



# Client Alert



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## Georgia Composite Medical Board Publishes Proposed Professional Health Program Rules

Following the lead of a number of other states that have adopted and implemented professional health programs, the Georgia Composite Medical Board has published proposed Professional Health Program rules that would impact physicians in the State of Georgia.

Highlights of the proposed program include the following:

1. A Georgia physician would serve as the Medical Director of the program.
2. The program would impact "impaired" physicians, which are defined to include those who are unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety due to illness or use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals or any other type of material, or as a result of any mental or physical condition.
3. The rules do not describe any one particular evaluation, treatment, or monitoring program but rather contemplate a policy approved by the Board to identify approved treatment programs, when physicians are referred to the program or contact the program directly.
4. The affected physician would bear all costs of the program.
5. The program would set procedures, responsibilities and consequences for non-compliance, including notification to the Board within 72 hours of a participant's failure to meet the terms of participation; refusal to cease practicing when he or she has been found unable to practice; withdrawal from the program against medical advice; conduct or behavior believing to constitute an imminent danger to the public or the physician; failure to abide by the terms and conditions of a monitoring agreement.
6. All such reports, records, documents and information relevant to the physician in the program are to be treated as confidential, and a program participant would agree to give the program access to all of his or her records relating to his or her mental or physical conditions, including psychiatric functions.

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