



## SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT – INFORMATION SHEET

This information sheet provides information on how to submit a complaint and the role of the Optometrists and Opticians Board's (OOB) in dealing with complaints. If you are not able to find information you need, please contact the Secretariat.

### A. Before Making a Complaint

1. One of the main functions of the OOB is to determine and regulate the practice, ethics and conduct of optometrists and opticians. The OOB can only consider complaints against registered optometrists or opticians. Before you proceed to lodge a complaint against an optometrist or optician, please ensure that there is a legitimate basis for making a complaint. Legitimate basis for complaint would require substantive evidence of the following:
  - a. Professional misconduct involving serious lapses in patient care, for example, significant departure from applicable practice standards;
  - b. Supported cases of clear negligence
  - c. Unethical or unprofessional behaviour, for example, no attempt to settle disputes in a professional manner;
  - d. Lack of physical or mental fitness of the optician or optometrist to practice; or
  - e. Criminal offences committed by practitioners that reflect on their professional standing and the standing of the profession.
2. Practices of optometry and opticianry are regulated practices. If you suspect or encounter any unlawful optometry or opticianry practice, please contact the Ministry of Health directly at 6325 9220.
3. Please note that the complaints process under the Optometrists and Opticians Act (Act) does not allow for the ordering of financial compensation. If you are seeking refunds or financial compensation for the purchase of your optical appliance or services, depending on the quantum of your claims, you may wish to contact the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) instead at 6100 0315.

### B. Making a Complaint

4. Under the Optometrists and Opticians Act (Act), a complaint must be made in writing in English and supported by a Statutory Declaration ("SD").
5. Please note that OOB is unable to accept verbal complaints (e.g. phone calls or walk-ins) or complaints via email. OOB would also not be able to provide legal advice or assist you to draft your complaint.

6. To facilitate investigation, the following must be stated in the complaint:
  - a. Full name of the optometrist or optician complained against
  - b. Name and place of practice
  - c. Full account of your complaint.
7. You must clearly state the allegation(s) against the optometrist(s) or optician(s), including any necessary details, and include copies of all documents necessary to support your complaint. You may refer to Annex 1 “Sample Letter” as a guide.
8. If the SD is made in Singapore, it should be made before a justice of the peace, a commissioner for oaths (CFO) or a notary public. Members of the public who require CFO can approach private law firm for CFO services. You may wish to contact a Commissioner for Oaths under this [directory](#) of the Singapore Academy of Law for the service.
9. Only a SD made before an authorized person would be valid and considered by the OOB. Failure to complete the SD form correctly may cause the complaint to be rejected. For your complaint to be processed, you will need to resubmit an acceptable SD.
10. In order for a complaint to be investigated effectively, the complaint should be lodged within a reasonable period of the incident in question (e.g. two years), as the relevant evidence such as medical records and witness testimony may become unavailable or difficult to secure with the passage of time.
11. After endorsement by the authorized person, please scan and send us the following documents **in colour:**

	What to submit	Where to submit to:
<b>By email</b>	a) The (i) Original SD, (ii) complaint letter and (iii) supporting documents <b><u>consolidated in one PDF file</u></b> ; and b) A completed and signed copy of the <a href="#">acknowledgement form</a> (see page 4)  Note: Your email submission should contain only the two attachments referred to above.	<a href="mailto:OOB@spb.gov.sg">OOB@spb.gov.sg</a>

12. The OOB will acknowledge receipt of your complaint.

<b>C. Processing of Complaint</b>
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13. Upon receipt of your complaint, the OOB will review the completeness of the SD. You may be contacted to provide clarifications or additional information.

14. The complaint will then be reviewed by the Board members of OOB to decide if there is a *prima facie* case for further inquiry. In appropriate cases, the OOB may direct that an Inquiry Committee be appointed to gather more information and report its findings to the OOB. Hence, it may take 3 months or more for the whole review process to be completed.
15. Where the OOB determines that the complaint raises a *prima facie* case, under the law, your complaint (including your identity and any accompanying document) must be furnished to the practitioner for him/her to be given an opportunity to submit an explanation to the complaint.
16. The OOB may need copies of your clinical records from your optometrists or opticians. If records are needed from clinics or hospitals, your permission would be sought. If the OOB determines that a formal inquiry (hearing) is necessary, you may also be asked to appear as a witness to provide information and clarifications before the Inquiry Committee.
17. While the inquiry is ongoing, the OOB is not obliged to provide any updates on the status of the inquiry to you.

