

**Department Of Health  
Medical Quality Assurance Commission  
Washington State**

**Procedure**

<b>Title</b>	Processing Completed Investigations More Efficiently	Number: MD2011-07
<b>Reference</b>		
<b>Contact</b>	Michael Farrell, Legal Unit Manager	
<b>Effective Date</b>	June 3, 2011	
<b>Supersedes</b>		
<b>Approved</b>	Signature on file Leslie M. Burger, MD, FACP, Chair Medical Quality Assurance Commission	

**Background**

One of the principal ways the Medical Quality Assurance Commission protects the health and safety of the citizens of Washington is by timely and efficient processing complaints of unprofessional conduct or physical/mental impairment and taking appropriate action. The Commission continues to seek ways to reduce the time it takes to process complaints and take action to ensure patient safety.

After the investigation of a complaint is completed, the file is sent to a reviewing commission member (RCM) for review and presentation at the next Commission meeting. This process is timely and efficient for the majority of cases. However, some cases are not presented at the next Commission meeting for a variety of reasons, causing a delay in the resolution of the case. This procedure is intended to address case presentations that are delayed and ensure that they are resolved timely and efficiently.

**Procedure**

1. Commission staff mails a copy of the completed investigation file by mail or by secure e-mail attachment to the assigned RCM and gives the original file to the assigned staff attorney.
2. The RCM reviews the file as soon as reasonably possible in preparation for presentation at the next Commission meeting.
  - a. The RCM and the staff attorney communicate with each other if additional investigation is required, and the staff attorney transfers the original file to

the Chief Investigator with a memo describing the additional investigation that is requested. The staff attorney and the Chief Investigator make the appropriate entries in ILRS to change the case status from disposition to investigation and back.

- b. If the RCM wants an expert review of standard of care issues, the RCM contacts the staff attorney to begin that process.
  - c. If the RCM believes a mental or physical evaluation is appropriate, the RCM contacts the staff attorney. The staff attorney prepares the necessary documents to begin that process.
3. After investigations and review are completed, the RCM presents the case at the next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting.
4. If the RCM cannot attend the next regularly-scheduled Commission meeting, the RCM notifies the staff attorney, the Medical Consultant, and/or the Disciplinary Manager. Commission staff assists the RCM to either:
  - a. Arrange for another person to present the case at the Commission meeting (this person can be the staff attorney, Medical Consultant or another Commission member); or
  - b. Arrange to present the case at a Case Management Team (CMT) meeting on a day that is convenient for the RCM. The CMT meets every Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m.