

Section 34-24-120

"Chiropractic" defined; authority of licensed chiropractor.

(a) The term "chiropractic," when used in this article, is hereby defined as the science and art of locating and removing without the use of drugs or surgery any interference with the transmission and expression of nerve energy in the human body by any means or methods as taught in schools or colleges of chiropractic which are recognized by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

(b) Any chiropractor who has been certified and licensed by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners may examine, analyze, and diagnose the human body and its diseases by the use of any physical, clinical, thermal, or radonic method, and the use of X-ray diagnosing, and may use any other general method of examination for diagnosis and analysis taught in any school of chiropractic recognized by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

(c) Chiropractors certified and licensed by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners may practice chiropractic as set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of this section and may also recommend the use of foods and concentrates, food extracts, and may apply first aid and hygiene, but chiropractors are expressly prohibited from prescribing or administering to any person any drugs included in materia medica, except as herein provided, from performing any surgery, from practicing obstetrics or from giving X-ray treatments or treatments involving the use of radioactive materials of any description.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §1; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-121

Advertising.

The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall have the right to regulate the advertising of chiropractic services by chiropractors or permit holders within the limits prescribed by this article and the rules and regulations governing the practice of chiropractic in this state.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §22; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-122

Rights and duties of chiropractors.

Chiropractors who have complied with the provisions of this article shall have the right to treat patients according to specific chiropractic methods and shall observe state, county, and municipal public health regulations, reporting to the proper health officers the same as other practitioners. Chiropractors shall not prescribe or administer medicine to patients, perform surgery, nor practice obstetrics or osteopathy.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §9; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-123

License requirements under article; permit requirement for nonlicensed owner of chiropractic practice.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to practice chiropractic unless he or she shall have first obtained a valid license as provided in this article and possesses all the qualifications prescribed by the terms of this article. Any person who shall practice or attempt to practice chiropractic without such a license or any person who shall buy or fraudulently obtain such a license or shall violate any of the terms of this article, or shall use the title "chiropractic," "D.C.," or any word or title to induce the belief that he or she is engaged in the practice of chiropractic, without first complying with the provisions of this article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or by imprisonment in the county jail for not less than 30 days nor more than one year, either or both, at the discretion of the court. All subsequent offenses shall be separate and distinct offenses and punishable in like manner.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person who is not otherwise licensed by the board to own, in whole or in part, any chiropractic practice unless he or she shall have first obtained a valid permit in the name of the chiropractic practice or office. Each applicant must pass an examination administered by the board on this article and the rules of the board. Upon completion of all requirements and passage of the examination, a permit shall be issued. Employment of a chiropractor by a hospital, as defined in Section 22-21-7, shall be excluded from the requirements of this subsection. The board shall establish a reasonable fee for the issuance and renewal of the permit, which shall be renewable annually and shall provide a grace period for any permit to be renewed in the same manner as provided for licensees in Section 34-24-165. The holder of a permit issued pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to this article and any rules or regulations issued pursuant thereto.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §20; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2004-442, p. 780, §1; Act 2006-295, p. 602, §1; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-124

Injunctive action.

When it appears to the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners that any person is violating any of the provisions of this article, the board may in its own name bring an action in the circuit court for an injunction, and the court may enjoin any person from violating this article regardless of whether proceedings have been or may be instituted before the board or whether criminal proceedings have been or may be instituted. For purposes of this section, a person shall be deemed to include any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, professional association, professional corporation, or other entity.

(Act 2006-295, p. 602, §2.)

Section 34-24-140

Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Creation; composition; powers and duties.

(a) There is created and established a State Board of Chiropractic Examiners. The board shall be composed of nine members. Eight members of the board shall be active licensed chiropractors elected as provided in this section. Seven of the elected members shall be elected one from each congressional district in this state except as otherwise provided in Section 34-24-141. Any candidate for or member of the board shall be a resident of the appropriate congressional district except one candidate for the board shall be elected from the state at large. One elected member of the board shall be elected from the state at-large and shall be an African-American. Each elected member of or candidate for the board shall meet the following qualifications: A citizen and resident of Alabama who has resided in this state for at least five years; a graduate of a chartered chiropractic school or college, which required actual attendance in the school as a prerequisite to graduation; currently engaged in the clinical practice of chiropractic and has been engaged in the clinical practice in this state for at least the five immediately preceding years; having renewed his or her license to practice chiropractic by September 30 of the year in which the election shall take place; of good moral character; and must not be presently on probation relating to the practice of chiropractic in any state including this state.

(b) One member of the board shall be a consumer member appointed by the Governor. Neither the consumer member, nor his or her spouse, shall be a chiropractor. The consumer member shall not be an immediate family member of a chiropractor, nor shall he or she be employed in the chiropractic field.

(c) The elected members of the board shall be elected as provided in this subsection. In August of any year that the term of a member of the board expires, the Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall mail a notice of the election of the board and the method of qualifying as a candidate to each active licensed chiropractor in the district where the vacancy occurs at his or her permanent mailing address. The election provided for in this section shall be conducted by an independent agency such as a certified public accounting firm unless there is only one candidate for the board and in this situation, the board shall certify the results. The board shall set a period for candidates to qualify and the date for the ballots to be mailed. Candidates shall qualify by submitting their name to the executive director of the board during the qualifying period which shall be not less than 20 days nor more than 40 days after the notice is mailed. Not less than 14 days after the deadline for qualification, each licensed chiropractor shall be mailed a ballot for the appropriate congressional district where the vacancy is to be filled. In order to be counted, the ballots shall be returned by mail to the independent agency postmarked not later than 14 business days after the ballots were mailed by the board. The results of the election shall be certified by the independent agency. The ballots shall be maintained for a period of six months by the independent agency. The candidate with a simple majority of the votes cast in each respective congressional district shall be elected to the board position for that congressional district. In the event no candidate in a district receives a majority of the votes, the board shall hold a run-off election in the same manner as provided in this subsection. The members of the board shall take office immediately upon election and the executive director of the board shall set the first meeting of the board after the election of the new board.

(d) Whenever a vacancy occurs on the board, whether by death, resignation of a member, or other cause, the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original election or appointment for the remainder of the term of office.

(e)(1) The board may employ investigators, inspectors, attorneys, and any other agents, employees, and assistants as may from time to time be necessary, and may use any other means necessary to bring about and maintain a rigid administration and enforcement of state and federal law.

(2) The board shall have the power to issue subpoenas and compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of all necessary papers, books, records, documentary evidence and materials, or other evidence. Any person failing or refusing to appear or testify regarding any matter about which he or she may be lawfully questioned or to produce any papers, books, records, documentary evidence or materials, or other evidence in the matter to be heard, after having been required by order of the board or by a subpoena of the board to do so, upon application by the board to any circuit judge of this state, may be ordered to comply therewith; and, upon failure to comply with the order of the circuit judge, the court may compel obedience by attachment as for contempt as in case of disobedience of a similar order or subpoena issued by the court. The president and secretary-treasurer of the board shall have authority to issue subpoenas, and any board member shall have authority to administer oaths to witnesses, or to take their affirmation. A subpoena or other process of paper may be served upon any person named therein, anywhere within the State of Alabama, by any officer authorized to serve subpoenas or other process or paper in civil actions, in the same manner as is prescribed by law for subpoenas issued out of the circuit courts of this state, the fees and mileage and other costs to be paid as the board directs.

(f) The board shall employ an executive director who shall be responsible for the administration of board policy. The executive director may be licensed to practice chiropractic in this state as provided in this article.

(g) The board shall publish annually a directory listing all permit holders and all persons licensed to practice chiropractic in Alabama. Copies of the directory shall be made available from the executive director at a cost set from time to time by rule of the board.

(h) The membership of the board shall be inclusive and reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state.

(i) Each member of the board shall meet all qualifications to be a candidate for his or her seat on the board during his or her entire term. Any member who fails to continue to meet the qualifications for his or her seat shall forfeit his or her seat on the board and resign or the board seat shall be declared vacant by the board.

Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §2; Acts 1985, No. 85-613, p. 938, §3; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Acts 1993, No. 93-150, p. 213, §3; Acts 1995, No. 95-402, p. 837, §1; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2006-295, p. 602, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1; Act 2015-275, §1.)

Section 34-24-141

Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Membership.

The members of the board shall be elected or appointed, as provided in Section 34-24-140, for a term of four years and the terms shall be staggered. In the event that there are two or more board members serving from the same congressional district based on redistricting, the members of the board shall serve until their term expires, and the vacancy shall be filled from any congressional district where no member resides as the term or terms expire. In the event the State of Alabama gains or loses a congressional seat, the districts shall be based on the last congressional districting plan having seven districts. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms on the board, effective January 1, 1990. A member of the board may be removed by the Governor for neglect of duty or just cause. Before taking office, the members of the board shall take and file with the Secretary of State the constitutional oath of office required by Section 279 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §3; Acts 1985, No. 85-613, p. 938, §3; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Acts 1995, No. 95-402, p. 837, §1; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1.)

Section 34-24-142

Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Compensation of members.

Each member of the board shall be entitled to receive a per diem at the rate of 80 percent of the rate established by Section 34-24-54 for each day or any portion thereof that the member of the board is in attendance at a meeting of the board or any function of the board, plus an amount not to exceed the per diem expense and transportation costs allowed to Alabama state employees for in-state travel for each day actively engaged in the duties of their office. All expenditures by the board shall be made only on requisition signed by the president or the executive director of the board.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §4; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3.)

Section 34-24-143

Disposition of funds; audit; refunds; records.

All examination fees, certification fees, renewal fees, and other similar funds received by the board under the provisions of this article shall be deposited in the State Treasury to the credit of the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and all such funds are hereby appropriated to the board to defray the expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of this article. The expenses shall include printing, stamps, stationery, clerical help, travel, and other necessary expenditures. In all cases, any fee which is received by the board shall not be refunded, and no applicant shall have the right to recover any part of a fee accompanying his or her application for licensure or otherwise paid to the board except on the death, disability, or retirement from practice of any applicant or licensee between payment of any fee and the expiration of his or her current renewal or the issuance of the initial license or permit or on the failure of the board to conduct any scheduled examination. The books and records of the board shall be subject to state audit in the

same manner and to the same extent as any other state agency. The secretary-treasurer or the executive director shall keep a true and accurate account of all funds received by the board and all expenditures made by the board.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §5; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2006-295, p. 602, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-144

Board of Chiropractic Examiners - Officers; meetings; rules and regulations; bond.

The members of the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall convene within 30 days after their election or appointment and elect a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer from among their members, and thereafter the board shall elect, annually, after the commencement of the term of any board member, a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer from among the members of the board. The board shall meet at least twice a year and shall set by rule the regular meeting schedule of the board. The board shall adopt a seal, which shall be affixed to all licenses issued. Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum. However, the board may appoint hearing panels consisting of no fewer than three board members. The consumer member of the board may be a member of each hearing panel. The hearing panels are authorized to conduct hearings in the same manner as the full board is authorized to conduct hearings. The board may from time to time adopt necessary rules and regulations for the performance of its duties. The secretary-treasurer and the executive director of the board shall give bond in the principal sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), payable to the State of Alabama, for the faithful performance of their duties. The premiums for the bond shall be paid by the board from funds appropriated for its use.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §6; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Acts 1995, No. 95-402, p. 837, §1; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2006-295, p. 602, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3.)

Section 34-24-145

Establishment of preceptorship, etc., authorized; issuance and expiration of limited license; board to establish rules, etc., for implementation of section.

(a) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners is hereby authorized to establish a preceptorship and extern program whereby chiropractic students enrolled in their last year at board-approved chiropractic colleges accredited by the Council of Chiropractic Education and recent chiropractic graduates of such schools may be issued a limited license to practice chiropractic under the direct on-premises supervision of a sponsor licensed to practice chiropractic in the State of Alabama, and in the case of chiropractic students, also under the supervision of the school. The limited license shall expire immediately upon the board issuing the results of the second licensure examination.

(b) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall prohibit the use of more than one limited license student or graduate to one sponsor licensed to practice chiropractic.

(c) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners is empowered to establish rules and regulations for the implementation of this section, including, but not limited to, providing academic, professional, and character requirements for eligible participants, defining the permitted scope of practice of the limited licensee, and requiring fees for participation.

(d) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall implement and perform all powers and duties transferred to it pursuant to Act 81-217, H. 213, 1981 Regular Session (Acts 1981, p. 271).

(Acts 1983, No. 83-586, p. 919, §§1-3; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-160

Application; qualifications of applicant; fee.

(a) Any person wishing the right to practice chiropractic shall make application to the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners in the form as the board may prescribe.

(b) In addition to other requirements established by law and for the purpose of determining an applicant's suitability for a license to practice chiropractic, each applicant shall submit a complete set of fingerprints to the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners. The board shall submit the fingerprints provided by each applicant for a license to practice chiropractic to the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI). The fingerprints shall be forwarded by the ABI to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for a national criminal history record check. Costs associated with conducting a criminal history background check shall be borne by the applicant. The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall keep information received pursuant to this section confidential, except that such information received and relied upon in denying the issuance of a license to practice chiropractic in this state may be disclosed as may be necessary to support the denial. This requirement also shall apply to any person who is not licensed as a chiropractor who applies for a permit pursuant to Section 34-24-123(b).

(c) Each applicant shall be of good moral character, a citizen of the United States or, if not a citizen of the United States, a person who is legally present in the United States with appropriate documentation from the federal government.

(d) Each applicant shall be a graduate of a chartered chiropractic school or college accredited by the council of chiropractic education which teaches only attendance courses and requires a minimum four-year standard college course.

(e) An applicant for licensure who graduated from chiropractic college after January 1, 2010, shall have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Absent a bachelor's degree, the requirement may be met by an academic graduate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and proof that the applicant has taken a nationally recognized standardized test commensurate with that applicant's graduate degree.

(f) The application shall be signed by the applicant in his or her own handwriting, and shall be notarized, and shall recite the history of the applicant's educational qualifications, how long he or she has studied chiropractic, what collateral branches, if any, he or she has studied, the length of

time he or she has engaged in clinical practice, with proof thereof in the form of diplomas, certificates, transcripts, etc.

(g) Each applicant shall submit with his or her application satisfactory evidence of good character and reputation.

(h) Each applicant for licensure shall pay to the board a fee of not less than fifty dollars (\$50) and not more than one hundred fifty dollars (\$150), the exact amount to be fixed annually by resolution of the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners. The fee shall accompany the application. A fee of not less than fifty dollars (\$50) and not more than one hundred fifty dollars (\$150), the exact amount to be fixed by resolution of the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall be paid for any subsequent examination.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §7; Acts 1978, No. 767, p. 1107, §1; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2006-295, p. 602, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-161

Examinations; issuance and replacement of license; identification of office.

(a) Each applicant, who matriculated into a chiropractic college after January 1, 1973, must pass parts one and two of the examination administered by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners or other national examination as approved by the board. In addition, each applicant must pass an examination administered by the board on this article and the rules of the board.

(b) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall prescribe rules and regulations regarding which national examination shall be administered, the conduct of and times and places of examinations, and requirements for successful completion of examinations. A license shall be issued for each applicant who successfully completes the examination.

