

XXXII. REGULATIONS GOVERNING MEDICAL EXPERT ACTIVITIES BY PHYSICIANS

A. AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE OF THESE REGULATIONS

The Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) adopts these regulations governing medical expert activities by physicians pursuant to Chapters 25 and 43 of Title 73 of the Mississippi Code (1972) Annotated, as Amended. The Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure finds it necessary to fulfill its statutory responsibilities by adopting these regulations in order to protect the public, to set professional standards, to enforce the provisions of law regarding the performance of medical expert activities by physicians, and to further other legitimate government purposes in the public interest.

B. SCOPE OF THESE REGULATIONS

1. These regulations apply to any physician who performs medical expert activities regarding any person, facility, or entity located within the State of Mississippi, or regarding an event alleged to have occurred within the State of Mississippi, regardless of the location, type, or status of the physician’s medical expert activity, the presence or absence of the physician expert’s license to practice medicine in Mississippi, the physician expert’s presence or absence of a physician-patient relationship in Mississippi, the type of medical expert activity performed (e.g., oral testimony or a written statement), or the setting in which the medical expert activity is performed (e.g., a state or federal court or administrative agency).
2. No part of these regulations is intended to conflict with or supercede the authority of any state or federal court or administrative agency to designate a physician as a medical expert in a legal matter then pending before the court or agency. The Board does not intend for these regulations to conflict with or supercede the description or regulation of the function of a physician serving as an “expert” as that term is used in the Mississippi Rules of Evidence or in other provisions of law, rules, regulations, or decisions of any court or administrative agency.
3. No part of these regulations is intended to conflict with or supercede the authority of a person other than a physician to serve as an expert in a legal matter. Furthermore, the Board does not intend for these regulations to have any effect on physicians’ participation in legal proceedings in a capacity other than as a medical expert.

C. DEFINITION OF MEDICAL EXPERT ACTIVITIES

For the purposes of these regulations only, the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure has determined that the definition of the term “medical expert activities” includes, but is not limited to, the use of medical knowledge and professional judgment by a physician to

- (1) suggest or recommend to a person any medical advice or other agency (whether material or not material),
- (2) perform medical services (including, but not limited to, a physical or mental Examination of a person),
- (3) conduct a review of a person’s medical record,
- (4) serve as a medical consultant,
- (5) render a medical opinion concerning the diagnosis or treatment of a person,
- (6) produce a written medical expert opinion report, affidavit, or declaration, or
- (7) give testimony under oath as a medical expert at a state or federal hearing, deposition, trial, administrative agency proceeding, alternative dispute resolution proceeding, or any other legal proceeding,

regarding the medical issues in a legal matter pending in Mississippi that involve a person, facility, or entity located within the State of Mississippi, or an event alleged to have occurred within the State of Mississippi.

D. LICENSURE AND QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICIANS WHO PERFORM MEDICAL EXPERT ACTIVITIES

1. In keeping with Mississippi statutes, court rules and decisions, administrative agency regulations, and other provisions of Mississippi law, any medical expert activity by a physician regarding a legal matter pending in a state or federal court or administrative agency in Mississippi must be performed by a physician who has a current medical license issued by Mississippi or another State and who has the qualifications to serve as a medical expert on the issue(s) in question by virtue of knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education.
2. The practice of any physician not licensed in Mississippi that meets the licensure and qualification requirements stated in section D(1) of these regulations shall be deemed automatically by the Board to be authorized to include the performance of medical expert activities as an otherwise lawful practice, without any need for licensure verification or further requirement for licensure. In accordance with the provisions of law in Mississippi, any physician not licensed in Mississippi whose practice is deemed automatically by the Board to be authorized to include the performance of medical expert

activities as an otherwise lawful practice shall be subject to regulation by the Board regarding the physician's performance of medical expert activities.

E. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICIANS WHO PERFORM MEDICAL EXPERT ACTIVITIES

Any physician who performs medical expert activities must:

- (1) Comply with these regulations and all applicable provisions of Mississippi law (e.g., statutes, court rules and decisions, and other administrative agency rules and regulations);
- (2) Comply with medical ethics principles and other nationally recognized professional standards regarding the performance of medical expert activities, including, but not limited to, ethics principles established by the American Medical Association and relevant medical specialty associations;
- (3) Uphold the standards of medical professionalism, especially with regard to ethical conduct and competent practice;
- (4) Be honest in all professional interactions involving his or her medical expert activities;
- (5) Avoid conflicts of interest or make efforts to minimize conflicts of interest that are unavoidable;
- (6) Give opinions and testimony that do not exceed the limits of the data or the physician's knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education;
- (7) Represent accurately his or her professional credentials and qualifications;
- (8) Avoid accepting payment for medical expert activities that is contingent on the outcome of a case;
- (9) Avoid making or using any false, fraudulent, or forged statement or document; and
- (10) Comply with the Mississippi statutes and administrative agency regulations regarding the practice of telemedicine in Mississippi, when performing medical expert activities by means of telemedicine.

F. PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VIOLATION OF REGULATIONS

1. Any physician who performs medical expert activities, whether or not licensed to practice medicine in Mississippi, may be disciplined or otherwise held professionally accountable by the Board, upon a finding by the Board that the physician is unqualified as evidenced by behavior including, but not limited to,
 - (i) incompetent professional practice,
 - (ii) unprofessional conduct, or
 - (iii) any other dishonorable or unethical conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public.

2. Any violation of Section E of these regulations as enumerated above shall constitute unprofessional conduct in violation of Mississippi Code Annotated (1972) Section 73-25-29(8), as amended.

G. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE, INVESTIGATION, DUE PROCESS, AND ACTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE BOARD

1. Any person who has reason to believe that any physician may have failed to comply with any part of these regulations in the performance of medical expert activities may make a complaint to the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure.
2. Any physician, whether or not licensed to practice medicine in Mississippi, who performs medical expert activities in the context of a legal matter regarding any person, facility, entity, or event located within the State of Mississippi may be subject to an investigation by the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure upon the receipt of a complaint regarding the physician's conduct or practice. Any such physician shall be afforded the due process procedures of the law and Board regulations. The Board, in its sole discretion, may refer the complaint to the medical licensure authority of another State, or to any other appropriate legal authority.
3. Any physician may request, or may be summoned by the Board, to appear before the Board at a hearing to consider the physician's compliance with these regulations. Any physician's failure to appear when summoned to a hearing may be deemed by the Board to be a waiver of the physician's due process opportunity to appear before the Board and may result in a finding by the Board that the physician is out of compliance with these regulations *in absentia*.
4. In disciplining a physician licensed to practice medicine in Mississippi or otherwise holding any physician professionally accountable pursuant to these regulations and to the statutes, rulings, and other regulations and provisions of Mississippi law, the actions that the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure may take include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - (1) denying, suspending, restricting, or revoking a Mississippi license to practice medicine;
 - (2) administering a public or private reprimand to a Mississippi licensed physician;
 - (3) assessing up to \$10,000 of the reasonable investigation costs expended by the Board in investigating a Mississippi licensed physician;

- (4) moving for an injunction in Chancery Court to prohibit any physician's further performance of medical expert activities;
 - (5) petitioning the Chancery Court to cite any noncompliant physician for contempt of court;
 - (6) referring the matter to another medical licensure authority or other legal authority for action regarding any physician; and,
 - (7) any other action regarding any physician that the Board may deem proper under the circumstances (e.g., issuing an advisory letter of concern; issuing a notice of warning; issuing a cease and desist notice; or adopting a resolution of disapproval of any physician's medical expert activities).
5. Any physician who is found by the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure to have failed to comply with any part of these regulations may be reported by the Board to any person or organization appropriate under the circumstances in order to enforce or comply with the law or to protect the public, including, but not limited to, the National Practitioner Data Bank, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Federation of State Medical Boards, the medical licensure authority or state medical association in any State in which the physician is licensed to practice medicine, the American Board of Medical Specialties and any of its member specialty boards, the Mississippi Attorney General or District Attorney, the United States Attorney, any state or federal court or administrative agency, any national or state professional organization or medical specialty association, and any other appropriate person, government agency, healthcare entity, or legal authority.

H. COMPLIANCE POLICY AND EXEMPTIONS

In assuring compliance with these regulations, the duty shall be on the physician, not on the party who engaged the physician to perform medical expert activities and not on any other person or entity, to ensure that his or her medical expert activities comply with these regulations. Any physician who claims to be exempt from these regulations shall have the burden of proving to the Board that the exemption is valid.

I. NOTICE OF REGULATION OF MEDICAL EXPERT ACTIVITIES BY PHYSICIANS

At the time of an initial licensure application, and at the time of each application for a renewal of a license to practice medicine in Mississippi, all physicians shall acknowledge that they have had an opportunity to read these regulations by accessing the website of the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure (at internet address www.msbml.state.ms.us) or by requesting a printed copy of these regulations from the Board.

J. EFFECTIVE DATE

These regulations shall become effective on July 1, 2006.

K. REFERENCES

1. Mississippi Code Annotated Sections 11-1-61, 73-25-27, 73-25-29, 73-25-30, 73-25-33, 73-25-34, 73-25-83, 73-25-87, 73-43-11, 73-51-1, et al
2. Mississippi Rule of Evidence 702
3. "Rules, Regulations, Laws, and Policies of the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure." Published by the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure and available at internet address www.msaml.state.ms.us
4. Hall v. Hilbun, 466 So. 2d 856 (Miss. 1985)
5. Code of Medical Ethics, Current Opinions with Annotations. Published by the Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs of the American Medical Association, 2006-07 edition.
6. "The Role of Licensing Boards in the Evaluation and Discipline of the Expert Witness." Authored by William J. Wenner, Jr., M.D., J.D. Published in the Journal of Medical Licensure and Discipline, Vol. 90, No. 3, 2004, Pp. 15-20 (collecting cases and scholarly publications)