

Who makes up the Impaired Practitioner Review Committee (IPRC)?

The committee includes professionals with expertise in substance abuse and mental health, and a health-care professional who has in the past suffered from an impairment and has successfully completed a recovery or rehabilitation program.

What happens when I complete or fail the program?

Successful completion of the program occurs when the terms of the program contract have been fulfilled.

A participant may voluntarily terminate participation in the program. Termination will be reported to the licensing board. If a licensee under contract with the committee fails to comply with the provisions of the agreement, the committee will refer the matter to the licensing board for investigation and appropriate disciplinary action.

Discharge and referral to the board may be made for reasons including, but not limited to (1) the inability to secure information necessary to develop a contract with the licensee (2) failure to comply with the contract agreement, and (3) indications that continued practice would create serious risk of harm to the public.

Is it confidential?

All information in the possession of the committee is confidential and is not disclosed to the public or the media. Participation in the Impaired Practitioner Program is not a matter of public record. The IPRC may disclose information about a licensee in the program to the licensure board in the event the licensee is non-compliant with the terms of the contract or fails to cooperate with the IPRC.

How do I contact the program?

The program may be contacted by telephone at 515/242-6385 or by e-mail at ppublic@idph.iowa.gov

Iowa Department of Public Health

Professional Licensure Impaired Practitioner Program

A Confidential, Non-Disciplinary Monitoring Program for Professional Licensees

Promoting and Protecting the Health of Iowans.



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What is the Impaired Practitioner Program?

The Bureau of Professional Licensure Impaired Practitioner Program (IPP) was established in 1996 to support licensees who struggle with problems of alcohol or drug abuse, mental illness, or physical disorders.

The IPP is a confidential program designed to assist professionals licensed by boards within professional licensure to establish and monitor a treatment/recovery program and the continuing eligibility of licensees who are regulated by those boards.

The IPP is based on the premise that a professional's skills and reputation need not be damaged as a result of impairment IF supportive services are put into place at an EARLY stage.

The Impaired Practitioner Review Committee evaluates, assists, monitors and, as necessary, makes reports to the board on the recovery or rehabilitation of licensees. The IPP is both an advocate for the practitioner and a means to protect the health and safety of the public.

How is Impairment Defined?

Iowa law defines impairment as the inability to practice with reasonable safety and skill as a result of alcohol or drug problems, mental health issues or physical disability.

Who should self-report?

Licensees who suspect they are at risk of being unable to practice with reasonable safety and skill due to impairment and who self-report are offered an opportunity to get confidential help for the impairment.

By self-reporting and cooperating with the IPP, the licensee may be able to avoid the exposure and consequences of formal, public disciplinary action.

Are you worried about a colleague?

Licensees are obligated to report knowledge of a colleague's impairment to the licensing board in a timely manner. Licensees who fail to report another licensee licensed by the same board may find themselves in the position of being subject to disciplinary action themselves.

If you are worried about a colleague's possible impairment, you may encourage that individual to self-report, while explaining that you will be forced to do so if he or she does not comply. You may also contact the IPP directly about the problem for consultation and to satisfy your obligation for reporting to the Board.

When should a professional self report?

It may be in the licensee's best interest to self report to the IPP as soon as possible if any of the following applies:

Charged or arrested for any alcohol or drug charge, including OWI;

Diagnosed with drug or alcohol abuse or dependency, mental health disorder or physical disability;

Practiced after consuming alcohol or taking an illegal or mood altering substances; and / or

Urged by friends, family or colleagues to seek help for an impairment problem.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for the IPP, the licensee must be regulated by one of the professional licensure boards and have the ability to practice with reasonable skill and safety when appropriate limitations and continuing-care requirements are followed. The licensee must meet all of the following requirements:

The licensee must self-report an impairment or suspected impairment directly to the IPP.

The licensee must not have engaged in the unlawful diversion or distribution of controlled substances or illegal substances.

At the time of the self-report or referral, the licensee must not already be under board order for impairment or any other violation of laws and rules governing the practice of the profession.

The licensee must not have caused harm or injury to a client.

There is currently no board investigation of the licensee that the committee determines constitutes a serious matter related to the ability to practice with reasonable safety and skill or in accordance with acceptable standards of care.

The licensee must not have been subject to criminal or civil sanctions for actions that the committee determines to be serious infractions of the laws of the licensee's profession.

The licensee must provide truthful information and fully cooperate with the committee.

Admission to the program is denied to persons who have been terminated from a similar program in another state, persons accused of sexual misconduct, and licensees whose continued practice would create a serious risk of harm to the public.

How does the program work?

Upon referral to the IPP committee, information will be gathered to assist the evaluation process. This may result in referral for further evaluation and treatment. If the licensee qualifies for the IPP, the committee will develop an individualized contract to monitor compliance with a treatment plan, consistent with the licensee's impairment. The program monitors treatment progress, work quality, attendance at support groups (if applicable) and/or random urine screens - if alcohol or drug use is part of the impairment. Participants are responsible for the cost of their own evaluation, treatment and toxicology screens.