(c) Irrespective of the requirements in subsections (a) and (b), the board may license an applicant if the applicant is licensed in another state that, in the opinion of the board, has standards of practice or licensure equal to or stricter than the requirements imposed by this article. If the applicant graduated from chiropractic college after January 1, 2010, he or she must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Absent a bachelor's degree, the requirement may be met by an academic graduate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and proof that the applicant has taken a nationally recognized standardized test commensurate with that applicant's graduate degree.

(d) Upon completion of all requirements for licensure an applicant shall be issued a license. The fee for issuance of a license shall be established by rule of the board. Each license shall be dated and numbered in the order of issuance and shall be signed by the executive director and the president of the board.

(e) Replacement licenses:

(1) Any licensee whose license is lost or destroyed may be issued a replacement license upon making application to the board. The application must be accompanied by an affidavit setting out the facts concerning the loss or destruction.

(2) Name change. Any licensee whose name is changed by marriage or court order may surrender his or her license and apply for a replacement license.

(3) The fee for any replacement license shall be established by rule of the board.

(f) Each licensed chiropractor who is actively engaged in practice or who holds himself or herself out as a chiropractor shall place or cause to be placed in a conspicuous place at the entrance of his or her office or place in which he or she practices a sign in intelligible lettering not less than one inch in height containing the name of the chiropractor and in lettering no smaller than half the size of the name of the chiropractor, the words "CHIROPRACTOR" or "CHIROPRACTIC." The intent of this requirement is that the office of the licensee be clearly identified by name and profession.

(g) Any licensee or permittee upon request shall be issued a duplicate license upon payment of a fee to be established by rule of the board.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §8; Acts 1985, No. 85-613, p. 938, §3; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Acts 1997, No. 97-149, p. 190, §3; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1; Act 2015-275, §1.)

Section 34-24-162.1

Application; licensure by credentials.

(a) Every person who desires to practice chiropractic within the State of Alabama shall file an application prescribed by the board. Notwithstanding the method of obtaining licensure or any particular requirement set forth herein, every person as a prerequisite to licensure must be at least 21 years of age, of good moral character, a citizen of the United States or, if not a citizen of the United States a person who is legally present in the United States with appropriate documentation from the federal government, a graduate of a chiropractic school or college accredited and recognized by the board and must satisfy any other requirement set forth in any rule adopted by the board.

(b) Any individual who possesses a current license in any state, who has passed a state licensure examination approved by the board and who has, since graduation from chiropractic school, participated in a clinical residency or practiced chiropractic in the Armed Forces or with the Public Health Service shall be eligible for licensure if an application is received by the board within 18 months of the completion of the subject residency or Armed Forces or Public Health Service commitment. All of the above applicants shall pay a fee which shall accompany the application.

(c) Licensure by credentials may be utilized to evaluate the theoretical knowledge and clinical skill of a chiropractor when an applicant for licensure by credentials holds a chiropractic license

in another state. The board may promulgate rules relating to licensure by credentials in addition to any statutory requirements.

(d) An applicant for licensure by credentials must meet all of the following:

(1) The chiropractor shall have engaged in the active practice of chiropractic or full-time chiropractic education for the five years immediately preceding his or her application. The active practice of chiropractic or full-time chiropractic education shall mean spending a minimum of at least 5,000 hours engaged in these activities during the relevant time period.

(2) The applicant must hold a current, valid, unrevoked, and unexpired license in a state having examination standards regarded by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners as an equivalent to the Alabama standards.

(3) The board of examiners in the state of current practice must verify or endorse that the applicant's license is in good standing without any restrictions.

(4) The chiropractor shall not be the subject of a pending disciplinary action in any state in which the individual is or has been licensed which shall be verified by a query to the National Practitioner Data Bank, the Health Integrity Protection Data Bank, the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Board CINBAD Databank, or any other pertinent bank currently existing or which may exist in the future.

(5) The applicant must provide a written statement agreeing to be interviewed at the request of the board.

(6) The individual must successfully pass a written jurisprudence examination.

(7) The applicant must submit affidavits from two licensed chiropractors practicing in the same geographical area where the applicant currently is practicing or teaching attesting to the applicant's moral character, standing, and ability.

(8) The applicant must provide the board with an official transcript with school seal from the chiropractic school which issued the applicant's professional degree or execute a request and authorization allowing the board to obtain the transcript.

(9) The applicant must not be the subject of any pending or final action from any hospital revoking, suspending, limiting, modifying, or interfering with any clinical or staff privileges.

(10) The applicant must not have been convicted of a felony, a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, any offense relating to controlled or legend drugs or any offense which would interfere with or impair the ability of the applicant to practice chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to his or her patients.

(11) The board may consider or require other criteria including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- a. Questioning under oath.
- b. Results of peer review reports from constituent chiropractic societies or federal chiropractic services.
- c. Substance abuse testing or treatment.
- d. Proof of no physical or psychological impairment that would adversely affect the ability to practice chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety.
- e. Participation in continuing education.
- f. Background checks for criminal or fraudulent activities.
- g. An agreement to initiate practice within the State of Alabama within a period of one year from the date of the issuance of a license.
- h. Proof of professional liability coverage and that coverage has not been refused, declined, cancelled, non-renewed, or modified.
- i. In the event an applicant has or is practicing in a state which allows an applicant to prescribe or administer drugs, the applicant has not been the subject of any disciplinary action or is subject to the pendency of any disciplinary action or enforcement proceeding of any kind in connection with these activities. This paragraph applies regardless of whether or not a separate permit or license was issued to engage in the described activities.

