



WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK?

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The National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) is the national clearinghouse and database for medical malpractice and peer review reports. The NPDB serves as a central location for hospitals and other stakeholders to access information on adverse actions against physicians, surgeons, and other medical professionals. A negative report to the NPDB can have a profound negative impact on a provider's career and reputation, including, but not limited to, the ability to find new employment.

What Gets Reported to the NPDB?

Federal regulations dictate which actions must be reported or can be reported to the NPDB. Some reportable actions include:

- Written claims that result in a malpractice payment;
- Certain competence or conduct licensure actions;
- Voluntary surrender or restriction of privileges;
- Adverse actions or findings by peer review committees; and
- Penalties/restrictions imposed by state licensing entities.

If a report to the NPDB is required or allowed, it must be made within 30 days of the peer review action or medical malpractice payment. If you have a question about the specific action placed on your record, contact our office today.

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Can I Access My NPDB Record?

Yes. Physicians can utilize the self-query procedure on the NPDB website to obtain a copy of their NPDB report. It is important that physicians and other health care providers know what is stated on their NPDB report for purposes of confirming the accuracy of the information and, if necessary, contest and/or respond to the NPDB report. Rules and procedures for doing so can vary. In general, it is difficult to vacate or remove an NPDB report entirely.

Can I Contest a NPDB Report?

Occasionally mistakes occur and inaccurate details are included in a report, which is why reviewing your report is critical. You can dispute or contest a report if you disagree with its accuracy or submission details. There is a regulated process for resolving these issues, but the overall idea is that you can request the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS) to conduct a review in certain circumstances. Although DSHS is responsible for overseeing the NDPB, DSHS is limited in which aspect of a report they can review and/or compel the reporting agency to take corrective action.

Can I Respond to a NPDB Report?

If dispute resolution does not bring you the outcome you hoped for, you also have the option of adding a comment to your report. Including a statement allows you to clarify any information in the report or offer additional information that you feel is relevant to the incident. Your subject statement

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becomes part of the report and remains with the report unless you edit or remove it. In order to submit a statement, you will need to access the NPDB database at npdb.hrsa.gov.

What Is the NPDB Guidebook?

The NPDB has published a guidebook that serves as a way to inform physicians and other members of the medical community about the laws and requirements of NPDB operations. Gathering information about these regulations and procedures directly from the source can ensure the data is as accurate as possible, so this guidebook is a great resource for quick answers.

However, seeking the advice of an experienced attorney is always a good idea if you need more than basic information on this subject. Applying the guidelines to a real-life scenario can only be done by someone with experience and knowledge of the relevant laws. If you have concerns about being reported to the NPDB and potential consequences of any such reporting, contact our office today at (509) 215-4679.

Additional Resources

- [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services – NPDB](#)
- [NPDB Guidebook](#)

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