

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE DIVISION[645]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rulemaking related to use of criminal convictions in eligibility determinations and initial licensing decisions and providing an opportunity for public comment

The Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensure hereby proposes to rescind Chapter 14, “Use of Criminal Convictions in Eligibility Determinations and Initial Licensing Decisions,” Iowa Administrative Code, and to adopt a new chapter with the same title.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code chapter 272C and Executive Order 10 (January 10, 2023).

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 272C.

Purpose and Summary

This proposed rulemaking clarifies the pathway to potential licensure for individuals with criminal convictions. The requirements set out in this rulemaking ensure a streamlined pathway while protecting the public through criteria that allows the board to review the complete criminal record, evidence of rehabilitation, and other information when making a determination on eligibility for licensure. This rulemaking implements recent legislation, 2020 Iowa Acts, House File 2627.

A public hearing was held November 21, 2023, after proper notice. No public comment was received.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking will have no fiscal impact on the State of Iowa. Staff salaries to support the work of the boards are covered by the Licensing and Regulation Fund established in 2023 Iowa Acts, Senate File 557. Licensing fees go to the Fund to cover operations of the regulated professional licensing boards.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, there will be a positive impact on jobs in Iowa since the rulemaking reduces the regulatory burdens on Iowans and allows Iowans to more freely engage in individual and business pursuits.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Department for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 481—Chapter 6.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written or oral comments concerning this proposed rulemaking. Written or oral comments in response to this rulemaking must be received by the Department no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 13, 2024. Comments should be directed to:

Emily DeRonde
Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing
6200 Park Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Phone: 515.249.7038
Email: emily.deronde@dia.iowa.gov

Public Hearing

Public hearings at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

February 13, 2024 9 to 9:20 a.m.	6200 Park Avenue Des Moines, Iowa Video call link: meet.google.com/isb-pmab-qob Or dial: +1 813.252.1868 PIN: 724 486 884# More phone numbers: tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450
February 14, 2024 9 to 9:20 a.m.	6200 Park Avenue Des Moines, Iowa Video call link: meet.google.com/isb-pmab-qob Or dial: +1 813.252.1868 PIN: 724 486 884# More phone numbers: tel.meet/isb-pmab-qob?pin=8352415222450

Persons who wish to make oral comments at a public hearing may be asked to state their names for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of this proposed rulemaking.

Any persons who intend to attend a public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department and advise of specific needs.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Rescind 645—Chapter 14 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 14

USE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS IN ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS AND INITIAL LICENSING DECISIONS

645—14.1(272C) Definitions.

“*Complete criminal record*” includes the complaint and judgment of conviction for each offense of which the applicant has been convicted, regardless of whether the offense is classified as a felony or a misdemeanor, and regardless of the jurisdiction in which the offense occurred.

“*Conviction*” means a finding, plea, or verdict of guilt made or returned in a criminal proceeding, even if the adjudication of guilt is deferred, withheld, or not entered. “Conviction” includes Alford pleas and pleas of nolo contendere.

“*Disqualifying offense*” means a conviction directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the profession pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.1(8).

“License” means any license, registration, or permit issued by the board.

645—14.2(272C) License application. Unless an applicant for licensure petitions the board for an eligibility determination pursuant to rule 645—14.3(272C), the applicant’s convictions will be reviewed when the board receives a completed license application.

14.2(1) An applicant must disclose all convictions on a license application. Failure to disclose all convictions is grounds for license denial or disciplinary action following license issuance.

14.2(2) An applicant with one or more convictions shall submit the complete criminal record for each conviction and a personal statement regarding whether each conviction directly relates to the practice of the profession in order for the license application to be considered complete.

14.2(3) An applicant must submit all evidence of rehabilitation that the applicant wishes to be considered by the board.

14.2(4) The board may deny a license if the applicant has a disqualifying offense unless the applicant demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant is rehabilitated pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.15.

14.2(5) An applicant with one or more disqualifying offenses who has been found rehabilitated must still satisfy all other requirements for licensure.

14.2(6) Any application fees paid will not be refunded if the license is denied.

645—14.3(272C) Eligibility determination.

14.3(1) An individual who has not yet submitted a completed license application may petition the board for a determination of whether one or more of the individual’s convictions are disqualifying offenses that would render the individual ineligible for licensure.

14.3(2) To petition the board for an eligibility determination of whether one or more of the petitioner’s convictions are disqualifying offenses, a petitioner shall submit all of the following:

- a. A completed petition for eligibility determination form;
- b. The complete criminal record for each of the petitioner’s convictions;
- c. A personal statement regarding whether each conviction directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the profession and why the board should find the petitioner rehabilitated;
- d. All evidence of rehabilitation that the petitioner wishes to be considered by the board; and
- e. Payment of a nonrefundable fee of \$25.

645—14.4(272C) Appeal. A petitioner deemed ineligible or an applicant denied a license due to a disqualifying offense may appeal the decision in the manner and time frame set forth in the board’s written decision. A timely appeal will initiate a nondisciplinary contested case proceeding. The board’s rules governing contested case proceedings will apply unless otherwise specified in this rule. If the petitioner or applicant fails to timely appeal, the board’s written decision will become a final order.

14.4(1) An administrative law judge will serve as the presiding officer of the nondisciplinary contested case proceeding, unless the board elects to serve as the presiding officer. When an administrative law judge serves as the presiding officer, the decision rendered shall be a proposed decision.

14.4(2) The contested case hearing shall be closed to the public, and the board’s review of a proposed decision shall occur in closed session.

14.4(3) The office of the attorney general shall represent the board’s initial ineligibility determination or license denial and shall have the burden of proof to establish that the petitioner or applicant’s convictions include at least one disqualifying offense. Upon satisfaction of this burden by a preponderance of the evidence by the office of the attorney general, the burden of proof shall shift to the petitioner or applicant to establish rehabilitation by clear and convincing evidence.

14.4(4) A petitioner or applicant must appeal an ineligibility determination or license denial in order to exhaust administrative remedies. A petitioner or applicant may only seek judicial review of an ineligibility determination or license denial after the issuance of a final order following a contested

case proceeding. Judicial review of the final order following a contested case proceeding shall be in accordance with Iowa Code chapter 17A.

645—14.5(272C) Future petitions or applications. If a final order determines a petitioner is ineligible, the petitioner may not submit a subsequent petition for eligibility determination or a license application prior to the date specified in the final order. If a final order denies a license application, the applicant may not submit a subsequent license application or a petition for eligibility determination prior to the date specified in the final order.

These rules are intended to implement 2020 Iowa Acts, House File 2627.