



Federation of State Physician Health Programs

FSPHP Insights

June 20, 2025



REENTRY TO PRACTICE

Report of the FSMB Workgroup on Reentry to Practice
Adopted by the FSMB House of Delegates, April 2025

Executive Summary

Physicians may take a leave from practice for a variety of reasons that later necessitate reentry. The following document contains guidance for state medical boards when considering potential reentry to practice requirements for physicians seeking to resume active practice following a significant absence. Recommendations offered in the document reflect an appreciation that unique situations sometimes exist for physicians—as well as physician assistants/associates (PAs), for whom many of the policy recommendations in this guidance may also apply—seeking to reenter practice, and flexibility is therefore encouraged, as is the need to consider reentry decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Key considerations for state medical boards in reentry decisions include:

- time out of practice;
- clinical and other relevant activities of the physician while out of practice;
- the need for assessment of a physician's competence prior to reentry to practice;
- reentry during public health emergencies;
- collection of data about licensee clinical activity;
- the variety of challenges faced by physicians seeking to reenter practice;
- instances where absence from practice occurs to manage potentially impairing illness;
- monitoring and supervision for reentering physicians; and
- offering specialty-specific requirements when retraining is required due to a change in scope of practice or a lack of training or experience in the physician's intended scope of practice.

The following recommendations are included for state medical boards:

- 1) State medical boards should proactively communicate with and educate licensee applicants about the issues associated with reentering clinical practice and ways in which the individual may demonstrate engagement in clinically active practice.

¹ Physicians and PAs are held to different standards of practice, reflecting differences in their training, experience, and expertise. Additionally, the degree of practice independence for PAs varies by state, with some requiring physician supervision and others allowing greater autonomy depending on regulatory frameworks.

Federation of State Medical Boards | www.fsmb.org | 1

FSPHP Contributes to National Reentry to Practice Policy

In April 2025, the [Federation of State Medical Boards \(FSMB\)](#) adopted the updated *Report of the FSMB Workgroup on Reentry to Practice*, a significant step forward in supporting physicians returning to clinical practice. Dr. Chris Bundy, Chief Medical Officer of the Federation of State Physician Health Programs (FSPHP) and Executive Medical Director of the Washington Physicians Health Program, played a pivotal role in shaping this important policy update. His expertise and leadership were instrumental in guiding the FSMB's efforts to ensure safe, effective, and compassionate pathways for physician reentry.

- [Updated Reentry to Practice policy.](#)
- [More policies and statements from other organizations.](#)



Lisa J. Merlo, PhD, MPE
FSPHP Research
Committee Co-Chair

Dr. Lisa Merlo Greene Co-Authors Paper Proposing Decision Analysis to Assess the Safety of Providing MAT to Professionals with Substance Use Disorder

Dr. Lisa Merlo Greene, Co-Chair of the FSPHP Research Committee, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Florida, and Director of Research at Professionals Resource Network, Inc., has co-authored a pivotal article titled *"Utilizing Decision Analysis to Assess the Safety of Providing Medication for Addiction Treatment to Professionals with Substance Use Disorder,"* published in the *Journal of Addiction Medicine*. This important work explores the use of decision analysis to evaluate the safety and implications of offering medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to healthcare professionals navigating substance use disorders. The study contributes valuable insights to the ongoing conversation about balancing recovery support with patient safety in professional practice.

[Read the abstract here.](#)

Access to the full article is available when you log-in to your ASAM account.



**IMPORTANT
REQUEST**

FSPHP Requests PHP Members to Verify State Regulatory Information

On June 18, FSPHP sent an important email to all State Voting and Associate Members requesting verification of their state's regulatory information. This outreach is part of a collaborative initiative with the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) to support the [FSPHP Task Force to Support Safe Haven Position Statement Enhancing Confidential Care for Physicians and Healthcare Professionals through FSPHP State Physician Health Programs \(PHPs\)](#).

The input of our PHP members is **critical** in ensuring that we have the most accurate and complete data, which will empower us to advocate more effectively for improvements in PHP protections where needed.

Members are asked to review and update state-specific information by **July 31, 2025**.

If your program has any questions or did not receive the email request to verify your state's regulatory information, please contact Sandra Savage at ssavage@fsphp.org.



Attention PHP Member Leaders: Don't Miss the Next Open Forum Leadership Meeting

August 27, 2025 at 12-1pm Eastern Time

Facilitator: Dr. Molly Rossignol, FSPHP Northeast Region

Director and New Hampshire Professionals Health

Program Medical Director

[Click here to register](#)

The FSPHP Open Forum Leadership Series offers a space for PHP leaders to connect, exchange best practices, share updates, and collaborate on key issues impacting physician and professional health programs. These informal Zoom sessions are agenda-free, with no presentations or minutes—just open, candid dialogue.

Participation is open to FSPHP PHP Members who are part of their organization's leadership team, including executives, directors, and department heads.

[Click here for all upcoming Open Forum Leadership Series Meetings](#)

Email Sandra Savage at ssavage@fsphp.org if you would like to facilitate an Open Forum Leadership Series meeting.

COMING UP!

Task Force to Support Safe Haven
Friday, June 20 at 12:30pm Eastern

Funding Development Committee
Wednesday, June 25 at 1pm Eastern

Research Committee
Wednesday, June 25 at 4pm Eastern

OPEN FORUM LEADERSHIP SERIES

August 27, 2025 at 12-1pm Eastern Time
November 19, 2025 at 12-1pm Eastern Time

REGIONAL MEMBER MEETINGS

Northeast Region - Thursday, October 9, 2025

Southeast Region - Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Western Region - Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Central Region - Friday, November 14, 2025

All meetings will be held virtually.

[Become a Regional Member Meeting Sponsor!](#)

June 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 ● Membership Committee Meeting	3	4 ● Public Policy Committee Meeting ● Program Planning Committee	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 ● Board Meeting	12	13	14
15	16 ● Medical Student & Resident Com...	17	18	19	20 ● Task Force to Support Safe Hav...	21
22	23	24	25 ● Funding Development Committee ● Research Committee Meeting	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

JOIN FSPHP FOR ACCESS TO MEMBER-ONLY CONTENT



Federation of State Physician Health Programs
668 Main Street, Suite 8, #295
Wilmington, MA 01887
Phone: 978-347-0600 Fax: 978-347-0603

www.fsphp.org

[Follow FSPHP on LinkedIn](#)

Best way to contact us is by email:

lbresnahan@fsphp.org Linda Bresnahan, MS, FSPHP Executive Director

ssavage@fsphp.org Sandra Savage, Membership Services Manager