



Profile Frequently Asked Questions

I'm not sure how to spell a practitioner's name. How can I find that practitioner?

If you are not sure how to spell a practitioner's name, just enter the first 3 letters of his or her last name. You will then get a list of all the practitioners whose names begin with those letters. If you still cannot find your practitioner, please call the New Jersey Health Care Profile help desk at 888-654-2712 for assistance.

Why can't I find my practitioner?

It is best to search for your practitioner by entering his or her last name only. If you have entered other fields, press "clear form" and search again using only the practitioner's last name. Do not fill in any of the other criteria. You will get a listing of all the practitioners in New Jersey with that last name. If you still cannot find your practitioner, please call the NJ Health Care Profile help desk at 888-654-2712 for assistance.

Too many practitioners appear when I enter a name, how can I narrow down this list?

Try your search again after filling in additional fields like city, county, field of medicine, hospital). Add one field at a time until you are satisfied with the number of the results.

I was involved in a medical malpractice case against a practitioner. Why doesn't that information appear on the profile?

There can be two reasons why the medical malpractice action does not appear on the profile. There can be a delay from the date on which a malpractice action is settled to the date that information is posted on the profile. Insurers authorized to issue medical malpractice insurance are required to report all payments made in malpractice actions. Once a report is received, we are required to notify the licensee that information on his or her profile will be changed. The licensee then has 30 days to dispute the accuracy of any proposed change. New information cannot be posted until that process is complete. You may check our website periodically for information updates. Another reason a medical malpractice action might not appear on the profile is that the date of the payment may exceed 5 years. The law requires that only medical malpractice actions within the most recent 5 years be displayed.

The Healthcare Profile does not list the practitioner's license expiration date. How do I find this information?

Information regarding the expiration date of a practitioner's license can be found on the internet at www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/Pages/verification.aspx, or can be obtained by calling the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs License Verification Line at (973)-273-8090 (note: in order to obtain information from the telephone verification system, you will need to know the full license number of the practitioner).

Why doesn't your website include practitioner ratings?

The New Jersey Health Care Profile website provides the public with a means to obtain factual information about licensed physicians and optometrists in the state of New Jersey. The categories of information posted are limited by statute and do not include opinions about or ratings of individual practitioners.

What does it mean to be Board certified?

Physician Certifications According to the American Board of Medical Specialties, (<http://www.abms.org/>), medical specialty certification in the United States is a voluntary process. While medical licensure sets the minimum competency requirements to diagnose and treat patients, it is not specialty specific. Board certification demonstrate a physician's exceptional expertise in a particular specialty and/or subspecialty of medical practice. Certification by an ABMS Member Board involves a rigorous process of testing and peer evaluation that is designed and administered by specialists in the specific area of medicine. Optometrists Certification The Board of Optometrists issues a certification to licensed optometrists who qualify to dispense medications. The designation OM indicates that the optometrist is credentialed to dispense oral and topical medications and certain controlled dangerous substances in the diagnosis and treatment of deficiencies, deformities, diseases, abnormalities of the human eye. The designation TO indicates that the optometrist is credentialed to dispense topical medications only. Board certification by the American Optometric Association, (not to be confused with the designation OM or OA) is not a requirement for licensing of an optometrist. According to the American Optometric Association, board certification is a process that allows doctors of optometry to demonstrate that they exceed entry level requirements and are maintaining appropriate knowledge, skills and experience needed to deliver quality eye care. Learn more about how an optometrist is board certified at www.americanboardofoptometry.org/board certification

Do practitioners need to be Board Certified?

Physicians are not required to be board certified in order to be licensed by the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners. Optometrists are required to hold a State Board certification as an OM or OA to practice optometry in New Jersey. Optometrists are not required to have a board certification from any other board entity to practice optometry

How can I file a formal complaint against a practitioner?

You may file a formal complaint against a physician or podiatrist with the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners. The complaint form can be found online at www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/ComplaintsForms/State-Board-of-Medical-Examiners-Complaint-Form.pdf.

