

NPDB NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK

NPDB 101 for Nurses: A Guide to the NPDB and How it Affects You

Q: What is the NPDB?

A: The National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) is a confidential information clearinghouse created by Congress designed to improve health care quality, protect the public, and reduce health care fraud and abuse in the U.S.



The NPDB contains reports related to medical malpractice payments and certain adverse actions taken against health care practitioners, health care entities, providers and suppliers, which are submitted as mandated by law by certain eligible entities.

The NPDB collects and shares with authorized users, including eligible entities (such as hospitals, health plans, and state licensing boards) information that contributes to the comprehensive and continuous review of practitioners' professional credentials. Organizations use NPDB information along with data from other sources when considering a practitioner for clinical privileges, employment, affiliation, or licensure, or when reviewing a practitioner's records.

Q: What nurses are reportable to the NPDB?

A: Reportable nursing professionals include those who are licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized to provide health care services, including but not limited to: Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Certified Nurse-Midwives, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Registered Nurses, and Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses.

Q: What actions are reportable to the NPDB for nurses?

A: The NPDB maintains adverse actions taken against licensed or certified nursing professionals, including:

Must Be Reported	May Be Reported
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical malpractice payments • State and federal licensure and certification actions (including actions related to licensure, certification, registration, or other authorization to provide health care services; and actions related to certification agreements or contracts for participation in a government health care program) • Exclusions from participation in federal or state health care programs • Health care-related criminal convictions and civil judgments in federal or state court • Negative actions or findings by a peer review organization • Other adjudicated actions or decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse clinical privileges (including network participation) actions • Adverse professional society membership action

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Q: Who has access to reported information?

A: The following organizations are authorized to query the NPDB to receive reports regarding licensed nurses. Not all organizations have access to all NPDB information.

- Hospitals and other health care entities with formal peer review
- Health plans
- Federal and state licensing and certification agencies/authorities (including state medical and dental boards, other state licensing boards)
- Quality Improvement Organizations
- State law enforcement agencies
- Agencies administering federal health care programs and their contractors
- State agencies administering or supervising the administration of state health care programs
- State Medicaid Fraud Control Units
- Federal law enforcement officials and agencies
- Professional societies with formal peer review

Note: For comprehensive querying and reporting responsibilities please see [Summary of NPDB Reporting Requirements and Query Access](#).

Q: Does the public have access to reported information?

A: No. NPDB information is confidential and protected. The general public cannot query the NPDB. However, researchers and journalists may access de-identified statistical information for research purposes only.

Q: How is NPDB information used?

A: Eligible entities use NPDB information as part of their health care practitioner licensing, credentialing, privileging, and reviewing processes. NPDB information is intended to be used in combination with information from other sources and should not be used as the sole source of verification of professional credentials. If there is a report (or reports) concerning you in the NPDB, you may add a Subject Statement that explains your point of view (see Q&A below).

Q: How do I find out if there is a report on me in the NPDB?

A: Whenever the NPDB receives a new report or a modification to an existing report, the practitioner is sent a notification, including access to a copy of the report. A nurse may also query the NPDB online to determine whether the NPDB contains any reports on her or him. This process is called a self-query and can be accessed from the NPDB's [Self-Query](#) website page.

Because of the confidentiality of NPDB information, practitioners requesting a self-query will be asked to provide proof of identity during the self-query process. To perform a self-query, please follow the online instructions and submit your self-query request. (If you do not have computer access, you may request a self-query by calling the NPDB Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732). Once the self-query is processed, a printable self-query response will be available online.

All self-queries are processed through the NPDB at a cost of \$5.00 each. An official sealed copy of the self-query results will be mailed to you, and you will also be able to view your self-query response online. You may request additional sealed copies at an additional charge of \$5.00 per copy.

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Q: May I challenge a report in the NPDB?

A: Yes. First, you may add a 4,000-character subject statement to a report that informs queriers of your side of the story. Once a statement is processed, the NPDB sends the statement to anyone who queried and received a copy of the report within the last 3 years. Your statement becomes a permanent part of the report and is included with the report when it is disclosed. Instructions for adding a subject statement are on the document you received notifying you of the report, and are also outlined on the NPDB's [Submit a Statement](#) website page.

Also, as the subject of a report, you may dispute either the factual accuracy of the report, or whether a report was submitted in accordance with NPDB reporting requirements, including the eligibility of the entity to report the information to the NPDB. Instructions for disputing a report are on the report notification document you received notifying you of the report, and are also outlined on the NPDB's [Dispute a Report](#) website page.

If, after disputing a report, you are unable to resolve the dispute with the reporting entity, you may request that the report be elevated to Dispute Resolution. Again, disputed reports that are elevated to Dispute Resolution are reviewed for factual accuracy or whether the report was submitted in accordance with NPDB reporting requirements, including the eligibility of the entity to report the information to the NPDB. For instructions on how to request that a report be elevated to Dispute Resolution, see the NPDB's [Elevate a Report to Dispute Resolution](#) website page.

NPDB Assistance

For additional information or assistance, please contact the NPDB Customer Service Center at:

1-800-767-6732

Outside the U.S.: 1-703-802-9380

TT/TDD: 1-703-802-9395

Fax: 1-703-803-1964

Email: help@npdb.hrsa.gov

Online: <http://www.npdb.hrsa.gov>

Open: Mon. - Thurs. 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. ET, Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. ET

Closed: Federal holidays