

Applicants for licensure as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant are required to report if they have ever been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or no contest to, a crime in any jurisdiction other than a minor traffic offense. Applicants must include all misdemeanors and felonies, even if the court withheld adjudication so that you would not have a record of conviction. Driving under the influence or driving while impaired is not a minor traffic offense for the purposes of the application. Failing to report is grounds for denial of the application.

In accordance with section 456.013(3)(c), Florida Statutes, the Board may require a personal appearance. If an appearance is required, an applicant must appear before the Board at either of the next two regularly scheduled meetings or the application shall be denied. When required to appear, applicants will receive notification of the date and location of the meeting from board staff.

The majority of convictions are not an absolute bar to licensure; for most convictions the Board has discretion. The Board takes into consideration several factors which include but are not limited to: the length of time since the conviction, aggravating and mitigating circumstances and whether the required penalties or probation were successfully completed.

Section 456.0635, F.S., provides that felony convictions under chapter 409 (social and economic assistance), chapter 817 (fraudulent practices), chapter 893 (drug convictions) or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction are crimes that may prevent licensure, unless the applicant has successfully completed a drug court program for that felony and provides proof that the plea has been withdrawn or the charges have been dismissed. If you have a felony conviction, under any of these chapters or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, regardless of adjudication, the Board does not have authority to issue a license until the specified timeframes have elapsed.

If you have a criminal history and have questions about how this will impact your ability to obtain a license, you may wish to contact a private attorney. Board staff is unable to speak for the Board or provide a legal opinion. The following references are provided to assist you however, you should read and understand all provisions of chapters 456 and 486, Florida Statutes and the physical therapy rules in title 64B17, Florida Administrative Code.

Resources:

Chapter 456, F.S., Health Professions and Occupations: General Provisions

Section 456.0635, F.S., Health Care Fraud; Disqualification for License, certificate, or Registration

Section 456.072, F.S., Grounds for Discipline; Penalties Enforcement

Chapter 486, F.S., Physical Therapy Practice

Title 64B17, F.A.C., Board of Physical Therapy Practice

Title 64B17- 7.001, F.A.C., Disciplinary Guidelines

Links:

Florida Statutes: <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/>

Florida Administrative Code: <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/Division.asp?DivID=308>