

CHAPTER 36
DISCIPLINE

657—36.1(147,155A,272C) Authority. The board has the authority to impose discipline for any violations of Iowa Code chapters 124, 124B, 126, 147, 155A, 205, and 272C or the rules promulgated thereunder.

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.2(147,155A,272C) Definitions. For purposes of this chapter:

“*Board*” means the Iowa board of pharmacy.

“*License*” means any license, registration, or permit issued by the board, regardless of whether the license, registration, or permit is active.

“*Licensee*” means any person or entity possessing a license, registration, or permit issued by the board, regardless of whether the license, registration, or permit is active.

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.3(147,155A,272C) Complaints, investigations, and board action.

36.3(1) General. The board may, upon receipt of a written or verbal complaint or upon its own motion pursuant to other evidence received by the board, review and investigate alleged acts or omissions that may violate the board’s rules or that are related to the ethical or professional conduct of a licensee.

36.3(2) Confidentiality of investigative files. Complaint files, investigation files, and all other investigation reports and investigative information in the possession of the board or its employees or agents that relate to licensee discipline shall be confidential pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

36.3(3) Investigation of allegations. In order to determine if probable cause exists for a disciplinary hearing, the board, the executive director, or someone designated by the executive director shall cause an investigation to be made into the allegations of the complaint. The licensee that is the subject of the complaint shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present to the investigator a position or defense respecting the allegations of the complaint prior to the commencement of a contested case.

36.3(4) Investigatory subpoena powers. The board is authorized by law to subpoena books, papers, records, and any other real evidence, whether or not privileged or confidential under law, which are necessary for the board to decide whether to institute a contested case proceeding. The issuance of investigative subpoenas is governed by rule 657—36.4(17A,147,152,272C).

36.3(5) Investigative report. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) shall prepare a report for the board’s consideration. The report may contain evidence gathered by the investigator, findings made by the investigator, the licensee’s response to the allegations, and the applicable laws or rules alleged to have been violated.

36.3(6) Board consideration. The board shall review all investigations. Participation in the review of investigative materials shall not bar any board member from participating in any subsequent disciplinary proceeding.

a. Board action. After reviewing an investigation, the board may institute a disciplinary proceeding by filing one or more statements of charges, approve a combined statement of charges and settlement agreement, send a confidential letter of education or administrative warning to the licensee, request additional investigation, including peer review, refer the case to another regulatory authority with jurisdiction over the issue, or close the case without further investigation.

b. Confidential action. If the board determines that formal disciplinary action is not warranted, the board may send a confidential letter of education or administrative warning to the licensee. The purpose of a confidential letter of education or administrative warning is to alert the licensee to possible violations of Iowa law or board rules so that the licensee may address the issues. Confidential letters of education and administrative warnings do not constitute formal disciplinary action and are not open for inspection under Iowa Code chapter 22. The board shall maintain a copy of the confidential letter of education or administrative warning in the confidential investigative file regarding the licensee.

Confidential letters of education and administrative warnings may be used as evidence against a licensee in future administrative hearings.

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657—36.4(17A,147,152,272C) Issuance of investigatory subpoenas. The board shall have the authority to issue an investigatory subpoena in accordance with the provisions of Iowa Code section 17A.13.

36.4(1) Justification. The executive director or designee may, upon the written request of a board investigator or on the executive director's own initiative, subpoena books, papers, records and other real evidence which are necessary for the board to decide whether to institute a contested case proceeding. In the case of a subpoena for mental health records, each of the following conditions shall be satisfied prior to the issuance of the subpoena:

- a. The nature of the complaint reasonably justifies the issuance of a subpoena;
- b. Adequate safeguards have been established to prevent unauthorized disclosure;
- c. An express statutory mandate, articulated public policy, or other recognizable public interest favors access; and
- d. An attempt was made to notify the patient and to secure an authorization from the patient for release of the records at issue.

36.4(2) Contents of request. A written request for a subpoena or the executive director's written memorandum in support of the issuance of a subpoena shall contain the following:

- a. The name and address of the person to whom the subpoena will be directed;
- b. A specific description of the books, papers, records or other real evidence requested;
- c. An explanation of why the documents sought to be subpoenaed are necessary for the board to determine whether it should institute a contested case proceeding; and
- d. In the case of a subpoena request for mental health records, confirmation that the conditions described in subrule 36.4(1) have been satisfied.

