

body regarding the competence or professional conduct of a physician shall be held, by reason of having provided such information, to be liable in damages under any law of the United States or of any State (or political subdivision thereof) unless such information is false and the person providing it knew that such information was false.

**(b) Exception**

If the Secretary has reason to believe that a health care entity has failed to report information in accordance with section 11133(a) of this title, the Secretary shall conduct an investigation. If, after providing notice of noncompliance, an opportunity to correct the noncompliance, and an opportunity for a hearing, the Secretary determines that a health care entity has failed substantially to report information in accordance with section 11133(a) of this title, the Secretary shall publish the name of the entity in the Federal Register. The protections of subsection (a)(1) of this section shall not apply to an entity the name of which is published in the Federal Register under the previous sentence with respect to professional review actions of the entity commenced during the 3-year period beginning 30 days after the date of publication of the name.

**(c) Treatment under State laws**

**(1) Professional review actions taken on or after October 14, 1989**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), subsection (a) of this section shall apply to State laws in a State only for professional review actions commenced on or after October 14, 1989.

**(2) Exceptions**

**(A) State early opt-in**

Subsection (a) of this section shall apply to State laws in a State for actions commenced before October 14, 1989, if the State by legislation elects such treatment.

**(B) Effective date of election**

An election under State law is not effective, for purposes of,<sup>1</sup> for actions commenced before the effective date of the State law, which may not be earlier than the date of the enactment of that law.

(Pub. L. 99-660, title IV, § 411, Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3784; Pub. L. 100-177, title IV, § 402(c), as added Pub. L. 101-239, title VI, § 6103(e)(6)(A), Dec. 19, 1989, 103 Stat. 2208.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), is Pub. L. 88-352, July 2, 1964, 78 Stat. 241, as amended, which is classified principally to subchapters II to IX (§2000a et seq.) of chapter 21 of this title. Title VII of this Act relates to equal employment opportunities, and is classified generally to subchapter VI (§2000e et seq.) of chapter 21 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2000a of this title and Tables.

The Civil Rights Acts, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), are classified generally to chapter 21 (§1981 et seq.) of this title.

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “for purposes of subparagraph (A).”

AMENDMENTS

1989—Subsec. (c)(2)(B), (C). Pub. L. 101-239 added Pub. L. 100-177, § 402(c), see 1987 Amendment note below.

1987—Subsec. (c)(2)(B), (C). Pub. L. 100-177, § 402(c), as added by Pub. L. 101-239, redesignated subpar. (C) as (B), struck out “subparagraphs (A) and (B)” after “for purposes of”, and struck out former subpar. (B) which read as follows: “Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to State laws in a State for actions commenced on or after October 14, 1989, if the State by legislation elects such treatment.”

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1987 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 100-177 effective Nov. 14, 1986, see section 402(d) of Pub. L. 100-177, as renumbered and amended, set out as a note under section 11137 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 99-660, title IV, § 416, Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3788, provided that: “This part [part A (§§ 411-416) of title IV of Pub. L. 99-660, enacting this subchapter] shall apply to professional review actions commenced on or after the date of the enactment of this Act [Nov. 14, 1986].”

**§ 11112. Standards for professional review actions**

**(a) In general**

For purposes of the protection set forth in section 11111(a) of this title, a professional review action must be taken—

(1) in the reasonable belief that the action was in the furtherance of quality health care,

(2) after a reasonable effort to obtain the facts of the matter,

(3) after adequate notice and hearing procedures are afforded to the physician involved or after such other procedures as are fair to the physician under the circumstances, and

(4) in the reasonable belief that the action was warranted by the facts known after such reasonable effort to obtain facts and after meeting the requirement of paragraph (3).

A professional review action shall be presumed to have met the preceding standards necessary for the protection set out in section 11111(a) of this title unless the presumption is rebutted by a preponderance of the evidence.

**(b) Adequate notice and hearing**

A health care entity is deemed to have met the adequate notice and hearing requirement of subsection (a)(3) of this section with respect to a physician if the following conditions are met (or are waived voluntarily by the physician):

**(1) Notice of proposed action**

The physician has been given notice stating—

(A)(i) that a professional review action has been proposed to be taken against the physician,

(ii) reasons for the proposed action,

(B)(i) that the physician has the right to request a hearing on the proposed action,

(ii) any time limit (of not less than 30 days) within which to request such a hearing, and

(C) a summary of the rights in the hearing under paragraph (3).

