



Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

Division of Professional Regulation

FAQs for Consumers

- 1. What professions are regulated by the Department?** The Department's [website](#) lists all regulated professions.
- 2. How can I verify whether a person or business is licensed and/or disciplined?** You can check if a person or business is licensed by using [License Lookup](#). You can also check the [Physician Profile Search](#) for more information about a doctor or chiropractor.
- 3. What disciplinary actions can the Department take?** The Department may take any of the following disciplinary actions. This list is not exclusive.
 - **Reprimand:** A reprimand is an official public record of discipline but does not restrict the licensee's ability to practice. If monitoring is required, the licensee may have to fulfill additional requirements or conditions.
 - **Probation:** Licensees placed on probation are permitted to practice subject to certain terms and conditions which vary depending on case circumstances. During the probation term, a licensee may be monitored by the Department's Probation Compliance Unit. The probation term may be for a definite period (i.e. automatically expires at the end of a stated term) or indefinite (i.e. a licensee must file a Petition for Restoration after a stated term has passed and prove that probation should be terminated). A licensee's failure to comply with probation terms and conditions may result in further disciplinary action.
 - **Suspension:** Suspended licensees are prohibited from practice during the suspension term and may be subject to certain terms and conditions. The suspension term may be for a definite period (i.e. automatically expires at the end of a stated term) or indefinite (i.e. a licensee must file a Petition for Restoration after a stated term has passed and prove that suspension should be terminated). The term of suspension may be followed by probation.
 - **Summary or Temporary Suspension:** When a licensee's continuation in practice poses an imminent danger to the public, the Department may take immediate action by summarily or temporarily suspending a license. The license remains suspended pending a hearing on the case within a required statutory time frame. Summarily or temporarily suspended licensees are prohibited from practice immediately upon being served by the Department.
 - **Revocation:** Licensees are prohibited from practice while revoked. If no term is stated, a licensee must wait a minimum of three (3) years to be eligible to file a Petition for Restoration. In limited instances, a license may be permanently revoked and is ineligible for restoration.
 - **Refuse to Renew:** Licensees who are refused renewal are ineligible to renew their license and are prohibited from practice after the expiration of the date of their license. A licensee who has been refused renewal may file a Petition for Restoration.
 - **Relinquished, Surrendered, or Permanent Inactive:** These terms may or may not be considered discipline; however, a licensee in one of these statuses is not currently authorized to practice in Illinois. License lookup will indicate whether or not the status is disciplinary.
 - **Fines:** Fines are disciplinary actions and may be issued in conjunction with one of the above disciplines.
 - **Order to Cease & Desist:** An order to cease and desist is issued to an unlicensed individual or entity that is practicing without a license. An order to cease and desist may require the individual or entity to pay a monetary civil penalty. In some cases, the unlicensed activity may be referred to law enforcement for further action.
- 4. What non-disciplinary actions can the Department take?** The Department may take any of the following non-disciplinary actions. This list is not exclusive.
 - **Administrative Warning Letter/Letter of Concern:** An administrative warning letter (AWL) or letter of concern (LOC) may be issued to an individual or entity to bring attention to a specific issue which may or may not be a violation of law.
 - **Agreement for Care, Counseling & Treatment:** An Agreement for Care, Counseling, & Treatment (CCT) is a confidential agreement between a licensee and the Department wherein the licensee seeks recommended

treatment. A licensee may continue to practice so long as they abide by the terms of the agreement. The agreement remains confidential unless a licensee violates its terms.

