

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members, Utah State Board of Education

**FROM:** Angie Stallings, Associate Superintendent  
Policy and Communication

**DATE:** June 10, 2016

**ACTION:** Administrative Rules Hearing Report and Rules R277-210 through R277-215

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**Background:**

In its April 2016 meeting, the Board approved new rules R277-210 through R277-215 and directed that the rules be filed immediately with the Division of Administrative Rules. In addition, the Board voted to hold a voluntary public hearing on the rules. The hearing took place on May 12, 2016 and verbal and written comments were received.

**Board Strategic Plan:**

This item supports the following imperative and strategies in the Board's Strategic Plan: Oversight - Monitor, review, and provide general supervision to all public education institutions and other entities for which the State Board has responsibility.

**Anticipated Action:**

The Board will review the hearing report of the May12 hearing and consider recommendations made in the report. The Board may amend R277-210 *Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC), Definitions*; R277-211 *Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC), Rules of Procedure: Notification to Educators, Complaints and Final Disciplinary Action*; R277-212 *UPPAC Hearing Procedures and Reports*; R277-213 *Request for Licensure Reinstatement and Reinstatement Procedure*; R277-214 *Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission Criminal Background Review*; and R277-215 *Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC) Disciplinary Rebuttable Presumptions*.

**Contact:** Angie Stallings, 801-538-7550

R277-210 was approved by the Utah State Board of Education on April 15, 2016. R277-210 is published in the May 1, 2016 Utah State Bulletin, subject to a 30-day comment period, with a first possible effective date of June 7, 2016.

**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-210. Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC), Definitions.**

**R277-210-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish definitions for terms in UPPAC activities.

(3) The definitions contained in this rule apply to Rules R277-210 through R277-216.

(b) Any calculation of time called for by these rules shall be governed by Utah R.

Civ. P. 6.

**R277-210-2. Definitions.**

(1)(a) "Action" means a disciplinary action taken by the Board adversely affecting an educator's license.

(b) "Action" does not include a disciplinary letter.

(c) "Action" includes:

(i) a letter of reprimand;

(ii) probation;

(iii) suspension; and

(iv) revocation.

(2) "Administrative hearing" or "hearing" has the same meaning as that term is defined in Section 53A-6-601.

(3) "Alcohol related offense" means:

(a) driving under the influence;

(b) alcohol-related reckless driving or impaired driving;

(c) intoxication;

(d) driving with an open container;

(e) unlawful sale or supply of alcohol;

(f) unlawful permitting of consumption of alcohol by minors;

(g) driving in violation of an alcohol or interlock restriction; and

(8) any offense under the laws of another state that is substantially equivalent to the offenses described in Subsections(3)(a) through (g).

(4) "Allegation of misconduct" means a written report alleging that an educator:

(a) has engaged in unprofessional or criminal conduct;

(b) is unfit for duty;

(c) has lost the educator's license in another state due to revocation or suspension, or through voluntary surrender or lapse of a license in the face of a claim of misconduct;  
or

(d) has committed some other violation of standards of ethical conduct,

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performance, or professional competence as provided in Rule R277-515.

(5) "Answer" means a written response to a complaint filed by USOE alleging educator misconduct.

(6) "Applicant" means a person seeking:

(a) a new license;

(b) reinstatement of an expired, surrendered, suspended, or revoked license; or

(c) clearance of a criminal background review from USOE at any stage of the licensing process.

(7) "Chair" means the Chair of UPPAC.

(8) "Complaint" means a written allegation or charge against an educator filed by USOE against the educator.

(9) "Complainant" means the Utah State Office of Education.

(10) "Comprehensive Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools (CACTUS)" means the electronic file developed by the USOE and maintained on all licensed Utah educators.

(11)(a) "Conviction" means the final disposition of a judicial action for a criminal offense, except in cases of a dismissal on the merits.

(b) "Conviction" includes:

(i) a finding of guilty by a judge or jury;

(ii) a guilty or no contest plea;

(iii) a plea in abeyance; and

(iv) for purposes of this rule, a conviction that has been expunged.

(12) "Criminal Background Review" means the process by which the Executive Secretary, UPPAC, and the Board review information pertinent to:

(a) a charge revealed by a criminal background check;

(b) a charge revealed by a hit as a result of ongoing monitoring; or

(c) an educator or applicant's self-disclosure.

(13)(a) "Disciplinary letter" means a letter issued to a respondent by the Board as a result of an investigation into an allegation of educator misconduct.

(b) "Disciplinary letter" includes:

(i) a letter of admonishment;

(ii) a letter of warning; and

(iii) any other action that the Board takes to discipline an educator for educator misconduct that does not rise to the level of an action as defined in this section.

(14) "Drug" means controlled substance as defined in Section 58-37-2.

(15) "Drug related offense" means any criminal offense under:

(a) Title 58, Chapter 37;

(b) Title 58, Chapter 37a, Utah Drug Paraphernalia Act;

(c) Title 58, Chapter 37b, Imitation Controlled Substances Act;

(d) Title 58, Chapter 37c, Utah Controlled Substance Precursor Act;

(e) Title 58, Chapter 37d, Clandestine Drug Lab Act; and

(f) Title 58, Chapter 37e, Drug Dealer's Liability Act.

Sections 58-37 through 37e.

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(16) "Educator Misconduct" means:

(a) unprofessional or criminal conduct;

(b) conduct that renders an educator unfit for duty; or

(c) conduct that is a violation of standards of ethical conduct, performance, or professional competence as provided in Rule R277-515.

(17) "Executive Committee" means a subcommittee of UPPAC consisting of the following members:

(a) Executive Secretary;

(b) Chair;

(c) Vice-Chair; and

(d) one member of UPPAC at large.

(18) "Executive Secretary" means:

(a) an employee of USOE who:

(i) is appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to serve as the UPPAC Director; and

(ii) serves as a non-voting member of UPPAC, consistent with Section 53A-6-302;

or

(b) the Executive Secretary's designee.

(b) the Executive Secretary's designee.

(19) "Expedited Hearing" means an informal hearing aimed at determining an Educator's fitness to remain in the classroom held as soon as possible following an arrest, citation, or charge for a criminal offense requiring mandatory self-reporting under Section R277-516-3.

(20) "Expedited Hearing Panel" means a panel of the following three members:

(a) the Executive Secretary;

(b) a voting member of UPPAC; and

(c) a UPPAC attorney.

(21) "Final action" means an action by the Board that concludes an investigation of an allegation of misconduct against a licensed educator.

(22) "GRAMA" refers to the Government Records Access and Management Act, Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act.

(23) "Hearing officer" means a licensed attorney who:

(a) is experienced in matters relating to administrative procedures;

(b) is appointed by the Executive Secretary to manage the proceedings of a hearing;

(c) is not an acting member of UPPAC;

(d) has authority, subject to the limitations of these rules, to regulate the course of the hearing and dispose of procedural requests; and

(5) does not have a vote as to the recommended disposition of a case.

(24) "Hearing panel" means a panel of three or more individuals designated to:

(a) hear evidence presented at a hearing;

(b) make a recommendation to UPPAC as to disposition; and

(c) collaborate with the hearing officer in preparing a hearing report.

(25) "Hearing report" means a report that:

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(a) is prepared by the hearing officer consistent with the recommendations of the hearing panel at the conclusion of a hearing; and

(b) includes:

(i) a recommended disposition;

(ii) detailed findings of fact and conclusions of law, based upon the evidence presented in the hearing, relevant precedent; and

(iii) applicable law and rule.

(26) "Informant" means a person who submits information to UPPAC concerning the alleged misconduct of an educator.

(27) "Investigator" means an employee of the USOE, or independent investigator selected by the Board, who:

(a) is assigned to investigate allegations of educator misconduct under UPPAC supervision;

(b) offers recommendations of educator discipline to UPPAC and the Board at the conclusion of the investigation;

(c) provides an independent investigative report for UPPAC and the Board; and

(d) may also be a UPPAC attorney but does not have to be.

(28) "Investigative report" means a written report of an investigation into allegations of educator misconduct, prepared by an Investigator that:

(a) includes a brief summary of the allegations, the investigator's narrative, and a recommendation for UPPAC and the Board;

(b) may include a rationale for the recommendation, and mitigating and aggravating circumstances;

(c) is maintained in the UPPAC Case File; and

(d) is classified as protected under Subsection 63G-2-305(34).

(29) "LEA" or "local education agency" for purposes of this rule includes the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

(30) "Letter of admonishment" is a letter sent by the Board to an educator cautioning the educator to avoid or take specific actions in the future.

(31) "Letter of reprimand" is a letter sent by the Board to an educator:

(a) for misconduct that was longer term or more seriously unethical or inappropriate than conduct warranting a letter of warning, but not warranting more serious discipline;

(b) that provides specific directives to the educator as a condition for removal of the letter;

(c) appears as a notation on the educator's CACTUS file; and

(d) that an educator can request to be removed from the educator's CACTUS file after two years, or after such other time period as the Board may prescribe in the letter of reprimand.

(32) "Letter of warning" is a letter sent by the Board to an educator:

(a) for misconduct that was inappropriate or unethical; and

(b) that does not warrant longer term or more serious discipline.

(33) "License" means a teaching or administrative credential, including an endorsement, which is issued by the Board to signify authorization for the person holding

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the license to provide professional services in Utah's public schools.

(34) "Licensed educator" means an individual issued a teaching or administrative credential, including an endorsement, issued by the Board to signify authorization for the individual holding the license to provide professional services in Utah's public schools.

(35) "National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Educator Information Clearinghouse" means a database maintained by NASDTEC for the members of NASDTEC regarding persons whose licenses have been suspended or revoked.

(36) "Notification of Alleged Educator Misconduct" means the official UPPAC form that may be accessed on UPPAC's internet website, and may be submitted by any person, school, or LEA that alleges educator misconduct.

(37) "Party" means a complainant or a respondent.

