A Guide to the Chiropractic Profession:

Getting Licensed and Staying Licensed

BOARD of CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The profession

Chiropractic is a health care profession that emphasizes the power of one's own body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery. The practice of chiropractic focuses on the relationship between structure (primarily the spine) and function (as coordinated by the nervous system), and how that relationship affects one's health.

Its future

Employment of chiropractors is projected to grow 15 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Also, more people are becoming interested in chiropractic care, since chiropractors use nonsurgical and nonpharmaceutical methods of healing.

Getting licensed

If you're interested in a career as a chiropractor in California, you must meet the board of Chiropractic Examiners' (board's) strict requirements:

- **Degree.** You must receive a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.) degree from a board-approved college. For a list of these colleges, go to the board's website, **www.chiro.ca.gov**. The curriculum includes class time as well as clinical experience hours.
- **NBCE.** Chiropractic students must pass parts I, II, III, IV, and physiotherapy of the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) exam to be eligible to apply for a state license.

- **Application.** Complete the *Application for a Chiropractic License*, which must include your 2-inch-by-2-inch photograph. Be sure to use the *Check Sheet for the Application for a Chiropractic License* to ensure your application packet is complete. Both forms can be found on the Board's website, **www.chiro.ca.gov**.
- **Fingerprinting.** Live Scan is a process that scans your fingerprints electronically and is mandatory for all applicants. Take the *Request for Live Scan Service* form to a Live Scan site for fingerprint scanning. Out-of-state residents may submit fingerprint cards. But will need to submit Live Scan prior to first renewal cycle.
- **Background check.** California chiropractic license applicants must disclose all citations/arrests on your record—whether set aside, dismissed, or expunged—in response to any direct question in any questionnaire or application for licensure.
- **Fees.** The standard license application fee is $371. The reciprocal application fee is $371. The Live Scan fingerprint services fees are paid directly to the Live Scan agency submitting the print. The fee to submit out-of-state fingerprint cards is $49.
- **CCLE.** The California Chiropractic Law Examination (CCLE) is administered through computerized testing on a continuous basis. Once the board determines the applicant is qualified to take the CCLE, the applicant will be notified by letter.

Out-of-state reciprocal applicants

Refer to the *Application for Reciprocal License to Practice Chiropractic* for a complete list of the requirements to obtain a reciprocal license in California. You can find the application on the board's website at **www.chiro.ca.gov/forms_pubs/index.shtml**.

International applicants

Currently, the board is unable to issue a license to applicants who do not hold a diploma from a board-approved chiropractic college. Prior to submitting an *Application for Chiropractic License* to the board, international applicants are encouraged to contact a California board-approved chiropractic college for information regarding coursework needed to obtain a degree from an approved chiropractic college.

More details regarding requirements can be found in the board's Chiropractic Initiative Act and Chiropractic Examiners Rules & Regulations. Both can be found on the board's website, **www.chiro.ca.gov**.

The average time for an initial review of your license application is three to four weeks. At that time, either a letter requesting more information or letter authorizing you to sit for the CLPPE will be sent. The average processing time for an application once received by the board is three to five months.

Staying licensed

Continuing education

To maintain an active chiropractic license, D.C.s must complete 24 hours of continuing education (CE) per year. Six of the 24 hours are mandatory from the following categories:

- **Two hours of Ethics and Law**
- **Four hours in any one of or combination of the following topics:**
  - **Chiropractic Adjustive or Manipulation Technique**
  - **History Taking and Physical Examination Procedures**
  - **Proper and Ethical Billing and Coding**

Of the 24 hours, 18 hours may be completed in general subject categories, four hours of CE credit can be gained by attending a full board meeting, and a maximum of 12 CE hours may be completed through distance learning.

License renewal

It is your responsibility to keep your license current. When renewing, do it early. Remember to read and review your completed form carefully, check all boxes, and sign the form.

Also, be sure you complete all required CE hours prior to submitting the renewal form, and that your check or money order is for the correct amount of $313. Incomplete renewal forms can cause a license to become delinquent, putting your ability to work at risk.

At this time, license renewals cannot be submitted online. Renewal forms are mailed to the address the board has on file approximately 60 days prior to your license expiration date. If you did not receive your renewal form, you may print and complete a *Replacement Renewal Form* and mail it to our office.

Please note that the board is required to deny an application for licensure and to suspend the license/certificate/registration of any applicant or licensee who has outstanding

tax obligations due to the Franchise Tax Board (FTB) or the State Board of Equalization (BOE) and appears on either the FTB's or BOE's certified lists of top-500 tax delinquencies more than $100,000 (Assembly Bill 1424, Perea, Chapter 455, Statutes of 2011).

Show it off

Displaying your license is not only a well-deserved privilege, but also a requirement under section 308 of the board's Chiropractic Examiners Rules & Regulations. Your license must be clearly visible to consumers at your place of practice, including any certificates issued for satellite offices.

Not worth it

Be aware of and understand the top licensee violations that may result in disciplinary actions. Frequent enforcement violations include:

- **Insurance fraud**
- **Practicing with a nonvalid license**
- **Sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, or sexual relations with a patient, client, customer, or employee**
- **Excessive treatment**
- **Conviction of a crime (including DUI violation)**
- **False and/or misleading advertising**
- **Negligence/incompetence**

More information regarding possible grounds for discipline can be found in the board's Chiropractic Initiative Act and Chiropractic Examiners Rules & Regulations. Both can be found on the board's website, **www.chiro.ca.gov**.

For More Information

If you have any questions about obtaining, maintaining, or renewing a license, visit **www.chiro.ca.gov**, or call the board at (916) 263-5355 or the Department of Consumer Affairs' Consumer Information Center at (800) 952-5210.

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