

**147.74 Professional titles or abbreviations — false use prohibited.**

1. Any person who falsely claims by the use of any professional title or abbreviation, either in writing, cards, signs, circulars, advertisements, the internet, or other written or electronic means, to be a practitioner of a profession other than the one under which the person holds a license or who fails to use the designations provided in [this section](#) shall be guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

2. A physician or surgeon may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, and shall add after the person’s name the letters, “M. D.”

3. An osteopathic physician and surgeon may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, and shall add after the person’s name the letters, “D. O.”, or the words “osteopathic physician and surgeon”.

4. A chiropractor may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, but shall add after the person’s name the letters, “D. C.” or the word, “chiropractor”.

5. A dentist may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, but shall add after the person’s name the letters “D. D. S.”, or “D. M. D.”, or the word “dentist” or “dental surgeon”. A dental hygienist may use the words “registered dental hygienist” or the letters “R. D. H.” after the person’s name. A dental assistant may use the words “registered dental assistant” or the letters “R. D. A.” after the person’s name.

6. A podiatric physician may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, but shall add after the person’s name the letters “D. P. M.” or the words “podiatric physician”.

7. A graduate of a school accredited by the board of optometry may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor”, but shall add after the person’s name the letters “O. D.”

8. A physical therapist registered or licensed under [chapter 148A](#) may use the words “physical therapist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “P. T.” after the person’s name. A physical therapist with an earned doctoral degree from an accredited school, college, or university may use the suffix designating the degree, or the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” and add after the person’s name the words “physical therapist”. An occupational therapist registered or licensed under [chapter 148B](#) may use the words “occupational therapist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “O. T.” after the person’s name. An occupational therapist with an earned doctoral degree from an accredited school, college, or university may use the suffix designating the degree, or the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” and add after the person’s name the words “occupational therapist”.

9. A physical therapist assistant licensed under [chapter 148A](#) may use the words “physical therapist assistant” after the person’s name or signify the same by use of the letters “P. T. A.” after the person’s name. An occupational therapy assistant licensed under [chapter 148B](#) may use the words “occupational therapy assistant” after the person’s name or signify the same by use of the letters “O. T. A.” after the person’s name.

10. A psychologist who possesses a doctoral degree may use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor” but shall add after the person’s name the word “psychologist”.

11. A speech pathologist with an earned doctoral degree in speech pathology obtained beyond a bachelor’s degree from an accredited school, college, or university, may use the suffix designating the degree, or the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” and add after the person’s name the words “speech pathologist”. An audiologist with an earned doctoral degree in audiology obtained beyond a bachelor’s degree from an accredited school, college, or university, may use the suffix designating the degree, or the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” and add after the person’s name the word “audiologist”.

12. A bachelor social worker licensed under [chapter 154C](#) may use the words “licensed bachelor social worker” or the letters “L. B. S. W.” after the person’s name. A master social worker licensed under [chapter 154C](#) may use the words “licensed master social worker” or the letters “L. M. S. W.” after the person’s name. An independent social worker licensed under [chapter 154C](#) may use the words “licensed independent social worker”, or the letters “L. I. S. W.” after the person’s name.

13. A marital and family therapist licensed under [chapter 154D](#) and [this chapter](#) may use the words “licensed marital and family therapist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “L. M. F. T.” after the person’s name. A marital and family therapist

licensed under [chapter 154D](#) and [this chapter](#) who possesses a doctoral degree may use the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” in conjunction with the person’s name, but shall add after the person’s name the words “licensed marital and family therapist”.

14. A mental health counselor licensed under [chapter 154D](#) and [this chapter](#) may use the words “licensed mental health counselor” after the person’s name. A mental health counselor licensed under [chapter 154D](#) and [this chapter](#) who possesses a doctoral degree may use the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” in conjunction with the person’s name, but shall add after the person’s name the words “licensed mental health counselor”.

