



Title 59. Professions and Occupations

Oklahoma Statutes Citationized

Title 59. Professions and Occupations

Chapter 16 - Healing Arts

Section 725.2 - Right to Use Word "Doctor" or Abbreviation Thereof

Cite as: O.S. §, ___

A. The following nine classes of persons may use the word "Doctor", or an abbreviation thereof, and shall have the right to use, whether or not in conjunction with the word "Doctor", or any abbreviation thereof, the following designations:

1. The letters "D.P.M." or the words podiatrist, doctor of podiatry, podiatric surgeon, or doctor of podiatric medicine by a person licensed to practice podiatry under the Podiatric Medicine Practice Act;
2. The letters "D.C." or the words chiropractor or doctor of chiropractic by a person licensed to practice chiropractic under the Oklahoma Chiropractic Practice Act;
3. The letters "D.D.S." or "D.M.D.", as appropriate, or the words dentist, doctor of dental surgery, or doctor of dental medicine, as appropriate, by a person licensed to practice dentistry under the State Dental Act;
4. The letters "M.D." or the words surgeon, medical doctor, or doctor of medicine by a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery under the Oklahoma Allopathic Medical and Surgical Licensure and Supervision Act;
5. The letters "O.D." or the words optometrist or doctor of optometry by a person licensed to practice optometry under Sections 581 through 606 of this title;
6. The letters "D.O." or the words surgeon, osteopathic surgeon, osteopath, doctor of osteopathy, or doctor of osteopathic medicine by a person licensed to practice osteopathy under the Oklahoma Osteopathic Medicine Act;
7. The letters "Ph.D.", "Ed.D.", or "Psy.D." or the words psychologist, therapist, or counselor by a person licensed as a health service psychologist pursuant to the Psychologists Licensing Act;
8. The letters "Ph.D.", "Ed.D.", or other letters representing a doctoral degree or the words language pathologist, speech pathologist, or speech and language pathologist by a person licensed as a speech and language pathologist pursuant to the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Licensing Act and who has earned a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning in the field of speech and language pathology; and
9. The letters "Ph.D.", "Ed.D.", or other letters representing a doctoral degree or the word audiologist by a person licensed as an audiologist pursuant to the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Licensing Act and who has earned a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning in the field of audiology.

B. Unless otherwise specifically provided in a particular section or chapter of the Oklahoma Statutes, the word "doctor" or "doctors" shall mean and include each of the nine classes of persons listed in subsection A and the word "physician" or "physicians", as provided in subsection C of this section. Any other person using the term doctor, or any abbreviation thereof, shall designate the authority under which the title is used or the college or honorary degree that gives rise to use of the title.

C. Unless otherwise specifically provided in a particular section or chapter of the Oklahoma Statutes, the word "physician" or "physicians" shall mean and include each of the classes of persons listed in paragraphs 1 through 6 of subsection A and the word "doctor" or "doctors" as provided in subsection B of this section. The term "physician" shall not include any person specified in paragraphs 7 through 9 of subsection A of this section unless such person is otherwise authorized to use such designation pursuant to this section.

D. For purposes of this section, "provider" means and includes:

1. Each of the nine classes of persons listed in subsection A of this section and referred to in subsections B and C of this section; and
2. Any other person using the term doctor or any abbreviation thereof.

E. Persons in each of the nine classes listed in subsection A, and referred to in subsections B and C, of this section shall identify through written notice, which may include the wearing of a name tag, the type of license under which the doctor is practicing, utilizing the designations provided in subsections A, B and C of this section. Each applicable licensing board is authorized by rule to determine how its license holders may comply with this disclosure requirement.

F. 1. Any advertisement for health care services naming a provider shall:

- a. identify the type of license of the doctor utilizing the letters or words set forth in this section if the person is one of the classes of persons listed in subsection A of this section, and referred to in subsections B and C of this section, or
- b. utilize appropriate, accepted, and easily understood words or letters, which clearly show and indicate the branch of the healing art in which the person is licensed to practice and is engaged in, if the person is not one of the nine classes of persons listed in subsection A of this section, or referred to in subsections B and C of this section.

2. The term "advertisement" includes any printed document including letterhead, video clip, or audio clip created by, for, or at the direction of the provider or providers and advertised for the purpose of promoting the services of the doctor or provider.

G. 1. It shall be unlawful for any medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, doctor of dental surgery, doctor of dental medicine, doctor of optometry, doctor of podiatry, or doctor of chiropractic to make any deceptive or misleading statement, or engage in any deceptive or misleading act, that deceives or misleads the public or a prospective or current patient, regarding the training and the license under which the person is authorized to practice.

2. The term "deceptive or misleading statement or act" includes, but is not limited to:

- a. such statement or act in any advertising medium,
- b. making a false statement regarding the education, skills, training, or licensure of a person, or

c. in any other way describing the profession, skills, training, expertise, education, or licensure of a person in a fashion that causes the public, a potential patient, or current patient to believe that the person is a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathic medicine, doctor of dental surgery, doctor of dental medicine, doctor of optometry, doctor of podiatry, or doctor of chiropractic when that person does not hold such credentials.

H. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a person licensed in this state to perform speech pathology or audiology services is designated to be a practitioner of the healing art for purposes of making a referral for speech pathology or audiology services pursuant to the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendment of 1997, Public Law 105-17, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Historical Data

Laws 1947, HB 159, c. 16, § 2, emerg. eff. March 13, 1947; Amended by Laws 1991, SB 461, c. 265, § 20, eff. October 1, 1991; Amended by Laws 1993, SB 139, c. 168, § 1, eff. September 1, 1993; Amended by Laws 2000, HB 2090, c. 52, § 1, emerg. eff. April 14, 2000 ([superseded document available](#)); Amended by Laws 2004, SB 1280, c. 543, § 5, emerg. eff. July 1, 2004 ([superseded document available](#)); Amended by Laws 2009, HB 1569, c. 148, § 2, eff. November 1, 2009 ([superseded document available](#)).

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<u>2006 OK AG 16</u>	<u>Question Submitted by: The Honorable Kenneth Corn, State Senator, District 4</u>	Discussed
<u>2008 OK AG 26</u>	<u>Question Submitted by: The Honorable Mike Shelton, State Representative, District 97, James Gormley, M.D., President, Okla. State Bd. of Medical Licensure and Supervision, Kim Glazier, R.N., M.Ed., Executive Director, Okla. Bd. of Nursing</u>	Cited
Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals Cases		
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<u>2007 OK CIV APP 100, 171 P.3d 924</u>	<u>PTS HEALTHCARE, INC. v. MID-CENTURY INSURANCE COMPANY</u>	Discussed at Length

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