<b>D. Possible Outcomes of Complaint</b>
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18. Upon the conclusion of the inquiry into the complaint, the Board may take a variety of measures under the Act. These range from directing that the complaint be dismissed or directing that the registration of the registered person(s) be cancelled. The full suite of measures can be found in section 20(3) to (5) of the Act.
19. You will be notified of the decision taken by the OOB upon conclusion of the investigation.

**Note: Please complete the following acknowledgement form and email it to [OOB@spb.gov.sg](mailto:OOB@spb.gov.sg) together with one consolidated PDF file containing the (i) original SD, (ii) complaint letter and (iii) supporting documents. All documents submitted to OOB should be scanned in colour.**

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**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I have read and understood all the contents of the information sheet.

I am aware that the OOB disciplinary process is suitable only for certain types of complaints, and have considered all the other avenues (e.g. approaching the management of the optical practice directly for assistance) indicated.

I understand and acknowledge that \*the patient / my information may be provided to the optometrist or opticianry (if necessary) and \*the patient / my medical records may be requested and accessed by OOB.

Please tick only if you are not the patient.

- I confirm that I have sought the patient's consent to lodge the complaint on his/her behalf and that his/her medical information may be disclosed to me.

*\*please delete accordingly*

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**Signature of Complainant**

Name:

Date:

**OATHS AND DECLARATIONS ACT  
(CHAPTER 211)**

**STATUTORY DECLARATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, NRIC No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact no.: \_\_\_\_\_, Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

do solemnly and sincerely declare that in accordance with Regulation 3(1) of the Optometrists and opticians (Investigation of Complaints) Regulations that the contents of the documents attached and marked "A" is my complaint against the conduct of

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Full name of Practitioner)*

of \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(Name and address of Place of Practice).*

And I make this solemn declaration by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths and Declarations Act (Cap.211), and subject to the penalties provided by the Act for the making of false statements in statutory declarations, conscientiously believing the statements contained in this declaration to be true in every particular.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature Declarant)

Declared at Singapore  
this \_\_\_\_\_ (day) of \_\_\_\_\_ (month) of \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

Before me,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner for Oaths, Justice of the Peace, Notary Public or other officer  
empowered by law to administer oaths, affirmation or affidavits

**ANNEX 1 - SAMPLE LETTER**

26 April 2020

Optometrists and Opticians Board  
16 College Road, #01-01  
College of Medicine Building  
Singapore 169854

Dear Sir/ Madam

**MAKING A COMPLAINT AGAINST MR ABC OF OPTICAL COMPANY**

1. The following are my particulars:  
Name:  
NRIC No.  
Address:  
Contact no.  
Email address
2. If you are not the patient, please state the details of the patient as follows:  
Patient's Name:  
Patient's NRIC / Birth Registration No.:  
Relationship to Patient:
3. The optometrist/ optician I wish to make a complaint against:  
Name of practitioner(s):  
Place of Practice:
4. Summary of the incident(s), including the relevant date(s) and location(s):  
On 1 February 2020, I visited Mr ABC at his practice to buy a pair of contact lens. Mr ABC brought me to a room to check on my refractive powers ...

*(Please provide the background and description main issue(s) e.g. however, after wearing the lens, it caused major irritation to my eyes/ there was no follow-up on my feedback on my eye irritation etc..)*

Attached are the complete details of the purchase and attempts to follow up with the optometrist. *(Please attach all documents and correspondence in relation to this matter, and label them accordingly)*

5. As my attempts to resolve Mr ABC were not successful, I am laying a complaint against the optometrist/ optician for:
  - a. Failure to provide proper eye check
  - b. Failure to carry out due patient care
6. Details of the complaint are as follows:

a. **Failure to provide proper eye check**

*(Provide details to each allegation, followed by details: e.g. On 1 Feb 2019, Mr ABC only did a refraction for me. I understand that I also need to go through other eye examination to ensure suitability of contact lens. However, Mr ABC did not perform such examinations for me... )*

b. **Failure to carry out due patient care**

*(Provide details to each allegation, followed by details)*

7. I hereby provide a Statutory Declaration in support of the complaint as may be required by the OOB.

Yours faithfully,  
*(Signature)*