



DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELLORS

I. Introduction

a) Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors have undergone a Breastfeeding Peer Counselling Training Course presented by La Leche League South Africa (LLSA). The ONLINE year-long program (<https://www.llsa.org/product-page/breastfeeding-peer-counsellor-online-training-program>) covers the basic tools for Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors to provide lactation support to pregnant and breastfeeding families in their own communities, and protect and promote breastfeeding. The course, compiled in 2021, used the 2020 Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative training course for maternity staff as a basis, and added material from various Peer Counsellor training courses available (LLNZ, WABA, Malaysia, Well Start, WIC and material supplied by Dilshaad Sungay - retired LLSA Leader and breastfeeding peer counsellor trainer) and is updated yearly.

b) In order to maintain and enhance the credibility of Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors, the Disciplinary Procedures to follow, allow consumers and others to bring complaints concerning Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors' conduct, to LLSA PCPA (Peer Counsellor Program Administrator). LLSA PCPA may require education, obtain written assurance of non-continuation of specified conduct, privately reprimand, publicly reprimand, suspend the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor, or report the violation to a higher authority.

c) It should be emphasized that actions taken under these Disciplinary Procedures do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate government agencies, licensing bodies, or other organizations may be made about the conduct of the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor. Individuals bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of this process, although they will receive notice of any public action taken.

d) It is up to the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor to report the individual bringing a complaint to an appropriate* authority should she feel the need.
(*Report suspected child abuse to the police, the Child Protection Unit, or a social worker at one a local child and family welfare agencies. Severe abuse should be reported to Lifeline, Childline, or the Child Emergency Line.)

II. Complaints

a) Complaints must be signed, and valid contact information for the submitter supplied, and submitted by email to pcp@llsa.org and cc info@llsa.org and marked "BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELLORS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMPLAINT". During the course of the disciplinary process, a complainant's identity

may become known to the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor who is the subject of the complaint for purposes of ensuring a fair process.

- b) Anonymous complaints will not be entertained.
- c) The individual filing a complaint must have direct, first-hand knowledge of the facts of a violation of one or more principles of the Code of Professional Conduct. Complaints made without sufficient evidentiary documentation, as well as those based on hearsay, may be deemed invalid. All available evidentiary documentation must be submitted with the complaint form (e.g., screen shots of social media posts, emails, photos, charting, etc.).
- d) The individual filing the complaint must provide signed consent authorizing LLLSA PCPA to share with or otherwise disclose to (a) the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor and (b) all persons with knowledge identified in the complaint all the information included in the complaint, or a summary of such information, for purposes of the disciplinary proceeding initiated against a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors.
- e) A complaint involving conviction of a crime by a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor may not be actionable if the crime is unrelated to the practice of lactation consulting.

Before submitting a complaint, please familiarize yourself with the Disciplinary Procedures above and ensure the following requirements:

1. The only accepted method of submitting a complaint and related documentation to LLLSA PCPA is by email. Be sure to attached all evidentiary documentation.
2. Each section of the complaint-form below must be completed. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.
3. All available evidentiary documentation must be submitted with the complaint form (e.g., screen shots of social media posts, emails, photos, charting, etc.).
4. The Complainant must be an individual, not a business or entity, and must have direct, first-hand knowledge of the facts of a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor's violation of one or more principles of the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellors Code of Professional Conduct. Complaints made without sufficient evidentiary documentation, as well as those based on hearsay, may be dismissed.
5. LLLSA PCPA may self-initiate complaints on the basis of third-party sourced information only when the allegations pertain to egregious conduct such as abuse or significant bodily harm; all other anonymous complaints will not be entertained by LLLSA PCPA.
6. During the course of the disciplinary process, the Complainant's identity may become known to the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor who is the subject of the complaint for purposes of ensuring a fair process.
7. A complaint involving a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor's conviction of a crime may not be actionable if the crime is unrelated to the practice of lactation support.
8. The disciplinary process is designed to resolve only complaints concerning potential unethical conduct of a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor within the meaning of the Code of Professional Conduct. The disciplinary process is not applicable to disputes of a commercial or personal nature, such as claims that a Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor's conduct amounted to defamation or disparagement, or to

differences in professional opinion. Such matters should be resolved without resorting to the disciplinary process. Only complaints where the major component rises to the level of unethical conduct under the Code will be considered actionable.

CONFIDENTIAL - BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELLORS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMPLAINT FORM

1. Today's date: _____

2. Person filing complaint: [Must be an individual with direct, first-hand knowledge of the facts involving a potential violation of the Code of Professional Conduct]

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Title: _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

3. Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor against whom complaint is being filed:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Title: _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

4. Complainant's relationship with the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor against whom the complaint is being filed:

5. Provide a concise summary of complaint (in your own words – who, what, where, when, why, and how): [Use additional sheets if needed]. All available evidentiary documentation must be submitted with the complaint form.

6. Identify the specific provision(s) of the Code of Professional Conduct allegedly violated by the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor who is the subject of the complaint: [required to proceed with Disciplinary Procedures]

7. Other persons with knowledge of the incident(s) giving rise to this complaint – you must submit sufficient contact information for LLLSA PCPA to notify these persons about the use of their personal data and to be able to contact them for relevant facts about the complaint:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Title: _____

Email address: _____

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Title: _____

Email address: _____

8. Other agencies or organizations you have submitted this complaint to (i.e., police or other authorities, etc.):

CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE OF HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR CHILD(REN): Your complaint about the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor may include health information about you and/or one or more of your children. By signing below you authorize LLLSA PCPA to share with or otherwise disclose to (a) the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor and (b) all persons with knowledge you identify in this complaint all the information you include in this complaint for purposes of the disciplinary proceeding you have initiated against the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor. This information will become part of LLLSA's PCPA records for that Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor.

CONSENT TO LLLSA PCPA RECEIVING HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN FROM CERTAIN THIRD PARTIES: In order for us to investigate and address your complaint pursuant to our Disciplinary Procedures for the Code of Professional Conduct, we may collect information, including health information about you and your children from the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor or any third party the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor identifies as being a person with knowledge of relevant facts about your complaint. By signing below you consent to us doing so.

If you submit the complaint without signing this consent, we may not process your complaint and will not share your personal data with the Breastfeeding Peer Counsellor.

The complaint must be signed by an individual with first-hand knowledge of the alleged violation(s) of the Code of Professional Conduct.

By signing this document, you attest that all the information in this complaint is true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If the allegations in your complaint are determined to be possible violations of the Code of Professional Conduct, you will be notified that your complaint has been opened for investigation. Conversely, if the allegations are determined not to be possible violations, you will receive notification that your complaint has been dismissed.

✉ email to pcp@llsa.org and cc info@llsa.org and mark "BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELLORS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMPLAINT"