

STATE OF WISCONSIN
MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF RULEMAKING : PROPOSED ORDER OF THE
PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE : MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD : ADOPTING RULES
: (CLEARINGHOUSE RULE CR 22-063)
:

PROPOSED ORDER

An order of the Medical Examining Board to create Med 10.02 (2m), (4m), and 10.03 (2)(fm), relating to performance of physical examinations.

Analysis prepared by the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

ANALYSIS

Statutes interpreted:

Section 448.015 (4) (am) 1., Stats.

Statutory authority:

Section 15.08 (5) (b) and 448.40 (1), Stats.

Explanation of agency authority:

Section 15.08 (5) (b), Stats., provides each examining board “[s]hall promulgate rules for its own guidance and for the guidance of the trade or profession to which it pertains. . .”

Section 448.40 (1), Stats., provides that “[t]he board may promulgate rules to carry out the purposes of this subchapter, including rules requiring the completion of continuing education, professional development, and maintenance of certification or performance improvement or continuing medical education programs for renewal of a license to practice medicine and surgery.”

The board expressly does not intend to impose or attempt to impose requirements upon any person or entity that does not fall under the board’s jurisdiction through this project.

Related statute or rule:

Chapter Med 21 provides minimum standards for patient health care records. The proposed changes to chapter Med 10 are related in that they involve actions and decisions that a physician will need to properly document.

Plain language analysis:

The proposed rule expands unprofessional conduct to require that physicians either follow the policies established by their employers for the use of chaperones during physical examinations, or that physicians establish policies and follow them. Physicians will also be required to make their policy regarding the use of chaperones accessible to all patients.

“Chaperone” is defined to mean an individual whom a physician requests to be present during a clinical examination who can serve as a witness to the examination taking place. “Observer” is defined to mean an individual chosen by the patient to be present during an examination, and is presumed to include an adult family member, legal guardian, or legal custodian if the patient is twelve years of age or under. The distinction between the two is that a chaperone is arranged for or requested by the physician on the patient’s behalf and must be able to serve as a witness, whereas an observer is directly chosen by the patient.

Nothing under this rule is intended to impose a requirement upon any person or entity that the board does not have jurisdiction over.

Summary of, and comparison with, existing or proposed federal regulation:

None.

Comparison with rules in adjacent states:

Illinois:

Rules of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation establish standards of conduct for physicians licensed in Illinois [68 Ill. Adm. Code 1285.110]. The rules do not require the use of chaperones during physical examinations.

Iowa:

Rules of the Iowa Board of Medicine provide the Board with authority to impose disciplinary sanctions for certain acts and offenses (653 IAC 23.1). The rules do not require the use of chaperones during physical examinations.

Michigan:

The Michigan Public Health Code establishes grounds for discipline of licensees and registrants (MCL 333.16221). The Code does not require the use of chaperones during physical examinations.

Minnesota:

The Minnesota Statutes provide the grounds for disciplinary action against a physician (2020 Minnesota Statutes, Section 147.091). These provisions do not require the use of chaperones during physical examinations.

Summary of factual data and analytical methodologies:

The proposed rules were developed by obtaining input and feedback from the Medical Examining Board.

Analysis and supporting documents used to determine effect on small business or in preparation of economic impact analysis:

The proposed rules were posted for a period of 14 days to solicit public comment on economic impact, including how the proposed rules may affect businesses, local government units, and individuals.

Effect on small business:

The proposed rules were posted for a period of 14 days to solicit public comment on economic impact, including how the proposed rules may affect businesses, local government units, and individuals.

Agency contact person:

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TEXT OF RULE

SECTION 1. Med 10.02 (2m) and (4m) are created to read:

Med 10.02 (2m) “Chaperone” means an individual whom a physician requests to be present during a clinical examination that exposes the breasts, genitals, or rectal area, and who can serve as a witness to the examination taking place should there be any misunderstanding or concern for sexual misconduct.

(4m) “Observer” means an individual chosen by the patient to be present during an examination or inspection that exposes the breasts, genitals, or rectal area. A patient’s adult family member, legal guardian, or legal custodian is presumed to be able to act as an observer if the patient is twelve years of age or under.

SECTION 2. Med 10.03 (2) (fm) is created to read:

Med 10.03 (2) (fm) 1. If a physician who practices in a hospital or works for any other employer fails to comply with the rules established by their hospital or employer regarding chaperones or other observers in patient examinations, then the failure to follow such rules during an exam in which a violation of par. (f) is alleged may be considered by the board in determining whether the alleged misconduct occurred.

2. Physicians who are self-employed or in other practice settings that do not involve hospitals or employers shall establish written procedures for the use of chaperones or other observers in patient examinations and shall comply with these procedures once established.

3. A copy of any rules and procedures, or a summary thereof, regarding the physician’s use of chaperones or other observers shall be made available and accessible to all patients who are likely to receive a non-emergency examination of the breasts, genitals, or rectal area.

4. A physician shall not be found in violation of this section because of the failure of a third party to create a policy regarding chaperones, or to allow posting or notification of any policy regarding chaperones.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. The rules adopted in this order shall take effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Wisconsin Administrative Register, pursuant to s. 227.22 (2) (intro.), Stats.

(END OF TEXT OF RULE)

Dated 2/23/2023


Board Chairperson or Secretary