

FSRA

Financial Services Regulatory
Authority of Ontario



www.fsrao.ca



2023 Credentialing body Annual Information Return report

May 2025

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Executive summary

To strengthen protection for Ontarians seeking financial advice, FSRA ensures that individuals using the Financial Planner (FP) and Financial Advisor (FA) titles meet minimum education standards, are being actively supervised by a FSRA-approved credentialing body, and are subject to a complaints and discipline process.

The 2023 Credentialing body Annual Information Return (AIR) Report compares AIR data from 2022 and 2023 to monitor trends in Ontario's Financial Planners and Financial Advisors sector. Four (4) FSRA-approved credentialing bodies were required to complete and submit AIRs in 2022 and 2023. The data collected from credentialing bodies provides insights about the sector, such as continuing education (CE) compliance rates, complaints received among credentialing bodies, and disciplinary actions imposed on credential holders.

Some of the key observations from this report include the following:

- The total number of credentials issued to individuals to use the Financial Advisor and/or Financial Planner titles increased by 19% from 2022 to 2023.
- The total number of complaints about credential holders doubled from 36 in 2022 to 74 in 2023.
- Between 2022 and 2023, disciplinary actions against credential holders decreased by 86% and credential revocations decreased by 97%.

Insights from the AIR report enhance FSRA's understanding of the sector, informing its risk-based supervisory efforts.

About FSRA

FSRA is an independent regulatory agency created to enhance public confidence in non-securities financial services and pensions in Ontario. FSRA promotes high standards of business conduct by regulating financial services sectors, including the FP/FA sector.

About the 2023 Credentialing body Annual Information Return Report

The 2023 AIR Report is designed to monitor and evaluate trends and developments in the FP/FA sector. Understanding the sector's trends and developments assists FSRA in forming risk-based supervision plans and establishing policy direction. Sector trends also help assess how credentialing bodies are adapting as regulated entities, with the goal of fostering a strong regulatory culture at the credentialing bodies.

The AIR Report also promotes transparency and disclosure of information within the sector. The disclosure of sector data helps FSRA identify and monitor emerging trends and risks, with the aim of enhanced consumer protection.

About the Annual Information Return

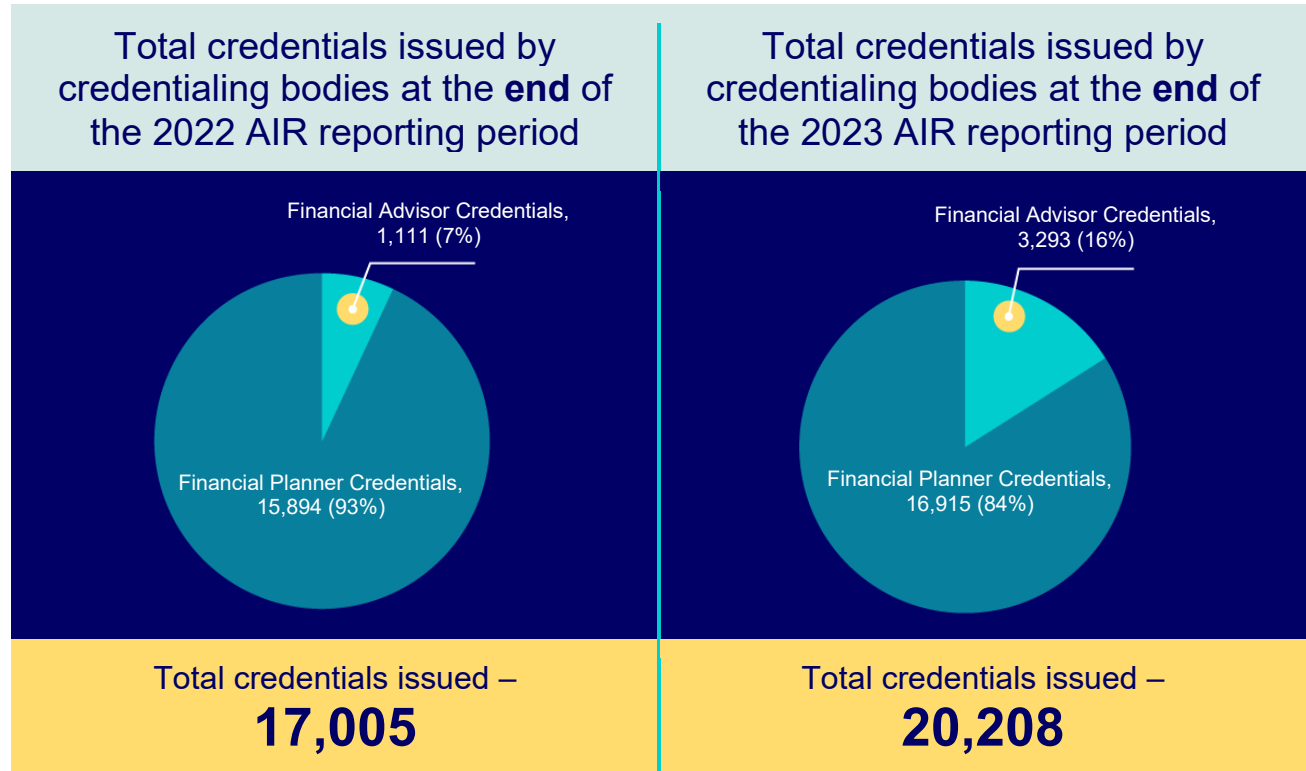
The AIR collects information about credentialing bodies' business practices and general title usage information for the previous calendar year.

