

Vermont Board of Medical Practice Call Scam Alert!

The Vermont Board of Medical Practice has heard today from Vermont medical professionals who have recently been targeted by scammers who have posed as law enforcement or medical board investigators or staff. Please read on to learn more about how to avoid being a victim.



On several occasions the Vermont Board of Medical Practice has alerted licensees about scams targeting medical professionals. The scams have occurred across the nation, including Vermont. Today we have already received two reports of scammers targeting our licensees this week.

We are issuing this reminder that the scams are, unfortunately, on-going. There are simple ways to protect yourself. Please take a moment to read about these scams so that you can recognize them and know how to respond to questionable telephone calls, emails, or texts.

Frequently the scammers claim to be medical board investigators, DEA agents, or FBI agents. In several reported cases, the scammers claimed that the professionals' medical licenses or prescribing permits had been compromised and were being used by criminals in drug trafficking schemes. Victims were then directed to wire money to foreign bank accounts, and in some cases with a claim that the money would be returned within three days. One report today included a report that the scammer had directed the licensee to go to a UPS store to open an account.

Most of these cases begin with telephone calls, but there may also be text messages, emails, and faxes. In some cases, the thieves are able to make it appear that a call is coming from our office telephone number. Some victims receive information allegedly detailing aspects of the investigation that feature official-looking letterhead, seals, stamps, and water marks from the FBI, DEA, and Department of Justice, as well as publicly available information such as the

victims' National Provider Identifier numbers, license numbers, and business address. Criminals may modify their schemes, so you cannot count on a ruse fitting this exact description, but **there are certain signs that are almost guaranteed to indicate you are dealing with a scam:**

- **A demand or request for you to act immediately.**
- **A demand for money, account information, or protected personal information.**

These scams are often designed to take advantage of a person's fear of getting in trouble with a regulatory or law enforcement agency and to prompt action before you can think about the situation or seek advice. **It is possible that any medical professional could receive a legitimate call from a regulatory body or law enforcement agency, but you can avoid being a victim if you remember one important lesson:**

The Board (and other government agencies) will never contact you by telephone, text or email to demand money, account information, or protected personal information in this way. Likewise, no legitimate regulator or law enforcement agent will force you to respond immediately and without opportunity to confirm their identity.

Most initial contacts are by telephone. If you receive such a call, we recommend the following:

- Ask the caller to provide you his or her name and the telephone number of the Board office (or other agency) so that you can call back. **Do not call back the number that you are given. Independently check the number on a reliable source if you want to call the Board.**
- Do not provide any personal financial or identifying information.
- If you think it may be a legitimate call, get the number of the agency yourself and call the office.
- Report the incident to the local FBI Field Office. Licensees in Vermont should call the FBI Field Office in Albany, NY at (518) 465-7551. For other states check online at: <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices>.

When someone contacts you and claims they are a Board of Medical Practice employee, you may call our office to verify our staff is trying to reach you. Our office is open from 7:45AM - 4:30PM eastern time, Monday - Friday: (802) 657-4220 or you may email: AHS.VDHMedicalBoard@vermont.gov and we will assist you in determining if the call is legitimate.

Sincerely,
David K. Herlihy
Executive Director

For questions or concerns please contact the Vermont Board of Medical Practice
Email: AHS.VDHMedicalBoard@vermont.gov
Phone: (802) 657-4220

Vermont Board of Medical Practice | 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05401

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