



Scams Targeting Healthcare Practitioners Continue, Be Alert

Kyle Karinen, J.D., LL.M

In the [Spring Edition](#) of our newsletter this year, I discussed the ongoing issue of fraud against practitioners that the Medical Commission has attempted to mitigate and halt. Despite efforts to date, the Medical Commission has not been as successful as I would like. At this point, we feel like our best resource is your education! Therefore, I'm following up that article with even stronger advice. My hope is that if it stops even one more person from getting taken by these criminals, it will have been worth the effort. Please share this as far and wide with your colleagues as possible. Just a few weeks ago, the Medical Commission heard from another clinician who was victimized to the tune of \$14,000.

Please be aware the people perpetuating this scam seem to be very real. They have information about you when they call; like your license number, any discipline you've received, my name and the Medical Commission's phone number. They will sound official. Their documents will look official.

Here is what I can guarantee you the Medical Commission will never do and how to potentially spot fraud attempts:

If we have received a complaint and it is authorized for investigation, in almost every instance, you will be notified via postal mail. In addition to investigation notifications, in almost every case, you will be given an opportunity to address the specific allegations that were raised by one of the Medical Commission's investigators. Licensing fees are handled through the Department of Health's (DOH) online licensing portal or are paid in person. In the very few instances when disciplinary actions occur and money is owed to the Medical Commission, we only accept payment through the mail.

If you ever have a question about any of these malicious fraud attempts, please contact the Medical Commission to verify. Do not send money without verification. We are sending out this message and others like it to other stakeholders in the medical field. However, we are still looking for ways to put an end to this scheme. I invite anyone reading this and has ideas about how we can further disseminate this message to call me at (360) 236-4810, I would love to talk to you.

The Medical Commission will NOT:

- Ask for money over the phone.
- Ask you to fax or wire money.
- Accept or ask you to use cryptocurrency.
- Demand a response in less than twenty days.
- Advise against speaking with a lawyer.
- Request personal details, passwords, or social security numbers.
- Threaten to take your license or suspend you if you don't pay immediately.
- Threaten to restrict your prescription privileges or "turn you in to the FDA or DEA" for not paying.

Unfortunately, I could give you many more examples of what the Medical Commission will not do because people have been tricked by them. Many well-meaning, intelligent practitioners have fallen prey to these tactics. The best protection is your awareness in this matter and your willingness to verify. Please make sure you do not click on suspicious links, download attachments or be swayed by urgent demands; we provide ample time to respond to our requests. Verify any suspicious contact by calling the Medical Commission right away at (360) 236-2750.