Credentialing bodies are required to complete and submit the AIR by March 31 of each year. Credentialing bodies may visit the [Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Industry section on FSRA's website](#) to learn more about their legal obligations and other relevant FSRA publications and resources for the sector.

Four (4) [FSRA-approved credentialing bodies](#) were required to complete and submit the 2022 and 2023 AIRs:

1. FP Canada
2. Institute of Advanced Financial Education (IAFE)
3. Canadian Securities Institute (CSI)
4. Canadian Institute of Financial Planning (CIFP)

Credential holders overview



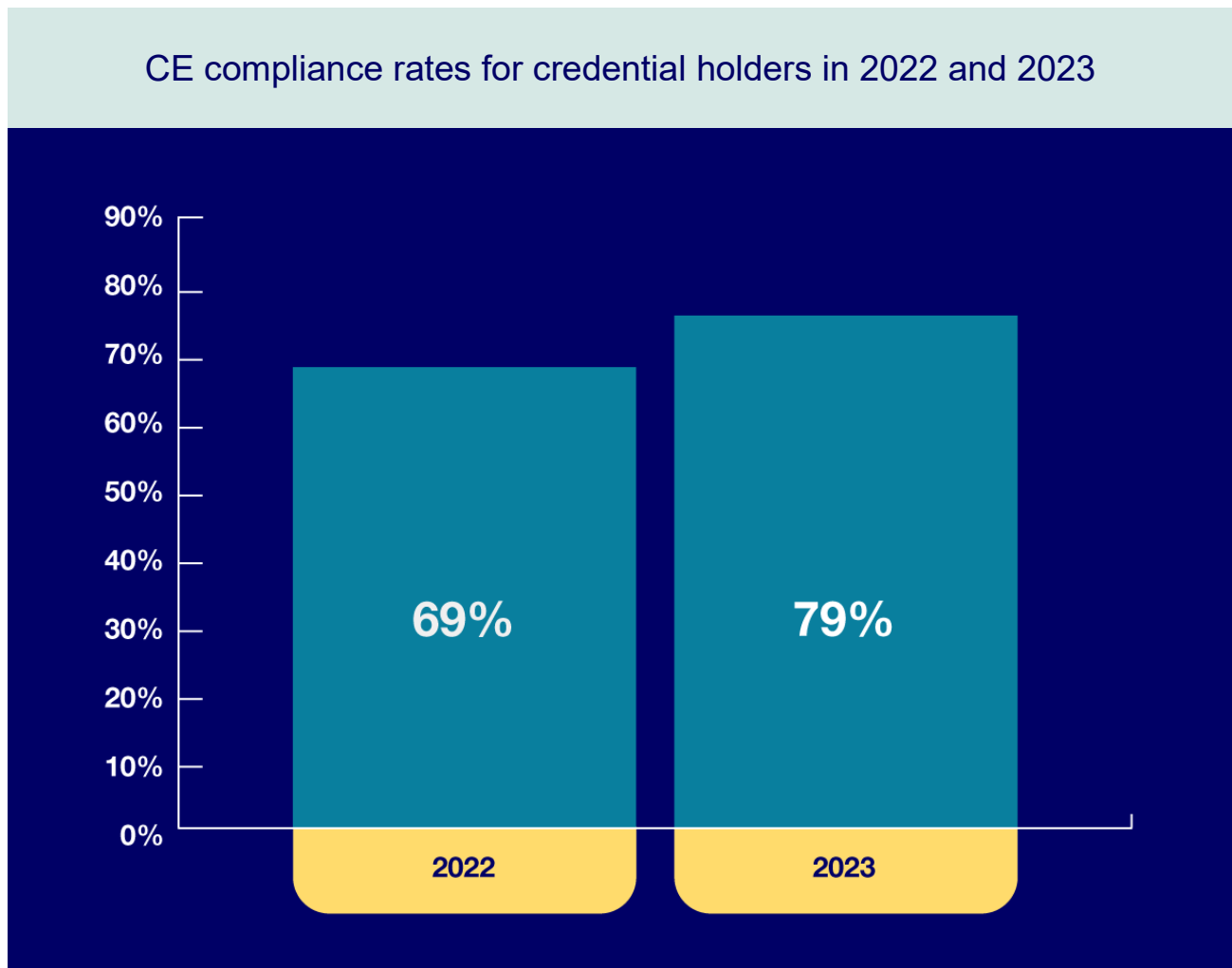
Key observations

- The total number of credentials issued to individuals to use the Financial Advisor and/or Financial Planner titles increased by 19% from 2022 to 2023.
- The total number of credentials issued to individuals to use the Financial Advisor title increased by 196% from 2022 to 2023.