36.4(3) Contents of subpoena. Each subpoena shall contain the following:

- a. The name and address of the person to whom the subpoena is directed;
- b. A description of the books, papers, records or other real evidence requested;
- c. The date, time and location for production or inspection and copying;
- d. The time within which a motion to quash or modify the subpoena must be filed;
- e. The signature, address and telephone number of the executive director or designee;
- f. The date of issuance;
- g. A return of service.

36.4(4) Motion to quash or modify. Any person who is aggrieved or adversely affected by compliance with the subpoena and who desires to challenge the subpoena must, within 14 days after service of the subpoena, or before the time specified for compliance if such time is less than 14 days, file with the board a motion to quash or modify the subpoena. The motion shall describe the legal reasons why the subpoena should be quashed or modified and may be accompanied by legal briefs or factual affidavits.

36.4(5) Timely filing of motion. Upon receipt of a timely motion to quash or modify a subpoena, the board may request an administrative law judge to issue a decision or the board may issue a decision. Oral argument may be scheduled at the discretion of the board or the administrative law judge. The administrative law judge or the board may quash or modify the subpoena, deny the motion, or issue an appropriate protective order.

36.4(6) Appeal of administrative law judge ruling. A person aggrieved by a ruling of an administrative law judge who desires to challenge that ruling must appeal the ruling to the board by filing a notice of appeal with the board within ten days after service of the decision of the administrative law judge in accordance with rule 657—35.17(17A,272C).

36.4(7) Judicial review. If the person contesting the subpoena is not the person under investigation, the board's decision is final for purposes of judicial review. If the person contesting the subpoena is the person under investigation, the board's decision is not final for purposes of judicial review until either

(1) the person is notified that the investigation has been concluded with no formal action, or (2) there is a final decision in the contested case.

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657—36.5(147,272C) Peer review committee. Any case may be referred to peer review for evaluation of the professional services rendered by the licensee.

36.5(1) Contract and case referral. The board shall enter into a contract with peer reviewers to provide peer review services. The board or board staff shall determine which peer reviewer(s) will review a case and what investigative information shall be referred to a peer reviewer.

36.5(2) Written opinion. Peer reviewers shall review the information provided by the board and provide a written report to the board. The written report shall contain an opinion of the peer reviewer regarding whether the licensee conformed to minimum standards of acceptable and prevailing practice of pharmacy and the rationale supporting the opinion.

36.5(3) Confidentiality. Peer reviewers shall observe the confidentiality requirements imposed by Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

36.5(4) Board review and action. The board shall review the committee's findings and proceed with action available under subrule 36.3(6).

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657—36.6(147,155A,272C) Grounds for discipline. The board may impose any of the disciplinary sanctions set forth in rule 657—36.7(147,155A,272C) when the board determines that the licensee has committed any of the following acts or omissions:

36.6(1) Fraud in procuring a license. Fraud in procuring a license includes but is not limited to an intentional perversion of the truth in making application for a license to practice pharmacy, to operate a pharmacy doing business in this state, or to operate as a wholesale drug distributor doing business in this state, or in making application for a registration to practice as a pharmacist-intern, a pharmacy technician, or a pharmacy support person. Fraud in procuring a license includes false representations of a material fact, whether by word or conduct, by false or misleading allegations, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed when making application, or attempting to file or filing with the board any false or forged diploma, certificate, affidavit, identification, or qualification in making application for a license or registration in this state.

36.6(2) Professional incompetency. Professional incompetency includes but is not limited to:

a. A substantial lack of knowledge or ability to discharge professional obligations within the scope of the pharmacist's practice.

b. A substantial deviation by a pharmacist from the standards of learning or skill ordinarily possessed and applied by other pharmacists in the state of Iowa acting in the same or similar circumstances.

c. A failure by a pharmacist to exercise in a substantial respect that degree of care which is ordinarily exercised by the average pharmacist in the state of Iowa acting under the same or similar circumstances.

d. A willful or repeated departure from, or the failure to conform to, the minimal standard or acceptable and prevailing practice of pharmacy in the state of Iowa.

36.6(3) Knowingly making misleading, deceptive, untrue or fraudulent representations in the practice of pharmacy or engaging in unethical conduct or practice harmful or detrimental to the public. Proof of actual injury need not be established.

36.6(4) Habitual intoxication or addiction to the use of drugs. Habitual intoxication or addiction to the use of drugs includes, but is not limited to:

a. The inability of a licensee to practice with reasonable skill and safety by reason of the excessive use of alcohol on a continuing basis.

b. The excessive use of drugs which may impair a licensee's ability to practice with reasonable skill or safety.