**(2) Notice of hearing**

If a hearing is requested on a timely basis under paragraph (1)(B), the physician involved must be given notice stating—

(A) the place, time, and date, of the hearing, which date shall not be less than 30 days after the date of the notice, and

(B) a list of the witnesses (if any) expected to testify at the hearing on behalf of the professional review body.

**(3) Conduct of hearing and notice**

If a hearing is requested on a timely basis under paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) subject to subparagraph (B), the hearing shall be held (as determined by the health care entity)—

(i) before an arbitrator mutually acceptable to the physician and the health care entity,

(ii) before a hearing officer who is appointed by the entity and who is not in direct economic competition with the physician involved, or

(iii) before a panel of individuals who are appointed by the entity and are not in direct economic competition with the physician involved;

(B) the right to the hearing may be forfeited if the physician fails, without good cause, to appear;

(C) in the hearing the physician involved has the right—

(i) to representation by an attorney or other person of the physician's choice,

(ii) to have a record made of the proceedings, copies of which may be obtained by the physician upon payment of any reasonable charges associated with the preparation thereof,

(iii) to call, examine, and cross-examine witnesses,

(iv) to present evidence determined to be relevant by the hearing officer, regardless of its admissibility in a court of law, and

(v) to submit a written statement at the close of the hearing; and

(D) upon completion of the hearing, the physician involved has the right—

(i) to receive the written recommendation of the arbitrator, officer, or panel, including a statement of the basis for the recommendations, and

(ii) to receive a written decision of the health care entity, including a statement of the basis for the decision.

A professional review body's failure to meet the conditions described in this subsection shall not, in itself, constitute failure to meet the standards of subsection (a)(3) of this section.

**(c) Adequate procedures in investigations or health emergencies**

For purposes of section 1111(a) of this title, nothing in this section shall be construed as—

(1) requiring the procedures referred to in subsection (a)(3) of this section—

(A) where there is no adverse professional review action taken, or

(B) in the case of a suspension or restriction of clinical privileges, for a period of not longer than 14 days, during which an investigation is being conducted to determine the need for a professional review action; or

(2) precluding an immediate suspension or restriction of clinical privileges, subject to subsequent notice and hearing or other adequate procedures, where the failure to take such an action may result in an imminent danger to the health of any individual.

(Pub. L. 99-660, title IV, § 412, Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3785.)

**§ 11113. Payment of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in defense of suit**

In any suit brought against a defendant, to the extent that a defendant has met the standards set forth under section 11112(a) of this title and the defendant substantially prevails, the court shall, at the conclusion of the action, award to a substantially prevailing party defending against any such claim the cost of the suit attributable to such claim, including a reasonable attorney's fee, if the claim, or the claimant's conduct during the litigation of the claim, was frivolous, unreasonable, without foundation, or in bad faith. For the purposes of this section, a defendant shall not be considered to have substantially prevailed when the plaintiff obtains an award for damages or permanent injunctive or declaratory relief.

(Pub. L. 99-660, title IV, § 413, Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3787.)

**§ 11114. Guidelines of Secretary**

The Secretary may establish, after notice and opportunity for comment, such voluntary guidelines as may assist the professional review bodies in meeting the standards described in section 11112(a) of this title.

(Pub. L. 99-660, title IV, § 414, Nov. 14, 1986, 100 Stat. 3787.)

**§ 11115. Construction**

**(a) In general**

Except as specifically provided in this subchapter, nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as changing the liabilities or immunities under law or as preempting or overriding any State law which provides incentives, immunities, or protection for those engaged in a professional review action that is in addition to or greater than that provided by this subchapter.

**(b) Scope of clinical privileges**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as requiring health care entities to provide clinical privileges to any or all classes or types of physicians or other licensed health care practitioners.

**(c) Treatment of nurses and other practitioners**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as affecting, or modifying any provision of Federal or State law, with respect to activities of professional review bodies regarding nurses, other licensed health care practitioners, or other health professionals who are not physicians.

**(d) Treatment of patient malpractice claims**

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as affecting in any manner the rights and remedies