

151.071 DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Subdivision 1. **Forms of disciplinary action.** When the board finds that a licensee, registrant, or applicant has engaged in conduct prohibited under subdivision 2, it may do one or more of the following:

- (1) deny the issuance of a license or registration;
- (2) refuse to renew a license or registration;
- (3) revoke the license or registration;
- (4) suspend the license or registration;

(5) impose limitations, conditions, or both on the license or registration, including but not limited to: the limitation of practice to designated settings; the limitation of the scope of practice within designated settings; the imposition of retraining or rehabilitation requirements; the requirement of practice under supervision; the requirement of participation in a diversion program such as that established pursuant to section 214.31 or the conditioning of continued practice on demonstration of knowledge or skills by appropriate examination or other review of skill and competence;

(6) impose a civil penalty not exceeding \$10,000 for each separate violation, the amount of the civil penalty to be fixed so as to deprive a licensee or registrant of any economic advantage gained by reason of the violation, to discourage similar violations by the licensee or registrant or any other licensee or registrant, or to reimburse the board for the cost of the investigation and proceeding, including but not limited to, fees paid for services provided by the Office of Administrative Hearings, legal and investigative services provided by the Office of the Attorney General, court reporters, witnesses, reproduction of records, board members' per diem compensation, board staff time, and travel costs and expenses incurred by board staff and board members; and

- (7) reprimand the licensee or registrant.

Subd. 2. **Grounds for disciplinary action.** The following conduct is prohibited and is grounds for disciplinary action:

(1) failure to demonstrate the qualifications or satisfy the requirements for a license or registration contained in this chapter or the rules of the board. The burden of proof is on the applicant to demonstrate such qualifications or satisfaction of such requirements;

(2) obtaining a license by fraud or by misleading the board in any way during the application process or obtaining a license by cheating, or attempting to subvert the licensing examination process. Conduct that subverts or attempts to subvert the licensing examination process includes, but is not limited to: (i) conduct that violates the security of the examination materials, such as removing examination materials from the examination room or having unauthorized possession of any portion of a future, current, or previously administered licensing examination; (ii) conduct that violates the standard of test administration, such as communicating with another examinee during administration of the examination, copying another examinee's answers, permitting another examinee to copy one's answers, or possessing unauthorized materials; or (iii) impersonating an examinee or permitting an impersonator to take the examination on one's own behalf;

(3) for a pharmacist, pharmacy technician, pharmacist intern, applicant for a pharmacist or pharmacy license, or applicant for a pharmacy technician or pharmacist intern registration, conviction of a felony reasonably related to the practice of pharmacy. Conviction as used in this subdivision includes a conviction of an offense that if committed in this state would be deemed a felony without regard to its designation

elsewhere, or a criminal proceeding where a finding or verdict of guilt is made or returned but the adjudication of guilt is either withheld or not entered thereon. The board may delay the issuance of a new license or registration if the applicant has been charged with a felony until the matter has been adjudicated;

(4) for a facility, other than a pharmacy, licensed or registered by the board, if an owner or applicant is convicted of a felony reasonably related to the operation of the facility. The board may delay the issuance of a new license or registration if the owner or applicant has been charged with a felony until the matter has been adjudicated;

(5) for a controlled substance researcher, conviction of a felony reasonably related to controlled substances or to the practice of the researcher's profession. The board may delay the issuance of a registration if the applicant has been charged with a felony until the matter has been adjudicated;

(6) disciplinary action taken by another state or by one of this state's health licensing agencies:

(i) revocation, suspension, restriction, limitation, or other disciplinary action against a license or registration in another state or jurisdiction, failure to report to the board that charges or allegations regarding the person's license or registration have been brought in another state or jurisdiction, or having been refused a license or registration by any other state or jurisdiction. The board may delay the issuance of a new license or registration if an investigation or disciplinary action is pending in another state or jurisdiction until the investigation or action has been dismissed or otherwise resolved; and

(ii) revocation, suspension, restriction, limitation, or other disciplinary action against a license or registration issued by another of this state's health licensing agencies, failure to report to the board that charges regarding the person's license or registration have been brought by another of this state's health licensing agencies, or having been refused a license or registration by another of this state's health licensing agencies. The board may delay the issuance of a new license or registration if a disciplinary action is pending before another of this state's health licensing agencies until the action has been dismissed or otherwise resolved;

(7) for a pharmacist, pharmacy, pharmacy technician, or pharmacist intern, violation of any order of the board, of any of the provisions of this chapter or any rules of the board or violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule reasonably pertaining to the practice of pharmacy;