- The total number of credentials issued to individuals to use the Financial Planner title increased by 6% from 2022 to 2023.

Continuing Education (CE) compliance statistics

All credentialing bodies must establish CE requirements for their credential holders that align with the technical knowledge requirements for the Financial Planner and Financial Advisor titles. FSRA collects CE compliance data from credentialing bodies to ensure that individuals using the FP and FA titles stay up to date with industry advancements and best practices, enabling them to better serve consumers.

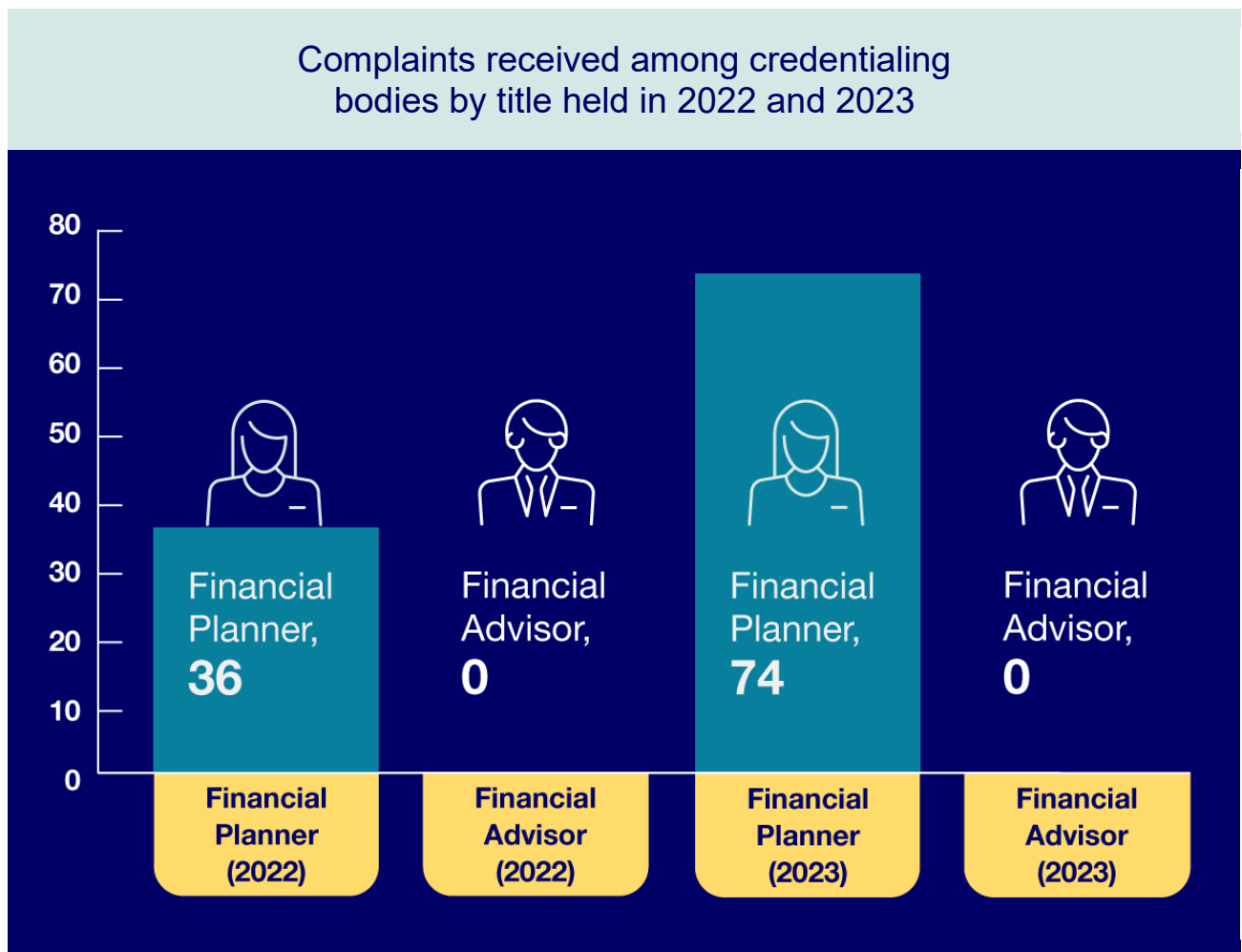
Using the CE audit sample sizes and CE compliance data reported by credentialing bodies on the 2022 and 2023 AIRs, FSRA extrapolated the overall CE compliance rates for the population of credential holders for 2022 and 2023.








