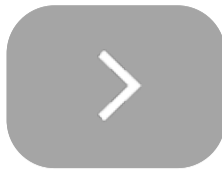


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Protect Your Nursing License From Board Action, License Disputes, and Revocation

A Nursing License Can Take Years to Earn, and Mere Seconds to Lose



By Andrea Santiago
Health Careers Expert

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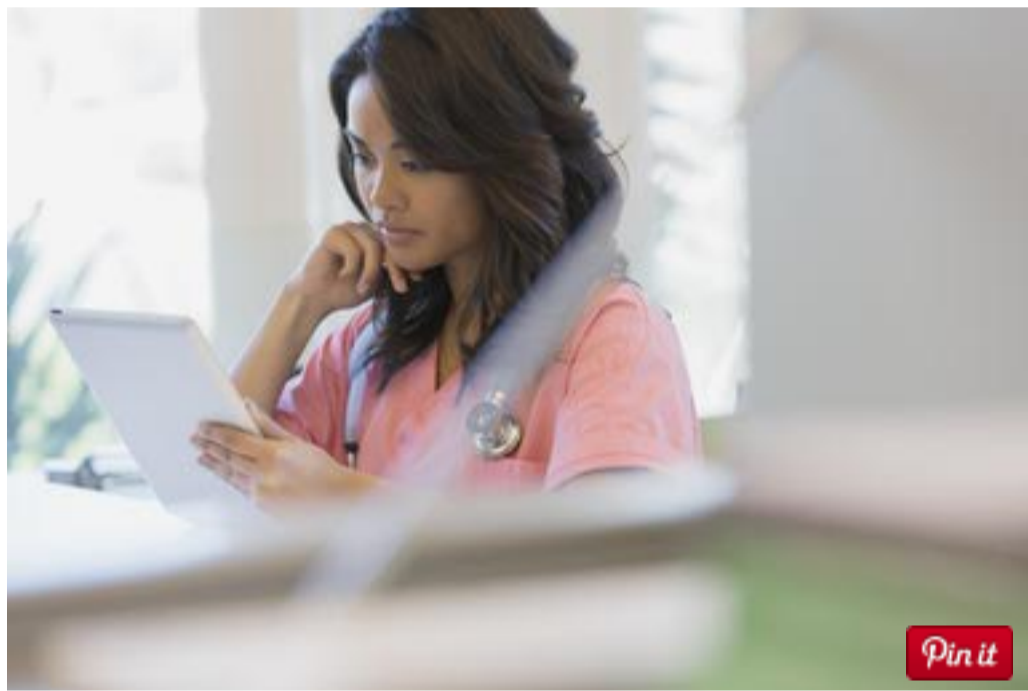
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Undoubtedly, you worked hard to obtain your nursing license. Depending on what type of nurse you are, you may have spent up to 6-8 years, and tens of thousands of dollars, obtaining the necessary education, training, and certifications to become a licensed, practicing nurse. And yet, one split-second mistake, bad decision, or momentary lapse of judgment

could cause you to lose your license -- and perhaps your career -- indefinitely.

Every Nurse is Vulnerable to License Actions or Disputes

You may think you are safe - you may think that something like a licensing revocation or suspension would never happen to you. But one expert warns that every nurse is vulnerable to losing his or her license, and a [nursing career](#).

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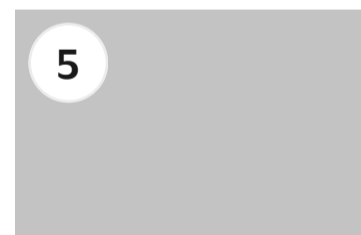
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In fact, more than 4,000 nurses were placed on probation by nursing boards in 2013. Additionally, nearly 5,000 nurses had their licenses suspended, and more than 2,000 had their licenses revoked.

One former nurse became an attorney and is now working to lower these incidents of nursing license disputes. Lorie Brown, author of "[Law and Order for Nurses: The Easy Way to Protect Your License and Your Livelihood](#)," aims to help nurses learn how to prevent making mistakes, as well as how to handle a licensing issue should it arise.