36.6(5) Being convicted of an offense that directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the profession. A conviction includes a guilty plea, including Alford and nolo contendere pleas, or a finding

or verdict of guilt, even if the adjudication of guilt is deferred, withheld or not entered. A copy of the guilty plea or order of conviction constitutes conclusive evidence of conviction. An offense directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the profession if the actions taken in furtherance of the offense are actions customarily performed within the scope of practice of the profession or the circumstances under which the offense was committed are circumstances customary to the profession.

36.6(6) Fraud in representations as to skill or ability. Fraud in representations as to skill or ability includes, but is not limited to, a pharmacist having made deceptive or untrue representations as to competency to perform professional services which the pharmacist is not qualified to perform by virtue of training or experience.

36.6(7) Use of untrue or improbable statements in advertisements.

36.6(8) Distribution of drugs for other than lawful purposes. The distribution of drugs for other than lawful purposes includes, but is not limited to, the disposition of drugs in violation of Iowa Code chapters 124, 126, and 155A.

36.6(9) Willful or repeated violations of the provisions of Iowa Code chapter 147 or 272C. Willful or repeated violations of these Acts include, but are not limited to, a licensee's intentionally or repeatedly violating a lawful rule or regulation promulgated by the board of pharmacy or the Iowa department of public health, violating a lawful order of the board in a disciplinary hearing, or violating the provisions of title IV (public health) of the Iowa Code.

36.6(10) Violating a statute or law of this state, another state, or the United States, without regard to its designation as either a felony or misdemeanor, which statute or law relates to the practice of pharmacy or the distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, or nonprescription drugs.

36.6(11) Failure to notify the board within 30 days after a final decision entered by the licensing authority of another state, territory, or country which decision resulted in a license revocation, suspension, or other disciplinary sanction.

36.6(12) Knowingly aiding, assisting, procuring, or advising another person to unlawfully practice pharmacy or to unlawfully perform the functions of a pharmacist-intern, a pharmacy technician, or a pharmacy support person.

36.6(13) Inability of a licensee to practice with reasonable skill and safety by reason of mental or physical impairment or chemical abuse.

36.6(14) Being adjudged mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction. Such adjudication shall automatically suspend a license for the duration of the license or registration unless the board otherwise orders.

36.6(15) Submission of a false report of continuing education, submission of a false certification of completion of continuing education, or failure to submit biennial reports of continuing education as directed by the board.

36.6(16) Failure to notify the board within 30 days after occurrence of any judgment or settlement of a malpractice court claim or action.

36.6(17) Failure to file reports concerning acts or omissions committed by another licensee.

36.6(18) Willful or repeated malpractice.

36.6(19) Willful or gross negligence.

36.6(20) Obtaining any fee by fraud or misrepresentation.

36.6(21) Violating any of the grounds for revocation or suspension of a license or registration listed in Iowa Code section 147.55, Iowa Code chapter 155A, or any of the rules of the board.

36.6(22) Practicing pharmacy without an active and current Iowa pharmacist license, operating a pharmacy without a current pharmacy license, operating a prescription drug wholesale facility without a current wholesale drug license, operating an outsourcing facility without a current outsourcing facility license, practicing as a pharmacist-intern without a current pharmacist-intern registration, assisting a pharmacist with technical functions associated with the practice of pharmacy without a current pharmacy technician registration except as provided in the introductory paragraph of rule 657—3.3(155A), or assisting a pharmacist with nontechnical functions associated with the practice of pharmacy without a current pharmacy support person registration.

36.6(23) Attempting to circumvent the patient counseling requirements or discouraging patients from receiving patient counseling concerning their prescription drug orders.

36.6(24) Noncompliance with a child support order or with a written agreement for payment of child support as evidenced by a certificate of noncompliance issued pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 252J.

36.6(25) Engaging in any conduct that subverts or attempts to subvert a board investigation.

36.6(26) Employing or continuing to employ as a practicing pharmacist any person whose Iowa pharmacist license is not current and active, employing or continuing to employ a person to assist a pharmacist with technical functions associated with the practice of pharmacy who is not currently registered as a pharmacy technician except as provided in the introductory paragraph of rule 657—3.3(155A), or employing or continuing to employ a person to assist a pharmacist with nontechnical functions associated with the practice of pharmacy who is not currently registered as a pharmacy support person.

36.6(27) Retaliating against a pharmacist, pharmacist-intern, pharmacy technician, or pharmacy support person for making allegations of illegal or unethical activities, making required reports to the board, or cooperating with a board investigation or survey.

