



# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

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Legislative Document

No. 416

S.P. 158

In Senate, February 14, 2013

**An Act To Allow Complainants in Disciplinary Actions To Attend  
Informal Conferences Held by the State Board of Nursing in  
Executive Session**

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Submitted by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation pursuant to Joint Rule 204.

Reference to the Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator PATRICK of Oxford.  
Cosponsored by Representative CHIPMAN of Portland and  
Representatives: FITZPATRICK of Houlton, KNIGHT of Livermore Falls, THERIAULT of  
Madawaska, TIMBERLAKE of Turner, TURNER of Burlington.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 32 MRSA §2105-A, sub-§1-A**, as amended by PL 2001, c. 260, Pt. D, §2,  
3 is further amended to read:

4 **1-A. Disciplinary proceedings and sanctions.** The board shall investigate a  
5 complaint, on its own motion or upon receipt of a written complaint filed with the board,  
6 regarding noncompliance with or violation of this chapter or of rules adopted by the  
7 board. Investigation may include a hearing before the board to determine whether  
8 grounds exist for suspension, revocation or denial of a license, or as otherwise considered  
9 necessary to the fulfillment of its responsibilities under this chapter. The board may  
10 subpoena witnesses, records and documents, including records and documents maintained  
11 by a health care facility, in an investigation or hearing it conducts.

12 The board shall notify the licensee of the content of a complaint filed against the licensee  
13 as soon as possible, but, absent unusual circumstances justifying the delay, not later than  
14 60 days from receipt of this information. The licensee shall respond within 30 days. The  
15 board shall share the licensee's response with the complainant, unless the board  
16 determines that it would be detrimental to the health of the complainant to obtain the  
17 response. If the licensee's response to the complaint satisfies the board that the complaint  
18 does not merit further investigation or action, the matter may be dismissed, with notice of  
19 the dismissal to the complainant, if any.

20 If, in the opinion of the board, the factual basis of the complaint is or may be true, and ~~it~~  
21 the complaint is of sufficient gravity to warrant further action, the board may request an  
22 informal conference with the licensee. The board shall provide the licensee with adequate  
23 notice of the conference and of the issues to be discussed. The complainant may attend  
24 the conference and may be accompanied by up to 2 individuals, including legal counsel.  
25 The conference must be conducted in executive session of the board, or its subcommittee,  
26 pursuant to Title 1, section 405, unless otherwise requested by the licensee. Before the  
27 board or its subcommittee decides what action to take at the conference or as a result of  
28 the conference, the board or its subcommittee shall give the complainant a reasonable  
29 opportunity to speak. Statements made at the conference may not be introduced at a  
30 subsequent formal hearing unless all parties consent.

31 When a complaint has been filed against a licensee and the licensee moves or has moved  
32 to another state, the board may report to the appropriate licensing board in that state the  
33 complaint that has been filed, other complaints in the licensee's record on which action  
34 was taken and disciplinary actions of the board with respect to that licensee.

35 When an individual applies for a license under this chapter, the board may investigate the  
36 professional record of that individual, including professional records that the individual  
37 may have as a licensee in other states. The board may deny a license or authorize a  
38 restricted license based on the record of the applicant in other states.

39 If the board or its subcommittee finds that the factual basis of the complaint is true and is  
40 of sufficient gravity to warrant further action, ~~it~~ the board or its subcommittee may take  
41 any of the following actions ~~it~~ the board or its subcommittee considers appropriate:

42 A. Warn, censure or reprimand;

1 B. With the consent of the licensee, enter into a consent agreement that fixes the  
2 period and terms of probation best adapted to protect the public health and safety and  
3 to rehabilitate or educate the licensee. A consent agreement may be used to terminate  
4 a complaint investigation, if entered into by the board, the licensee and the Attorney  
5 General's office;

6 C. In consideration for acceptance of a voluntary surrender of the license, negotiate  
7 stipulations, including terms and conditions for reinstatement that ensure protection  
8 of the public health and safety and serve to rehabilitate or educate the licensee. These  
9 stipulations may be set forth only in a consent agreement signed by the board, the  
10 licensee and the Attorney General's office;

11 D. If the board or its subcommittee concludes that modification or nonrenewal of the  
12 license is in order, hold an adjudicatory hearing in accordance with the provisions of  
13 Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~4~~ 4; or

14 E. If the board or its subcommittee concludes that suspension or revocation of the  
15 license is in order, file a complaint in the District Court in accordance with Title 4,  
16 chapter 5.

17 **Sec. 2. Rulemaking.** The Department of Professional and Financial Regulation,  
18 State Board of Nursing shall amend its rules to implement the provisions of this Act.  
19 Rules adopted pursuant to this Act are routine technical rules as defined in the Maine  
20 Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

21 **SUMMARY**

22 This bill confirms that the complainant may be present and speak during an informal  
23 conference conducted by the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, State  
24 Board of Nursing regarding a disciplinary action against a licensee.

25 The bill also gives the State Board of Nursing the authority to report to the  
26 appropriate licensing board of the state to which a licensee has moved that a complaint  
27 has been filed against the licensee. The board may also take into account the professional  
28 records from another state where an individual was a licensee when determining whether  
29 to issue a license to that individual.

30 The bill also requires the State Board of Nursing to amend its rules to implement the  
31 changes made by this bill.