15. A pharmacist who possesses a doctoral degree recognized by the accreditation council for pharmacy education from a college of pharmacy approved by the board of pharmacy or a doctor of philosophy degree in an area related to pharmacy may use the prefix “Doctor” or “Dr.” but shall add after the person’s name the word “pharmacist” or “Pharm. D.”

16. A physician assistant licensed under [chapter 148C](#) may use the words “physician assistant” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “P.A.” after the person’s name.

17. A massage therapist licensed under [chapter 152C](#) may use the words “licensed massage therapist” or the initials “L. M. T.” after the person’s name.

18. An acupuncturist licensed under [chapter 148E](#) may use the words “licensed acupuncturist” or the abbreviation “L. Ac.” after the person’s name.

19. A respiratory care practitioner licensed under [chapter 152B](#) and [this chapter](#) may use the title “respiratory care practitioner” or the letters “R. C. P.” after the person’s name.

20. An athletic trainer licensed under [chapter 152D](#) and [this chapter](#) may use the words “licensed athletic trainer” or the letters “LAT” after the person’s name.

21. A registered nurse licensed under [chapter 152](#) may use the words “registered nurse” or the letters “R. N.” after the person’s name. A licensed practical nurse licensed under [chapter 152](#) may use the words “licensed practical nurse” or the letters “L. P. N.” after the person’s name. An advanced registered nurse practitioner licensed under [chapter 152](#) or [152E](#) may use the words “advanced registered nurse practitioner” or the letters “A.R.N.P.” after the person’s name.

22. A sign language interpreter or transliterator licensed under [chapter 154E](#) and [this chapter](#) may use the title “licensed sign language interpreter” or the letters “L. I.” after the person’s name.

23. a. An orthotist licensed under [chapter 148F](#) may use the words “licensed orthotist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “L.O.” after the person’s name.

b. A pedorthist licensed under [chapter 148F](#) may use the words “licensed pedorthist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “L.ped.” after the person’s name.

c. A prosthetist licensed under [chapter 148F](#) may use the words “licensed prosthetist” after the person’s name or signify the same by the use of the letters “L.P.” after the person’s name.

24. A person who is licensed to engage in the practice of polysomnography shall have the right to use the title “polysomnographic technologist” or the letters “P.S.G.T.” after the person’s name. No other person may use that title or letters or any other words or letters indicating that the person is a polysomnographic technologist.

25. No other practitioner licensed to practice a profession under any of the provisions of this subtitle shall be entitled to use the prefix “Dr.” or “Doctor” unless the licensed practitioner possesses an earned doctoral degree. Such a practitioner shall reference the degree held after the person’s name.

[C31, 35, §2510-d1; C39, §2510.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §147.74; [81 Acts, ch 66, §1](#)]

[84 Acts, ch 1075, §11](#); [87 Acts, ch 215, §40](#); [88 Acts, ch 1225, §10](#); [90 Acts, ch 1168, §27](#); [91 Acts, ch 228, §1](#); [91 Acts, ch 229, §4](#); [92 Acts, ch 1137, §7](#); [92 Acts, ch 1183, §4](#); [93 Acts, ch 86, §13](#); [95 Acts, ch 108, §4](#); [96 Acts, ch 1035, §4](#); [96 Acts, ch 1036, §21](#); [98 Acts, ch 1053, §19](#); [99 Acts, ch 101, §1](#); [2000 Acts, ch 1053, §3](#); [2001 Acts, ch 58, §7](#); [2003 Acts, ch 93, §1, 14](#); [2004 Acts, ch 1045, §2](#); [2004 Acts, ch 1175, §424, 433](#); [2007 Acts, ch 10, §61](#); [2007 Acts, ch 215,](#)

§246; 2008 Acts, ch 1088, §31; 2012 Acts, ch 1101, §5; 2014 Acts, ch 1019, §1; 2015 Acts, ch 70, §6  
Referred to in §148A.7