

Senator Kirk A. Cullimore proposes the following substitute bill:

HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONER LIABILITY AMENDMENTS

2023 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Kirk A. Cullimore

House Sponsor: Karianne Lisonbee

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill modifies a health care provider's liability under certain circumstances.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- modifies the duty of care, under certain circumstances, for a health care provider who deviates from medical norms or established practices;

- prohibits the Division of Professional Licensing from sanctioning a health care provider's license for deviating from medical norms or established practices under certain circumstances;

- allows a health care provider who deviates from medical norms or established practices to advertise if certain criteria are met; and

- makes technical changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:



26 **58-1-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2020, Chapters 289, 339
27 **58-17b-502**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 465
28 ENACTS:
29 **78B-3-428**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

31 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

32 Section 1. Section **58-1-501** is amended to read:

33 **58-1-501. Unlawful and unprofessional conduct.**

34 (1) "Unlawful conduct" means conduct, by any person, that is defined as unlawful
35 under this title and includes:

36 (a) practicing or engaging in, representing oneself to be practicing or engaging in, or
37 attempting to practice or engage in any occupation or profession requiring licensure under this
38 title if the person is:

39 (i) not licensed to do so or not exempted from licensure under this title; or
40 (ii) restricted from doing so by a suspended, revoked, restricted, temporary,
41 probationary, or inactive license;

42 (b) (i) impersonating another licensee or practicing an occupation or profession under a
43 false or assumed name, except as permitted by law; or

44 (ii) for a licensee who has had a license under this title reinstated following disciplinary
45 action, practicing the same occupation or profession using a different name than the name used
46 before the disciplinary action, except as permitted by law and after notice to, and approval by,
47 the division;

48 (c) knowingly employing any other person to practice or engage in or attempt to
49 practice or engage in any occupation or profession licensed under this title if the employee is
50 not licensed to do so under this title;

51 (d) knowingly permitting the person's authority to practice or engage in any occupation
52 or profession licensed under this title to be used by another, except as permitted by law;

53 (e) obtaining a passing score on a licensure examination, applying for or obtaining a
54 license, or otherwise dealing with the division or a licensing board through the use of fraud,
55 forgery, or intentional deception, misrepresentation, misstatement, or omission;

56 (f) (i) issuing, or aiding and abetting in the issuance of, an order or prescription for a

57 drug or device to a person located in this state:

58 (A) without prescriptive authority conferred by a license issued under this title, or by
59 an exemption to licensure under this title; or

60 (B) with prescriptive authority conferred by an exception issued under this title or a
61 multistate practice privilege recognized under this title, if the prescription was issued without
62 first obtaining information, in the usual course of professional practice, that is sufficient to
63 establish a diagnosis, to identify underlying conditions, and to identify contraindications to the
64 proposed treatment; and

65 (ii) Subsection (1)(f)(i) does not apply to treatment rendered in an emergency, on-call
66 or cross coverage situation, provided that the person who issues the prescription has
67 prescriptive authority conferred by a license under this title, or is exempt from licensure under
68 this title; or

69 (g) aiding or abetting any other person to violate any statute, rule, or order regulating
70 an occupation or profession under this title.

71 (2) (a) "Unprofessional conduct" means conduct, by a licensee or applicant, that is
72 defined as unprofessional conduct under this title or under any rule adopted under this title and
73 includes:

74 ~~[(a)]~~ (i) violating any statute, rule, or order regulating an occupation or profession
75 under this title;

76 ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) violating, or aiding or abetting any other person to violate, any generally
77 accepted professional or ethical standard applicable to an occupation or profession regulated
78 under this title;

79 ~~[(c)]~~ (iii) subject to the provisions of Subsection (4), engaging in conduct that results in
80 conviction, a plea of nolo contendere, or a plea of guilty or nolo contendere that is held in
81 abeyance pending the successful completion of probation with respect to a crime of moral
82 turpitude or any other crime that, when considered with the functions and duties of the
83 occupation or profession for which the license was issued or is to be issued, bears a substantial
84 relationship to the licensee's or applicant's ability to safely or competently practice the
85 occupation or profession;

86 ~~[(d)]~~ (iv) engaging in conduct that results in disciplinary action, including reprimand,
87 censure, diversion, probation, suspension, or revocation, by any other licensing or regulatory

authority having jurisdiction over the licensee or applicant in the same occupation or profession if the conduct would, in this state, constitute grounds for denial of licensure or disciplinary proceedings under Section 58-1-401;

~~[(e)]~~ (v) engaging in conduct, including the use of intoxicants, drugs, narcotics, or similar chemicals, to the extent that the conduct does, or might reasonably be considered to, impair the ability of the licensee or applicant to safely engage in the occupation or profession;

~~[(f)]~~ (vi) practicing or attempting to practice an occupation or profession regulated under this title despite being physically or mentally unfit to do so;