(12) The board may refuse to grant a license to an applicant who does not comply with the requirements of Section 34-24-166(a) or who has engaged in any acts constituting the disciplinary grounds set forth in Section 34-24-166(b). The board may further take disciplinary action authorized by this chapter if the board learns or discovers subsequent to the issuance of a license that the individual engaged in any acts constituting the disciplinary grounds set forth in Section 34-24-166(b).

(13) The board may promulgate rules relating to licensure by credentials including applicable fees in addition to any requirements by law.

(Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §2.)

Section 34-24-163

Issuance of certificates to persons practicing on January 1, 1960.

Notwithstanding any section of this article or any other law to the contrary, the board shall issue a license to practice chiropractic without examination to any person in the active practice of chiropractic in the State of Alabama on January 1, 1960; provided, that the person shall make a written application to the board on forms and in the manner prescribed by the board; and provided further, that the person produces evidence satisfactory to the board that he or she is a

graduate of a school or college of chiropractic recognized by the board and is of good moral character. Such application shall be accompanied by a \$25 application fee. Any person who is in the Armed Forces of the United States and who otherwise meets the qualifications of this section and was actively in the practice of chiropractic in this state before becoming a member of the Armed Forces of the United States shall have 90 days after discharge or resignation from the Armed Forces of the United States in which to make application. The provisions of this section shall be further governed by the portions of this article which specifies methods for revocation, refusal, or suspension of licenses, or rules and regulations governing retirement or surrender of licenses.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §21; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-164

License to be recorded with judge of probate.

Every person who receives a license to practice chiropractic shall have it recorded in the office of the judge of probate of each county in which he practices and shall likewise have it recorded in the counties to which he may subsequently remove for the purpose of practicing chiropractic and shall pay a fee to the judge of probate in each county in which the license is recorded. No person shall engage in the practice of chiropractic until the license is recorded by the judge of probate.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §11; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-165

Renewal, forfeiture, etc., of license; waiver of fees; inactive license.

(a) Every license to practice chiropractic or permit to own a chiropractic practice shall be subject to renewal on September 30 of the year for which it is issued with a grace period from October 1 to December 31 of each year. Every person having a valid license or permit may on or before September 30 renew the license or permit for the ensuing year by the payment to the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners of a fee of not more than four hundred dollars (\$400), the exact amount to be fixed by rule of the board, adopted in accordance with the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, subject to the condition that no increase or decrease in any one year shall exceed twenty-five dollars (\$25). The license renewal shall be accompanied by satisfactory evidence that the person has completed during the preceding year a minimum of 18 hours of professional educational work approved by the board. The permit renewal shall be accompanied by satisfactory evidence that the primary permit holder has completed the number of approved continuing education hours in the manner set forth and required by rule of the board. The board, for good and reasonable cause shown, may waive the education requirement. The secretary-treasurer or the executive director of the board shall notify each licensee or permit holder at least 30 days prior to September 30 of each year of the due date for renewal. In addition to the renewal fee, a late renewal penalty shall be assessed any licensee or permit holder who fails to pay the renewal fee by September 30 of each year based on the following schedule:

(1) For renewal during the month of October, one hundred dollars (\$100).

(2) For renewal during the month of November, two hundred dollars (\$200).

(3) For renewal during the month of December, three hundred dollars (\$300).

A chiropractor may continue to practice or a permit holder may continue to own a chiropractic practice until December 31 of the year for which a license or permit is issued subject to subsection (b).

(b) Any license issued pursuant to this chapter shall be automatically suspended if not renewed on or before January 1. Any chiropractor whose license is automatically suspended shall be reinstated if all conditions for renewal have been satisfied and upon payment of a reinstatement fee on or before January 31. Any chiropractor who seeks reinstatement due to nonrenewal after the above time shall comply with Section 34-24-176.

(c) Any licensee who is no longer in active practice may apply for retirement of his or her license by submitting an affidavit to that effect on a form supplied by the executive director. A licensee whose license is retired is excused from the professional education requirement specified in this article. The annual fee for maintenance of a retired license may not be more than one-half of the amount required by this article for an active license. Any license issued pursuant to this section shall be automatically suspended if not renewed on or before January 1. Any chiropractor whose license is automatically suspended shall be reinstated if all conditions for renewal have been satisfied and upon payment of a reinstatement fee on or before January 31. Any chiropractor who seeks reinstatement due to nonrenewal after the above time shall comply with Section 34-24-176.

(d) The board may waive or reduce annual registration and the payment of fees while any licensee is prevented from practicing chiropractic by reason of physical disability, temporary active duty with any of the Armed Forces of the United States, or while any licensee is completely retired from the practice of chiropractic. The waiver of fees shall be effective so long as the disability, temporary active duty, or complete retirement continues.

(e) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall make rules and regulations as necessary and proper for effectuating or enforcing this article.

