



THE CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

World's Largest Registry of Pedigreed Cats

260 East Main Street • Alliance Ohio 44601

Tel: 330-680-4070 • Fax: 330-680-4633 • Web: www.cfa.org

PROCEDURE TO FILE A PROTEST

CFA Protest Procedure: There is no fee to file a protest.

CFA's procedure to review a protest regarding a violation of CFA Show Rules or Constitution by a CFA breeder, requires that the person who is directly involved complete and SIGN the enclosed CFA Protest Form (Show Rule or Article of Constitution* allegedly violated must be included-Part II). The name/address of the party you are citing in the complaint must be included-Part I). *Allegation of forgery (violation of CFA Constitution XV4b): provide us with 5 separate samples of your signature prior to date on paperwork in question (samples may be in the form of 5 separate checks).

Please Note:

- If the initial protest is returned to complainant for any reason prior to processing, the filing date then becomes the date it is resubmitted;
- **Do not use highlighters** to emphasize wording; highlighted areas do not photocopy;
- If more writing space is required in Part V of the CFA Protest Form, please use white or light-colored paper (letter size);
- It is helpful if the most important points are first or otherwise emphasized;
- Because most matters will now be resolved by the written submissions of the parties, it is important that both the protest and the responses be complete. It will be the responsibility of the parties to attach any CFA records necessary to support a claim, including registration documents. Witness statements must be in writing, and included in the filings and
- It is advised that all parties be as thorough as necessary, but please try to include only those matters necessary to understand the case. Name-calling is strongly discouraged. Long, rambling, disjointed recitations, with no relationship to the matters alleged, can be confusing and take away from the impact of the evidence.

The Protest Committee does not attempt to evaluate, resolve or offer comments about situations which involve personal or contractual disputes (e.g. dissatisfaction may arise from a variety of reasons including quality of the cat is not what was expected, refunds, reimbursements, replacement of cat, etc.). We suggest you seek legal advice if this is an area of concern to you or seek possible solution through small claims court. CFA does not license or endorse anyone engaged in the commerce of selling pedigreed cats and, therefore, has no control over the business practices of those involved in such transactions.

While we attempt to foster sound breeding practices through education and research, our jurisdiction is limited to the practices one must follow to ensure proper identification of cats registered with CFA. Registration, in itself, does not guarantee the quality or health of a cat. CFA is always concerned about the sale of a sick cat or a cat with health problems. However, we can not substitute for a court of law. For information on CFA resources to try to resolve contract disputes, please see below "How Contract Disputes (including "sick kitten" complaints) are Handled".

The process begins by filing the official protest form (along with all evidence, witness statements and supporting documentation). The matter is assigned a docket number, and a copy of the protest and all supporting documents are sent to the respondent (the party charged). The respondent has 21 days to submit a written response to Central Office (28 days if respondent is outside of US or Canada). In the absence of a response, a recommendation may be made on the basis of the strength of the supporting information. This response is then sent to the complainant (the one who filed the protest) who has 14 days to rebut in writing (to Central Office) any “new” issues raised in the response (21 days if complainant is outside of US or Canada). Either side could petition the Protest Committee for more time, or permission to submit additional evidence. After the submission of the case, the Protest Committee will determine if probable cause exists for conviction (all recommendations prepared for the CFA Executive Board are confidential). If the recommendation is to find a party guilty, the report would also recommend sentence under the CFA Boards’ guidelines. The Protest Committee report will be presented at the upcoming board meeting. If the CFA Executive Board accepts the recommendation of no probable cause, the case is marked closed and you will receive notification from the central office approximately 2 weeks after the board meeting. If the recommendation is to find a party guilty, the CFA Board will make its tentative rulings based on the Protest Committee report and the written submissions of the parties. After the tentative Board decision, the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) are notified in writing of both the decision and the proposed sentence. The Respondent(s) have 30 days to pay a \$250.00 “Appeal Fee” to request a full hearing with oral testimony (fee payable to CFA, mail to Central Office Attn: Protests; please show assigned docket # on all correspondence; Complainant(s) cannot appeal. The CFA legal counsel will advise you by letter of the scheduled hearing date. The parties may elect whether the hearing would be closed or public. The hearing would take place in front of a subcommittee of the Executive Board, consisting of at least 5 CFA board members (including the President and the Protest Chair). This hearing would take place the day before the next CFA Board meeting (Friday before February Board meeting; Wednesday before the June meeting; no hearings take place in October as meeting is conducted by teleconference call and does not facilitate hearings). This subcommittee would hear and consider any live testimony and/or additional evidence, and present their recommendation to the full Executive Board, along with your complete file. You would not be permitted to testify before the full CFA Board. Following the board meeting, the CFA legal counsel would advise you of the Board's action. Once cited for a hearing, the Protest Committee transfers the case to the CFA legal counsel who handles it from that point on. If a hearing request is not made within 30 days of the tentative decision notification, the tentative Board decision becomes final.