You can access the complaint form for New Jersey Board of Optometrists at

Do you have profiles on dentists or chiropractors?

The New Jersey Health Care Profile only maintains information for medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, podiatrists and optometrists. The New Jersey Health Care Consumer Information does not include profiles for dentists, orthodontists, chiropractors or any other categories of health care practitioners.

Why is my practitioner's profile so out of date?

Certain categories of information that appear on the profile are self-provided by individual practitioners, including the names of hospitals where the physician has privileges, appointments to medical school faculties, information regarding board specialty certifications, and information regarding a practitioner's offices including office hours and insurance plans accepted. While all New Jersey licensed practitioners are encouraged to update their profiles regularly, we do not independently verify self-reported information and cannot assure that any self-reported information is in fact current.

The name of the practitioner I was searching for appears on the website, however, there is limited profile information for the practitioner and the license status shows as "revoked," "suspended," "surrendered," "inactive," or "expired"? How can I obtain more information about this practitioner?

A practitioner whose license is suspended, revoked, surrendered, expired or inactive cannot practice his/her profession in New Jersey. We do not post full profiles for these practitioners in order to avoid confusion and to avoid making any suggestion that these practitioners are eligible to practice, however, we do provide limited information about these practitioners. You may be able to obtain more information regarding any public action taken against a physician or podiatrist at www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/bme/Pages/actions.aspx. For information regarding any public actions taken against optometrists please see www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/opt/Pages/actions.aspx.

Some sections of the practitioner's profile shows as "None Reported." Is the practitioner required to report information on all sections of the profile?

Certain sections of the healthcare profile are optional, including: practice location; office hours; professional activities; hospital privileges; health plans accepted, including Medicare and Medicaid; languages spoken and appointments to medical school faculties. Information in those categories only appears on the profile if the practitioner has provided the information for posting.

Under the practitioner's name there is an Initial License Date and Date of first NJ Licensure. What is the difference?

The initial license date is the date the practitioner first became licensed to practice in any jurisdiction. The date of first NJ License is when he/she first became licensed in New Jersey. The years will be different if the doctor first became licensed in a state other than New Jersey.

Why doesn't the profile show the educational information prior to Medical/Optomerty/Podiatry School?

The categories of information posted on the profile are limited by statute and do not include educational information obtained prior to medical school. The New Jersey Healthcare Profile does provide consumers with information regarding medical or optometry schools attended and graduate medical or optometry education, including all internships, residencies and fellowships.

Where does the information on the profile come from and how is it verified?

Information regarding medical education and board certifications held by medical and osteopathic physicians is obtained from the American Medical Association and the American Osteopathic Association respectively. Information regarding medical education and board certifications held by podiatrists and optometrists is obtained from the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners and the New Jersey Board of Optometrists respectively. Information regarding medical malpractice payments, criminal convictions, final disciplinary actions and revocations or involuntary restrictions of privileges at health care facilities is obtained from the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners and the New Jersey Board of Optometrists. All other information appearing on the profile (such as practice location, languages spoken, health plan participation, and hospital privileges) is optional and is provided by the individual licensee. Optional information provided by individual licensees is not independently verified.

How long are "legal" actions posted on the practitioner's profile?

Reports of medical malpractice payments are posted for five years from the payment date. All other "legal" actions (specifically, final board disciplinary actions taken in New Jersey or elsewhere, criminal convictions for crimes of the first, second, third or fourth degree and information regarding certain actions taken by health care facilities) are posted for 10 years from the effective date.

What do letters on the practitioner's license number mean (MA, MB, MD, OA)?

The letters of the license number reflects the practitioner's profession. "MA" is listed on the license numbers for Medical Doctors; "MB" is listed for Doctors of Osteopathy; "MD" for Podiatrists; and "OA" for Optometrists.

 **Questions?**
Call us toll-free at:
1-888-654-2712

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Questions? Call us at 1-888-654-2712

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