(f) In addition to other requirements established by law and for the purpose of determining suitability for reinstatement of a license to practice chiropractic, each individual seeking reinstatement shall submit a complete set of fingerprints to the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners and the board shall submit the fingerprints provided by any such individual to the State Bureau of Investigations. The fingerprints shall be forwarded by the State Bureau of Investigations to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for a national criminal history record check. Costs associated with conducting a criminal history background check shall be borne by the individual seeking reinstatement. The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall keep information received pursuant to this section confidential, except that such information received and relied upon in denying reinstatement may be disclosed as may be necessary to support the denial. In addition to other requirements established by law and for the purposes of determining suitability for renewal, the board, in its discretion, may require an individual seeking renewal of a license to practice chiropractic to submit a complete set of fingerprints to the State Board of

Chiropractic Examiners. The board shall submit the fingerprints provided by any such individual to the State Bureau of Investigations. The fingerprints shall be forwarded by the State Bureau of Investigations to the FBI for a national criminal history record check. Costs associated with conducting a criminal history background check shall be borne by the individual seeking renewal. The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall keep information received pursuant to this section confidential, except that such information received and relied upon in denying renewal may be disclosed as may be necessary to support the denial. This requirement also shall apply in the same manner to any person who is not licensed as a chiropractor who applies for reinstatement or renewal of his or her permit pursuant to Section 34-24-123(b).

(g) The board shall also establish an inactive license for persons who desire to be licensed in Alabama but who actually practice in another state. The annual fee for maintenance of an inactive license shall be one-half of the amount required by this section for an active license.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §19; Acts 1964, 1st Ex. Sess., No. 167, p. 232, §1; Acts 1969, No. 608, p. 1113, §1; Acts 1978, No. 769, p. 1109, §1; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Acts 1997, No. 97-149, p. 190, §3; Act 98-650, p. 1427, §1; Act 99-662, 2nd Sp. Sess., p. 120, §1; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2009-31, p. 98, §3; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1; Act 2015-275, §1.)

Section 34-24-166

Refusal, revocation, or suspension - Grounds; rules; disciplinary action.

(a) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners may refuse to grant a license or permit to any applicant who is not of good moral character and reputation or has a history of narcotic addiction or has previously been convicted of a felony or any crime of moral turpitude or has previously been diagnosed as having a psychopathic disorder.

(b) The State Board of Chiropractic Examiners may invoke disciplinary action as outlined in subsection (c) whenever the licensee or permit holder shall be found guilty of any of the following:

(1) Fraud in procuring a license or permit, or any fraud in obtaining money or other thing of value.

(2) Immoral conduct.

(3) Unprofessional conduct.

(4) Habitual intoxication or addiction to the use of drugs.

(5) Conviction of a felony or any crime of moral turpitude.

(6) Conviction for violation of any narcotic or controlled substance statute.

(7) Unlawful invasion of the field of practice of any other health practitioner when the licensee is not licensed to practice such profession.

(8) Division of fees or agreeing to split or divide fees received for professional services with any person for bringing or referring a patient.

(9) Continuing to practice after suspension or revocation of license.

(10) A violation of any order issued by the board.

(11) Engaging in the incompetent practice of chiropractic.

(12) Aiding the unauthorized practice of chiropractic.

(13) Advertising in any manner which violates the rules and regulations established by the board.

(14) A violation of any of the provisions of this article or any rule or regulation adopted by the board.

(15) Patient abandonment.

(16) The suspension, revocation, or probation by another state of a license to practice chiropractic or permit to operate or own a chiropractic office or practice. A certified copy of the record of suspension, revocation, or probation shall be conclusive evidence of the suspension, revocation, or probation.

(17) The inability to practice chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of illness, inebriation, excessive use of drugs, narcotics, alcohol, chemicals, or any other substance, or as a result of any mental or physical condition.

(c)(1) The Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall establish rules and regulations which shall govern the practice of chiropractic and shall detail prohibited acts stated in this article. The board shall have the power and it shall be its duty as a consumer protection agency to impose any of the sanctions set forth in subdivision (2) against any licensee or permit holder upon a determination of guilt of any of the above enumerated grounds.

(2) When the board finds any licensee or permit holder guilty of any of the grounds set forth in subsection (b), the board may enter an order imposing one or more of the following penalties:

a. Revoke the license to practice chiropractic or permit.

b. Suspend the license to practice chiropractic or permit.

c. Enter a censure on the license or permit.

d. Issue an order fixing a period and terms of probation best adapted to protect the public health and safety and to rehabilitate the licensee or permit holder.

e. Impose an administrative fine not to exceed eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) for each count or separate offense.

f. Impose restrictions on the scope of practice.

g. Impose peer review or professional education requirements.

h. Assess the costs of the disciplinary proceedings.

i. Issue a reprimand.

j. Assess the costs for the monitoring of any licensee or permit holder as ordered by the board.

(3) Failure to comply with any final order of the board, including, but not limited to, an order of censure or probation, is cause for suspension or revocation of the license or permit.

(d) The board may in an emergency situation, when danger to the public health, safety, and welfare requires, suspend any license or permit without a hearing or with an abbreviated hearing in accordance with the following sections of this article.