(38) "Petitioner" means an individual seeking:

(a) an educator license following a denial of a license;

(b) reinstatement following a license suspension; or in the event of compelling circumstances, reinstatement following a license revocation.

(39) "Probation" is an action directed by the Board that:

(a) involves monitoring or supervision for a designated time period, usually accompanied by a disciplinary letter;

(b) may require the educator to be subject to additional monitoring by an identified person or entity;

(c) may require the educator to be asked to satisfy certain conditions in order to have the probation lifted;

(d) may be accompanied by a letter of reprimand, which shall appear as a notation on the educator's CACTUS file; and

(e) unless otherwise specified, lasts at least two years and may be terminated through a formal petition to the Board by the respondent.

(40) "Revocation" means a permanent invalidation of a Utah educator license consistent with Rule R277-517.

(41) "Respondent" means an educator against whom:

(a) a complaint is filed; or

(b) an investigation is undertaken.

(42) "Serve" or "service," as used to refer to the provision of notice to a person, means:

(a) delivery of a written document or its contents to the person or persons in question; and

(b) delivery that may be made in person, by mail, by electronic correspondence, or by any other means reasonably calculated, under all of the circumstances, to notify an interested person or persons to the extent reasonably practical or practicable of the information contained in the document.

(43) "Sexually explicit conduct" means the same as that term is defined in Section 76-5b-103.

(44) "Stipulated agreement" means an agreement between a respondent and the



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Board:

(a) under which disciplinary action is taken against the educator in lieu of a hearing;  
(b) that may be negotiated between the parties and becomes binding:  
(i) when approved by the Board; and  
(ii) at any time after an investigative letter has been sent;  
(c) is a public document under GRAMA unless it contains specific information that requires redaction or separate classification of the agreement.

(45)(a) "Suspension" means an invalidation of a Utah educator license.

(b) "Suspension" may:  
(i) include specific conditions that an educator must satisfy; and  
(ii) may identify a minimum time period that must elapse before the educator may request a reinstatement hearing before UPPAC.

(46) "Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission" or "UPPAC" means an advisory commission established to assist and advise the Board in matters relating to the professional practices of educators, established in Section 53A-6-301.

(47) "UPPAC Attorney File" means a file:  
(a) that is kept by the attorney assigned by UPPAC to investigate and/or prosecute a case that contains:  
(i) the attorney's notes prepared in the course of investigation; and  
(ii) other documents prepared by the attorney in anticipation of an eventual hearing;

and

(b) that is classified as protected pursuant to Subsection 63G-2-305(18).  
(48) "UPPAC Background Check File" means a file maintained securely by UPPAC on a criminal background review that:

(a) contains information obtained from:  
(i) BCI; and  
(ii) letters, police reports, court documents, and other materials as provided by an educator; and  
(b) is classified as private under Subsection 63G-2-302(2).

(49) "UPPAC Case File" means a file:  
(a) maintained securely by UPPAC on an investigation into educator misconduct;  
(b) opened following UPPAC's direction to investigate alleged misconduct;  
(c) that contains the original notification of misconduct with supporting documentation, correspondence with the Executive Secretary, the investigative report, the stipulated agreement, the hearing report, and the final disposition of the case;

(d) that is classified as protected under Subsection 63G-2-305(10) until the investigation and any subsequent proceedings before UPPAC and the Board are completed; and

(e) that after a case proceeding is closed, is considered public under GRAMA, unless specific documents contained therein contain non-public information or have been otherwise classified as non-public under GRAMA, in which case the file may be redacted or partially or fully restricted.

(50) "UPPAC Evidence File" means a file:

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(a) maintained by the attorney assigned by UPPAC to investigate a case containing materials, written or otherwise, obtained by the UPPAC investigator during the course of the attorney's investigation;

(b) that contains correspondence between the Investigator and the educator or the educator's counsel;

(c) that is classified as protected under Subsection 63G-2-305(10) until the investigation and any subsequent proceedings before UPPAC and the Board are completed; and

(d) that is considered public under GRAMA after case proceedings are closed, unless specific documents contained therein contain non-public information or have been otherwise classified as non-public under GRAMA.

(51) "UPPAC investigative letter" means a letter sent by UPPAC to an educator notifying the educator that an allegation of misconduct has been received against him and that UPPAC or the Board has directed that an investigation of the educator's alleged actions take place.

**KEY: professional practices, definitions, educators**

**Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**



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**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-211. Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC), Rules of Procedure: Notification to Educators, Complaints and Final Disciplinary Actions.**

**R277-211-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to provide procedures regarding:

(a) notifications of alleged educator misconduct;

(b) review of notifications by UPPAC; and

(c) complaints, proposed stipulated agreements, approved stipulated agreements, and defaults.

(3) Except as provided in Subsection(4), Title 63G, Chapter 4, Administrative Procedures Act does not apply to this rule under the exemption of Subsection 63G-4-102(2)(d).

(4) UPPAC may invoke and use sections or provisions of Title 63G, Chapter 4, Administrative Procedures Act as necessary to adjudicate an issue.

**R277-211-2. Initiating Proceedings Against Educators.**

(1) The Executive Secretary may refer a case to UPPAC to make a determination if an investigation should be opened regarding an educator:

(a) upon receiving a notification of alleged educator misconduct; or

(b) upon the Executive Secretary's own initiative.

(2) An informant shall submit an allegation to the Executive Secretary in writing, including the following:

(a) the informant's:

(i) name;

(ii) position, such as administrator, teacher, parent, or student;

(iii) telephone number;

(iv) address; and

(v) contact information;

(b) information of the educator against whom the allegation is made:

(i) name;

(ii) position, such as administrator, teacher, candidate; and

(iii) if known, the address and telephone number;

(c) the facts on which the allegation is based and supporting information; and

(d) signature of the informant and date.

(3) If an informant submits a written allegation of misconduct as provided in this rule, the informant may be notified of a final action taken by the Board regarding the allegation.

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(4)(a) Proceedings initiated upon the Executive Secretary's own initiative may be based on information received through a telephone call, letter, newspaper article, media information, notice from another state, or by other means.

(b) The Executive Secretary may also recommend an investigation based on an anonymous allegation, notwithstanding the provisions of this rule, if the allegation bears sufficient indicia of reliability.

(5) The Executive Secretary shall maintain all written allegations, subsequent dismissals, actions, or disciplinary letters related to a case against an educator shall be maintained permanently in the UPPAC case file.

### **R277-211-3. Review of Notification of Alleged Educator Misconduct.**

(1)(a) Upon receipt of a notification of alleged educator misconduct, the Executive Secretary shall recommend one of the following to UPPAC:

(i) dismiss the matter if UPPAC determines that alleged misconduct does not involve an issue that UPPAC should address; or

(ii) initiate an investigation if UPPAC determines that the alleged misconduct involves an issue that may be appropriately addressed by UPPAC and the Board.

(b) If the Executive Secretary recommends UPPAC initiate an investigation:

(i) UPPAC shall initiate an investigation; and

(ii) the Executive Secretary shall direct a UPPAC investigator to gather evidence relating to the allegations.

(2)(a) Prior to a UPPAC investigator's initiation of an investigation, the Executive Secretary shall send a letter to the following with information that UPPAC has initiated an investigation:

(i) the educator to be investigated;

(ii) the LEA that employs the educator; and

(iii) the LEA where the alleged activity occurred.

(b) A letter described in Subsection(2)(a) shall inform the educator and the LEA that an investigation shall take place and is not evidence of unprofessional conduct.

(c) UPPAC shall place a flag on the educator's CACTUS file after sending the notices as provided in this rule.

(3)(a) The investigator shall review relevant documentation and interview individuals who may have knowledge of the allegations.

(b) The investigator shall prepare an investigative report of the findings of the investigation and a recommendation for appropriate action or disciplinary letter.

(c) If the investigator discovers additional evidence of unprofessional conduct that could have been included in the original notification of alleged educator misconduct, the investigator may include the additional evidence of misconduct in the investigative report.

(d) The investigator shall submit the investigative report to the Executive Secretary.

(e) The Executive Secretary shall review the investigative report described in Subsection(3)(d) with UPPAC.

(f) The investigative report described in Subsection(3)(d) shall become part of the UPPAC case file.

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- (4) UPPAC shall review the investigative report and take one of the following actions:
  - (a) UPPAC determines no further action should be taken, UPPAC may recommend that the Board dismiss the case; or
  - (b) UPPAC may make an initial recommendation of appropriate action or disciplinary letter.
- (5) After receiving an initial recommendation from UPPAC for action, the Executive Secretary shall direct a UPPAC attorney to:
  - (a) prepare and serve a complaint; or
  - (b) negotiate and prepare a proposed stipulated agreement.
- (6)(a) A proposed stipulated agreement shall conform to the requirements set forth in Section R277-211-6.
  - (b) An educator may stipulate to any recommended disposition for an action.
- (7) The Executive Secretary shall forward any proposed stipulated agreement to the Board for approval.

#### **R277-211-4. Expedited Hearings.**

- (1) In a case involving the report of an arrest, citation, or charge of a licensed educator, which requires self-reporting by the educator under Section R277-516-3, the Executive Secretary, with the consent of the educator, may schedule the matter for an expedited hearing in lieu of initially referring the matter to UPPAC.
- (2)(a) The Executive Secretary shall hold an expedited hearing within 30 days of a report of an arrest, citation, or charge, unless otherwise agreed upon by both parties.
  - (b) The Executive Secretary or the Executive Secretary's designee shall conduct an expedited hearing with the following additional invited participants:
    - (i) the educator;
    - (ii) the educator's attorney or representative;
    - (iii) a UPPAC attorney;
    - (iv) a voting member of UPPAC; and
    - (v) a representative of the educator's LEA.
- (3) The panel may consider the following matters at an expedited hearing:
  - (a) an educator's oral or written explanation of the events;
  - (b) a police report;
  - (c) a court docket or transcript;
  - (d) an LEA's investigative report or employment file; and
  - (e) additional information offered by the educator if the panel deems it probative of the issues at the expedited hearing.
- (4) After reviewing the evidence described in Subsection (3), the expedited hearing panel shall make written findings and a recommendation to UPPAC to do one of the following:
  - (a) close the case;
  - (b) close the case upon completion of court requirements;
  - (c) recommend issuance of a disciplinary letter to the Board;
  - (d) open a full investigation; or

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(e) recommend action by the Board, subject to an educator's due process rights under these rules.

