



OHIO BOARD OF DIETETICS

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BULLETIN #5 DIETITIAN LICENSURE REGULATIONS

The purpose of Bulletin #5 is to inform dietitians who are employed as "Directors of Nutrition/Dietary Departments" and dietetic educators of practitioners of licensing regulations which apply to dietitians who are not directly involved in the provisions of nutritional care.

Chapter 4759 of the Ohio Revised Code, effective July 1, 1987, is a mandatory practice act which protects the title and scope of practice of Ohio dietitians. Individuals who practice dietetics as defined in Ohio law are required to be licensed.* Dietitians who participate in or supervise certain dietary personnel in the development, administration, evaluation, and consultation regarding nutritional care standards and dietetic educators of practitioners, who are not currently licensed, are encouraged to carefully review Bulletin #5.

It has been brought to the Board's attention that some dietitians may unknowingly be violating Ohio law by practicing without a valid license. It appears that some dietitians who are not directly involved in the provision of clinical nutrition services are uncertain as to whether Ohio licensure is required. Administrative dietitians employed in management positions as "Directors of Nutrition/Dietary Departments" may be unaware that they are practicing dietetics as defined in the Ohio dietitian licensure law.

The following administrative or management dietitians **ARE REQUIRED** to be licensed in Ohio:

1. dietitians involved with the development of care practice standards for delivery of nutrition services;
2. dietitians involved in the development and implementation of critical pathways;
3. dietitians involved in the development and implementation of nutritional care guidelines/protocols; and/or,
4. dietitians responsible for supervision of dietary personnel who are involved in any of the above listed activities.

The above list should not be construed to be all inclusive.

Additionally, some dietetic educators of practitioners in college or university settings are unclear whether licensure is necessary for their practice. Dietetic educators of practitioners are usually responsible for providing supervision of the clinical practice of dietetic students and, therefore, must be licensed.

The confusion for both the administrative dietitian and the dietetic educator of practitioners appears to be further compounded by the "RD" credentials. It is important not to confuse the national credentials of the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) for Registered Dietitians (RD) with state licensure requirements. The "RD" is a trademark of the American Dietetic Association (ADA) and does not authorize Registered Dietitians to practice in Ohio without **FIRST** obtaining a license. License laws are state specific, enacted through the legislative process and regulated by a professional licensing board or agency.

Rule 4759-2 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) provides several definitions which will assist individual dietitians in determining whether Ohio licensure is required for their practice:

Division (C) of Rule 4759-2-01 OAC:

"Nutritional Education" means a planned program based on learning objectives with expected outcomes designed to modify nutrition-related behaviors. This does not prohibit an individual from providing general non-medical nutrition information if the person does not violate division (B) of section 4759.02 of the Revised Code.

Division (D) of Rule 4759-2-01 OAC:

"Nutritional Care Standards" means policies and procedures pertaining to the provision of nutritional care in institutional and community settings.

Division (E) of Rule 4759-2-01 OAC:

"Nutritional Care" means the application of the science of nutrition in the health and disease of people.

All dietitians who may have engaged in the practice of dietetics without a license should IMMEDIATELY contact the Board Office to obtain an application. Your cooperation in resolving this matter will be acknowledged. It is a violation of Ohio law to practice without a valid license or permit and penalties do apply. If in doubt, the safest course is to obtain licensure.

Please address your questions relative to Ohio's dietitian licensing regulations to:

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77 South High Street, 18th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6119
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* **Section 4759.01(A) defines the "practice of dietetics" as follows:**

- 1) Nutritional assessment to determine nutritional needs and to recommend appropriate nutritional intake, including enteral and parenteral nutrition;**
- 2) Nutritional counseling or education as components of preventative, curative, and restorative health care;**
- 3) Development, administration, evaluation, and consultation regarding nutritional care standards.**