



## **The NBOME Independent Review Committee** *Disciplinary Actions and Medical Professionalism*

### **Winter 2023 Update**

The Independent Review Committee (IRC), in conjunction with the NBOME staff, is responsible for reviewing and acting upon allegations of irregular conduct or other unprofessional conduct by NBOME exam candidates under the COMLEX-USA [Bulletin of Information](#).

The IRC comprises five (5) members—four DO members and a public member with relevant legal, business, and/or professional ethics experience. The IRC meets on an as-needed basis to conduct hearings to review and determine whether irregular conduct has occurred and to recommend what sanction, if any, is appropriate.

Possible sanctions include voiding exam scores, temporary or permanent suspension from taking NBOME exams, and placing an “I” annotation on a candidate’s transcript, indicating a finding of irregular conduct by the NBOME.

In 2023, the IRC heard three matters, one of which found the candidate engaged in irregular conduct. As a result, the IRC suspended the candidate from taking NBOME exams for a period of one year and annotated the candidate’s transcript.



## **Fall 2022 Update**

The NBOME Independent Review Committee (IRC), in conjunction with NBOME staff, is charged with reviewing and acting upon allegations of irregular conduct or other unprofessional conduct on the part of COMLEX-USA candidates.

The IRC consists of five (5) members appointed by the Board Chair of the NBOME and includes representation from undergraduate osteopathic medical education, graduate medical education, and physician licensure communities. At least one member is a non-physician public member with relevant legal, business, and/or professional ethics experience.

Irregular or unprofessional conduct is defined in the COMLEX-USA [Bulletin of Information](#) (BOI).

During the past year the IRC has reviewed several cases of irregular or unprofessional conduct including:

- Unauthorized access to cell phones or other unauthorized personal items during unscheduled examination breaks
- Unsuccessful attempts to access portions of the secure NBOME Portal database (hacking)
- Altering and falsifying score report documentation, profanity in exam survey comments
- Disruptive offensive behavior at testing centers

As a result, the NBOME has taken disciplinary actions based on the evidence presented, including:

- Voiding a candidate's score
- Suspension from taking COMLEX-USA examinations
- Adding an "I" annotation (Irregular Conduct) on the permanent transcript

Medical professionalism remains an important competency domain of concern to state licensing boards.

All COMLEX-USA candidates are required to receive an attestation of good academic and professional standing from the dean of their college of osteopathic medicine (Level 1 and 2-CE) or their residency program director (Level 3) to establish COMLEX-USA examination eligibility.

For more on irregular or unprofessional conduct, consult the [COMLEX-USA BOI](#) or email [ClientServices@NBOME.org](mailto:ClientServices@NBOME.org).