upon receipt of an appeal, the AB Director shall appoint a Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) and will ensure that the DRC comprises of at least two other AB members.
- 2) The AB Director will ensure that the appointed AB members do not have a conflict of interest with the CB or activities in question.
- 3) The AB Director will ensure that the DRC is provided with all necessary information regarding the appeal. The DRC will review all documentation provided to ensure the appeal is valid.
- 4) If the DRC determines that the appeal is invalid, notification and reasoning shall be provided to the disputant within 30 days. If the appellant is not satisfied with this determination, they can proceed to Step 2 – Appeal Process.
- 5) If the DRC determines that the appeal is valid, the disputant shall be notified and given the opportunity to state their case to the DRC. The DRC may ask questions of the disputant and endeavour to assist in reaching a final decision which may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Agreement
 - b. Changing the previous ruling
 - c. Referring the disputant to the COABC Board of Directors (Step 2)
 - d. Reaching some other mutually agreeable decision
- 6) Investigation and decisions on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions.
- 7) The DRC shall make a final decision and inform the disputant in writing within 10 days following the committee meeting.

2.2. STEP 2: APPEAL PROCESS

- 1) If the decision made after Step 1 by the CB is to proceed to appeal to the COABC Board of Directors, the AB Director will ensure that:
 - a. The COABC BOD members involved shall not have a conflict of interest with the CB or activities in question.
 - b. The COACB BOD members involved shall receive all necessary information regarding the appeal, including a summary of the DRC meeting and conclusions.
 - c. The COABC BOD holds a meeting within 30 days from the DRC notification to the appellant.
- 2) The COABC BOD shall review the fairness of the process and determine if they are in agreement. This review may include:
 - a. Meeting(s) with the appellant, AB members and/or DRC to discuss the case
 - b. Requesting further investigation
 - c. Review from the COABC Impartiality Committee
- 3) The COABC BOD shall notify the appellant and the AB of their conclusions within 10 days following the meeting.

- 4) [The COABC BOD must provide rationale of their final decision and provide a written report.](#)
- 5) [The AB will review the BOD's findings, reevaluate the accreditation decision if necessary and communicate the final outcome to all parties.](#)

2.3. NOTIFICATION TO CB

- 1) The appeal shall be considered closed once the CB has been notified by the AB of the final decision.

COABC Accreditation Board Flowchart for Appeals Procedure