(e) Any person who engages in the unlawful practice of chiropractic, or who violates any provision of this chapter, shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

(f)(1) When the issue is whether or not a licensee is physically or mentally capable of practicing chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to patients, then, upon a showing of probable cause to the board that the licensee is not capable of practicing chiropractic with reasonable skill and safety to patients, the board may order and direct the licensee in question to submit to a physical, mental, or laboratory examination, or any combination thereof, to be performed by a physician designated or approved by the board. The expense of the examination shall be borne by the licensee who is examined. The board may collect and expend funds available to the board as necessary to adequately provide for the operational expenses of the wellness program.

(2) Every person issued a license to practice chiropractic in this state or issued a permit in this state upon a showing of probable cause as provided in subdivision (1), shall be deemed to have given consent to submit to a mental, physical, or laboratory examination, or to any combination thereof, and to waive all objections to the admissibility of the testimony or examination reports of the examining physician on the ground that the reports constitute privileged doctor-patient communications.

(g) It shall be the duty and obligation of the board to promote the early identification, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation of chiropractors licensed to practice in the state who may be impaired by reason of illness, inebriation, excessive use of drugs, narcotics, alcohol, chemicals, or other substances or as a result of any physical or mental condition. The board may enter into an agreement for any of the following:

(1) Contracting with providers for treatment programs.

- (2) Receiving and evaluating reports of suspected impairment from any source.
 - (3) Intervening in cases of verified impairment.
 - (4) Referring impaired chiropractors to treatment programs.
 - (5) Monitoring the treatment and rehabilitation of impaired chiropractors.
 - (6) Providing post-treatment monitoring and support of rehabilitated impaired chiropractors.
- (h) All information, interviews, reports, statements, memoranda, or other documents furnished to the board are confidential and shall be used by the board only in the exercise of the proper function of the board and shall not be public records nor available for court subpoena or for discovery proceedings.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §12; Acts 1969, No. 609, p. 1114, §1; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2006-553, p. 1271, §1; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1; Act 2015-275, §1.)

Section 34-24-167

Refusal, revocation, or suspension - Notice of hearing; procedure.

- (a) In a contested case, all parties shall be afforded an opportunity for hearing after reasonable notice in writing delivered either by personal service as in civil actions or by certified mail, return receipt requested. Delivery of the notice referred to in this subsection shall constitute commencement of the contested case proceeding.
- (b) The notice shall include:
- (1) A statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing;
 - (2) A statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held;
 - (3) A reference to the particular sections of the statutes and rules involved;
 - (4) A short and plain statement of the matters asserted. If the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners is unable to state the matters in detail at the time the notice is served, the initial notice may be limited to a statement of the issues involved. Thereafter, upon application, a more definite and detailed statement shall be furnished; and
 - (5) The summons and complaint shall be mailed at least 35 days prior to the scheduled date of the hearing. The board may specify in its rules and regulations the period for reasonable notice in the event service is refused or returned.
- (c) If a party fails to appear in a contested case proceeding after proper service of notice, the presiding officer may, if no adjournment is granted, proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party.

(d) Opportunity shall be afforded all parties to respond and present evidence and argument on all material issues involved and to be represented by counsel at their own expense.

(e) Informal dispositions may be made of any contested case by stipulation, agreed settlement, consent order or default or by another method agreed upon by the parties in writing. The attorney for the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners shall have the authority to make any settlement offer to any respondent in a disciplinary proceeding. Such offer shall not be binding upon the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

(f) The record in a contested case shall include:

(1) All pleadings, motions, and intermediate rulings;

(2) All evidence received or considered and all other submissions;

(3) A statement of all matters officially noticed;

(4) All questions and offers of proof, objections, and rulings thereon;

(5) All proposed findings and exceptions;

(6) Any decision, opinion, or report by the hearing officer at the hearing; and

(7) All staff memoranda or data submitted to the hearing officer or members of the board in connection with their consideration of the case.

(g) Oral proceedings shall be open to the public. Oral proceedings shall be recorded either by mechanized means or by qualified shorthand reporters. Oral proceedings or any part thereof shall be transcribed at the request of any party with the expense of the transcription charged to the requesting party. The recording or stenographic notes of oral proceedings or the transcription thereof shall be filed with and maintained by the board for at least five years from the date of the decision and shall be made available for inspection by the public, except in those cases where the proceedings shall be ordered sealed by order of the court.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §13; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-168

Refusal, revocation, or suspension - Guidelines for conduct of hearing; settlement by guilty plea.

The board shall specify in its rules and regulations specific guidelines to govern all hearings.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §14; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-170

Costs and fines.

The board shall specify in its rules and regulations a schedule of costs or fines, or both, to be imposed upon any person or permit holder who has been found guilty of a violation of Sections 34-24-166 or 34-24-161(f), each not to exceed eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) per violation.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §16; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-172

Restoration of license.

Repealed by Act 2015-275 effective August 1, 2015.

(Acts 1959, No. 108, p. 612, §18; Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-173

Rules of evidence in contested cases.

