

Rulemaking Hearing Rules

Board of Medical Examiners
Advisory Committee for Acupuncture

Chapter 0880-12
General Rules and Regulations Governing the Practice of Acupuncturists

Amendments

Rule 0880-12-.19 Committee Officers, Consultants, Records, and Declaratory Orders, is amended by deleting the catchline in its entirety and substituting instead the following language, and is further amended by deleting paragraph (5) in its entirety and substituting instead the following language, and is further amended by adding the following language as new paragraph (8), so that as amended, the new catchline and the new paragraphs (5) and (8) shall read:

0880-12-.19 Committee Officers, Consultants, Records, Declaratory Orders, and Screening Panels.

- (5) The Committee authorizes the member who chaired the Committee for a contested case to be the agency member to make the decisions authorized pursuant to rule 1360-4-1-.18 regarding petitions for reconsideration and stays in that case.
- (8) Screening Panels - The Committee adopts, as if fully set out herein, rule 1200-10-1-.13, of the Division of Health Related Boards and as it may from time to time be amended, as its rule governing the screening panel process.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 4-5-202, 4-5-204, 63-1-138, 63-6-101, 63-6-1004, and 63-6-1007.

Rule 0880-12-.20 Advertising, is amended by deleting the language of the rule in its entirety and substituting instead the following language as new paragraphs (1) through (6):

- (1) Policy Statement. The lack of sophistication on the part of many of the public concerning acupuncture, the importance of the interests affected by the choice of an acupuncturist and the foreseeable consequences of unrestricted advertising by acupuncturists which is recognized to pose special possibilities for deception, require that special care be taken by acupuncturists to avoid misleading the public. The acupuncturist must be mindful that the benefits of advertising depend upon its reliability and accuracy. Since advertising by acupuncturists is calculated and not spontaneous, reasonable regulation designed to foster compliance with appropriate standards serves the public interest without impeding the flow of useful, meaningful, and relevant information to the public.
- (2) Definitions
 - (a) Advertisement. Informational communication to the public in any manner designed to attract public attention to the practice of an acupuncturist who is certified to practice in Tennessee.
 - (b) Certificate holder - Any person holding a certificate to practice acupuncture in the State of Tennessee. Where applicable this shall include partnerships and/or corporations.
 - (c) Material Fact - Any fact which an ordinary reasonable and prudent person would need to know or rely upon in order to make an informed decision con-

cerning the choice of practitioners to serve her particular needs.

- (d) Bait and Switch Advertising - An alluring but insincere offer to sell a product or service which the advertiser in truth does not intend or want to sell. Its purpose is to switch consumers from buying the advertised service or merchandise, in order to sell something else, usually for a higher fee or on a basis more advantageous to the advertiser.
- (e) Discounted Fee - Shall mean a fee offered or charged by a person or product or service that is less than the fee the person or organization usually offers or charges for the product or service. Products or services expressly offered free of charge shall not be deemed to be offered at a "discounted fee."

(3) Advertising Fees and Services

- (a) Fixed Fees. Fixed fees may be advertised for any service. It is presumed unless otherwise stated in the advertisement that a fixed fee for a service shall include the cost of all professional recognized components within generally accepted standards that are required to complete the service.
- (b) Range of Fees. A range of fees may be advertised for services and the advertisement must disclose the factors used in determining the actual fee, necessary to prevent deception of the public.
- (c) Discount Fees. Discount fees may be advertised if:
 - 1. The discount fee is in fact lower than the certificate holder's customary or usual fee charged for the service; and
 - 2. The certificate holder provides the same quality and components of service and material at the discounted fee that are normally provided at the regular, non-discounted fee for that service.
- (d) Related Services and Additional Fees. Related services which may be required in conjunction with the advertised services for which additional fees will be charged must be identified as such in any advertisement.
- (e) Time Period of Advertised Fees.
 - 1. Advertised fees shall be honored for those seeking the advertised services during the entire time period stated in the advertisement whether or not the services are actually rendered or completed within that time.
 - 2. If no time period is stated in the advertisement of fees, the advertised fee shall be honored for thirty (30) days from the last date of publication or until the next scheduled publication whichever is later whether or not the services are actually rendered or completed within that time.