(8) for a facility, other than a pharmacy, licensed by the board, violations of any order of the board, of any of the provisions of this chapter or the rules of the board or violation of any federal, state, or local law relating to the operation of the facility;

(9) engaging in any unethical conduct; conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public, or demonstrating a willful or careless disregard for the health, welfare, or safety of a patient; or pharmacy practice that is professionally incompetent, in that it may create unnecessary danger to any patient's life, health, or safety, in any of which cases, proof of actual injury need not be established;

(10) aiding or abetting an unlicensed person in the practice of pharmacy, except that it is not a violation of this clause for a pharmacist to supervise a properly registered pharmacy technician or pharmacist intern if that person is performing duties allowed by this chapter or the rules of the board;

(11) for an individual licensed or registered by the board, adjudication as mentally ill or developmentally disabled, or as a chemically dependent person, a person dangerous to the public, a sexually dangerous person, or a person who has a sexual psychopathic personality, by a court of competent jurisdiction, within or without this state. Such adjudication shall automatically suspend a license for the duration thereof unless the board orders otherwise;

(12) for a pharmacist or pharmacy intern, engaging in unprofessional conduct as specified in the board's rules. In the case of a pharmacy technician, engaging in conduct specified in board rules that would be unprofessional if it were engaged in by a pharmacist or pharmacist intern or performing duties specifically reserved for pharmacists under this chapter or the rules of the board;

(13) for a pharmacy, operation of the pharmacy without a pharmacist present and on duty except as allowed by a variance approved by the board;

(14) for a pharmacist, the inability to practice pharmacy with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of illness, use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other type of material or as a result of any mental or physical condition, including deterioration through the aging process or loss of motor skills. In the case of registered pharmacy technicians, pharmacist interns, or controlled substance researchers, the inability to carry out duties allowed under this chapter or the rules of the board with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of illness, use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other type of material or as a result of any mental or physical condition, including deterioration through the aging process or loss of motor skills;

(15) for a pharmacist, pharmacy, pharmacist intern, pharmacy technician, medical gas distributor, or controlled substance researcher, revealing a privileged communication from or relating to a patient except when otherwise required or permitted by law;

(16) for a pharmacist or pharmacy, improper management of patient records, including failure to maintain adequate patient records, to comply with a patient's request made pursuant to sections 144.291 to 144.298, or to furnish a patient record or report required by law;

(17) fee splitting, including without limitation:

(i) paying, offering to pay, receiving, or agreeing to receive, a commission, rebate, kickback, or other form of remuneration, directly or indirectly, for the referral of patients;

(ii) referring a patient to any health care provider as defined in sections 144.291 to 144.298 in which the licensee or registrant has a financial or economic interest as defined in section 144.6521, subdivision 3, unless the licensee or registrant has disclosed the licensee's or registrant's financial or economic interest in accordance with section 144.6521; and

(iii) any arrangement through which a pharmacy, in which the prescribing practitioner does not have a significant ownership interest, fills a prescription drug order and the prescribing practitioner is involved in any manner, directly or indirectly, in setting the price for the filled prescription that is charged to the patient, the patient's insurer or pharmacy benefit manager, or other person paying for the prescription or, in the case of veterinary patients, the price for the filled prescription that is charged to the client or other person paying for the prescription, except that a veterinarian and a pharmacy may enter into such an arrangement provided that the client or other person paying for the prescription is notified, in writing and with each prescription dispensed, about the arrangement, unless such arrangement involves pharmacy services provided for livestock, poultry, and agricultural production systems, in which case client notification would not be required;

(18) engaging in abusive or fraudulent billing practices, including violations of the federal Medicare and Medicaid laws or state medical assistance laws or rules;

(19) engaging in conduct with a patient that is sexual or may reasonably be interpreted by the patient as sexual, or in any verbal behavior that is seductive or sexually demeaning to a patient;

(20) failure to make reports as required by section 151.072 or to cooperate with an investigation of the board as required by section 151.074;

(21) knowingly providing false or misleading information that is directly related to the care of a patient unless done for an accepted therapeutic purpose such as the dispensing and administration of a placebo;

(22) aiding suicide or aiding attempted suicide in violation of section 609.215 as established by any of the following:

(i) a copy of the record of criminal conviction or plea of guilty for a felony in violation of section 609.215, subdivision 1 or 2;