(5) An expedited hearing may be recorded, but the testimony from the expedited hearing is inadmissible during a future UPPAC action related to the allegation.

(6) If the Board fails to adopt the recommendation of an expedited hearing panel, UPPAC shall open a full investigation.

### **R277-211-5. Complaints.**

(1) If UPPAC determines that an allegation is sufficiently supported by evidence discovered in the investigation, the Executive Secretary shall direct the UPPAC attorney to serve a complaint upon the educator being investigated.

(2) At a minimum, a complaint shall include:

(a) a statement of legal authority and jurisdiction under which the action is being taken;

(b) a statement of the facts and allegations upon which the complaint is based;

(c) other information that the investigator believes is necessary to enable the respondent to understand and address the allegations;

(d) a statement of the potential consequences if an allegation is found to be true or substantially true;

(e) a statement that the respondent shall answer the complaint and request a hearing, if desired, within 30 days of the date the complaint is mailed to the respondent;

(f) a statement that the respondent is required to file a written answer described in Subsection(2)(e) with the Executive Secretary;

(g) a statement advising the respondent that if the respondent fails to respond within 30 days, a default judgment for revocation or a suspension of the educator's license may occur for a term of five years or more;

(h) a statement that, if a hearing is requested, the hearing will be scheduled no less than 25 days, nor more than 180 days, after receipt of the respondent's answer, unless a different date is agreed to by both parties in writing; and

(i) a copy of the applicable hearing rules as required by Subsection 53A-6-604(2).

(3) On the Executive Secretary's own motion, the Executive Secretary, or the Executive Secretary's designee, with notice to the parties, may reschedule a hearing date.

(4)(a) A respondent may file an answer to a complaint by filing a written response signed by the respondent or the respondent's representative with the Executive Secretary within 30 days after the complaint is mailed.

(b) The answer may include a request for a hearing, and shall include:

(i) the file number of the complaint;

(ii) the names of the parties;

(iii) a statement of the relief that the respondent seeks; and

(iv) if not requesting a hearing, a statement of the reasons that the relief requested should be granted.

(5)(a) As soon as reasonably practicable after receiving an answer, or no more than 30 days after receipt of an answer at the USOE, the Executive Secretary shall schedule a

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hearing, if requested by either party, as provided in Rule R277-202.

(b) If the parties can reach an agreement prior to the hearing consistent with the terms of UPPAC's initial recommendation, the UPPAC attorney may negotiate a proposed stipulated agreement with the respondent.

(c) A proposed stipulated agreement described in Subsection(5)(b) shall be submitted to the Board for the Board's final approval.

(6)(a) If a respondent does not respond to the complaint within 30 days, the Executive Secretary may initiate default proceedings in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section R277-211-7.

(b) Except as provided in Subsection R277-211-7(3), if the Executive Secretary enters an order of default, the Executive Secretary shall make a recommendation to the Board for a revocation or a suspension of the educator=s license for five years before the educator may request a reinstatement hearing.

(c) If a default results in a suspension, a default may include conditions that an educator shall satisfy before the educator may qualify for a reinstatement hearing.

(d) An order of default shall result in a recommendation to the Board for a revocation if the alleged misconduct is conduct identified in Subsection 53A-6-501(5)(b).

#### **R277-211-6. Proposed Stipulated Agreements.**

(1) At any time after UPPAC has made an initial recommendation, a respondent may accept UPPAC's initial recommendation, rather than request a hearing, by entering into a proposed stipulated agreement.

(2) By entering into a proposed stipulated agreement, a respondent waives the respondent's right to a hearing to contest the recommended disposition, contingent on final approval by the Board.

(3) At a minimum, the Executive Secretary shall include the following in a stipulated agreement:

(a) a summary of the facts, the allegations, and the evidence relied upon by UPPAC in its recommendation;

(b) a statement that the respondent admits the facts recited in the stipulated agreement as true for purposes of the Board administrative action;

(c) a statement that the respondent:

(i) waives the respondent's right to a hearing to contest the allegations that gave rise to the investigation; and

(ii) agrees to limitations on the respondent's license or surrenders the respondent's license rather than contest the allegations;

(d) a statement that the respondent agrees to the terms of the proposed stipulated agreement and other provisions applicable to the case, such as remediation, counseling, restitution, rehabilitation, and other conditions, if any, under which the respondent may request a reinstatement hearing or a removal of the letter of reprimand or termination of probation;

(e) if for suspension or revocation of a license, a statement that the respondent:

(i) may not seek or provide professional services in a public school in the state;

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(ii) may not seek to obtain or use an educator license in the state; or  
(iii) may not work or volunteer in a public K-12 setting in any capacity without express authorization from the UPPAC Executive Secretary, unless or until the respondent:

(A) first obtains a valid educator license or authorization from the Board to obtain such a license; or

(B) satisfies other provisions provided in the proposed stipulated agreement;

(f) a statement that the action and the proposed stipulated agreement shall be reported to other states through the NASDTEC Educator Information Clearinghouse and any attempt to present to any other state a valid Utah license shall result in further licensing action in Utah;

(g) a statement that respondent waives the respondent's right to contest the facts stated in the proposed stipulated agreement at a subsequent reinstatement hearing, if any;

(h) a statement that all records related to the proposed stipulated agreement shall remain permanently in the UPPAC case file;

(i) a statement reflecting the proposed stipulated agreement's classification under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act;

(j) a statement that a violation of the terms of an approved stipulated agreement may result in additional disciplinary action and may affect the reinstatement process; and

(k) a statement that the educator understands that the Board is not bound by UPPAC's recommendation or the negotiated proposed stipulated agreement unless the Board approves the proposed stipulated agreement.

(4)(a) The Executive Secretary shall forward a proposed stipulated agreement to the Board for approval.

(b) If the Board does not approve a proposed stipulated agreement, the Board may:

(i) direct UPPAC to hold a hearing if the Board provides direction, in the form of a motion, as to what issues need to be addressed by UPPAC;

(ii) provide alternative terms, by motion, to the Executive Secretary, that would be satisfactory to the Board;

(iii) direct the Executive Secretary to issue a disciplinary letter or dismiss the matter;

or

(iv) take other appropriate action consistent with due process and R277-215.

(5) If the respondent accepts a stipulated agreement with a modified disposition proposed by the Board, the stipulated agreement, as modified, is a final Board administrative action without further Board consideration.

(6) If the terms approved by the Board are rejected by the respondent, the proceedings shall continue from the point under these procedures at which the agreement was negotiated, as if the stipulated agreement had not been submitted.

(7) If the Board directs UPPAC to hold a hearing under Subsection (4)(b)(i), the Executive Secretary shall:

(a) notify the parties of the decision;

(b) direct a UPPAC attorney to issue a complaint; and

(c) direct the proceedings as if the proposed stipulated agreement had not been submitted.



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(8) If the Board approves a proposed stipulated agreement, the approval is a final Board administrative action, effective upon signature by all parties, and the Executive Secretary shall:

- (a) notify the parties of the decision;
- (b) update CACTUS to reflect the action;
- (c) report the action to the NASDTEC Educator Information Clearinghouse if the agreement results in:
  - (i) a revocation; or
  - (ii) a suspension; and
  - (d) direct the appropriate penalties to begin.

#### **R277-211-7. Default Procedures.**

(1) If a respondent does not respond to a complaint within 30 days from the date the complaint or approved stipulated agreement is served, the Executive Secretary may issue an order of default against the respondent consistent with the following:

(a) the Executive Secretary shall prepare and serve on the respondent an order of default including:

- (i) a statement of the grounds for default; and
- (ii) a recommended disposition if the respondent fails to file a response to a complaint;

(b) ten days following service of the order of default, a UPPAC attorney shall attempt to contact respondent by telephone or electronically;

(c) UPPAC shall maintain documentation of attempts toward written, telephonic, or electronic contact;

(d) the respondent has 20 days following service of the order of default to respond to UPPAC; and

(e) if UPPAC receives a response from respondent to a default order before the end of the 20 day default period, UPPAC shall allow respondent a final ten day period to respond to a complaint.

(2) Except as provided in Subsection (3), if an order of default is issued, the Executive Secretary may make a recommendation to the Board for revocation or for a suspension of the educator's license for no less than five years.

(3) If an order of default is issued, the Executive Secretary shall make a recommendation to the Board for a revocation of the educator's license if the alleged misconduct is conduct identified in Subsection 53A-6-501(5)(b).

#### **R277-211-8. Disciplinary Letters and Dismissal.**

(1) If UPPAC recommends issuance of a disciplinary letter or dismissal, the Executive Secretary shall forward the case to the Board for review.

(2) If the Board does not approve a recommendation for a disciplinary letter or dismissal described in Subsection (1), the Board may:

(a) remand the case to UPPAC for a hearing with direction from the Board, in the form of a motion, as to what issues need to be addressed by UPPAC;

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(b) remand the case to UPPAC with recommendations for negotiation of a stipulated agreement;

(c) direct the Executive Secretary to issue a different level of disciplinary letter; or

(d) dismiss the matter.

(3) If the Board approves a disciplinary letter, the Executive Secretary shall:

(a) prepare the disciplinary letter and mail it to the educator;

(b) place a copy of the disciplinary letter in the UPPAC case file; and

(c) update CACTUS to reflect that the investigation is closed.

**KEY: teacher licensing, conduct, hearings**

**Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**

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**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-212. UPPAC Hearing Procedures and Reports.**

**R277-212-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish procedures regarding UPPAC hearings and hearing reports.