- **Non-Disciplinary Order**: A non-disciplinary order is not available to the public but imposes certain terms and conditions on the licensee. Failure to comply with the terms of the non-disciplinary order may result in a public discipline.
 - **Non-Disciplinary Fee or Administrative Fee**: This fee is non-disciplinary, non-public action and may be issued in conjunction with a non-disciplinary order.
5. **Does the Department recommend licensed professionals?** No, the Department may not recommend licensed professionals, but you can check if a licensee has been disciplined by using the Department's [License Lookup](#).
 6. **Does the Department license hospitals, nursing homes, or certified nursing assistants?** No, hospitals, nursing homes, and certified nursing assistants are licensed by the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#).
 7. **Does the Department regulate attorneys?** No, attorneys are regulated by the [Illinois Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission](#).
 8. **Does the Department regulate appliance repair companies, general contractors, or car mechanics?** No, but you can file any complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's [Consumer Fraud Bureau](#).
 9. **Who can file a complaint?** Anyone who has knowledge that a professional act regulated by the Department has been violated, including unlicensed activity.
 10. **How do I file a complaint?** Information about filing a complaint can be found on the Department's [website](#). The Department accepts complaints online, by mail, by phone and in person.
 11. **What information is needed to file a complaint?** The Department relies on the information provided in the complaint to determine whether a violation may exist. You are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible in your complaint, including all relevant timelines and documents (e.g. contracts, bills, photos, etc.).
 12. **Can I file a complaint anonymously?** Yes, please be cautioned that filing anonymously may make it more difficult for the Department to prove a violation occurred.
 13. **Should I send in original documents to support my complaint?** No, only send copies to the Department and save all original documents, such as bills or contracts, unless otherwise directed.
 14. **I have a billing dispute, can I file a complaint about this?** Yes, fraudulent or gross billing irregularities are grounds for discipline. You may also consider filing a complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's [Consumer Fraud Bureau](#) or [Health Care Bureau](#). If the dispute involves insurance billing, you can file a complaint with the [Illinois Department of Insurance](#).
 15. **My insurance denied coverage for a service and now I owe a balance, can I file a complaint against the service provider?** Typically a provider's attempt to recover a balance for services rendered is not grounds for a complaint. It is a patient's responsibility to ensure their insurance policy covers a service. If the dispute involves insurance billing, you can file a complaint with the [Illinois Department of Insurance](#).
 16. **Will the Department advocate on my behalf?** No, investigators and prosecutors only represent the Department. You can consult [illinoislegalaid.org](#) for assistance with solving your legal problems or seek your own legal counsel.
 17. **What if I want my money back?** The Department is unable to recover money on behalf of a consumer. You can consult [illinoislegalaid.org](#) for assistance with solving your legal problems or seek your own legal counsel.
 18. **Can the Department order a professional to pay money to me or perform services on my behalf?** No, the Department does not have the authority to order a professional to pay you money or perform services for you. If you are seeking this kind of relief, you should contact a private attorney. You can consult [illinoislegalaid.org](#) for assistance with solving your legal problems.

19. **After I file a complaint, will I get regular updates about the case or be informed of the case's outcome?** Formal disciplinary action against a licensee may be viewed on the Department's [License Lookup](#). Confidentiality laws may prevent the Department from providing updates during the pendency of proceedings or from disclosing the outcome of a case if non-disciplinary in nature.
20. **After I file a complaint, will I get to participate in the case?** You may be contacted by Department staff for information or be asked to testify at an administrative hearing.
21. **What should I do after I filed a complaint?** Please cooperate with Department staff, if contacted, to ensure timely and complete review of your complaint. Do not wait to continue necessary treatment or services or seek legal recourse.
22. **Will I be kept up to date on the process of the investigation into my complaint?** You may be contacted by Department staff for information or notified your complaint was closed.
23. **What are the possible outcomes for a complaint?** A complaint may result in disciplinary action, non-disciplinary remedial action, or closure.
24. **Why was my complaint closed?** Confidentiality laws prevent the Department from disclosing the reason this case was closed. However, common reasons for cases to be closed include insufficient evidence to prove a violation, that the allegations even if true are not a violation, that the allegations are unfounded, an expiration of the statute of limitations, or the Department imposed an action less than a public discipline.
25. **My physician or dentist fired me or will no longer see me, is this abandonment?** A physician or dentist may terminate a patient relationship for any reason permitted by law. Generally, the patient should be given reasonable notice to find another provider and the provider should be available for emergency care for a reasonable time.
26. **Can I file a complaint because a licensed professional was rude?** The Department understands sometimes a licensed professional's action may be abrupt or rude, however, this action does not necessarily constitute grounds for disciplinary action.
27. **A licensed professional physically or sexually assaulted me, who should I contact?** You should immediately contact local law enforcement, in addition to filing a complaint with the Department.
28. **Am I entitled to a copy of my medical or dental records?** Yes, generally, a physician or dentist must provide a copy of your records upon written request but may require reasonable copying fees as set forth in Section 5/8-2001 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure.
29. **Are there other agencies that can help me with my complaint?** Yes, below is a list of other state agencies that may be able to assist you:
 - Attorneys: [Illinois Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission](#)
 - Consumer fraud of health care fraud complaints: Illinois Attorney General's [Consumer Fraud Bureau](#) or [Health Care Bureau](#)
 - Illinois Department of Human Services operated facilities (such as hospitals, community mental health centers, and home nursing agencies, etc.) complaints: [Illinois Department of Human Services](#)
 - Insurance: [Illinois Department of Insurance](#)
 - Medicare: [Medicare.gov](#)
 - Schools & Teachers: [Illinois State Board of Education](#)
 - Hospitals or Nursing Homes: [Illinois Department of Public Health](#)

DISCLAIMER: The above questions and answers are provided for general information only and may not be completely accurate in every circumstance, do not purport to be legal advice, and are not intended to be legally binding on the Department in a particular case. Questions involving interpretation of the law and your legal rights and obligations should be addressed to your lawyer.