



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Regulations Adopted to Monitor Substance-Abusing Physicians

Sacramento – Regulations take effect July 1, 2015 to implement 2008 legislation from Senate Bill (SB) 1441 (Ridley-Thomas, Chapter 548), designed to protect the public by monitoring physicians (and other healing arts professionals) impaired by drug or alcohol abuse.

The [regulations](#) spell out uniform standards for dealing with substance-abusing health care professionals. The regulations detail how physicians will be monitored during probation, including the mechanics of random biological fluid testing “on any day, at any time, including weekends and holidays.” The physician, if permitted to work, may be monitored in the workplace and/or required to attend support group meetings. Violation of any of the new regulations can result in permanent loss of his or her license to practice medicine. All costs associated with disciplining the substance abuser will be borne by the licensee.

Executive Director of the Medical Board of California Kimberly Kirchmeyer says, “These new regulations will ensure consistent standards are applied to all disciplinary orders issued against substance-abusing physicians and will further the Board’s mission of consumer protection,” Ms. Kirchmeyer served with other executive officers from the state’s healing arts boards on the Substance Abuse Coordination Committee created by the Department of Consumer Affairs as a requirement of SB 1441.

“The regulations also promote rehabilitation of the licensee,” Kirchmeyer said.

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The mission of the Medical Board of California is to protect health care consumers through the proper licensing and regulation of physicians and surgeons and certain allied health care professions and through the vigorous, objective enforcement of the Medical Practice Act, and to promote access to quality medical care through the Board's licensing and regulatory functions.

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Medical Board of California