Complaint statistics

Credentialing bodies are responsible for overseeing the professional conduct and activities of individuals holding approved credentials. Credentialing bodies receive complaints from the public and adjudicate them in accordance with their code of ethics and professional standards to uphold professionalism in the industry. FSRA uses complaint data from approved credentialing bodies to monitor trends and inform our supervisory efforts, with the goal of protecting consumers in Ontario.

Below are the complaint statistics as reported in 2022 and 2023:



Credentialing bodies' complaint statistics

| | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|---|--|
|  | 36 complaints were received by the credentialing bodies | 74 complaints were received by the credentialing bodies |
|  | 67% of complaints received in 2022 were resolved and closed by credentialing bodies within the AIR reporting period | 68% of complaints received in 2023 were resolved and closed by credentialing bodies within the AIR reporting period |
|  | 10 complaints were escalated to credentialing bodies' respective disciplinary committee(s) during the AIR reporting period | 23 complaints were escalated to credentialing bodies' respective disciplinary committee(s) during the AIR reporting period |
|  | <p>Common complaint themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of due diligence in providing financial advice or services • Product suitability and product misrepresentation issues • Failure to obtain clear express consent from client(s) | <p>Common complaint themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of due diligence in providing financial advice or services • Product suitability issues • Misrepresentation/dishonest conduct in providing financial advice or services |
|  | <p>Common complaint resolution methods reported among credentialing bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning / caution letter outlining professional obligations • Referral to disciplinary panel for disciplinary action | <p>Common complaint resolution methods reported among credentialing bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning / caution letter outlining professional obligations • Referral to disciplinary panel for disciplinary action |

Key observations

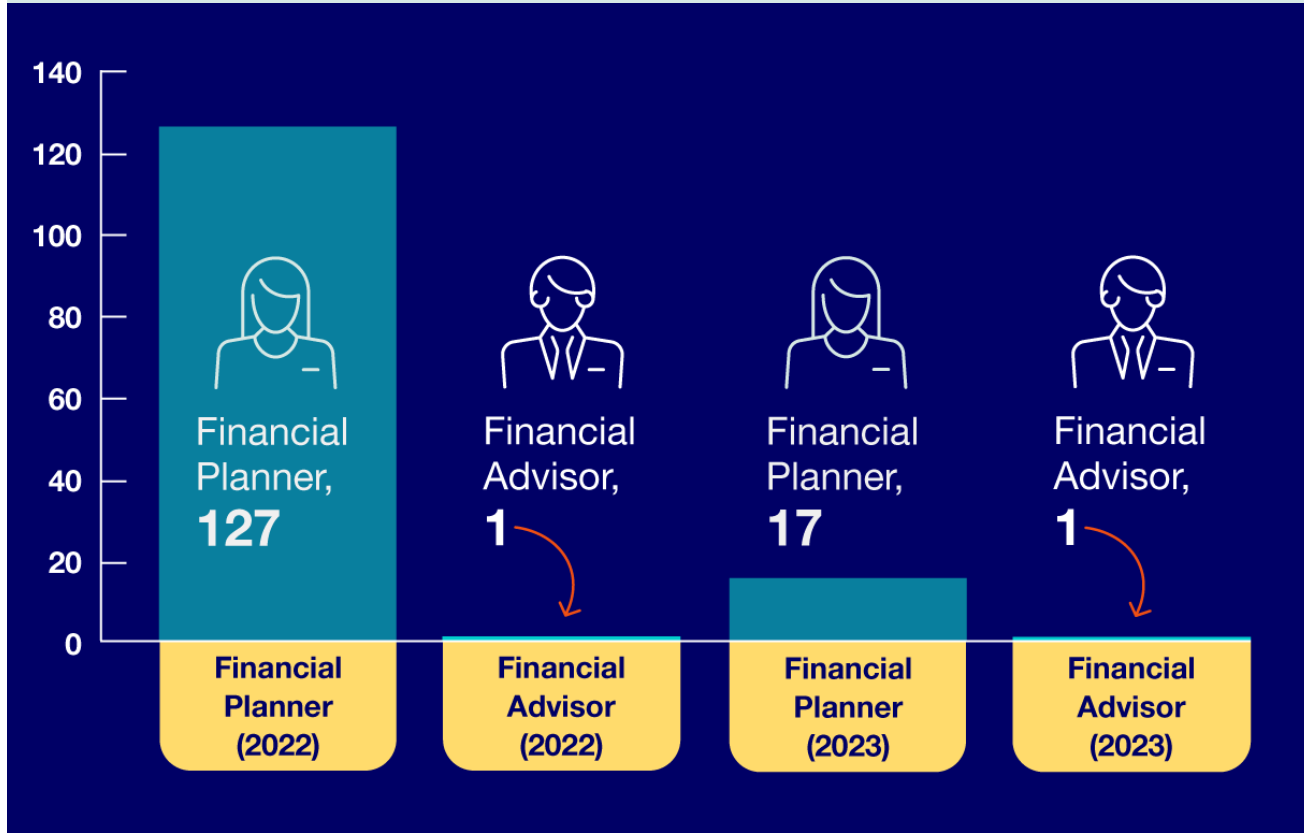
- The total number of complaints reported by credentialing bodies has doubled between 2022 and 2023 (36 complaints reported in 2022 AIR vs. 74 complaints reported in 2023 AIR).
- Complaint resolution methods remained consistent between 2022 and 2023.

