When a Formal Complaint Has Been Filed Against You

Being told that someone has filed a complaint against you in Shambhala can be very difficult. If a formal complaint has been filed, this means the complainant is not seeking a local resolution to the situation. Please reflect on your actions. If you have done or said something inappropriate or harmful, you may or may not be aware of having done so. You may need support.

1. What You Can Expect

1.1. To have the Code of Conduct process and its possible outcomes explained to you as soon as possible by a neutral person trained in this process (either a Code of Conduct Facilitator or someone from the Regional or International Conduct Council addressing the complaint).

1.2. To be provided with the document setting out the complaint against you and to know who filed it (except in cases of anonymous complaints, as will be explained to you).

1.3. To have the opportunity to say what happened in your own words, and have that taken into account in the Code of Conduct process.

1.4. To have an opportunity to give names of witnesses, if any, and have them speak to what they witnessed.

1.5. You may bring a friend or advisor to accompany you at all stages of raising your concern or complaint. They may attend any meeting with you, support you in the process itself and speak on your behalf if you feel unable to speak for yourself. Your support person does not need to be a Shambhala member; however, they need to abide by the Shambhala Code of Conduct and the confidentiality agreement. A support person is not a “legal advisor,” but can communicate on behalf of a respondent/complainant in the case that the person is experiencing
challenges in communicating. The support person must be in the presence of the reporter when communicating.

If you do not have a support person in mind and wish to have one arranged for you from within Shambhala, please request this.

1.6. To have your privacy and the confidentiality of the Code of Conduct process respected throughout the process.

1.7. To have the complaint heard and decided fairly and impartially.

1.8. To have the opportunity to appeal a decision.

1.9. To be supported in Shambhala practice and related activities, as appropriate, during the Code of Conduct process.

2. **Your responsibilities**

2.1. To respect the privacy of others involved, and the confidentiality of the Code of Conduct process.

2.2. To refrain from any form of retaliation or putting pressure on the complainant to resolve their complaint in a particular way.

2.3. To accept and respect any protective measures that may be applied during the Code of Conduct process.

2.4. To accept and respect any protective or rebalancing measures that may be applied as part of the Code of Conduct process’ outcome.

3. **If you are subject to protective or rebalancing measures**

3.1. A Conduct Council may apply **protective measures** that suspend your authorizations or otherwise limit your participation in Shambhala activities temporarily while the formal Code of Conduct process is underway. This is not related to any final decision, but is intended to provide for everyone involved a sense of protection in a situation that may be highly emotional.

3.2. The intention of the Code of Conduct process is not punishment. However, a Conduct Council may finally decide it needs to apply protective measures for a specific period of time, or while you fulfil certain requirements, or indefinitely. As the term “protective measures” implies, they are intended to provide protection for the community, and also for you.
3.3. A Conduct Council may also apply **rebalancing measures** to help you regain your relationship with your community. These measures may involve activities such as programs, training or counselling, within or outside Shambhala. You have the right to have the measures clearly defined, to know who will monitor progress or review the status, and to know when the conditions have been adequately met.

3.4. You should understand that any alleged criminal conduct on your part subject to mandatory reporting requirements will be reported to the local authorities.

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**Approved By:** Shambhala Board of Directors.