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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS
PROFESSIONAL HEALTH MONITORING PROGRAMS (PHMP)
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Voluntary Recovery Program

Objective: The Voluntary Recovery Program (VRP) provides a method by which licensed health care professionals suffering from a physical or mental impairment, such as a chemical dependency, can be directed to appropriate treatment and receive monitoring to ensure that they remain capable of practicing safely. The program offers the eligible impaired professional an alternative to board disciplinary action from becoming a permanent part of his or her professional licensing record.

Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible for VRP participation, a licensee must:

1. Complete an evaluation by a provider approved by the VRP and have the assessor determine that a diagnosed mental or physical impairment exists, such as a substance use disorder.
2. Adhere to a treatment plan recommended by the VRP-approved provider(s) and approved by the VRP.
3. Enter into a VRP Consent Agreement, which is approved by the licensing board, providing that disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation, will be deferred so long as the licensed professional adheres to the VRP Consent Agreement.
4. Successfully complete at least three years of monitoring under the VRP Consent Agreement that includes VRP supervision of the licensee's treatment and recovery process, work performance, professional support group attendance, abstention from prohibited substances, and random drug testing.

Terms and Conditions for VRP Participation: To enroll and maintain good standing in the VRP, the licensee must:

1. Agree not to accept or continue employment in any position requiring licensure until cleared to do so by the VRP case manager and a VRP-approved provider.
2. Sign the Participation Cooperation Form; complete the Personal Data Sheet.
3. Complete a VRP-approved assessment and/or treatment (at licensee expense).

4. Adhere to the aftercare/continuing care plan developed with the VRP-approved assessor/treatment provider.
5. When permitted to return to licensed practice by the VRP, the licensee:
 - A. Shall not work in any practice setting without workplace monitoring as required by the VRP;
 - B. Shall adhere to all practice limitations established by the VRP case manager.
6. Completely abstain from the use of all controlled substances, caution legend (prescription) drugs, mood altering drugs or drugs of abuse including alcohol in any form, except under the following:
 - A. The licensee is a bona fide patient of a licensed health care practitioner who is aware of the licensee's impairment and participation in the VRP;
 - B. Such medications are lawfully prescribed by the licensee's treating practitioner and approved by the VRP case manager;
 - C. The licensee provides the VRP, within 48 hours of receiving the prescription, written notification of the prescription including name of prescribing practitioner, illness or condition diagnosed, the type, strength, amount and dosage.
7. Avoid all products containing alcohol including over-the-counter medications (e.g. cough syrup), mouthwash, hygiene products, topical gels or medications, foods containing alcohol (e.g. vanilla extract, desserts), etc...
8. Avoid all foods containing poppy seeds.
9. Undergo random drug testing as directed by the VRP (at licensee expense).
10. Arrange for submission to the VRP of regularly scheduled progress reports by:
 - A. Treatment provider
 - B. Approved monitor
 - C. Employer
11. Sign a VRP Consent Agreement with the licensing board deferring formal disciplinary action (i.e. suspension or revocation) for a period of no less than three years.
12. When a peer assistance program (e.g. Physicians' Health Program, SARPH, or Pennsylvania Nurse Peer Assistance Program) is available, sign an agreement with that program and adhere to their monitoring procedures.
13. Provide treatment provider(s) and employer(s) with a copy of the VRP Consent Agreement with the licensing board.

14. Submit monthly verification of AA/NA/professional support group attendance (number of meetings as recommended by the VRP-approved treatment provider, but never less than twice per week).
15. If requested by the VRP, the licensee will agree to inactivate his/her professional license and maintain an inactive license until the VRP provides the licensee with written permission to pursue reactivation.

Ineligible for VRP participation include:

1. Licensees convicted of, pleading guilty, or nolo contendere to either a felony or a misdemeanor under the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act.
2. Licensees with a history of practice problems clearly involving significant patient harm.
3. Licensees who have been involved in the diversion of controlled substances for the primary purpose of sale or distribution.
4. Licensees who have committed sexual boundary violations.
5. Licensees who have failed to successfully complete a similar program in another jurisdiction.

Revised
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