(ii) a copy of the record of a judgment of contempt of court for violating an injunction issued under section 609.215, subdivision 4;

(iii) a copy of the record of a judgment assessing damages under section 609.215, subdivision 5; or

(iv) a finding by the board that the person violated section 609.215, subdivision 1 or 2. The board shall investigate any complaint of a violation of section 609.215, subdivision 1 or 2;

(23) for a pharmacist, practice of pharmacy under a lapsed or nonrenewed license. For a pharmacist intern, pharmacy technician, or controlled substance researcher, performing duties permitted to such individuals by this chapter or the rules of the board under a lapsed or nonrenewed registration. For a facility required to be licensed under this chapter, operation of the facility under a lapsed or nonrenewed license or registration; and

(24) for a pharmacist, pharmacist intern, or pharmacy technician, termination or discharge from the health professionals services program for reasons other than the satisfactory completion of the program.

Subd. 3. **Automatic suspension.** (a) A license or registration issued under this chapter to a pharmacist, pharmacist intern, pharmacy technician, or controlled substance researcher is automatically suspended if:

(1) a guardian of a licensee or registrant is appointed by order of a court pursuant to sections 524.5-101 to 524.5-502, for reasons other than the minority of the licensee or registrant; or

(2) the licensee or registrant is committed by order of a court pursuant to chapter 253B. The license or registration remains suspended until the licensee is restored to capacity by a court and, upon petition by the licensee or registrant, the suspension is terminated by the board after a hearing.

(b) For a pharmacist, pharmacy intern, or pharmacy technician, upon notice to the board of a judgment of, or a plea of guilty to, a felony reasonably related to the practice of pharmacy, the license or registration of the regulated person may be automatically suspended by the board. The license or registration will remain suspended until, upon petition by the regulated individual and after a hearing, the suspension is terminated by the board. The board may indefinitely suspend or revoke the license or registration of the regulated individual if, after a hearing before the board, the board finds that the felonious conduct would cause a serious risk of harm to the public.

(c) For a facility that is licensed or registered by the board, upon notice to the board that an owner of the facility is subject to a judgment of, or a plea of guilty to, a felony reasonably related to the operation of the facility, the license or registration of the facility may be automatically suspended by the board. The license or registration will remain suspended until, upon petition by the facility and after a hearing, the suspension is terminated by the board. The board may indefinitely suspend or revoke the license or registration

of the facility if, after a hearing before the board, the board finds that the felonious conduct would cause a serious risk of harm to the public.

(d) For licenses and registrations that have been suspended or revoked pursuant to paragraphs (a) and (b), the regulated individual may have a license or registration reinstated, either with or without restrictions, by demonstrating clear and convincing evidence of rehabilitation, as provided in section 364.03. If the regulated individual has the conviction subsequently overturned by court decision, the board shall conduct a hearing to review the suspension within 30 days after the receipt of the court decision. The regulated individual is not required to prove rehabilitation if the subsequent court decision overturns previous court findings of public risk.

(e) For licenses and registrations that have been suspended or revoked pursuant to paragraph (c), the regulated facility may have a license or registration reinstated, either with or without restrictions, conditions, or limitations, by demonstrating clear and convincing evidence of rehabilitation of the convicted owner, as provided in section 364.03. If the convicted owner has the conviction subsequently overturned by court decision, the board shall conduct a hearing to review the suspension within 30 days after receipt of the court decision. The regulated facility is not required to prove rehabilitation of the convicted owner if the subsequent court decision overturns previous court findings of public risk.

(f) The board may, upon majority vote of a quorum of its appointed members, suspend the license or registration of a regulated individual without a hearing if the regulated individual fails to maintain a current name and address with the board, as described in paragraphs (h) and (i), while the regulated individual is: (1) under board investigation, and a notice of conference has been issued by the board; (2) party to a contested case with the board; (3) party to an agreement for corrective action with the board; or (4) under a board order for disciplinary action. The suspension shall remain in effect until lifted by the board to the board's receipt of a petition from the regulated individual, along with the current name and address of the regulated individual.

(g) The board may, upon majority vote of a quorum of its appointed members, suspend the license or registration of a regulated facility without a hearing if the regulated facility fails to maintain a current name and address of the owner of the facility with the board, as described in paragraphs (h) and (i), while the regulated facility is: (1) under board investigation, and a notice of conference has been issued by the board; (2) party to a contested case with the board; (3) party to an agreement for corrective action with the board; or (4) under a board order for disciplinary action. The suspension shall remain in effect until lifted by the board pursuant to the board's receipt of a petition from the regulated facility, along with the current name and address of the owner of the facility.