(3) The standards and procedures of Title 63G, Chapter 4, Administrative Procedures Act do not apply to this rule under the exemption of Subsection 63G-4-102(2)(d).

**R277-212-2. Scheduling a Hearing.**

(1)(a) Following receipt of an answer by respondent requesting a hearing, or at the direction of the Board:

(i) UPPAC shall select panel members;

(ii) the Executive Secretary shall appoint a hearing officer from among a list of hearing officers identified by the state procurement process and approved by UPPAC; and

(iii) UPPAC shall schedule the date, time, and place for the hearing.

(b) The Executive Secretary shall schedule a hearing for a date that is not less than 45 days nor more than 180 days from the date the Executive Secretary receives the answer unless otherwise stipulated by the parties.

(c) The required scheduling periods may be waived by mutual written consent of the parties or by the hearing officer for good cause shown.

(2)(a) Any party may request a change of hearing date by submitting a request in writing that shall:

(i) include a statement of the reasons for the request; and

(ii) be submitted to the hearing officer at least five days prior to the scheduled date of the hearing.

(b) The hearing officer shall determine whether the reason stated in the request is sufficient to warrant a change.

(c) If the hearing officer finds that the reason for the request for a change of hearing date is sufficient, the hearing officer shall promptly notify all parties of the new time, date, and place for the hearing.

(d) If the hearing officer does not find the reason for the request for a change of hearing date to be sufficient, the hearing officer shall immediately notify the parties that the request has been denied.

(e) The hearing officer and the parties may waive the time period required for requesting a change of hearing date for good cause shown.

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(3) An educator is entitled to a hearing on any matter in which an action is recommended.

(4) An educator is not entitled to a hearing on a matter in which a disciplinary letter is recommended.

### **R277-212-3. Appointment and Duties of the Hearing Officer and Hearing Panel.**

(1)(a) The Executive Secretary shall appoint a hearing officer to chair the hearing panel and conduct the hearing.

(b) The Executive Secretary shall select a hearing officer on a random basis from a list of available contracted hearing officers, subject to availability and conflict of interest.

(c) The Executive Secretary shall provide such information about the case as necessary to determine whether the hearing officer has a conflict of interest and shall disqualify any hearing officer that cannot serve under the Utah Rules of Professional Conduct.

(d) A hearing officer:

(i) may require the parties to submit a brief and a list of witnesses prior to the hearing;

(ii) presides at the hearing and regulates the course of the proceeding;

(iii) administers an oath to a witness as follows: "Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you will give is the truth?";

(iv) may take testimony, rule on a question of evidence, and ask a question of a witness to clarify a specific issue; and

(v) prepares and submits a hearing report to the Executive Secretary at the conclusion of the proceedings in consultation with panel members and the timelines of this rule.

(2)(a) UPPAC shall select three or more individuals to serve as members of the hearing panel.

(b) As directed by UPPAC, any licensed educator may serve as a panel member, if needed.

(c) The majority of panel members shall be current UPPAC members.

(d) UPPAC shall select panel members on a rotating basis to the extent practicable.

(e) UPPAC shall accommodate each prospective panel member based on the availability of the panel member.

(f) If the respondent is a teacher, at least one panel member shall be a teacher.

(g) If the respondent is a non-teacher licensed educator, at least one panel member shall be a non-teacher licensed educator.

(3) The requirements of Subsection (2) may be waived only upon the stipulation of both UPPAC and the respondent.

(4)(a) A UPPAC panel member shall:

(i) assist a hearing officer by providing information concerning professional standards and practices of educators in the respondent's particular field of practice and in the situations alleged;

(ii) ask a question of a witness to clarify a specific issue;

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(iii) review all evidence and briefs, if any, presented at the hearing;  
(iv) make a recommendation to UPPAC as to the suggested disposition of a complaint; and

(v) assist the hearing officer in preparing the hearing report.

(b) A panel member may only consider the evidence approved for admission by the hearing officer.

(c) The Executive Secretary may make an emergency substitution of a panel member for cause with the consent of the parties.

(d) The agreement to substitute a panel member shall be in writing.

(e) Parties may agree to a two-member UPPAC panel in an emergency situation.

(f) If the parties do not agree to a substitution or to having a two-member panel, the Executive Secretary shall reschedule the hearing.

(5)(a) A party may request that the Executive Secretary disqualify a hearing officer by submitting a written request for disqualification to the Executive Secretary.

(b) A party shall submit a request to disqualify a hearing officer to the Executive Secretary at least 15 days before a scheduled hearing.

(6)(a) The Executive Secretary shall review a request described in Subsection (5) and supporting evidence to determine whether the reasons for the request are substantial and compelling.

(b) If the Executive Secretary determines that the hearing officer should be disqualified, the Executive Secretary shall appoint a new hearing officer and, if necessary, reschedule the hearing.

(7) A hearing officer may recuse himself or herself from a hearing if, in the hearing officer's opinion, the hearing officer's participation would violate any of the Utah Rules of Professional Conduct consistent with the Supreme Court Rules of Professional Practice.

(8)(a) If the Executive Secretary denies a request to disqualify a hearing officer described in Subsection (5), the Executive Secretary shall notify the party within ten days prior to the date of the hearing.

(b) The requesting party may submit a written appeal of the Executive Secretary's denial to the Superintendent no later than five days prior to the hearing date.

(c) If the Superintendent finds that the appeal is justified, the Superintendent shall direct the Executive Secretary to appoint a new hearing officer and, if necessary, reschedule the hearing.

(d) The decision of the Superintendent described in Subsection (8)(c) is final.

(e) If a party fails to file an appeal within the time requirements of Subsection (8)(b), the appeal shall be deemed denied.

(f) If the Executive Secretary fails to meet the time requirements described in Subsection (6) or (8), the request or appeal is approved.

(9)(a) A UPPAC member shall recuse himself or herself as a panel member due to any known financial or personal interest, prior relationship, personal and independent knowledge of the persons or issues in the case, or other association that the panel member believes would compromise the panel member's ability to make an impartial decision.

(b) A party may request that a UPPAC panel member be disqualified by submitting

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a written request to the following:

(i) the hearing officer; or

(ii) to the Executive Secretary if there is no hearing officer.

(c) A party shall submit a request described in Subsection (9)(b) no less than 15 days before a scheduled hearing.

(d) The hearing officer, or the Executive Secretary, if there is no hearing officer, shall:

(i) review a request described in Subsection (9)(b) and supporting evidence to determine whether the reasons for the request are substantial and compelling enough to disqualify the panel member; and

(ii) if the reasons for the request described in Subsection (9)(b) are substantial and compelling, disqualify the panel member.

(e) If the panel member's disqualification leaves the hearing panel with fewer than three UPPAC panel members:

(i) UPPAC shall appoint a replacement; and

(ii) the Executive Secretary shall, if necessary, reschedule the hearing.

(f) If a request described in Subsection (9)(b) is denied, the hearing officer or the Executive Secretary if there is no hearing officer, shall notify the party requesting the panel member's disqualification no less than ten days prior to the date of the hearing.

(g) The requesting party may file a written appeal of a denial described in Subsection (9)(f) with the Superintendent no later than five days prior to the hearing date.

(h) If the Superintendent finds that an appeal described in Subsection (9)(g) is justified, the Superintendent shall direct the hearing officer or the Executive Secretary if there is no hearing officer, to replace the panel member.

(i) If a panel member's disqualification leaves the hearing panel with fewer than three UPPAC panel members, UPPAC shall agree upon a replacement and the Executive Secretary shall, if necessary, reschedule the hearing.

(j) The decision of the Superintendent described in Subsection (9)(h) is final.

(k) If a party fails to file an appeal within the time requirements of Subsection (9)(g), the appeal shall be deemed denied.

(l) If the hearing officer, or the Executive Secretary if there is no hearing officer, fails to meet the time requirements described in this Subsection (9), the request or appeal is approved.

(10) The Executive Secretary may, at the time the Executive Secretary selects a hearing officer or panel member, select an alternative hearing officer or panel member following the process for selecting those individuals.

(11) The Executive Secretary may substitute a panel member with an alternative panel member if the Executive Secretary notifies the parties of the substitution.

#### **R277-212-4. Preliminary Instructions to Parties to a Hearing.**

(1) A hearing shall be scheduled no less than 45 days after receipt of an answer, unless otherwise stipulated by the parties.

(2) No later than 25 days before the date of a hearing, the Executive Secretary shall



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provide the parties with the following information:

(a) date, time, and location of the hearing;

(b) names and LEA affiliations of each panel member, and the name of the hearing officer; and

(c) instructions for accessing these rules.

(3) No later than 20 days before the date of the hearing, the respondent and the complainant shall provide the following to the other party and to the hearing officer:

(a) a brief, if requested by the hearing officer containing:

(i) any procedural and evidentiary motions along with the party's position regarding the allegations; and

(ii) relevant laws, rules, and precedent;

(b) the name of the person who will represent the party at the hearing;

(c) a list of witnesses expected to be called, including a summary of the testimony that each witness is expected to present;

(d) a summary of documentary evidence that the party intends to submit; and

(e) following receipt of the other party's witness list, a list of anticipated rebuttal witnesses and evidence no later than ten days prior to the hearing.

(4)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), a party may not present a witness or evidence at the hearing if the witness or evidence has not been disclosed to the other party as required in Subsection (3).

(b) A party may present a witness or evidence at the hearing even if the witness or hearing has not been disclosed to the other party if:

(i) the parties stipulate to the presentation of the witness or evidence at the hearing;

or

(ii) the hearing officer makes a determination of good cause to allow the witness or evidence.

(5) If a party fails to comply in good faith with a directive of the hearing officer, including time requirements, the hearing officer may prohibit introduction of the testimony or evidence or take other steps reasonably appropriate under the circumstances.

(6) A party shall provide materials to the hearing officer, panel members, and UPPAC as directed by the hearing officer.

