



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4734.31 Disciplinary actions by board.

Effective: October 9, 2021

Legislation: House Bill 263, House Bill 151, House Bill 442

(A) The state chiropractic board may take any of the actions specified in division (B) of this section against an individual who has applied for or holds a license to practice chiropractic in this state if any of the reasons specified in division (C) of this section for taking action against an individual are applicable. Except as provided in division (D) of this section, actions taken against an individual shall be taken in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code. The board may specify that any action it takes is a permanent action. The board's authority to take action against an individual is not removed or limited by the individual's failure to renew a license.

(B) In its imposition of sanctions against an individual, the board may do any of the following:

(1) Except as provided in division (I) of this section, refuse to issue, renew, restore, or reinstate a license to practice chiropractic or a certificate to practice acupuncture;

(2) Reprimand or censure a license holder;

(3) Place limits, restrictions, or probationary conditions on a license holder's practice;

(4) Impose a civil fine of not more than five thousand dollars according to a schedule of fines specified in rules that the board shall adopt in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

(5) Suspend a license to practice chiropractic or a certificate to practice acupuncture for a limited or indefinite period;

(6) Revoke a license to practice chiropractic or a certificate to practice acupuncture.

(C) The board may take the actions specified in division (B) of this section for any of the following reasons:



- (1) A plea of guilty to, a judicial finding of guilt of, or a judicial finding of eligibility for intervention in lieu of conviction for, a felony in any jurisdiction, in which case a certified copy of the court record shall be conclusive evidence of the conviction;
- (2) Commission of an act that constitutes a felony in this state, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the act was committed;
- (3) A plea of guilty to, a judicial finding of guilt of, or a judicial finding of eligibility for intervention in lieu of conviction for, a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, as determined by the board, in which case a certified copy of the court record shall be conclusive evidence of the matter;
- (4) Commission of an act involving moral turpitude that constitutes a misdemeanor in this state, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the act was committed;
- (5) A plea of guilty to, a judicial finding of guilt of, or a judicial finding of eligibility for intervention in lieu of conviction for, a misdemeanor committed in the course of practice, in which case a certified copy of the court record shall be conclusive evidence of the matter;
- (6) Commission of an act in the course of practice that constitutes a misdemeanor in this state, regardless of the jurisdiction in which the act was committed;
- (7) A violation or attempted violation of this chapter or the rules adopted under it governing the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture by a chiropractor licensed under this chapter;
- (8) Failure to cooperate in an investigation conducted by the board, including failure to comply with a subpoena or order issued by the board or failure to answer truthfully a question presented by the board at a deposition or in written interrogatories, except that failure to cooperate with an investigation shall not constitute grounds for discipline under this section if the board or a court of competent jurisdiction has issued an order that either quashes a subpoena or permits the individual to withhold the testimony or evidence in issue;
- (9) Engaging in an ongoing professional relationship with a person or entity that violates any



provision of this chapter or the rules adopted under it, unless the chiropractor makes a good faith effort to have the person or entity comply with the provisions;

(10) Retaliating against a chiropractor for the chiropractor's reporting to the board or any other agency with jurisdiction any violation of the law or for cooperating with the board of another agency in the investigation of any violation of the law;

(11) Aiding, abetting, assisting, counseling, or conspiring with any person in that person's violation of any provision of this chapter or the rules adopted under it, including the practice of chiropractic without a license, the practice of animal chiropractic in violation of section 4734.151 of the Revised Code, the practice of acupuncture without a certificate, or aiding, abetting, assisting, counseling, or conspiring with any person in that person's unlicensed practice of any other health care profession that has licensing requirements;

(12) With respect to a report or record that is made, filed, or signed in connection with the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture, knowingly making or filing a report or record that is false, intentionally or negligently failing to file a report or record required by federal, state, or local law or willfully impeding or obstructing the required filing, or inducing another person to engage in any such acts;

(13) Making a false, fraudulent, or deceitful statement to the board or any agent of the board during any investigation or other official proceeding conducted by the board under this chapter or in any filing that must be submitted to the board;

(14) Attempting to secure a license to practice chiropractic, authorization to practice animal chiropractic, or a certificate to practice acupuncture, or to corrupt the outcome of an official board proceeding, through bribery or any other improper means;

(15) Willfully obstructing or hindering the board or any agent of the board in the discharge of the board's duties;

(16) Habitually using drugs or intoxicants to the extent that the person is rendered unfit for the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture;



- (17) Inability to practice chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture according to acceptable and prevailing standards of care by reason of chemical dependency, mental illness, or physical illness, including conditions in which physical deterioration has adversely affected the person's cognitive, motor, or perceptive skills and conditions in which a chiropractor's continued practice may pose a danger to the chiropractor or the public;
- (18) Any act constituting gross immorality relative to the person's practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture, including acts involving sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, or sexual exploitation;
- (19) Exploiting a patient for personal or financial gain;
- (20) Failing to maintain proper, accurate, and legible records in the English language documenting each patient's care, including, as appropriate, records of the following: dates of treatment, services rendered, examinations, tests, x-ray reports, referrals, and the diagnosis or clinical impression and clinical treatment plan provided to the patient;
- (21) Except as otherwise required by the board or by law, disclosing patient information gained during the chiropractor's professional relationship with a patient without obtaining the patient's authorization for the disclosure;
- (22) Commission of willful or gross malpractice, or willful or gross neglect, in the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture;
- (23) Failing to perform or negligently performing an act recognized by the board as a general duty or the exercise of due care in the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture, regardless of whether injury results to a patient from the failure to perform or negligent performance of the act;
- (24) Engaging in any conduct or practice that impairs or may impair the ability to practice chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture safely and skillfully;



(25) Practicing, or claiming to be capable of practicing, beyond the scope of the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture as established under this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter;