- (4) Advertising Content. The following acts or omissions in the context of advertisement by any certificate holder shall constitute false or fraudulent conduct, and subject the licensee to disciplinary action pursuant to T.C.A. § 63-6-1007(1):

- (a) Claims that the services performed, personnel employed, materials or office equipment used are professionally superior to that which is ordinarily performed, employed, or used, or that convey the message that one certificate holder is better than another when superiority of services, personnel, materials or equipment cannot be substantiated.
- (b) The misleading use of an unearned or non-health degree in any advertisement.
- (c) Promotion of professional services which the certificate holder knows or should know are beyond the certificate holder's ability to perform.
- (d) Techniques of communication which intimidate, exert undue pressure or undue influence over a prospective client.
- (e) Any appeals to an individual's anxiety in an excessive or unfair manner.
- (f) The use of any personal testimonial attesting to a quality of competency of a service or treatment offered by a certificate holder that is not reasonably verifiable.
- (g) Utilization of any statistical data or other information based on past performances for prediction of future services, which creates an unjustified expectation about results that the certificate holder can achieve.
- (h) The communication of personal identifiable facts, data, or information about a patient without first obtaining patient consent.
- (i) Any misrepresentation of a material fact.
- (j) The knowing suppression, omission or concealment of any material fact or law without which the advertisement would be deceptive or misleading.
- (k) Statements concerning the benefits or other attributes of acupuncture procedures or products that involve significant risks without including:
 1. A realistic assessment of the safety and efficiency of those procedures or products; and
 2. The availability of alternatives; and
 3. Where necessary to avoid deception, descriptions or assessment of the benefits or other attributes of those alternatives.
- (l) Any communication which creates an unjustified expectation concerning the potential results of any treatment.
- (m) Failure to comply with the rules governing advertisement of fees and services, or advertising records.
- (n) The use of "bait and switch" advertisements. Where the circumstances indicate "bait and switch" advertising, the Committee may require the certificate holder to furnish data or other evidence pertaining to those sales at the advertised fee as well as other sales.

- (o) Misrepresentation of a certificate holder's credentials, training, experience, or ability.
 - (p) Failure to include the corporation, partnership or individual certificate holder's name, address, and telephone number in any advertisement. Any corporation, partnership or association which advertises by use of a trade name or otherwise fails to list all certificate holders practicing at a particular location shall:
 1. Upon request provide a list of all certificate holders practicing at that location; and
 2. Maintain and conspicuously display at the certificate holder's office, a directory listing all certificate holders practicing at that location.
 - (q) Failure to disclose the fact of giving compensation or anything of value to representatives of the press, radio, television or other communicative medium in anticipation of or in return for any advertisement (for example, newspaper article) unless the nature, format or medium of such advertisement make the fact of compensation apparent.
 - (r) After thirty (30) days of the certificate holder's departure, the use of the name of any certificate holder formerly practicing at or associated with any advertised location or on office signs or buildings. This rule shall not apply in the case of a retired or deceased former associate who practiced in association with one or more of the present occupants if the status of the former associate is disclosed in any advertisement or sign.
 - (s) Stating or implying that a certain certificate holder provides all services when any such services are performed by another licensee.
 - (t) Directly or indirectly offering, giving, receiving, or agreeing to receive any fee or other consideration to or from a third party for the referral of a patient in connection with the performance of professional services.
- (5) Advertising Records and Responsibility
- (a) Each certificate holder who is a principal partner, or officer of a firm or entity identified in any advertisement, is jointly and severally responsible for the form and content of any advertisement. This provision shall also include any licensed or certified professional employees acting as an agent of such firm or entity.
 - (b) Any and all advertisements are presumed to have been approved by the certificate holder named therein.
 - (c) A recording of every advertisement communicated by electronic media, and a copy of every advertisement communicated by print media, and a copy of any other form of advertisement shall be retained by the certificate holder for a period of two (2) years from the last date of broadcast or publication and be made available for review upon request by the Board or its designee.
 - (d) At the time any type of advertisement is placed, the certificate holder must possess and rely upon information which, when produced, would substanti-

ate the truthfulness of any assertion, omission or representation of material fact set forth in the advertisement or public information.

- (6) Severability. It is hereby declared that the sections, clauses, sentences and parts of these rules are severable, are not matters of mutual essential inducement, and any of them shall be rescinded if these rules would otherwise be unconstitutional or ineffective. If any one or more sections, clauses, sentences or parts shall for any reason be questioned in court, and shall be adjudged unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remaining provisions thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the specific provision or provisions so held unconstitutional or invalid, and the inapplicability or invalidity of any section, clause, sentence or part in any one or more instance shall not be taken to affect or prejudice in any way its applicability or validity in any other instance.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 4-5-202, 4-5-204, 63-1-145, 63-1-146, 63-6-101, 63-6-1004, and 63-6-1007.

The rulemaking hearing rules set out herein were properly filed in the Department of State on the 16th day of March, 2007, and will become effective on the 30th day of May, 2007. (FS 03-17-07, DBID 2466)