#### **R277-212-5. Hearing Parties' Representation.**

(1) A UPPAC attorney shall represent the complainant.

(2) A respondent may represent himself or herself or be represented, at the respondent's own cost, by another person.

(3) The informant has no right to:

(a) individual representation at the hearing; or

(b) to be present or heard at the hearing unless called as a witness.

(4) A respondent shall notify the Executive Secretary in a timely manner and in writing if the respondent chooses to be represented by anyone other than the respondent.

#### **R277-212-6. Discovery Prior to a Hearing.**

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(1) Discovery is permitted to the extent necessary to obtain relevant information necessary to support claims or defenses, as determined by the hearing officer.

(2) Unduly burdensome legalistic discovery may not be used to delay a hearing.

(3) A hearing officer may limit discovery:

(a) at the discretion of the hearing officer; or

(b) upon a motion by either party.

(4) A hearing officer rules on all discovery requests and motions.

(5) The Executive Secretary shall issue a subpoena or other order to secure the attendance of a witness pursuant to Subsection 53A-6-306(3)(c)(i) if:

(a) requested by either party; and

(b) notice of intent to call the witness has been timely provided as required by Section R277-212-4.

(6) The Executive Secretary shall issue a subpoena to produce evidence if timely requested by either party.

(7)(a) A party may not present an expert witness report or expert witness testimony at a hearing unless the requirements of Section R277-212-10 have been met.

(b) A respondent may not subpoena the UPPAC attorney or investigator as an expert witness.

#### **R277-212-7. Burden and Standard of Proof for UPPAC Proceedings.**

(1) In matters other than those involving applicants for licensing, and excepting the presumptions under Subsection R277-212-11(11), the Board shall have the burden of proving that an action against the license is appropriate.

(2) An applicant for licensing has the burden of proving that licensing is appropriate.

(3) The standard of proof in all UPPAC hearings is a preponderance of the evidence.

(4) The Utah Rules of Evidence are not applicable to UPPAC proceedings.

(5) The criteria to decide an evidentiary question are:

(a) reasonable reliability of the offered evidence;

(b) fairness to both parties; and

(c) usefulness to UPPAC in reaching a decision.

(6) The hearing officer has the sole responsibility to determine the application of the hearing rules and the admissibility of evidence.

#### **R277-212-8. Deportment.**

(1) Parties, their representatives, witnesses, and other persons present during a hearing shall conduct themselves in an appropriate manner during a hearing, giving due respect to members of the hearing panel and complying with the instructions of the hearing officer.

(2) A hearing officer may exclude a person from the hearing room who fails to conduct himself or herself in an appropriate manner and may, in response to extreme instances of noncompliance, disallow the person's testimony.

(3) Parties, attorneys for parties, or other participants in the professional practices investigation and hearing process may not harass, intimidate, or pressure witnesses or

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other hearing participants, nor may they direct others to harass, intimidate, or pressure witnesses or participants.

**R277-212-9. Hearing Record.**

(1) A hearing shall be recorded at UPPAC's expense, and the recording shall become part of the UPPAC case file, unless otherwise agreed upon by all parties.

(2) An individual party may, at the party's own expense, make a recording or transcript of the proceedings if the party provides notice to the Executive Secretary.

(3) If an exhibit is admitted as evidence, the record shall reflect the contents of the exhibit.

(4) All evidence and statements presented at a hearing shall become part of the UPPAC case file and may not be removed except by direction of the Executive Secretary or by order of the Board.

(5)(a) Upon request of an educator, UPPAC will provide an electronic or paper copy of the UPPAC case file to the educator.

(b) UPPAC may charge fees in accordance with Rule R277-103-5 if the educator requests a paper copy.

**R277-212-10. Expert Witnesses in UPPAC Proceedings.**

(1) A hearing officer may allow testimony by an expert witness.

(2) A party may call an expert witness at the party's own expense.

(3) A party shall provide a hearing officer and the opposing party with the following information at least 15 days prior to the hearing date:

(a) notice of intent of a party to call an expert witness;

(b) the identity and qualifications of an expert witness;

(c) the purpose for which the expert witness is to be called; and

(d) any prepared expert witness report.

(4) Defects in the qualifications of an expert witness, once a minimum threshold of expertise is established, go to the weight to be given the testimony and not to its admissibility.

(5) An expert witness who is a member of the complainant's staff or staff of an LEA may testify and have the testimony considered as part of the record in the same manner as the testimony of any other expert.

**R277-212-11. Evidence and Participation in UPPAC Proceedings.**

(1) A hearing officer may not exclude evidence solely because the evidence is hearsay.

(2) Each party has a right to call witnesses, present evidence, argue, respond, cross-examine witnesses who testify in person at the hearing, and submit rebuttal evidence.

(3) Testimony presented at the hearing shall be given under oath if the testimony is offered as evidence to be considered in reaching a decision on the merits.

(4) If a case involves allegations of child abuse or of a sexual offense against a

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minor under applicable federal or state law, either party, a member of the hearing panel, or the hearing officer, may request that a child victim or witness younger than 14 years of age be allowed to testify outside of the respondent's presence.

(5) If the hearing officer determines that a minor would suffer undue emotional or mental harm, or that the minor's testimony in the presence of the respondent would be unreliable, the minor's testimony may be admitted as described in this section.

(6) An oral statement of a victim or witness younger than 14 years of age that is recorded prior to the filing of a complaint is admissible as evidence in a hearing regarding the offense if:

(a) no attorney for either party is in the minor's presence when the statement is recorded;

(b) the recording is visual and aural and is recorded;

(c) the recording equipment is capable of making an accurate recording;

(d) the operator of the equipment is competent;

(e) the recording is accurate and has not been altered; and

(f) each voice in the recording is identified.

(7) The testimony of a witness or victim younger than 14 years of age may be taken in a room other than the hearing room, and may be transmitted by closed circuit equipment to another room where it can be viewed by the respondent if:

(a) only the hearing panel members, attorneys for each party, persons necessary to operate equipment, and a person approved by the hearing officer whose presence contributes to the welfare and emotional well-being of the minor may be with the minor during the testimony;

(b) the respondent is not present during the minor's testimony;

(c) the hearing officer ensures that the minor cannot hear or see the respondent;

(d) the respondent is permitted to observe and hear, but not communicate with the minor; and

(e) only hearing panel members, the hearing officer, and the attorneys question the minor.

(8)(a) If a witness testifies under circumstances described in Subsection (7), a pro se educator, may submit written questions to the hearing officer to ask on the educator's behalf.

(b) A hearing officer shall take appropriate recesses to ensure a pro se educator is allowed to ask all needed follow up questions.

(9) If the hearing officer determines that the testimony of a minor may be taken consistent with Subsections (4) through (7), the minor may not be required to testify in any proceeding where the recorded testimony is used.

(10) On the hearing officer's own motion or upon objection by a party, the hearing officer:

(a) may exclude evidence that the hearing officer determines to be irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious;

(b) shall exclude evidence that is privileged under law applicable to administrative proceedings in the state unless waived;

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(c) may receive documentary evidence in the form of a copy or excerpt if the copy or excerpt contains all pertinent portions of the original document;

(d) may take official notice of any facts that could be judicially noticed under judicial or administrative laws of the state, or from the record of other proceedings before the agency.

(11)(a) In addition to a rebuttable presumption described in Subsection 53A-6-306(3)(e), a rebuttable evidentiary presumption exists that a person has committed a sexual offense against a minor if the person has:

(i) been found, pursuant to a criminal, civil, or administrative action to have committed a sexual offense against a minor; or

(ii) failed to defend himself or herself against the charge when given a reasonable opportunity to do so.

(b) A rebuttable evidentiary presumption exists that a person is unfit to serve as an educator if the person has been found pursuant to a criminal, civil, or administrative action to have exhibited behavior evidencing unfitness for duty, including immoral, unprofessional, or incompetent conduct, or other violation of standards of ethical conduct, performance, or professional competence.

(c) Evidence of behavior described in Subsection (11)(b) may include:

(i) conviction of a felony;

(ii) a felony charge and subsequent conviction for a lesser related charge pursuant to a plea bargain or plea in abeyance;

(iii) an investigation of an educator's license, certificate, or authorization in another state; or

(iv) the expiration, surrender, suspension, revocation, or invalidation of an educator's license for any reason.

### **R277-212-12. Hearing Report.**

(1) Within 20 days after the hearing, or within 20 days after the deadline imposed for the filing of any post-hearing materials as permitted by the hearing officer, the hearing officer shall sign and issue a hearing report consistent with the recommendations of the panel that includes:

(a) detailed findings of fact and conclusions of law based upon the evidence of record or on facts officially noted;

(b) a statement of relevant precedent, if available;

(c) a statement of applicable law and rule;

(d) a recommended disposition of UPPAC panel members that shall be one or an appropriate combination of the following:

(i) dismissal of the complaint;

(ii) letter of admonishment;

(iii) letter of warning;

(iv) letter of reprimand;

(v) probation, to include the following terms and conditions:

(A) it is the respondent's responsibility to petition UPPAC for removal of probation

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and letter of reprimand from the respondent's CACTUS file;

(B) a probationary time period or specifically designated indefinite time period;

(C) conditions that can be monitored;

(D) if recommended by the panel, a person or entity to monitor a respondent's probation;

(E) a statement providing for costs of probation, if appropriate; and

(F) whether or not the respondent may work in any capacity in public education during the probationary period;

(vi) disciplinary action held in abeyance;

(vii) suspension, to include the following terms and conditions:

(A) a recommended minimum time period after which an educator may request a reinstatement hearing under Rule R277-203; and

(B) any recommended conditions precedent to requesting a reinstatement hearing under Section R277-203-2; or

(viii) revocation; and

(e) notice that UPPAC's recommendation is subject to approval by the Board and judicial review as may be allowed by law.

(2) Findings of fact may not be based solely upon hearsay, and conclusions shall be based upon competent evidence.