Disciplinary/enforcement statistics



Credentialing bodies impose disciplinary/enforcement actions against credential holders for misconduct and non-compliance with their code of ethics and professional standards. Disciplinary data from approved credentialing bodies is used to monitor trends and inform FSRA's supervisory efforts, ensuring integrity among financial professionals and protecting consumers.



Below are the disciplinary/enforcement statistics as reported in 2022 and 2023:

Disciplinary actions imposed by credentialing bodies by title held in 2022 and 2023



Credentialing bodies' disciplinary / enforcement statistics

| | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|--|---|
|  | 128 disciplinary actions imposed on credential holders | 18 disciplinary actions imposed on credential holders |
|  | 116 credentials were revoked | 4 credentials were revoked |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
|  | <p>Common non-compliance themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credential holder suitability issues • Non-payment of renewal fees • Conflict of interest issues • Failure to meet continuing education requirements | <p>Common non-compliance themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to exercise due diligence in learning clients' financial situations/objectives • Unsuitable product recommendations • Alteration of client information/documents without client authorization |
|  | <p>Common disciplinary / enforcement outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credential revocation • Credential suspension • Imposition of additional mandatory CE requirements • Warning letters | <p>Common disciplinary / enforcement outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credential revocation • Credential suspension • Imposition of additional mandatory CE requirements • Warning letters |

Key observation:

- Between 2022 and 2023, disciplinary actions and revocations decreased by 86% and 97%, respectively. The number of disciplinary actions in 2022 was primarily attributed to non-payment of renewal fees by credential holders. By 2023, non-payment of renewal fees was no longer a significant issue, which explains the reduction in disciplinary actions by the credentialing bodies.

Methodology

Filing period: The 2022 AIR was made available to all four (4) approved credentialing bodies on January 16, 2023. All four (4) approved credentialing bodies submitted the 2022 AIR by the deadline of March 31, 2023.

The 2023 AIR was made available to all four (4) approved credentialing bodies on January 16, 2024. All four (4) approved credentialing bodies submitted the 2023 AIR by the deadline of March 31, 2024.

Error detection: Data was subjected to quality checks to detect errors that appear to be clear and obvious. Both qualitative and quantitative data may have been adjusted to facilitate aggregation. FSRA followed up with credentialing bodies to verify the accuracy of the submitted data, as necessary.

Data accuracy: The 2022 and 2023 AIRs gathered data from all four (4) approved credentialing bodies. Credentialing bodies submitted their AIRs directly to FSRA. The information provided in the AIR is subject to data validation checks and FSRA follows-up with credentialing bodies, as necessary.

Appendix

See the appendix below for a summary of the aggregate responses to the AIR questions.

[Appendix data](#) 