(h) An individual licensed or registered by the board shall maintain a current name and home address with the board and shall notify the board in writing within 30 days of any change in name or home address. An individual regulated by the board shall also maintain a current business address with the board as required by section 214.073. For an individual, if a name change only is requested, the regulated individual must request a revised license or registration. The board may require the individual to substantiate the name change by submitting official documentation from a court of law or agency authorized under law to receive and officially record a name change. In the case of an individual, if an address change only is requested, no request for a revised license or registration is required. If the current license or registration of an individual has been lost, stolen, or destroyed, the individual shall provide a written explanation to the board.

(i) A facility licensed or registered by the board shall maintain a current name and address with the board. A facility shall notify the board in writing within 30 days of any change in name. A facility licensed or registered by the board but located outside of the state must notify the board within 30 days of an address

change. A facility licensed or registered by the board and located within the state must notify the board at least 60 days in advance of a change of address that will result from the move of the facility to a different location and must pass an inspection at the new location as required by the board. If the current license or registration of a facility has been lost, stolen, or destroyed, the facility shall provide a written explanation to the board.

Subd. 4. **Effective dates.** A suspension, revocation, condition, limitation, qualification, or restriction of a license or registration shall be in effect pending determination of an appeal. A revocation of a license pursuant to subdivision 1 is not appealable and shall remain in effect indefinitely.

Subd. 5. **Conditions on reissued license.** In its discretion, the board may restore and reissue a license or registration issued under this chapter, but as a condition thereof may impose any disciplinary or corrective measure that it might originally have imposed.

Subd. 6. **Temporary suspension of license for pharmacists.** In addition to any other remedy provided by law, the board may, without a hearing, temporarily suspend the license of a pharmacist if the board finds that the pharmacist has violated a statute or rule that the board is empowered to enforce and continued practice by the pharmacist would create a serious risk of harm to the public. The suspension shall take effect upon written notice to the pharmacist, specifying the statute or rule violated. The suspension shall remain in effect until the board issues a final order in the matter after a hearing. At the time it issues the suspension notice, the board shall schedule a disciplinary hearing to be held pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. The pharmacist shall be provided with at least 20 days' notice of any hearing held pursuant to this subdivision. The hearing shall be scheduled to begin no later than 30 days after the issuance of the suspension order.

Subd. 7. **Temporary suspension of license for pharmacist interns, pharmacy technicians, and controlled substance researchers.** In addition to any other remedy provided by law, the board may, without a hearing, temporarily suspend the registration of a pharmacist intern, pharmacy technician, or controlled substance researcher if the board finds that the registrant has violated a statute or rule that the board is empowered to enforce and continued registration of the registrant would create a serious risk of harm to the public. The suspension shall take effect upon written notice to the registrant, specifying the statute or rule violated. The suspension shall remain in effect until the board issues a final order in the matter after a hearing. At the time it issues the suspension notice, the board shall schedule a disciplinary hearing to be held pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. The licensee or registrant shall be provided with at least 20 days' notice of any hearing held pursuant to this subdivision. The hearing shall be scheduled to begin no later than 30 days after the issuance of the suspension order.

Subd. 8. **Temporary suspension of license for pharmacies, drug wholesalers, drug manufacturers, medical gas manufacturers, and medical gas distributors.** In addition to any other remedy provided by law, the board may, without a hearing, temporarily suspend the license or registration of a pharmacy, drug wholesaler, drug manufacturer, medical gas manufacturer, or medical gas distributor if the board finds that the licensee or registrant has violated a statute or rule that the board is empowered to enforce and continued operation of the licensed facility would create a serious risk of harm to the public. The suspension shall take effect upon written notice to the licensee or registrant, specifying the statute or rule violated. The suspension shall remain in effect until the board issues a final order in the matter after a hearing. At the time it issues the suspension notice, the board shall schedule a disciplinary hearing to be held pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. The licensee or registrant shall be provided with at least 20 days' notice of any hearing held pursuant to this subdivision. The hearing shall be scheduled to begin no later than 30 days after the issuance of the suspension order.

Subd. 9. **Evidence.** In disciplinary actions alleging a violation of subdivision 2, clause (4), (5), (6), or (7), a copy of the judgment or proceeding under the seal of the court administrator or of the administrative agency that entered the same shall be admissible into evidence without further authentication and shall constitute prima facie evidence of the contents thereof.

