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Department of State

Voluntary Recovery Program
Terms and Conditions for Participation

Objective: The Professional Health Monitoring Programs (PHMP) Voluntary Recovery Program (VRP) provides a method by which licensed health care professionals suffering from a mental or physical disorder can be directed to appropriate treatment and receive monitoring to ensure that they remain capable of practicing safely. The program offers the eligible professional an alternative to board disciplinary action from becoming a permanent part of his or her professional licensing record.

Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible for VRP participation, a licensee must:

1. Complete an evaluation by a provider approved by the PHMP and have the assessor determine that a diagnosed mental or physical disorder exists.
2. Fully comply with the treatment plan recommended by the PHMP-approved provider(s) and approved by the PHMP.
3. Enter into a VRP Consent Agreement, which is approved by the licensing board, providing that disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation, will be deferred so long as the licensed professional adheres to their board approved VRP Consent Agreement.
4. Successfully complete at least three years of monitoring under their board approved VRP Consent Agreement that includes PHMP supervision of the licensee's treatment and recovery process, work performance, professional support group attendance, abstention from prohibited substances, and random drug testing.

Terms and Conditions for VRP Participation: To enroll and maintain good standing in the VRP, the licensee must:

1. Sign the Participation Cooperation Form; complete the Personal Data Sheet.
2. Complete a PHMP-approved assessment and/or treatment.
3. Comply with the recommendations made by the PHMP-approved treatment provider.
4. Fully execute a VRP Consent Agreement with the licensing board deferring formal disciplinary action for a period of no less than three years.



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5. If specifically requested by the PHMP to not practice as a licensed professional, the licensee must agree not to accept or continue employment in any position requiring licensure until cleared to do so by the PHMP case manager and a PHMP-approved provider.
6. When approved to return to licensed practice by the PHMP, the licensee:
 - A. Shall not work in any practice setting without workplace monitoring as required by the PHMP.
 - B. Shall comply with all practice limitations.
 - C. Shall not do any of the following until specific written permission is granted by the PHMP case manager:
 - (1) Practice nursing in any capacity that involves the administration of controlled substances (typically for a period of no less than six months upon returning to licensed practice);
 - (2) Function as a supervisor;
 - (3) Practice in a private practice setting;
 - (4) Practice in an emergency room, operating room, intensive care unit, cardiac catheterization laboratory, or coronary care unit; or
 - (5) Practice as an agency nurse.
7. Completely abstain from the use of all controlled substances, caution legend (prescription) drugs, mood altering substances or substances of abuse including alcohol in any form, except under the following:
 - A. The licensee is a bona fide patient of a licensed health care practitioner who is aware of the licensee's impairment and participation in the PHMP;
 - B. Such medications are lawfully prescribed by the licensee's treating practitioner and approved by the PHMP case manager;
 - C. The licensee provides the PHMP, within 48 hours of receiving the prescription, written notification of the prescription including name of prescribing practitioner, illness or condition diagnosed, the type, strength, amount and dosage.



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8. Completely abstain from the use of marijuana, medical marijuana, medical marijuana extract, synthetic marijuana, cannabinoids, cannabichromene (CBC), cannabidiol (CBD), cannabidiolic acid (CBDA), cannabidivarin (CBDV), cannabigerol (CBG), cannabinol (CBN), Delta-8 Tetrahydrocannabinol (Delta-8 THC), Delta-9 Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), tetrahydrocannabinolic acid (THCA), tetrahydrocannabivarin (THCV), and terpenes unless licensee's licensed health care practitioner who is aware of the licensee's impairment and PHMP participation and licensee's PHMP-approved provider determines it is medically appropriate.
9. Avoid all products containing alcohol including but not limited to over-the-counter medications (e.g. cough syrup), mouthwash, hygiene products, topical gels or medications, foods or liquids containing alcohol (e.g. vanilla extract, kombucha).
10. Abstain from all substances of abuse including but not limited to Dextromethorphan, Kratom, Kava, Khat, Ayahuasca, Peyote, Salvia.
11. Avoid all foods containing poppy seeds.
12. Undergo random drug testing as directed by the PHMP.
13. Arrange for submission to the PHMP of regularly scheduled progress reports by treatment provider(s) and/or the workplace supervisor or monitor.
14. Submit monthly verification of attendance at required support group meetings (number of meetings as recommended by the PHMP-approved treatment provider).
15. Enroll in a peer assistance program when available and requested by the PHMP.
16. If requested by the PHMP, the licensee will agree to inactivate the licensee's professional license and maintain an inactive license until the PHMP provides the licensee with written permission to pursue reactivation.
17. Pay all costs incurred in complying with PHMP participation, including but not limited to undergoing requested evaluation(s), treatment, the reproduction of treatment or other records, drug testing and any subsequent reanalysis of specimens and/or medical review officer consultation(s) of non-negative drug test results.



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Ineligible for VRP participation include:

1. Licensees convicted of, pleading guilty, or nolo contendere to either a felony or a misdemeanor under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act.
2. Licensees with a history of practice problems indicating significant patient harm.
3. Licensees who have been involved in the diversion of controlled substances for the primary purpose of sale or distribution.
4. Licensees who have committed sexual boundary violations.
5. Licensees who have failed to successfully complete a similar program in another jurisdiction.
6. Licensees who previously declined or failed to cooperate with the VRP.

Special notice for VRP nurse enrollees:

1. The VRP Agreement shall not be considered a public document, nor public discipline, and it is not reportable to the National Practitioner Data Bank. However, pursuant to Article VI(c) of the Nurse Licensure Compact Act (NLCA), 35 P.S. § 10292, the Nurse Board shall report to the coordinated licensure information system any multistate license holder's participation in the VRP.
2. Pursuant to Article III(c)(9) of the NLCA, 35 P.S. § 10292, the approval of the VRP Agreement by the Nurse Board prohibits a licensee from obtaining or retaining a multistate license. Any multistate license held by the licensee at the time the VRP Agreement is approved by the Board shall be revoked or deactivated in accordance with applicable rules adopted by the Interstate Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators. Article III(g)(2) of the NLCA, 35 P.S. §10292.
3. Despite the non-public nature of the VRP Agreement, a licensee shall disclose current participation in the VRP to any party state upon initial application for a multistate license or, if the licensee holds a multistate license, within ten (10) calendar days of enrollment in the VRP. Rule 402(6).