36.6(28) Failing to create and maintain complete and accurate records as required by state or federal law or regulation or rule of the board.

36.6(29) Violating the pharmacy or drug laws or rules of another state while under the jurisdiction of that state.

36.6(30) Having a license revoked or suspended or having other disciplinary action taken by a licensing authority of this state or of another state, territory, or country for conduct substantially equivalent to any of the grounds for disciplinary action in Iowa. A copy of the record from the licensing authority taking the disciplinary action shall be conclusive evidence of the action.

36.6(31) Failure to comply with mandatory child or dependent adult abuse reporter training requirements.

36.6(32) Failure to timely provide to the board or a representative of the board prescription fill data or other required pharmacy or controlled substances records.

36.6(33) Nonpayment of a state debt as evidenced by a certificate of noncompliance issued pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 272D.

36.6(34) Failure to notify the board of a criminal conviction relating to the practice of pharmacy or to the distribution of drugs within 30 days of the action, regardless of the jurisdiction where it occurred.

36.6(35) Obtaining, possessing, or attempting to obtain or possess prescription drugs without lawful authority.

36.6(36) Diverting prescription drugs from a pharmacy for personal use or for distribution.

36.6(37) Practicing pharmacy, or assisting in the practice of pharmacy, while under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances.

36.6(38) Practicing pharmacy, or assisting in the practice of pharmacy, while under the influence of prescription drugs or substances for which the licensee does not have a lawful prescription or while impaired by the use of legitimately prescribed pharmacological agents, drugs, or substances.

36.6(39) Forging or altering a prescription.

36.6(40) Practicing outside the scope of the profession.

36.6(41) Dispensing, or contributing to the dispensing of, an incorrect prescription, which includes, but is not limited to, the incorrect drug, the incorrect strength, the incorrect patient or prescriber, or the incorrect or incomplete directions.

36.6(42) Failing to comply with a confidential order for evaluation.

36.6(43) Failing to comply with the terms of an initial agreement or contract with the Iowa monitoring program for pharmacy professionals committee.

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17; ARC 4581C, IAB 7/31/19, effective 9/4/19; ARC 5750C, IAB 7/14/21, effective 8/18/21]

657—36.7(147,155A,272C) Disciplinary sanctions.

36.7(1) Possible sanctions. The board has the authority to impose the following disciplinary sanctions:

- a. Revocation of a license issued by the board.
- b. Suspension of a license issued by the board until further order of the board or for a specified period.
- c. Nonrenewal of a license issued by the board.
- d. Prohibit permanently, until further order of the board, or for a specified period, the engaging in specified procedures, methods or acts.
- e. Probation.
- f. Require a licensee to complete additional education or training.
- g. Require a pharmacist to successfully complete any reexamination for licensure.
- h. Order a licensee to undergo a physical or mental examination.
- i. Impose civil penalties not to exceed \$25,000.
- j. Issue citation and warning.
- k. Such other sanctions allowed by law as may be appropriate.

36.7(2) Considerations in determining sanctions. The board may consider the following factors in determining the nature and severity of the disciplinary sanction to be imposed:

- a. The relative seriousness of the violation as it relates to assuring the citizens of this state a high standard of professional care.
- b. The facts of the particular violation.
- c. Any extenuating circumstances or other countervailing considerations.
- d. Number of prior violations or complaints.
- e. Seriousness of prior violations or complaints.
- f. Whether remedial action has been taken.
- g. Any other factors as may reflect upon the competency, ethical standards, and professional conduct of the licensee.

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.8(147,272C) Voluntary surrender. A voluntary surrender of a license may be submitted to the board as resolution of a contested case or in lieu of continued compliance with a disciplinary order of the board. A voluntary surrender, when accepted by the board, has the same force and effect as an order of revocation. The voluntary surrender of a license during the pendency of a complaint or investigation shall be considered discipline and shall have the same force and effect as an order of revocation. A request for reinstatement of a license that has been surrendered shall be handled under the terms established by rule 657—35.36(17A,147,272C).

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.9(155A,272C) Order for mental or physical examination. A licensee is, as a condition of licensure, under a duty to submit to a mental or physical examination within a time period specified by order of the board. Such examination may be ordered upon a showing of probable cause and shall be at the expense of the licensee.