Subd. 10. **Mental examination; access to medical data.** (a) If the board receives a complaint and has probable cause to believe that an individual licensed or registered by the board falls under subdivision 2, clause (14), it may direct the individual to submit to a mental or physical examination. For the purpose of this subdivision, every licensed or registered individual is deemed to have consented to submit to a mental or physical examination when directed in writing by the board and further to have waived all objections to the admissibility of the examining practitioner's testimony or examination reports on the grounds that the same constitute a privileged communication. Failure of a licensed or registered individual to submit to an examination when directed constitutes an admission of the allegations against the individual, unless the failure was due to circumstances beyond the individual's control, in which case a default and final order may be entered without the taking of testimony or presentation of evidence. Pharmacists affected under this paragraph shall at reasonable intervals be given an opportunity to demonstrate that they can resume the competent practice of the profession of pharmacy with reasonable skill and safety to the public. Pharmacist interns, pharmacy technicians, or controlled substance researchers affected under this paragraph shall at reasonable intervals be given an opportunity to demonstrate that they can competently resume the duties that can be performed, under this chapter or the rules of the board, by similarly registered persons with reasonable skill and safety to the public. In any proceeding under this paragraph, neither the record of proceedings nor the orders entered by the board shall be used against a licensed or registered individual in any other proceeding.

(b) Notwithstanding section 13.384, 144.651, or any other law limiting access to medical or other health data, the board may obtain medical data and health records relating to an individual licensed or registered by the board, or to an applicant for licensure or registration, without the individual's consent when the board receives a complaint and has probable cause to believe that the individual is practicing in violation of subdivision 2, clause (14), and the data and health records are limited to the complaint. The medical data may be requested from a provider, as defined in section 144.291, subdivision 2, paragraph (h), an insurance company, or a government agency, including the Department of Human Services. A provider, insurance company, or government agency shall comply with any written request of the board under this subdivision and is not liable in any action for damages for releasing the data requested by the board if the data are released pursuant to a written request under this subdivision, unless the information is false and the provider giving the information knew, or had reason to believe, the information was false. Information obtained under this subdivision is classified as private under sections 13.01 to 13.87.

Subd. 11. **Tax clearance certificate.** (a) In addition to the provisions of subdivision 1, the board may not issue or renew a license or registration if the commissioner of revenue notifies the board and the licensee or applicant for a license that the licensee or applicant owes the state delinquent taxes in the amount of \$500 or more. The board may issue or renew the license or registration only if (1) the commissioner of revenue issues a tax clearance certificate, and (2) the commissioner of revenue or the licensee, registrant, or applicant forwards a copy of the clearance to the board. The commissioner of revenue may issue a clearance certificate only if the licensee, registrant, or applicant does not owe the state any uncontested delinquent taxes.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the meanings given.

(1) "Taxes" are all taxes payable to the commissioner of revenue, including penalties and interest due on those taxes.

(2) "Delinquent taxes" do not include a tax liability if (i) an administrative or court action that contests the amount or validity of the liability has been filed or served, (ii) the appeal period to contest the tax liability has not expired, or (iii) the licensee or applicant has entered into a payment agreement to pay the liability and is current with the payments.

(c) In lieu of the notice and hearing requirements of subdivision 1, when a licensee, registrant, or applicant is required to obtain a clearance certificate under this subdivision, a contested case hearing must be held if the licensee or applicant requests a hearing in writing to the commissioner of revenue within 30 days of the date of the notice provided in paragraph (a). The hearing must be held within 45 days of the date the commissioner of revenue refers the case to the Office of Administrative Hearings. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the licensee or applicant must be served with 20 days' notice in writing specifying the time and place of the hearing and the allegations against the licensee or applicant. The notice may be served personally or by mail.

(d) A licensee or applicant must provide the licensee's or applicant's Social Security number and Minnesota business identification number on all license applications. Upon request of the commissioner of revenue, the board must provide to the commissioner of revenue a list of all licensees and applicants that includes the licensee's or applicant's name, address, Social Security number, and business identification number. The commissioner of revenue may request a list of the licensees and applicants no more than once each calendar year.

Subd. 12. **Limitation.** No board proceeding against a regulated person or facility shall be instituted unless commenced within seven years from the date of the commission of some portion of the offense or misconduct complained of except for alleged violations of subdivision 2, clause (21).

History: 2014 c 291 art 5 s 3; 1Sp2019 c 9 art 10 s 30