



Informed Patient Institute



Patient Safety Action Network

Patient Driven, Patient Led

<https://www.patientsafetyaction.org/>

What is a state Medical Board?

Medical boards are state government agencies established to protect the public from the unprofessional, improper and incompetent practice of medicine. They issue licenses to practice medicine, investigate complaints and discipline doctors who violate the law.

What type of information can I find about a Doctor from a state Medical Board?

Every state medical board has some public information about doctors licensed in their state on their website. The information is usually found on a “physician profile” you see after a search based on the physician's name. At minimum, you can find out whether the doctor has had any action taken against them by the Board (such as probation or restrictions). In some states, you can also find out about:

- Malpractice settlements
- Actions by medical boards in other states
- Federal actions (such as Drug Enforcement Agency/DEA) issues)
- Hospital disciplinary actions
- Other convictions (such as felonies, DUIs etc.)
- Information about training such medical school attended and whether they are board certified.

You may have to wade through legal documents to find out why the board took action in some states. In others, they provide a plain language summary right on the physician profile.

Can I complain about a physician?

Yes. Every state medical board takes complaints from patients, families and the public. In some states, there are online complaint forms. In others, you have to print out forms and mail them in with relevant material. States then review the complaint and, in some cases, pursue an investigation that can take many months, and in some cases years. Data indicates that relatively few complaints result in board actions being taken against physicians.

How does state licensure differ from Board Certification?

Many doctors decide to become specialists (such as dermatologists or orthopedists) after they complete their medical education and training. They pursue additional specialty-specific training, must pass an exam, and participate in ongoing learning to make sure they're up-to date in their field. Certification is not done by medical boards but by private organizations led by the particular specialty.

Where can I get more information?

DocInfo: Shows whether a doctor has been disciplined in any state - <https://www.docinfo.org/>

Certification Matters: Provides information about whether a doctor is board certified - <https://www.certificationmatters.org/>

A list of all State Medical Boards in the country with website links - <https://www.fsmb.org/contact-a-state-medical-board/>

Medical Board Roundtable (MBR) is a national coalition of patient advocates interested in state medical boards. It is a committee of the Patient Safety Action Network - <https://www.patientsafetyaction.org/medical-board-round-table>

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