

Process to Ensure that alleged Practice Violations of Impaired Nurses are Reviewed by Board Staff

Pursuant to Rule 217.13(b), the peer assistance program shall report to the Board, in accordance with policies adopted by the Board (Guidelines Pertaining to Third Party Referrals for Nurses with Suspected Chemical Dependency Issues Who Commit Practice Related Violations which was adopted January 2008), a nurse reported to the program who is impaired or suspected of being impaired by chemical dependency, mental illness, or diminished mental capacity if the nurse was reported to the program by a third party. A third party report is a report concerning a nurse suspected of chemical dependency, mental illness, or diminished mental capacity that comes to the attention of the program through any source other than a self referral.

With regard to all third party reports, the Board must determine whether to take disciplinary action against the nurse for a violation of the Nursing Practice Act, or the Board rules and must balance the need to protect the public and the need to ensure the impaired nurse seeks treatment.

In order to meet this directive, and to avoid any unnecessary delays in providing service to those individual nurses deemed appropriate for the Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses (TPAPN) intervention (or other Peer Assistance Program approved under Sec. 301.4106), on at least a weekly basis, the Director of Enforcement (or his/her designee) and the Program Director (or his/her designee) for TPAPN shall meet to discuss each third party referral made to TPAPN where the reported nurse is alleged to have committed one or more violations of the NPA cited in Board policy.

The following report provides statistical information of these meetings.

TPAPN THIRD PARTY REFERRAL REPORT
September 2007 through February 2008

REGISTERED NURSES

Month	TPAPN/EEP Referral	Board Investigation	Total
September	23	7	30
October	21	3	24
November	16	4	20
December	13	3	16
January	15	3	18
February	14	3	17
Total	102	23	125

LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES

Month	TPAPN/EEP Referral	Board Investigation	Total
September	2	1	3
October	7	3	10
November	4	1	5
December	8	1	9
January	2	0	2
February	5	0	5
Total	28	6	34