

PROVIDER SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

Title 8, California Code of Regulations Chapter 4.5 Division of Workers' Compensation Subchapter 1 Administrative Director – Administrative Rules

ARTICLE 5.1 – Provider Suspension Procedure

§9788.1. Notice of Provider Suspension

(a) The Administrative Director shall issue a notice of suspension to a physician, practitioner, or provider who has met one of the criteria set forth under Labor Code section 139.21(a)(1).

(b) The term “suspension from participation” means the physician, practitioner, or provider is prohibited from providing any goods or services related to an occupational injury or illness that is either for pay or required by Labor Code sections 4060, 4061, 4062, 4062.1, 4062.2, 4600, 4600.3, 4610, 4610.5, 4610.6, 4616, and 4620. The term “suspension from participation” also precludes a physician’s continued certification as a qualified medical evaluator pursuant to Labor Code section 139.2.

(c) The physician, practitioner, or provider is prohibited from seeking payment or reimbursement, either directly or indirectly, for any goods or services related to an occupational injury or illness that is provided on or after the date of their suspension.

(d) The notice required under subdivision (a) shall be in writing and shall include all of the following:

(1) Notice that the physician, practitioner, or provider is subject to suspension from participating in the workers’ compensation system;

(2) The basis for the suspension under Labor Code section 139.21(a)(1);

(3) A statement that the suspension is effective 30 days from the date the notice is mailed, unless the physician, practitioner, or provider requests a hearing and, in that hearing, provides proof that Labor Code section 139.21(a)(1) is not applicable;

(4) A statement that the physician, practitioner, or provider may request a hearing within 10 calendar days from the date the notice is mailed, which will stay the suspension pending the outcome of the hearing, and that the failure to request a hearing will result in suspension pursuant to section 9788.2(b); and

(5) A description of the method for requesting the hearing, including instructions on how the request should be filed and served.

(e) The notice shall be served by registered or certified mail. The Administrative Director shall have the option to serve the notice on the physician’s, practitioner’s, or provider’s address of

record with the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Department of Health Services, the California Department of Health Services, an address on file with physician's, practitioner's, or provider's licensing or certification agency, or from court records.

Authority: Sections 133 and 139.21, Labor Code.

Reference: Sections 139.21, Labor Code.

§9788.2. Provider Request for Hearing.

(a) Within 10 calendar days after the date the notice of suspension is mailed, the physician, practitioner, or provider may request a hearing as the respondent with the Administrative Director, in which the respondent may contest the allegation that Labor Code section 139.21(a)(1) is applicable and the basis for suspension. The respondent must set forth the legal and factual reason for the request for hearing.

(b) Failure to timely file a request for hearing shall constitute a waiver of the physician's, practitioner's, or provider's right to an evidentiary hearing. If a request for hearing is not timely filed, the Administrative Director shall serve an Order of Suspension on the physician, practitioner, or provider after 30 days from the date the notice of suspension is mailed. The Order of Suspension shall provide the written notification required by section 9788.4. All appeals from the Order of Suspension issued pursuant to this subdivision shall be made to the Superior Court of California by writ as provided in the Code of Civil Procedure.

(c) The request for hearing shall be in writing and signed by the respondent, or the respondent's legal representative on behalf of the respondent, and shall state the respondent's mailing address.

(d) The respondent must file the original and one copy of the request for hearing on the Administrative Director and serve one copy on the DWC Legal Unit at the same address as the Administrative Director. The original and all copies of any filings required by this section shall have a proof of service attached.

Authority: Sections 133 and 139.21, Labor Code.

Reference: Section 139.21, Labor Code.

§9788.3. Suspension Hearing.

(a) Upon receipt by the Administrative Director of the respondent's timely request for hearing, the Administrative Director shall issue a notice of hearing setting forth the date, time, and place of a hearing to determine whether the respondent shall be suspended from participating in the workers' compensation system. The date of the hearing shall be no later than 30 days after the receipt of the request for hearing, which shall be stated on the notice of hearing. The notice shall be served on the respondent by registered or certified mail.

(b) The Administrative Director shall designate a hearing officer to preside over the hearing, which need not be conducted according to the technical rules relating to evidence and witnesses.

Any relevant evidence shall be admitted if it is the sort of evidence on which reasonable persons are accustomed to rely in the conduct of serious affairs, regardless of the existence of any common law or statutory rule which might make the admission of the evidence improper over objection in civil actions. Oral testimony shall be taken only on oath or affirmation.

(c) The designated hearing officer shall issue a written recommended Determination and Order re: Suspension, including a statement of the basis for the Determination, within ten (10) days of the date the case was submitted for decision, which shall be served on the Administrative Director. The time requirement of this subdivision is directory and not jurisdictional.

(d) The Administrative Director shall have ten (10) calendar days to adopt or modify the recommended Determination and Order re: Suspension issued by the designated hearing officer. In the event the recommended Determination and Order of the designated hearing officer is modified, the Administrative Director shall include a statement of the basis for the Determination and Order re: Suspension signed and served by the Administrative Director, or his or her designee. If the Administrative Director does not act within ten (10) calendar days, then the recommended Determination and Order of the hearing officer shall become the Determination and Order on the eleventh (11th) calendar day.

(e) The Determination and Order re: Suspension shall be served on the respondent by registered or certified mail by the Administrative Director, and shall become final on the day it is mailed.

(f) All appeals from the Determination and Order re: Suspension shall be made to the Superior Court of California by writ as provided in the Code of Civil Procedure.

Authority: Sections 133 and 139.21, Labor Code.

Reference: Section 139.21, Labor Code.

§9788.4. Suspension Notification.

(a) Following the date that the Determination and Order re: Suspension is final, the Administrative Director shall provide written notification of the physician's, practitioner's, or provider's suspension from participating in the workers' compensation system to:

(1) The Chief Judge of the Division of Workers' Compensation. Upon notification, the Chief Judge shall provide written notification of the suspension to the district offices of the Division of Workers' Compensation and all Administrative Law Judges employed by the Division.

(2) The special lien proceeding attorney designated under Labor Code section 139.21(f), if one is appointed.

(3) The physician's, practitioner's, or provider's state licensing, certifying, or registering authority.

(b) Following the date that the Determination and Order re: Suspension is final, the Administrative Director shall further:

(1) Update the Division's qualified medical evaluator and medical provider network databases, as appropriate, to indicate the physician's, practitioner's, or provider's suspension; and

(2) Post notification of the physician, practitioner, or provider's suspension on the Division's website.

Authority: Sections 133 and 139.21, Labor Code.

Reference: Sections 139.21, Labor Code.