(3) Any of the consequences described in Subsection (1)(d) may be imposed in the form of a disciplinary action held in abeyance.

(4)(a) If the respondent's penalty is held in abeyance, the respondent's penalty is stayed subject to the satisfactory completion of probationary conditions.

(b) The decision to impose a consequence in the form of a disciplinary action held in abeyance shall provide for appropriate or presumed discipline if the respondent does not fully satisfy the probationary conditions.

(5)(a) A hearing officer shall circulate a draft report to hearing panel members prior to the 20 day completion deadline of the hearing report.

(b) Hearing panel members shall notify the hearing officer of any changes to the report:

(i) as soon as possible after receiving the report; and

(ii) prior to the 20 day completion deadline of the hearing report.

(c) The hearing officer shall file the completed hearing report with the Executive Secretary, who shall review the report with UPPAC.

(d) The Executive Secretary may participate in UPPAC's deliberation as a resource to UPPAC in explaining the hearing report and answering any procedural questions raised by UPPAC members.

(e) The hearing officer may confer with the Executive Secretary or the panel members or both while preparing the hearing report.

(f) The hearing officer may request the Executive Secretary to confer with the hearing officer and panel following the hearing.

(g) The Executive Secretary may return a hearing report to a hearing officer if the report is incomplete, unclear, or unreadable, or missing essential components or



R277-212 was approved by the Utah State Board of Education on March 18, 2016. R277-212 is published in the May 1, 2016 Utah State Bulletin, subject to a 30-day comment period, with a first possible effective date of June 7, 2016.

information.

(h) UPPAC shall vote to uphold the hearing officer's and panel's report if UPPAC finds that:

- (i) there are no significant procedural errors;
- (ii) the hearing officer's recommendations are based upon a preponderance of the evidence presented at the hearing; and
- (iii) that all issues explained in the hearing report are adequately addressed in the conclusions of the report.

(i) After the UPPAC review, the Executive Secretary shall send a copy of the hearing report to:

- (i) the Board for further action;
- (ii) the respondent; and
- (iii) the UPPAC case file.

(6)(a) If UPPAC adopts a hearing report that recommends an action, as defined in Subsection R277-200-2(1), either party may request review by the Superintendent within 15 days from the date the Executive Secretary sends a copy of the hearing report to the respondent.

(b) The request for review shall consist of:

- (i) the name, position, and address of the appellant;
- (ii) the issue being appealed; and
- (iii) the signature of the appellant or the appellant's representative.

(c) An appeal to the Superintendent is limited to a question of fairness or a violation of due process.

(d) If the Superintendent finds that a procedural error has occurred that violates fairness or due process, the Superintendent shall:

- (i) refer the report back to UPPAC for reconsideration as to whether the findings, conclusions, or decisions are supported by a preponderance of the evidence; or
- (ii) direct the UPPAC Executive Secretary to take specific administrative action.

(e) After UPPAC completes reconsideration, the Superintendent shall:

- (i) notify all parties; and
- (ii) refer the report to the Board, if necessary, for final disposition consistent with this

rule.

(7) If the Board does not approve a UPPAC hearing report, the Board may:

- (a) remand the case to UPPAC with direction to cure due process issues; or
- (b) issue findings:

- (i) specifying the reasons why the Board disapproves of the hearing report;
- (ii) adopting the Board's decision on the matter; and

(iii) directing the Executive Secretary to include the findings as an addendum to the hearing report, which findings constitute final Board action; or

(c) take other appropriate action consistent with due process and R277-215.

(8) Following Board adoption of a hearing report or the Board's decision under Subsection (7)(b), the Executive Secretary shall:

- (a) notify the educator;

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(b) notify the educator's employer;  
(c) update CACTUS to reflect the Board's action; and  
(d) report the action to the NASDTEC Educator Information Clearing house if the action results in:

(i) a revocation; or

(ii) a suspension.

(9) The hearing report is a public document under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act after final action is taken in the case, but may be redacted if it is determined that the hearing report contains particular information, the dissemination of which is otherwise restricted under the law.

(10) A respondent's failure to comply with the terms of a final disposition may result in additional discipline against the educator license.

(11) If a hearing officer fails to satisfy the hearing officer's responsibilities under this rule, the Executive Secretary may:

(a) notify the Utah State Bar of the failure;

(b) reduce the hearing officer's compensation consistent with the failure;

(c) take timely action to avoid disadvantaging either party; or

(d) preclude the hearing officer from further employment by the Board for UPPAC purposes.

(12) The Executive Secretary may waive the deadlines within this section if the Executive Secretary finds good cause.

(13) All criteria of letters of warning and reprimand, probation, suspension, and revocation apply to the comparable sections of the final hearing report.

### **R277-212-13. Default.**

(1)(a) The Executive Secretary may prepare an order of default if:

(i) the respondent fails to attend or participate in a properly scheduled hearing after receiving proper notice; or

(ii) the hearing officer recommends default as a sanction as a result of misconduct by the respondent or the respondent's representative during the course of the hearing process.

(b) The hearing officer may determine that the respondent has failed to attend a properly scheduled hearing if the respondent has not appeared within 30 minutes of the appointed time for the hearing to begin, unless the respondent shows good cause for failing to appear in a timely manner.

(2) The recommendation of default may be executed by the Executive Secretary following all applicable time periods, without further action by UPPAC.

(3) An order of default may result in an Executive Secretary recommendation to the Board for revocation or for a suspension of no less than five years.

(4) An order of default shall result in an Executive Secretary recommendation to the Board for a revocation if the alleged misconduct is conduct identified in Subsection 53A-6-501(5)(b).

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**R277-212-14. Rights of Victims at Hearings.**

(1) If the allegations that gave rise to the underlying allegations involve abuse of a sexual or physical nature, UPPAC shall make reasonable efforts to:

(a) advise the alleged victim that a hearing has been scheduled;

(b) notify the alleged victim of the date, time, and location of the hearing; and

(c) notify the alleged victim of the right to attend the hearing alone or with a victim advocate present.

(2) An alleged victim entitled to notification of a hearing is permitted, but is not required, to attend the hearing.

(3) An alleged victim or witness may have a victim advocate attend the hearing with them.

**KEY: hearings, reports, educators**

**Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**

R277-213 was approved by the Utah State Board of Education on April 15, 2016. R277-213 is published in the May 1, 2016 Utah State Bulletin, subject to a 30-day comment period, with a first possible effective date of June 7, 2016.

**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-213. Request for Licensure Reinstatement and Reinstatement Procedures.**

**R277-213-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish procedures regarding educator license reinstatement.

(3) The standards and procedures of the Utah Administrative Procedures Act do not apply to this rule under the exemption of Subsection 63G-4-102(2)(d).

**R277-213-2. Application for Licensing Following Denial or Loss of License.**

(1)(a) An individual who has been denied a license or lost the individual's license through suspension, or through surrender of a license or allowing a license to lapse in the face of an allegation of misconduct, may request a review to consider reinstatement of a license.

(b) A request for review described in Subsection (1)(a) shall:

(i) be in writing;

(ii) be transmitted to the UPPAC Executive Secretary; and

(iii) have the following information:

(A) name and address of the individual requesting review;

(B) the action being requested;

(C) specific evidence and documentation of compliance with terms and conditions of any remedial or disciplinary requirements or recommendations from UPPAC or the Board;

(D) reason(s) that the individual seeks reinstatement; and

(E) signature of the individual requesting review.

(2)(a) The Executive Secretary shall review the request with UPPAC.

(b) If UPPAC determines that the request is incomplete or invalid:

(i) the Executive Secretary shall deny the request; and

(ii) notify the individual requesting reinstatement of the denial.

(c) If UPPAC determines that the request of an individual described in Subsection (1) is complete, timely, and appropriate, UPPAC shall schedule and hold a hearing as provided under Section R277-213-3.

(3)(a) Burden of Persuasion: The burden of persuasion at a reinstatement hearing shall fall on the individual seeking the reinstatement.

(b) An individual requesting reinstatement of a suspended license shall:

(i) show sufficient evidence of compliance with any conditions imposed in the past disciplinary action;

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(ii) provide sufficient evidence to the reinstatement hearing panel that the educator will not engage in recurrences of the actions that gave rise to the suspension and that reinstatement is appropriate;

(iii) undergo a criminal background check not more than six months prior to the requested hearing; and

(iv) provide materials for review by the hearing panel that demonstrate the individual's compliance with directives from UPPAC or the Board found in petitioner's original stipulated agreement or hearing report.

(c) An individual requesting licensing following a denial shall show sufficient evidence of completion of a rehabilitation or remediation program, if applicable, when requesting reinstatement.

(4) An individual whose license has been suspended or revoked in another state shall seek reinstatement of the individual's license in the other state before a request for a reinstatement hearing may be approved.

### **R277-213-3. Reinstatement Hearing Procedures.**

(1) A hearing officer shall:

(a) preside over a reinstatement hearing; and

(b) rule on all procedural issues during the reinstatement hearing as they arise.

(2) A hearing panel, comprising individuals as set forth in Subsection (2), shall:

(a) hear the evidence; and

(b) along with the UPPAC attorney and hearing officer, question the individual seeking reinstatement regarding the appropriateness of reinstatement.

(3) An individual seeking reinstatement may:

(a) be represented by counsel; and

(b) may present evidence and witnesses.

(4) A party may present evidence and witnesses consistent with Rule R277-212.

(5) A hearing officer of a reinstatement hearing shall direct one or both parties to explain the background of a case to panel members at the beginning of the hearing to provide necessary information about the initial misconduct and subsequent UPPAC and Board action.

(6) An individual seeking reinstatement shall present documentation or evidence that supports reinstatement.

(7) The USOE, represented by a UPPAC attorney, shall present any evidence or documentation that explains and supports USOE's recommendation in the matter.

(8) Other evidence or witnesses may be presented by either party and shall be presented consistent with Rule R277-212.