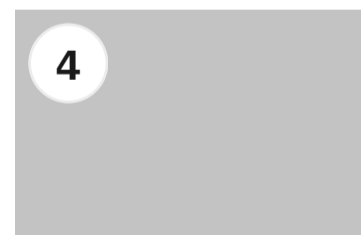
Having represented hundreds of nurses over her 20 year legal career, this former registered nurse has seen firsthand the "embarrassment, regret, and shock experienced by many nurses when they are reprimanded for what are often simple [and

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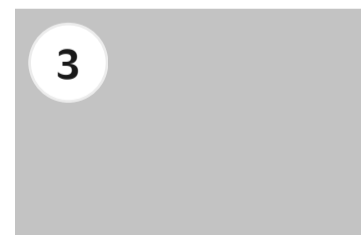
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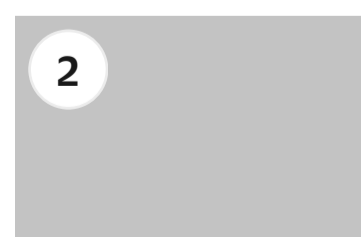
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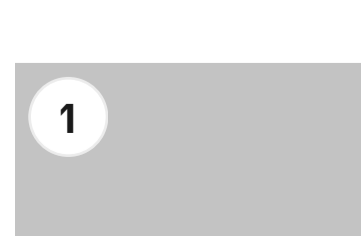
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states.

“Unfortunately, many nurses I’ve worked with didn’t even know they were doing anything wrong,” Brown says. “But lack of awareness is not a defense, and the best way to protect yourself is to be informed.”

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Brown provides the following tips for nurses to help protect their licenses from being suspended or revoked:

4 Tips for Nurses to Protect Their Nursing License

1. If you are asked to do something that you don't feel comfortable doing, question it. Don't just blindly do it.
2. Be professional- even though you do not work 24/7, the public's perception of a nurse is important. Be careful of wearing scrubs when you are outside of work.
3. Be careful what you post on social media.
4. If you do get a complaint before the Licensing Board, don't speak to anyone. Hire a nurse attorney or an attorney experienced with Board matters.

Brown notes that protecting one's nursing license is not something that future nurses are taught in nursing school.

To help nurses understand how vulnerable they may be to losing their license, Brown provides several accounts of other nurses who have been impacted by their own lack of awareness, or overly aggressive board actions:

- A nurse accused of abuse for speaking loudly to a hard-of-hearing patient, and for encouraging another patient to walk 10 feet to the bathroom per the doctor's orders
- A narcoleptic nurse who was required to stop taking her necessary medication in order to have her probationary license status lifted
- A nurse accused of neglect for failing to answer another nurse's patient's alarm light when the assigned nurse said she would take care of it
- A nurse disciplined for a medication error after being required to accept an assignment for which he was not properly trained

With nursing shortages already plaguing many areas and healthcare systems, Brown is concerned that licensing issues could eventually be detrimental to the quality and quantity of the nurse workforce in the United States.

Not only is this aggressive board action affecting individual nurses, many who struggle to find employment after their transgression becomes a matter of public record, but Brown says it could also change the nursing industry as a whole.

“I am increasingly concerned that people will become deterred from nursing because they are fed up with this type of ‘big brother’ oversight,” Brown says. “If smart and skilled individuals choose to opt out of pursuing a nursing career or continue to leave an established nursing career, who will take care of us in the future?”

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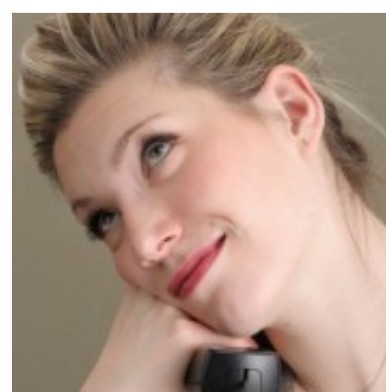
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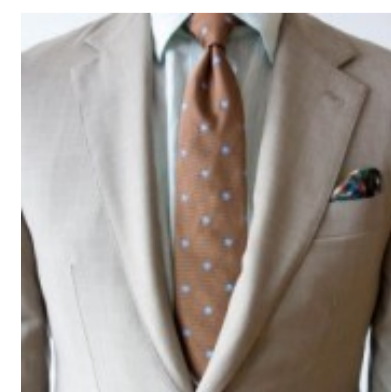
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