(26) Accepting and performing professional responsibilities as a chiropractor, animal chiropractic practitioner, or chiropractor with a certificate to practice acupuncture when not qualified to perform those responsibilities, if the person knew or had reason to know that the person was not qualified to perform them;

(27) Delegating any of the professional responsibilities of a chiropractor, animal chiropractic practitioner, or chiropractor with a certificate to practice acupuncture to an employee or other individual when the delegating chiropractor knows or had reason to know that the employee or other individual is not qualified by training, experience, or professional licensure to perform the responsibilities;

(28) Delegating any of the professional responsibilities of a chiropractor, animal chiropractic practitioner, or chiropractor with a certificate to practice acupuncture to an employee or other individual in a negligent manner or failing to provide proper supervision of the employee or other individual to whom the responsibilities are delegated;

(29) Failing to refer a patient to another health care practitioner for consultation or treatment when the chiropractor knows or has reason to know that the referral is in the best interest of the patient;

(30) Obtaining or attempting to obtain any fee or other advantage by fraud or misrepresentation;

(31) Making misleading, deceptive, false, or fraudulent representations in the practice of chiropractic, animal chiropractic, or acupuncture;

(32) Being guilty of false, fraudulent, deceptive, or misleading advertising or other solicitations for patients or knowingly having professional connection with any person that advertises or solicits for patients in such a manner;

(33) Violation of a provision of any code of ethics established or adopted by the board under section



4734.16 of the Revised Code;

(34) Failing to meet the examination requirements for receipt of a license specified under section 4734.20 of the Revised Code;

(35) Actions taken for any reason, other than nonpayment of fees, by the chiropractic or acupuncture licensing authority of another state or country;

(36) Failing to maintain clean and sanitary conditions at the clinic, office, or other place in which chiropractic services, animal chiropractic services, or acupuncture services are provided;

(37) Except as provided in division (G) of this section:

(a) Waiving the payment of all or any part of a deductible or copayment that a patient, pursuant to a health insurance or health care policy, contract, or plan that covers the chiropractor's services, otherwise would be required to pay if the waiver is used as an enticement to a patient or group of patients to receive health care services from that chiropractor;

(b) Advertising that the chiropractor will waive the payment of all or any part of a deductible or copayment that a patient, pursuant to a health insurance or health care policy, contract, or plan that covers the chiropractor's services, otherwise would be required to pay.

(38) Failure to supervise an acupuncturist in accordance with the provisions of section 4762.11 of the Revised Code that are applicable to a supervising chiropractor.

(D) The adjudication requirements of Chapter 119. of the Revised Code apply to the board when taking actions against an individual under this section, except as follows:

(1) An applicant is not entitled to an adjudication for failing to meet the conditions specified under section 4734.20 of the Revised Code for receipt of a license that involve the board's examination on jurisprudence or the examinations of the national board of chiropractic examiners.

(2) A person is not entitled to an adjudication if the person fails to make a timely request for a



hearing, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

(3) In lieu of an adjudication, the board may accept the surrender of a license to practice chiropractic or certificate to practice acupuncture from a chiropractor.

(4) In lieu of an adjudication, the board may enter into a consent agreement with an individual to resolve an allegation of a violation of this chapter or any rule adopted under it. A consent agreement, when ratified by the board, shall constitute the findings and order of the board with respect to the matter addressed in the agreement. If the board refuses to ratify a consent agreement, the admissions and findings contained in the consent agreement shall be of no force or effect.

(E)(1) This section does not require the board to hire, contract with, or retain the services of an expert witness when the board takes action against a chiropractor concerning compliance with acceptable and prevailing standards of care in the practice of chiropractic or acupuncture. As part of an action taken concerning compliance with acceptable and prevailing standards of care, the board may rely on the knowledge of its members for purposes of making a determination of compliance, notwithstanding any expert testimony presented by the chiropractor that contradicts the knowledge and opinions of the members of the board.

(2) If the board conducts a review or investigation or takes action against a chiropractor concerning an allegation of harm to an animal from the practice of animal chiropractic, the board shall retain as an expert witness a licensed veterinarian who holds a current, valid certification from a credentialing organization specified in division (A)(3) of section 4734.151 of the Revised Code.

(F) The sealing of conviction records by a court shall have no effect on a prior board order entered under this section or on the board's jurisdiction to take action under this section if, based on a plea of guilty, a judicial finding of guilt, or a judicial finding of eligibility for intervention in lieu of conviction, the board issued a notice of opportunity for a hearing prior to the court's order to seal the records. The board shall not be required to seal, destroy, redact, or otherwise modify its records to reflect the court's sealing of conviction records.

(G) Actions shall not be taken pursuant to division (C)(37) of this section against any chiropractor who waives deductibles and copayments as follows:



(1) In compliance with the health benefit plan that expressly allows a practice of that nature. Waiver of the deductibles or copayments shall be made only with the full knowledge and consent of the plan purchaser, payer, and third-party administrator. Documentation of the consent shall be made available to the board upon request.

(2) For professional services rendered to any other person licensed pursuant to this chapter, to the extent allowed by this chapter and the rules of the board.

(H) As used in this section, "animal chiropractic" and "animal chiropractic practitioner" have the same meanings as in section 4734.151 of the Revised Code.

(I) The board shall not refuse to issue a license to an applicant because of a conviction, plea of guilty, judicial finding of guilt, judicial finding of eligibility for intervention in lieu of conviction, or the commission of an act that constitutes a criminal offense, unless the refusal is in accordance with section 9.79 of the Revised Code.

The Legislative Service Commission presents the text of this section as a composite of the section as amended by multiple acts of the General Assembly. This presentation recognizes the principle stated in R.C. 1.52(B) that amendments are to be harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation.