

Data Bank 101 for Nurses: A Guide to the Data Bank and How it Affects You

Q: What is the Data Bank?

A: The National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB) are flagging systems run by the Federal government and collectively referred to as the Data Bank.

The NPDB's information assists State licensing boards, hospitals, and other health care entities in conducting extensive, independent investigations of the qualifications of health care practitioners they seek to license, hire, or grant medical staff membership or clinical privileges. The HIPDB's information identifies health care practitioners, providers, and suppliers involved in acts of health care fraud and abuse.



Section 1921 of the *Social Security Act* expanded the information that the NPDB collects and discloses on nurses and other practitioners. It enhances NPDB's ability to serve as a valuable pre-employment and pre-licensing resource for health care entities by collecting negative actions taken against all licensed health care practitioners, including nurses (now no longer limited to physicians and dentists). Implemented on March 1, 2010, Section 1921 is intended to protect beneficiaries participating in *Social Security Act* health care programs from unfit health care practitioners and improve the anti-fraud provisions of these programs.

Q: What Nurses are Reportable to the Data Bank?

A: Reportable licensed or certified health care nursing professionals include but are not limited to: Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Certified Nurse-Midwives, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Registered Nurses, and Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses.

Q: What is Reportable to the NPDB for Nurses?

A: The NPDB retains adverse actions taken against licensed or certified nursing professionals, including:

Must Be Reported

- Medical Malpractice Payments
- State Licensure Actions
- Other Negative Actions or Findings by State Licensing Authorities
- Medicare/Medicaid Exclusions
- Drug Enforcement Administration Actions

- Negative Actions or Findings by Peer Review
- Organizations and Private Accreditation
- Organizations

May Be Reported

- Clinical Privilege Actions
- Panel Membership Actions
- Professional Society Membership Actions

Q: What is Reportable to the HIPDB for Nurses?

A: The HIPDB retains official actions taken against licensed or certified nursing professionals. The following actions must be reported:

- Health Care Related Criminal Convictions
- Health Care Related Civil Judgments
- Federal or State Licensure and Certification Actions
- Exclusions from participation in Federal and State health care programs
- Any other adjudicated actions*

*Please Note: Other final health care related actions or decisions that are taken by a government agency or health plan, which include a due process mechanism and affect or could affect delivery or payment of a health care item or service, are reportable to the HIPDB.

Q: Who Has Access to Reported Information?

A: State health care licensing authorities, including State Boards of Nursing, may view Data Bank reports submitted against licensed nurses. Additionally, hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care entities with a formal peer review process have access to NPDB-HIPDB reports on nurses, and may use the Data Bank to verify a nurse's background as part of their pre-employment process. Lastly, professional societies with formal peer review have access to NPDB-HIPDB reports concerning licensed nurses.

Q: Does the Public Have Access to Reported Information?

A: No. Data Bank information is confidential and protected by the Privacy Act. The general public cannot query the Data Bank. Researchers and journalists may access de-identified information for statistical purposes only.

Q: What Does It Mean If I Have a Report in the Data Bank?

A: Health care organizations use Data Bank information as part of their licensing, credentialing, privileging, and reviewing processes for health care practitioners. Reports in the Data Bank are not a sole source of information. They should be used as part of an objective and circumspect review process that uses all available resources to make an informed decision to license, credential, or grant privileges to a practitioner.

Q: How Do I Find Out If There Is a Report on Me in the Data Bank?

A: Whenever the Data Bank receives a new report or a modification to an existing report, the practitioner is sent a notification, along with a copy of the report. A nurse may also query the Data Bank online to verify whether it contains any reports on her or him. This process is called a *self-query* and can be accessed at [Self-Query](#).

Because of the confidentiality of Data Bank information, self-query requests may be started online, but the full application must be printed, notarized and sent to the Data Bank to verify the requester's identity before the self-query can be completed. Once the self-query is processed, a printable self-query response will be available online.

All self-queries are processed through the NPDB and the HIPDB at a cost of \$8.00 per Data Bank, for a total charge of \$16.00 per completed self-query. One official sealed copy will be mailed to you. You may request additional sealed copies at an additional charge of \$16.00 per copy.

Q: May I Add a Statement to a Report and/or Dispute the Report's Accuracy?

A: Yes. You may add a 4,000 character subject statement that informs queriers of your side of the story. Once a statement is processed, the Data Bank forwards it to anyone who made a query about you within the previous 3 years. Your statement is included with the report when it is disclosed in the future. Instructions for adding a subject statement are on the document you received notifying you of the report and are also outlined on the Web site [Submit a Statement](#) page.

Also, as the subject of a report, you may dispute the report's factual accuracy or whether it was submitted in accordance with the NPDB and/or HIPDB reporting requirements. You must first attempt to resolve the disagreement directly with the reporting organization before you elevate to the dispute resolution process. Instructions for disputing a report are on the report notification document you received notifying you of the report, and are also outlined on the Web site [Dispute a Report](#) page.

If, after disputing a report, you are unable to resolve the dispute with the reporting organization, you may request that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) review the report. This is called Report Review. Disputed reports are reviewed only for accuracy of factual information and to ensure that the information was required to be reported. For instructions on how to request a Report Review, see the Web site's [Elevate a Report to Report Review](#) page.

For additional information or assistance, please contact The Data Bank Customer Service Center at:



1-800-767-6732

Outside the U.S.: 1-703-802-9380

TT/TDD: 1-703-802-9395

Fax: 1-703-803-1964

📧 **Email: help@npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov**

📧 **Online: <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/>**

Open: Mon. - Thurs. 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. ET, Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. ET

Closed: Federal holidays