

How to File a Complaint with Your State Licensing Board

By the AHA, Inc. Ethics and Advocacy Committee

Unlicensed practice may be defined as a person claiming to perform activities of a licensed healthcare professional such as Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and/or Occupational Therapy. When you become aware of unlicensed practice in your state (or another) as a licensed healthcare professional you are ethically* required to report this activity. The best way is to contact that state's Professional Licensing Board. The best process is to:

1. Look up the Professional Licensing Board website for the profession the person is claiming to perform.
2. Verify the licensure status of the individual you are researching. Is the license current, expired, or unlicensed?
3. Next find the location on the site to "File a Complaint".
4. Find the "Forms" section. You may need to print a form and mail it, or file electronically: this varies by state.
5. Complete the form using as much detail as possible. If the unlicensed practice has a website or Facebook page promoting the unlicensed activity, take a screenshot for your records. You may need to provide a copy to the Licensing Board, as well.
6. Most complaint forms may be completed anonymously, however, this makes the complaint hard to track.
7. The State may choose to investigate.

It is also recommended that you contact the applicable state's professional therapy organization(s), as they may take immediate action. State OT/PT/SLP associations have been known to write a cease and desist letter regardless of involvement with the licensing board. A list of the state associations for AOTA, APTA and ASHA are found on the AHA, Inc. website under the Resources tab.

You may want to consider alerting the national organization (such as APTA, ASHA, AOTA) governing the unlicensed activity, as well. These organizations write effective cease and desist letters, as well.

*Please refer to the AOTA Code of Ethics, APTA Code of Ethics and ASHA Code of Ethics.