~~[(g)]~~ (vii) practicing or attempting to practice an occupation or profession regulated under this title through gross incompetence, gross negligence, or a pattern of incompetency or negligence;

~~[(h)]~~ (viii) practicing or attempting to practice an occupation or profession requiring licensure under this title by any form of action or communication which is false, misleading, deceptive, or fraudulent;

~~[(i)]~~ (ix) practicing or attempting to practice an occupation or profession regulated under this title beyond the scope of the licensee's competency, abilities, or education;

~~[(j)]~~ (x) practicing or attempting to practice an occupation or profession regulated under this title beyond the scope of the licensee's license;

~~[(k)]~~ (xi) verbally, physically, mentally, or sexually abusing or exploiting any person through conduct connected with the licensee's practice under this title or otherwise facilitated by the licensee's license;

~~[(l)]~~ (xii) acting as a supervisor without meeting the qualification requirements for that position that are defined by statute or rule;

~~[(m)]~~ (xiii) issuing, or aiding and abetting in the issuance of, an order or prescription for a drug or device;

~~[(n)]~~ (A) without first obtaining information in the usual course of professional practice, that is sufficient to establish a diagnosis, to identify conditions, and to identify contraindications to the proposed treatment; or

~~[(o)]~~ (B) with prescriptive authority conferred by an exception issued under this title, or a multi-state practice privilege recognized under this title, if the prescription was issued without first obtaining information, in the usual course of professional practice, that is

sufficient to establish a diagnosis, to identify underlying conditions, and to identify contraindications to the proposed treatment;

~~[(n)]~~ (xiv) violating a provision of Section 58-1-501.5; or

~~[(o)]~~ (xv) violating the terms of an order governing a license.

(b) "Unprofessional conduct" does not include:

(i) a health care provider, as defined in Section 78B-3-403 and who is licensed under this title, deviating from medical norms or established practice if:

(A) the health care provider does not deviate outside of the health care provider's scope of practice and possesses the education, training, and experience to competently and safely administer the alternate health care service;

(B) the health care provider does not provide a health care service that is otherwise contrary to any state or federal law;

(C) the health care service has reasonable potential to be of benefit to the patient to whom the health care service is to be given;

(D) the potential benefit of the health care service outweighs the known harms or side effects of the health care service;

(E) the health care service is reasonably justified under the totality of the circumstances;

(F) after diagnosis but before providing treatment, the health care provider educates the patient on the treatments and therapies that are within the medical norms and established practices;

(G) after diagnosis but before providing treatment, the health care provider discloses to the patient that the health care provider is recommending a health care service that deviates from medical norms and established practices;

(H) after diagnosis but before providing treatment, the health care provider discusses the rationale for deviating from medical norms and established practices with the patient;

(I) after diagnosis but before providing treatment, the health care provider discloses any potential risks associated with deviation from medical norms and established practices;

(J) after diagnosis but before providing treatment, the patient signs and acknowledges a notice of deviation; and

(K) before providing treatment, the health care provider discloses to the patient that the

patient may enter into an agreement describing what would constitute the health care provider's negligence related to the deviation; and

(ii) notwithstanding Section 58-1-501.6, a health care provider advertising that the health care provider deviates from medical norms or established practices, including the maladies the health care provider treats, if the health care provider:

(A) does not guarantee any results regarding any health care service;

(B) fully discloses on the health care provider's website that the health care provider deviates from medical norms or established practices with a conspicuous statement; and

(C) includes the health care provider's contact information on the website.

(3) Unless otherwise specified by statute or administrative rule, in a civil or administrative proceeding commenced by the division under this title, a person subject to any of the unlawful and unprofessional conduct provisions of this title is strictly liable for each violation.

(4) The following are not evidence of engaging in unprofessional conduct under Subsection ~~[(2)(c)]~~ (2)(a)(iii):

(a) an arrest not followed by a conviction; or

(b) a conviction for which an individual's incarceration has ended more than seven years before the date of the division's consideration, unless:

(i) after the incarceration the individual has engaged in additional conduct that results in another conviction, a plea of nolo contendere, or a plea of guilty or nolo contendere that is held in abeyance pending the successful completion of probation; or

(ii) the conviction was for:

(A) a violent felony as defined in Section 76-3-203.5;

(B) a felony related to a criminal sexual act pursuant to Title 76, Chapter 5, Part 4, Sexual Offenses, or Title 76, Chapter 5b, Sexual Exploitation Act; or

(C) a felony related to criminal fraud or embezzlement, including a felony pursuant to Title 76, Chapter 6, Part 5, Fraud, or Title 76, Chapter 6, Part 4, Theft.

(5) As used in this section, "notice of deviation" means a written notice provided by a health care provider to a patient that:

(a) is specific to the patient;

(b) indicates that the health care provider is deviating from medical norms or

established practices in the health care provider's recommendation for the patient's treatment;
(c) describes how the health care service deviates from medical norms or established practices;

(d) describes the potential risks and benefits associated with the health care service;

(e) describes the health care provider's reasonably justified rationale regarding the reason for the deviation; and

(f) provides clear and unequivocal notice to the patient that the patient is releasing all claims of negligence with regards to the health care service.