In contested cases:

(1) The rules of evidence as applied in nonjury civil cases in the circuit courts of this state shall be followed. When necessary to ascertain facts not reasonably susceptible of proof under those rules, evidence not admissible thereunder may be admitted if it is of a type commonly relied upon by reasonably prudent persons in the conduct of their affairs. The board shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law. Except as hereinafter provided, objections to evidentiary offers may be made and shall be noted in the record. Whenever any evidence is excluded as inadmissible, all such evidence existing in written form shall remain a part of the record as an offer of proof. The party seeking the admission of oral testimony may make an offer of proof by means of a brief statement on the record describing the testimony excluded. All rulings on the admissibility of evidence shall be final and shall appear in the record. Subject to these requirements, when a hearing will be expedited and interests of the parties will not be prejudiced substantially, any part of the evidence may be received or may be required to be submitted in verified form; provided, the adversary party shall not be denied the right of cross-examination of the witness. The testimony of the parties and witnesses shall be made under oath.

(2) Documentary evidence otherwise admissible may be received in the form of copies or excerpts, or by incorporation by reference to material already on file with the board. Upon request, parties shall be given an opportunity to compare the copy with the original.

(3) A party may conduct cross-examination required for a full and true disclosure of the facts, except as otherwise limited by law.

(4) Official notice may be taken of all facts of which judicial notice may be taken and of other scientific and technical facts within the specialized knowledge of the board.

(5) The experience, technical competence, and specialized knowledge of the board may be utilized in the evaluation of the evidence.

(6) The board's interpretation of its own rules and regulations in contested cases shall be final and conclusive and shall not be set aside upon judicial review.

(7) The board shall have the power to issue subpoenas and to compel the attendance of any witness or the production of any book, writing, or other document in the possession, custody, or control of any person. Any person refusing to produce any book, writing, or other document or to appear to testify, without legal excuse, at such hearing of the board, after having been served with a subpoena issued by the board, shall be guilty of contempt; and upon certification of such act by the board to the judge of the circuit court of whose jurisdiction the hearing is held or is to be held, the judge shall punish the same as though committed before him.

(Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §2.)

Section 34-24-174

Form and content of final order.

(a) The final order in a proceeding shall be in writing and made a part of the record and include findings of fact and conclusions of law separately stated, and it shall be rendered within 45 days:

(1) After the hearing is concluded, if conducted by the board;

(2) After the board accepts any proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law or proposed final order from any party in a disciplinary hearing;

(3) After a recommended order, or findings and conclusion are submitted to the board and mailed to all parties, if the hearing is conducted by a hearing officer; or

(4) The 45-day period may be waived or extended with the consent of all parties.

(b) Findings of fact, if set forth in a manner which is no more than mere tracking of the statutory language, shall be accompanied by a statement of the underlying facts of record which support the findings.

(c) If the board finds that an immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare requires an immediate final order, it shall recite with particularity the facts underlying such findings in the final order, which shall be appealable or enjoinable from the date rendered.

(d) Parties shall be notified either personally or by certified mail return receipt requested of any order and, unless waived, a copy of the final order shall be so delivered or mailed to each party or to his or her attorney of record.

(Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §3.)

Section 34-24-175

Appeal from final decision, judicial review.

(a) Any party whose license or permit is sanctioned as provided herein, shall not be required to file a motion for rehearing to exhaust his or her remedies available from the board.

(b) Any party sanctioned as provided herein, may file a petition for judicial review in the circuit court where the board office is located. The filing of the petition must be within 30 days of the date of the board's final decision.

(c) Within 30 days after receipt of the petition for judicial review or within such additional time as the court may allow, the board shall transmit to the reviewing court the original or a certified copy of the entire record and transcript of the proceedings under review. Any party seeking judicial review of any sanction imposed by the board shall be responsible for all costs associated with preparation, transcription, reproduction, and transmittal of the proceedings under review.

(d) Other than specified in this statute, any judicial review of the board's final decision shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions for review of final agency decisions of contested cases in Sections 41-22-20 and 41-22-21.

(Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §4; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1.)

Section 34-24-176

Reinstatement of license.

Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) or (c) of Section 34-24-165, any chiropractor who desires to return to the active practice of chiropractic shall submit an application for reinstatement accompanied by a nonrefundable reinstatement fee and a penalty. The amount of the reinstatement fee and penalty shall be established by rule of the board. The applicant shall possess good moral character and meet the educational requirements existing at the time of his or her initial licensing. The board, as a condition of reinstatement, may require the completion of a designated number of continuing education hours, the successful completion of refresher courses at a board approved accredited chiropractic college, or the passing of a law exam, or all of the above if required by the board.

(Acts 1989, No. 89-237, p. 321, §5; Act 2003-352, p. 921, §1; Act 2013-414, p. 1568, §1; Act 2015-275, §1.)

Section 34-24-177

Nonrenewal pending payment of administrative fine; refund.

The board shall not renew the annual certificate of registration as set forth in Section 34-24-123, 34-24-165, or 34-24-176 of any licensee or permit holder against whom an administrative fine

has been assessed by the board until the fine is paid in full. In the event that the fine is subsequently reduced or set aside on judicial review as provided in the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, the licensee or permit holder shall be entitled to a prompt refund of the amount of the fine, but shall not be entitled to interest thereon. If any order issued by the board or if any agreement between the board and any licensee or permit holder allows for the payment of fines or costs in installments, the licensee or permit holder shall be allowed to renew his or her license or permit provided the payments are current.

(Act 2006-295, p. 602, §2; Act 2015-275, §1.)