



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4723.35 Substance use disorder monitoring program.

Effective: March 20, 2019

Legislation: House Bill 119 - 132nd General Assembly

(A) As used in this section, "substance use disorder" means either of the following:

(1) The chronic and habitual use of alcoholic beverages to the extent that the user no longer can control the use of alcohol or endangers the user's health, safety, or welfare or that of others;

(2) The use of a controlled substance as defined in section 3719.01 of the Revised Code, a harmful intoxicant as defined in section 2925.01 of the Revised Code, or a dangerous drug as defined in section 4729.01 of the Revised Code, to the extent that the user becomes physically or psychologically dependent on the substance, intoxicant, or drug or endangers the user's health, safety, or welfare or that of others.

(B) The board of nursing may abstain from taking disciplinary action under section 4723.28 or 4723.86 of the Revised Code against an individual with a substance use disorder if it finds that the individual can be treated effectively and there is no impairment of the individual's ability to practice according to acceptable and prevailing standards of safe care. The board shall establish a substance use disorder monitoring program to monitor the registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, dialysis technicians, and certified community health workers against whom the board has abstained from taking action. The board shall develop the program, select the program's name, and designate a coordinator to administer the program.

(C) Determinations regarding an individual's eligibility for admission to, continued participation in, and successful completion of the monitoring program shall be made by the board's supervising member for disciplinary matters in accordance with rules adopted under division (D) of this section.

(D) The board shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code that establish the following:

(1) Eligibility requirements for admission to and continued participation in the monitoring program;



- (2) Terms and conditions that must be met to participate in and successfully complete the program;
- (3) Procedures for keeping confidential records regarding participants;
- (4) Any other requirements or procedures necessary to establish and administer the program.

(E)(1) As a condition of being admitted to the monitoring program, an individual shall surrender to the program coordinator the license or certificate that the individual holds. While the surrender is in effect, the individual is prohibited from engaging in the practice of nursing, engaging in the provision of dialysis care, or engaging in the provision of services that were being provided as a certified community health worker.

If the board's supervising member for disciplinary matters determines that a participant is capable of resuming practice according to acceptable and prevailing standards of safe care, the program coordinator shall return the participant's license or certificate. If the participant violates the terms and conditions of resumed practice, the coordinator shall require the participant to surrender the license or certificate as a condition of continued participation in the program. The coordinator may require the surrender only on the approval of the board's supervising member for disciplinary matters.

The surrender of a license or certificate on admission to the monitoring program or while participating in the program does not constitute an action by the board under section 4723.28 or 4723.86 of the Revised Code. The participant may rescind the surrender at any time and the board may proceed by taking action under section 4723.28 or 4723.86 of the Revised Code.

(2) If the program coordinator determines that a participant is significantly out of compliance with the terms and conditions for participation, the coordinator shall notify the board's supervising member for disciplinary matters and the supervising member shall determine whether to temporarily suspend the participant's license or certificate. The board shall notify the participant of the suspension by certified mail sent to the participant's last known address and shall refer the matter to the board for formal action under section 4723.28 or 4723.86 of the Revised Code.

(F) All of the following apply with respect to the receipt, release, and maintenance of records and



information by the monitoring program:

(1) The program coordinator shall maintain all program records in the board's office, and for each participant, shall retain the records for a period of two years following the participant's date of successful completion of the program.

(2) When applying to participate in the monitoring program, the applicant shall sign a waiver permitting the board to receive and release information necessary to determine whether the individual is eligible for admission. After being admitted, the participant shall sign a waiver permitting the board to receive and release information necessary to determine whether the individual is eligible for continued participation in the program. Information that may be necessary for the board's supervising member for disciplinary matters to determine eligibility for admission or continued participation in the monitoring program includes, but is not limited to, information provided to and by employers, probation officers, law enforcement agencies, peer assistance programs, health professionals, and treatment providers. No entity with knowledge that the information has been provided to the monitoring program shall divulge that knowledge to any other person.

(3) Except as provided in division (F)(4) of this section, all records pertaining to an individual's application for or participation in the monitoring program, including medical records, treatment records, and mental health records, shall be confidential. The records are not public records for the purposes of section 149.43 of the Revised Code and are not subject to discovery by subpoena or admissible as evidence in any judicial proceeding.

(4) The board may disclose information regarding a participant's progress in the program to any person or government entity that the participant authorizes in writing to be given the information. In disclosing information under this division, the board shall not include any information that is protected under section 5119.27 of the Revised Code or any federal statute or regulation that provides for the confidentiality of medical, mental health, or substance abuse records.

(G) In the absence of fraud or bad faith, the board as a whole, its individual members, and its employees and representatives are not liable for damages in any civil action as a result of disclosing information in accordance with division (F)(4) of this section. In the absence of fraud or bad faith,



any person reporting to the program with regard to an individual's substance use disorder, or the progress or lack of progress of that individual with regard to treatment, is not liable for damages in any civil action as a result of the report.