36.9(1) Content of order. A board order for mental or physical examination shall include the following items:

- a. A description of the type of examination to which the licensee must submit.
- b. The name and address of the examiner or treatment facility that the board has identified as having the potential to perform the examination.
- c. The time period in which the licensee must schedule the required examination.
- d. The amount of time in which the licensee is required to complete the examination.
- e. A requirement that the licensee cause a report of the examination results to be provided to the board within a specified period of time.
- f. A requirement that the licensee communicate with the board regarding the status of the examination.

g. A provision allowing the licensee to request additional time to schedule or complete the examination or to request that the board approve an alternative examiner or treatment facility. The board shall, in its sole discretion, determine whether to grant such a request.

36.9(2) *Objection to order.* A licensee who is the subject of a board order and who objects to the order may file a request for hearing. The request for hearing shall specifically identify the factual and legal issues upon which the licensee bases the objection. The hearing shall be considered a contested case proceeding and shall be governed by the provisions of 657—Chapter 35. A contested case involving an objection to an examination order will be captioned in the name of Jane or John Doe in order to maintain the licensee’s confidentiality.

36.9(3) *Closed hearing.* Any hearing on an objection to the board order shall be closed pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

36.9(4) *Order and reports—confidential.* An examination order and any subsequent examination reports issued in the course of a board investigation are confidential investigative information pursuant to Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.10(272C) Disciplinary hearings—fees and costs.

36.10(1) *Definitions.* As used in this chapter in relation to a formal disciplinary action filed by the board against a licensee:

“*Deposition*” means the testimony of a person pursuant to subpoena or at the request of the state of Iowa taken in a setting other than a hearing.

“*Expenses*” means costs incurred by persons appearing pursuant to subpoena or at the request of the state of Iowa for purposes of providing testimony on the part of the state of Iowa in a hearing or other official proceeding and shall include mileage reimbursement at the rate specified in Iowa Code section 70A.9 or, if commercial air or ground transportation is used, the actual cost of transportation to and from the proceeding. Also included are actual costs incurred for meals and necessary lodging.

“*Medical examination fees*” means actual costs incurred by the board in a physical, mental, chemical abuse, or other impairment-related examination or evaluation of a licensee when the examination or evaluation is conducted pursuant to an order of the board.

“*Transcript*” means a printed verbatim reproduction of everything said on the record during a hearing or other official proceeding.

“*Witness fees*” means compensation paid by the board to persons appearing pursuant to subpoena or at the request of the state of Iowa, for purposes of providing testimony on the part of the state of Iowa. For the purposes of this rule, compensation shall be the same as outlined in Iowa Code section 622.69 or 622.72 as the case may be.

36.10(2) *Hearing fee and recoverable costs.* The board may charge a fee not to exceed \$75 for conducting a disciplinary hearing that results in disciplinary action taken by the board against the licensee. In addition to the fee, the board may recover from the licensee costs for the following procedures and personnel:

- a. Recording fees of a certified shorthand reporter.
- b. Transcript.
- c. Witness fees and expenses.
- d. Depositions.

36.10(3) *Fees, costs as part of disciplinary order.* Fees and costs assessed by the board shall be described as part of the board’s final disciplinary order. Fees and costs that can be calculated at the time of the issuance of the board’s final disciplinary order shall be itemized in the order. Fees and costs that cannot be calculated at the time of the issuance of the board’s final disciplinary order may be invoiced to the licensee at a later time, provided that the board’s final disciplinary order states that the particular fees and costs will be invoiced at a later date. The board’s final disciplinary order and any invoices shall specify the time period in which the licensee shall pay the assessed fees and costs.

36.10(4) *Board treatment of collected fees, costs.* Fees and costs collected by the board shall be allocated to the expenditure category of the board in which the hearing costs were incurred. The fees and costs shall be considered repayment receipts as defined in Iowa Code section 8.2.

36.10(5) *Failure to pay assessed fees, costs.* Failure of a licensee to pay the fees and costs assessed herein within the time period specified in the board's final disciplinary order or subsequent invoice shall constitute a violation of a lawful order of the board.

[ARC 3344C, IAB 9/27/17, effective 11/1/17]

657—36.11(88GA,SF304) Prohibited grounds for discipline. The board shall not suspend or revoke the license of a person who is in default or is delinquent on repayment or a service obligation under federal or state postsecondary educational loans or public or private services-conditional postsecondary tuition assistance solely on the basis of such default or delinquency.

[ARC 4581C, IAB 7/31/19, effective 9/4/19]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 17A.10 to 17A.23, 124.304, 124B.12, 126.17, 147.55, 155A.6 to 155A.6B, 155A.12, 155A.13 to 155A.13C, 155A.15 to 155A.18, 155A.26, 205.11, 272C.3 to 272C.6, 272C.9, and 272C.10.

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