(9) The individual seeking reinstatement shall:

(a) focus on the individual's actions, rehabilitative efforts, and performance following license denial or suspension;

(b) explain item by item how each condition of the hearing report or stipulated agreement was satisfied;

(c) provide documentation in the form of evaluations, reports, or plans, as directed

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by the hearing report or stipulated agreement, of satisfaction of all required and outlined conditions;

(d) be prepared to completely and candidly respond to the questions of the UPPAC attorney and hearing panel regarding:

(i) the misconduct that caused the license suspension;

(ii) subsequent rehabilitation activities;

(iii) counseling or therapy received by the individual related to the original misconduct; and

(iv) work, professional actions, and behavior between the suspension and reinstatement request;

(e) present witnesses and be prepared to question witnesses (including counselors, current employers, support group members) at the hearing who can provide substantive corroboration of rehabilitation or current professional fitness to be an educator;

(f) provide copies of all reports and documents to the UPPAC attorney and hearing officer at least five days before a reinstatement hearing; and

(g) bring eight copies of all documents or materials that an individual seeking reinstatement plans to introduce at the hearing.

(10) The UPPAC attorney, the hearing panel, and hearing officer shall thoroughly question the individual seeking reinstatement as to the individual's:

(a) underlying misconduct which is the basis of the sanction on the educator's license;

(b) specific and exact compliance with reinstatement requirements;

(c) counseling, if required for reinstatement;

(d) specific plans for avoiding previous misconduct; and

(e) demeanor and changed understanding of petitioner's professional integrity and actions consistent with Rule R277-515.

(11) If the individual seeking reinstatement sought counseling as described in Subsection(10)(c), the individual shall state, under oath, that he provided all relevant information and background to his counselor or therapist.

(12) A hearing officer shall rule on procedural issues in a reinstatement hearing in a timely manner as they arise.

(13) No more than 20 days following a reinstatement hearing, a hearing officer, with the assistance of the hearing panel, shall:

(a) prepare a hearing report in accordance with the requirements set forth in Section R277-213-5; and

(b) provide the hearing report to the UPPAC Executive Secretary.

(14) The Executive Secretary shall submit the hearing report to UPPAC at the next meeting following receipt of the hearing report by the Executive Secretary.

(15) UPPAC may do the following upon receipt of the hearing report:

(a) accept the hearing panel's recommendation as prepared in the hearing report;

(b) amend the hearing panel's recommendation with conditions or modifications to the hearing panel's recommendation which shall be:

(i) directed by UPPAC;



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(ii) prepared by the UPPAC Executive Secretary; and

(iii) attached to the hearing report; or

(c) reject the hearing panel's recommendation.

(16) After UPPAC makes a recommendation on the hearing panel report, the UPPAC recommendation will be forwarded to the Board for final action on the individual's reinstatement request.

(17) If the Board denies an individual's request for reinstatement, the individual shall wait at least twenty four (24) months prior to filing a request for reinstatement again, unless a different time is specified by UPPAC or the Board.

(18) If the Board reinstates an educator's license, the Executive Secretary shall:

(a) update CACTUS to reflect the Board's action; and

(b) report the Board's action to the NASDTEC Educator Information Clearing house.

(19) The Executive Secretary shall send notice of the Board's decision no more than 30 days following Board action to:

(a) the educator;

(b) the educator's LEA.

#### **R277-213-4. Rights of a Victim at a Reinstatement Hearing.**

(1) If the allegations that gave rise to the underlying suspension involve abuse of a sexual or physical nature, UPPAC shall make reasonable efforts to notify the victim or the victim's family of the reinstatement request.

(2) A UPPAC's notification described in Subsection (1) shall:

(a) advise the victim or the victim's family that a reinstatement hearing has been scheduled;

(b) notify the victim or the victim's family of the date, time, and location of the hearing;

(c) advise the victim or the victim's family of the victim's right to be heard at the reinstatement hearing; and

(d) provide the victim or the victim's family with a form upon which the victim can submit a statement for consideration by the hearing panel.

(3) A victim entitled to notification of the reinstatement proceedings shall be permitted:

(a) to attend the hearing; and

(b) to offer the victim's position on the educator's reinstatement request, either by testifying in person or by submitting a written statement.

(4) A victim choosing to testify at a reinstatement hearing shall be subject to reasonable cross examination in the hearing officer's discretion.

(5) A victim choosing not to respond in writing or appear at the reinstatement hearing waives the victim's right to participate in the reinstatement process.

#### **R277-213-5. Reinstatement Hearing Report.**

(1) A hearing officer shall provide the following in a reinstatement hearing report:

(a) a summary of the background of the original disciplinary action;

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(b) adequate information, including summary statements of evidence presented, documents provided, and petitioner's testimony and demeanor for both UPPAC and the Board to evaluate petitioner's progress and rehabilitation since petitioner's original disciplinary action;

(c) the hearing panel's conclusions regarding petitioner's appropriateness and fitness to be a public school educator again;

(d) the hearing panel's recommendation; and

(e) a statement indicating whether the hearing panel's recommendation to UPPAC was unanimous or identifying how the panel member's voted concerning reinstatement.

(2)(a) The hearing panel report is a public document under GRAMA following the conclusion of the reinstatement process unless specific information or evidence contained therein is protected by a specific provision of GRAMA, or another provision of state or federal law.

(b) The Executive Secretary shall add the hearing panel report to the UPPAC case file.

(3) If a license is reinstated, an educator's CACTUS file shall be updated to:

(a) remove the flag;

(b) show that the educator's license was reinstated; and

(c) show the date of formal Board action reinstating the license.

#### **R277-213-6. Reinstatement from Revocation of License.**

(1) The Executive Secretary shall deny any request for a reinstatement hearing for a revoked license unless the educator's stipulated agreement or revocation order from the Board allows the educator to request a reinstatement hearing.

(2) An educator may request that the Superintendent order a new hearing if:

(a) an educator provides:

(i) evidence of mistake or false information that was critical to the revocation action;

or

(ii) newly discovered evidence:

(A) that undermines the revocation determination; and

(B) that the educator could not have reasonably obtained during the original disciplinary proceedings; or

(b) an educator identifies material procedural Board error in the revocation process.

(3) A request for review by the Superintendent must be filed within 30 days of Board action for circumstances identified in Subsection (2)(a)(i) or (b).

(4) A request for review by the Superintendent must be filed within 90 days of discovery of the new evidence for circumstances identified in Subsection(2)(a)(ii).

(5) The Superintendent:

(a) shall make a determination on a request made under Subsection(2) within 60 days; and

(b) may request briefing from an educator and USOE staff in making a determination.

(6) If the Superintendent finds that the criteria in Subsection (2)(a) have been

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established, the Superintendent shall direct UPPAC to conduct a new hearing consistent with Rule R277-212.

(7) If the Superintendent finds that the criteria in Subsection (2)(b) have been established, the Superintendent shall recommend to the Board that they reconsider their previous action.

**KEY: licensure, reinstatement, hearings, license reinstatement**

**Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**

R277-214 was approved by the Utah State Board of Education on April 15, 2016. R277-214 is published in the May 1, 2016 Utah State Bulletin, subject to a 30-day comment period, with a first possible effective date of June 7, 2016.

**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-214. Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission Criminal Background Review.**

**R277-214-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is:

(a) to establish procedures for an applicant to proceed toward licensing; or

(b) be denied to continue when an application or recommendation for licensing or renewal identifies offenses in the applicant's criminal background check.

(3) The standards and procedures of the Utah Administrative Procedures Act do not apply to this rule under the exemption of Subsection 63G-4-102(2)(d).

**R277-214-2. Initial Submission and Evaluation of Information.**

(1) The Executive Secretary shall review all information received as part of a criminal background review.

(2) The Executive Secretary may request any of the following information from an educator in determining how to process a criminal background review:

(a) a letter of explanation for each reported offense that details the circumstances, the final disposition, and any explanation for the offense the applicant may want to provide UPPAC, including any advocacy for approving licensing;

(b) official documentation regarding each offense, including court records and police reports for each offense, or if both court records and police reports are not available, a letter on official police or court stationery from the appropriate court or police department involved, explaining why the records are not available; and

(c) any other information that the Executive Secretary considers relevant under the circumstances in a criminal background review.

(3)(a) The Executive Secretary may only process a criminal background review after receipt of all letters of explanation and documentation requested in good faith by the Executive Secretary.

(b) The Executive Secretary shall provide timely notice if the information provided by an applicant is incomplete.

(4) If an applicant is under court supervision of any kind, including parole, informal or formal probation, or plea in abeyance, the Executive Secretary may not process the background check review until the Executive Secretary receives proof that court supervision has terminated.

(5) It is the applicant's sole responsibility to provide any requested material to the Executive Secretary.

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(6) The Executive Secretary shall process criminal background reviews subject to the following criteria:

(a) the Executive Secretary may clear a criminal background review without further action if the arrest, citation, or charge resulted in a dismissal, unless the dismissal resulted from a plea in abeyance agreement;

(b) the Executive Secretary shall forward a recommendation to clear the following criminal background reviews directly to the Board:

(i) singular offenses committed by an applicant, excluding offenses identified in Subsection(6)(c), if the arrest occurred more than two years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC for review;

(ii) more than two offenses committed by the applicant, excluding offenses identified in Subsection(6)(c), if at least one arrest occurred more than five years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC for review; or

(iii) more than two offenses committed by the applicant, excluding offenses identified in Subsection(6)(c), if all arrests for the offenses occurred more than 10 years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC for review;

(c) the Executive Secretary shall forward the following criminal background reviews to UPPAC, which shall make a recommendation to the Board for final action:

(i) convictions or pleas in abeyance for any offense where the offense date occurred less than two years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC;

(ii) convictions or pleas in abeyance for multiple offenses where all offenses occurred less than five years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC;

(iii) convictions or pleas in abeyance for felonies;

(vi) arrests, convictions, or pleas in abeyance for sex-related or lewdness offenses;

(v) convictions or pleas in abeyance for alcohol-related offenses or drug-related offenses where the offense date was less than five years prior to the date of submission to UPPAC;

(vi) convictions or pleas in abeyance involving children in any way; and

(vii) convictions or pleas in abeyance involving any other matter which the Executive Secretary determines, in his discretion, warrants review by UPPAC and the Board; and

(d) If the criminal background review involves a conviction for an offense requiring mandatory revocation under Subsection 53A-6-501(5)(b) or meeting the definition of sex offender under Subsection 77-41-102(17), the Executive Secretary shall forward a recommendation directly to the Board that clearance be denied.