Section 2. Section **58-17b-502** is amended to read:

58-17b-502. Unprofessional conduct.

(1) "Unprofessional conduct" includes:

(a) willfully deceiving or attempting to deceive the division, the board, or their agents as to any relevant matter regarding compliance under this chapter;

(b) except as provided in Subsection (2):

(i) paying or offering rebates to practitioners or any other health care providers, or receiving or soliciting rebates from practitioners or any other health care provider; or

(ii) paying, offering, receiving, or soliciting compensation in the form of a commission, bonus, rebate, kickback, or split fee arrangement with practitioners or any other health care provider, for the purpose of obtaining referrals;

(c) misbranding or adulteration of any drug or device or the sale, distribution, or dispensing of any outdated, misbranded, or adulterated drug or device;

(d) engaging in the sale or purchase of drugs or devices that are samples or packages bearing the inscription "sample" or "not for resale" or similar words or phrases;

(e) except as provided in Section **58-17b-503**, accepting back and redistributing any unused drug, or a part of it, after it has left the premises of a pharmacy;

(f) an act in violation of this chapter committed by a person for any form of compensation if the act is incidental to the person's professional activities, including the activities of a pharmacist, pharmacy intern, or pharmacy technician;

(g) violating:

(i) the federal Controlled Substances Act, Title II, P.L. 91-513;

(ii) Title 58, Chapter 37, Utah Controlled Substances Act; or

- (iii) rules or regulations adopted under either act;
- (h) requiring or permitting pharmacy interns or technicians to engage in activities outside the scope of practice for their respective license classifications, as defined in this chapter and division rules made in collaboration with the board, or beyond their scope of training and ability;
- (i) administering:
- (i) without appropriate training, as defined by rule;
- (ii) without a physician's order, when one is required by law; and
- (iii) in conflict with a practitioner's written guidelines or written protocol for administering;
- (j) disclosing confidential patient information in violation of the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936, as amended, or other applicable law;
- (k) engaging in the practice of pharmacy without a licensed pharmacist designated as the pharmacist-in-charge;
- (l) failing to report to the division any adverse action taken by another licensing jurisdiction, government agency, law enforcement agency, or court for conduct that in substance would be considered unprofessional conduct under this section;
- (m) as a pharmacist or pharmacy intern, compounding a prescription drug in a dosage form which is regularly and commonly available from a manufacturer in quantities and strengths prescribed by a practitioner;
- (n) failing to act in accordance with Title 26, Chapter 64, Family Planning Access Act, when dispensing a self-administered hormonal contraceptive under a standing order;
- (o) violating the requirements of Title 26, Chapter 61a, Utah Medical Cannabis Act; or
- (p) falsely making an entry in, or altering, a medical record with the intent to conceal:
- (i) a wrongful or negligent act or omission of an individual licensed under this chapter or an individual under the direction or control of an individual licensed under this chapter; or
- (ii) conduct described in Subsections (1)(a) through (o) or Subsection 58-1-501(1).
- (2) Subsection (1)(b) does not apply to:
- (a) giving or receiving a price discount based on purchase volume;
- (b) passing along a pharmaceutical manufacturer's rebate; or

(c) providing compensation for services to a veterinarian.

(3) "Unprofessional conduct" does not include[;]:

(a) in accordance with Title 26, Chapter 61a, Utah Medical Cannabis Act:

~~[(a)]~~ (i) when registered as a pharmacy medical provider, as that term is defined in Section 26-61a-102, providing pharmacy medical provider services in a medical cannabis pharmacy; or

~~[(b)]~~ (ii) when acting as a state central patient portal medical provider, as that term is defined in Section 26-61a-102, providing state central patient portal medical provider services[;]; or

(b) if a pharmacist reasonably believes that a prescription drug will have adverse or harmful effects on an individual and warns the individual of the potential effects, filling a prescription prescribed by a health care provider who:

(i) is operating within the health care provider's scope of practice; and

(ii) is deviating from a medical norm or established practice in accordance with Section 78B-3-428.

(4) Notwithstanding Subsection (3), the division, in consultation with the board and in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, shall define unprofessional conduct for a pharmacist described in Subsections (3)(a) and (b).

Section 3. Section **78B-3-428** is enacted to read:

78B-3-428. Breach of duty for deviating from established practices.

(1) A health care provider does not breach the duty of care the health care provider owes to a patient:

(a) to the extent any alleged breach is based on actions related to the health care provider's deviation from medical norms or established practices; and

(b) if the conditions described in Subsection 58-1-501(2)(b)(i) have been met.

(2) A health care facility is not vicariously liable for an action or claim described in Subsection (1)(a) if the conditions described Subsection 58-1-501(2)(b)(i) have been met.