How Contract Disputes (including "sick kitten" complaints) are handled:

Generally, the protest process is not appropriate for contract disputes. Contract dispute includes, among other things: failure to deliver a cat/kitten, failure to pay money or refund a deposit, delivery of the wrong cat/kitten, failure to deliver papers or records, or complaints concerning the quality or health of a cat or kitten delivered. Every contract (including the sale or exchange of a cat) is governed by the law of the state or country having "subject matter jurisdiction." The local courts know the contract laws for their state and the, rather than CFA, would be the ones to enforce them.

That being said, CFA has a person called our "Ombudsman" whose job it is to handle problems that don't fit into the system. The ombudsman is someone who investigates complaints and tries to mediate settlements between aggrieved parties or between a party and CFA. The ombudsman is only there to open lines of communication and suggest alternatives. They can not impose solutions but can facilitate discussion. Contact information for the ombudsman may be found at: <http://www.cfa.org/client/exbcontacts.aspx>

If the ombudsman is unable to help you resolve the matter there is another option. If the other party has a history of contract problems it may be investigated. The CFA Animal Welfare Committee keeps track of unresolved complaints against breeders. If the ombudsman is unable to get the parties working together you can contact the Animal Welfare Committee. Contact information for CFA Animal Welfare may be found at: <http://www.cfa.org/client/exbcontacts.aspx>

Other agencies which you may want to contact, if applicable, are your local/county department of consumer affairs, the better business bureau, the board of health or the local organization which is empowered to do inspections of premises. Should a local agency deem the situation to be an animal welfare/cruelty case, we ask that you advise us by submitting a copy of the actual report that charges the individual or a newspaper clipping.

Requests for Complaint Information:

We do not dispense information regarding if a complaint has been received against an individual, the number of complaints received, or the content of a complaint. Protest information that is for public review is printed in the meeting minutes of the CFA Board of Directors which may be found online at: <http://www.cfa.org/client/minutesindex.aspx> Final actions on disciplinary matters (protests) are listed in the minutes. Only matters for which there has been a finding of guilty are available to the public. For persons still under suspension or other punishment from a protest, the Disciplinary/Suspension/Probation page may be found at: <http://www.cfa.org/Portals/0/documents/org/disciplinary-suspensions.pdf> This list reflects Show Rule/Constitutional Violations or cases of Animal Welfare/Cruelty that have been brought to the Board and in which the Board suspended and/or fined the party (type of violation is not printed). The list does not reflect complaints regarding, for example, the sale of a sick cat or a breeder that does not provide the promised paperwork. Once a person completes their sentence, their name is removed from this list but remains in the minutes of the board meeting at which they were sentenced.

For additional CFA Protest Forms, you may photocopy the form, call central office and advise your name and address with a request to send a CFA Protest Form, or print-out the form available on-line at <http://www.cfa.org/Portals/0/documents/forms/protest-procedure.pdf> along with the procedure letter at <http://www.cfa.org/Portals/0/documents/forms/protest-form.pdf>

Completed and signed protest forms (handwritten signature Part VI) may be mailed to CFA Central Office, Attn. Protest Committee OR may be sent electronically; All documents must be readable.