(7) The Executive Secretary shall use reasonable discretion to interpret the information received from the Bureau of Criminal Identification to comply with the provisions of this rule.

(8) In Board review of recommendations of the Executive Secretary and UPPAC for criminal background checks, the following shall apply:

(a) the Board shall consider a criminal background review in accordance with the standards described in Section 53A-6-405;

(b) the Board may uphold any recommendation of the Executive Secretary or UPPAC, which action shall be the final agency action of USOE;

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(c) the Board may substitute its own judgment in lieu of the recommendation of the Executive Secretary or UPPAC, which action shall be the final agency action of USOE; and

(d) if the Board chooses to substitute its own judgment in a criminal background review, the Board shall adopt findings articulating its reasoning.

(9) If a criminal background review arises as a result of conduct that was cleared in a prior criminal background review by the Executive Secretary, UPPAC, or the Board, the prior action shall be deemed final, and the Executive Secretary shall clear the criminal background review.

(10) If a criminal background review results in an applicant's denial, the applicant may request to be heard, and to have the matter reconsidered by the Board, consistent with the requirements of Subsection 53A-15-1506(1)(c).

### **R277-214-3. Alcohol and Drug Related Offenses of an Individual Who Does Not Hold Licensing.**

(1)(a) If as a result of a background check, it is discovered that an applicant has been convicted of an alcohol related offense or a drug related offense within five years of the date of the background check, the minimum conditions described in this Subsection (1) shall apply.

(b) One conviction--the individual shall be denied clearance for a period of one year from the date of the conduct giving rise to the charge.

(c) Two convictions--the individual shall be denied clearance for a period of two years from the date of the conduct giving rise to the most recent charge and the applicant shall present documentation of clinical assessment and recommended treatment before clearance shall be considered.

(d) Three convictions--the individual shall be denied clearance for a period of five years from the date of the conduct giving rise to the most recent charge, and the applicant shall present documentation of clinical assessment and recommended treatment before clearance shall be considered.

(2) UPPAC or the Board may take action in excess of the minimum conditions specified in Subsection (1) if aggravating circumstances exist as set forth in Subsection R277-215-2(9).

**KEY: educator license, background review, background check**

**Date of Enactment or Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**



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**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-215. Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC), Disciplinary Rebuttable Presumptions.**

**R277-215-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Section 53A-6-306, which directs the Board to adopt rules regarding UPPAC duties and procedures; and

(c) Section 53A-1-401, which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish rebuttable presumptions for UPPAC and Board review of UPPAC cases.

**R277-215-2. Rebuttable Presumptions.**

(1) UPPAC and the Board shall consider the rebuttable presumptions in this section when evaluating a case of educator misconduct.

(2)(a) Revocation is presumed appropriate if an educator:

(i) is subject to mandatory revocation under Subsection 53A-6-501(5)(b);

(ii) is convicted of, admits to, or is found pursuant to an evidentiary hearing to have engaged in viewing child pornography, whether real or simulated, on or off school property;

(iii) is convicted of an offense that requires the educator to register as a sex offender under Subsection 77-41-105(3);

(iv) intentionally provides alcohol or illegal drugs to a minor.

(b) Early release or work release permitted by the jail may not be considered by UPPAC or the Board for purposes of calculating the jail time in Subsection (2)(a)(iii).

(3)(a) Suspension of ten years or more is presumed if an educator is convicted of any felony not specified in Subsection (2).

(b) An educator who is suspended based on a felony conviction under Subsection (3)(a) may apply for a reinstatement hearing early if the educator's felony:

(i) is expunged; or

(ii) is reduced pursuant to Section 76-3-402.

(4) Suspension of five years or more is presumed appropriate if an educator:

(a) engages in a boundary violation of a sexually suggestive nature that is not sexually explicit conduct;

(b) is convicted of child abuse if the conduct results in a conviction of a class A misdemeanor or higher;

(c) is convicted of an offense that results in the educator being placed on court supervision for three or more years; or

(d) is convicted of intentional theft or misappropriation of public funds.

(5) Suspension of one to three years is presumed appropriate, if an educator:

(a) willfully or knowingly creates, views, or gains access to sexually inappropriate material on school property or using school equipment;

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(b) is convicted of one or more misdemeanor violence offenses in the last 3 years;  
(c) is convicted of using physical force with a minor if the conviction is a class B misdemeanor or lower;

(d) engages in repeated incidents of or a single egregious incident of excessive physical force or discipline to a child or student that:

(i) does not result in a criminal conviction; and

(ii) does not meet the circumstances described in Subsection 53A-11-802(2);

(e) threatens a student physically, verbally, or electronically;

(f) engages in a pattern of inappropriately fraternizing with a student under a circumstance not described in Subsection (3)(a);

(g) engages in multiple incidents or a pattern of theft or misappropriation of public funds that does not result in a criminal conviction;

(h) attends a school or school-related activity in an assigned employment-related capacity while possessing, using, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;

(i) is convicted of two drug-related offenses or alcohol-related offenses in the three years previous to the most recent conviction;

(j) engages in a pattern of or a single egregious incident of:

(i) harassing;

(ii) bullying; or

(iii) threatening a co-worker or community member;

(k) knowingly and deliberately falsifies or misrepresents information on an education-related document; or

(l) knowingly and deliberately teaches, counsels, or assists a student in a manner that undermines or disregards the lawful, express directives of a parent.

(6) A short-term suspension is presumed appropriate if an educator:

(a) has three or more incidents of inappropriate conduct that would otherwise warrant lesser discipline; or

(b) fails to report to appropriate authorities suspected child or sexual abuse.

(7) A letter of admonition, letter of warning, or letter of reprimand, with or without probation, is presumed appropriate if an educator:

(a) engages in a miscellaneous minimal boundary violation with a student or minor, whether physical, electronic, or verbal;

(b) engages in minimal inappropriate physical contact with a student;

(c) engages in unprofessional communications or conduct with a student, co-worker, community member, or parent;

(d) engages in an inappropriate discussion with a student that violates state or federal law;

(e) knowingly violates a requirement or procedure for special education needs;

(f) knowingly violates a standardized testing protocol;

(g) is convicted of one of the following with or without court probation:

(i) a single driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs offense under Section 41-6a-502;

(ii) impaired driving under Section 41-6a-502.5; or

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(iii) a charge that contains identical or substantially similar elements to the state's driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs law or under the law of another state or territory;

(h) carelessly mismanages public funds or fails to accurately account for receipt and expenditure of public funds entrusted to the educator's care;

(i) fails to make a report required by Rule R277-516;

(j) is convicted of one or two misdemeanor offenses not otherwise listed;

(k) engages in an activity that constitute or create the appearance of a conflict of interest with the educator's professional responsibility; or

(l) engages in other minor violations of the Utah Educator Standards in Rule R277-515.

(8) In considering a presumption described in this section, UPPAC or the Board shall consider deviating from the presumptions if:

(a) the presumption does not involve a revocation mandated by statute; and

(b) aggravating or mitigating factors exist that warrant deviation from the presumption.

(9) An aggravating factor may include the following:

(a) the educator has engaged in prior misconduct;

(b) the educator presents a serious threat to a student;

(c) the educator's misconduct directly involved a student;

(d) the educator's misconduct involved a particularly vulnerable student;

(e) the educator's misconduct resulted in physical or psychological harm to a student;

(f) the educator violated multiple standards of professional conduct;

(g) the educator's attitude does not reflect responsibility for the misconduct or the consequences of the misconduct;

(h) the educator's misconduct continued after investigation by the LEA or UPPAC;

(i) the educator holds a position of heightened authority as an administrator;

(j) the educator's misconduct had a significant impact on the LEA or the community;

(k) the educator's misconduct was witnessed by a student;

(l) the educator was not honest or cooperative in the course of UPPAC's investigation;

(m) the educator was convicted of crime as a result of the misconduct; and

(n) any other factor that, in the view of UPPAC or the Board, warrants a more serious consequence for the educator's misconduct.

(10) A mitigating factor may include the following:

(a) the educator's misconduct was the result of strong provocation;

(b) the educator was young and new to the profession;

(c) the educator's attitude reflects recognition of the nature and consequences of the misconduct and demonstrates a reasonable expectation that the educator will not repeat the misconduct;

(d) the educator's attitude suggests amenability to supervision and training;

(e) the educator has little or no prior disciplinary history;

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(f) since the misconduct, the educator has an extended period of misconduct-free classroom time;

(g) the educator was a less active participant in a larger offense;

(h) the educator's misconduct was directed or approved, whether implicitly or explicitly, by a supervisor or person in authority over the educator;

(i) the educator has voluntarily sought treatment or made restitution for the misconduct;

(j) there was insufficient training or other policies that might have prevented the misconduct;

(k) any other factor that, in the view of UPPAC or the Board, warrants a less serious consequence for the educator's misconduct.

(11)(a) UPPAC and the Board have sole discretion to determine the weight they give to an aggravating or mitigating factor.

(b) The weight UPPAC or the Board give an aggravating or mitigating factor may vary in each case and any one aggravating or mitigating factor may outweigh some or all other aggravating or mitigating factors.

**KEY: educator, disciplinary presumptions**

**Date of Enactment of Last Substantive Amendment: 2016**

**Authorizing, Implemented, or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53A-6-306; 53A-1-401**