

## Background and Drug Screening for Health Programs at SPC

All students entering a health program at St. Petersburg College are required to successfully complete a background screening within 120 days prior to starting the first health program course. The student will pay the background screening fee directly to the appropriate vendor. Applicants for health related programs at St. Petersburg College must be free of offenses that would disqualify one for employment in a health related field or to sit for a state licensing exam.

For progression into the first health program course, prospective students may not have one felony or two misdemeanor charges with a disposition dated within five years from the start of the health program courses with a judgment of guilty, or with a plea of nolo contendere (no contest), or where adjudication was withheld. Further, an applicant may be disqualified for admission based on Florida Statute 456.0635, where such person has been convicted on felony charges relating to medical fraud, neglect or substance abuse, or where terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid Program or other Medicare program.

Pursuant to [Section 456.0635](#), Florida Statutes, effective July 1, 2009, health care boards or the department shall refuse to renew a license, certificate or registration, issue a license, certificate or registration and shall refuse to admit a candidate for examination if the applicant has been:

1. Convicted or plead guilty or nolo contendere, regardless of adjudication, to a felony violation of: chapters [409](#), [817](#) or [893](#), Florida Statutes; or [21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970](#) or [42 U.S.C. ss1395-1396](#), unless the sentence and any probation or pleas ended more than 15 years prior to the application.
2. Terminated for cause from Florida Medicaid Program (unless the applicant has been in good standing for the most recent five years).
3. Terminated for cause by any other State Medicaid Program or the Medicare Program (unless the termination was at least 20 years prior to the date of the application and the applicant has been in good standing with the program for the most recent five years).

Additionally, the following crimes may disqualify applicants from entering into any health education program regardless of date of disposition:

- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Vehicle homicide
- Killing of an unborn child by injury to the mother
- Assault, if the victim of the offense was a minor
- Battery, if the victim of the offense was a minor
- Aggravated assault
- Aggravated battery
- Kidnapping
- False imprisonment
- Sexual battery

- Prohibited acts of persons in familial or custodial authority
- Lewd and lascivious behavior
- Lewdness and indecent exposure
- Arson
- Theft, robbery, and related crimes if the offense is a felony
- Incest
- Abuse or neglect of a disabled adult or elderly person
- Exploitation of disabled adult or elderly person
- Aggravated child abuse
- Negligent treatment of children
- Sexual performance by a child
- Animal cruelty or abuse
- Prostitution
- Drug related offense if a felony or involved a minor

Acceptance into the health program does not guarantee that the student will be eligible for licensure. Clinical facilities may limit or prohibit students with criminal histories from participating in clinical experiences which are part of the curriculum. Other options may not exist for the student to fulfill required clinical hours in order to complete the program; as a result, the student would receive a failing grade and may not be eligible to complete the health program or apply for licensure. All of the above factors should be taken into consideration prior to making a decision about pursuing a career as a healthcare provider.

Once admitted into the health program courses and continuing through enrollment in a SPC health program, the student is responsible for notifying the dean/program director of any arrests. Failure to notify the dean/program director within five business days shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. Continuing through enrollment in the health program, the student must not be found guilty, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld, of an offense that would disqualify the student under the standard(s) as referenced above.

### **Drug Screening**

While enrolled in a SPC health related program, the health care professions are committed to providing excellent patient care and services in a safe, productive, and quality-conscious environment. All students entering a health program at St. Petersburg College are required to successfully complete a drug screening within one hundred twenty (120) days prior to starting the first health program course. The student will pay the drug screening fee directly to the appropriate vendor. The drug screening must satisfactorily demonstrate that the student is free from the use of any illegal drug or misuse of a prescription drug. In the case of a positive screening, the student or employee shall have five (5) days during which to either contest or explain the result. Students who do not successfully pass the drug screening on the first attempt will be allowed to reapply for admission to a health program for a following semester. A student who fails the drug screening a second time will not be permitted to reapply for admission to a health program for the period of one year from the date of the most recent application. Students must remain drug-free throughout the tenure in their program at the College.\*\*\* Failure to do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.\*\*\* A Student who has not maintained continuous enrollment in health program courses for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days or more from the last date of attendance, must successfully complete and pass a new drug and background screening upon readmission and/or

before resuming enrollment into health program classes.



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All students enrolled in a health related program are required to be drug and/or alcohol free when reporting to school and while at "affiliating agencies" (including parking lots and grounds). For all "affiliating agencies" which require students to be subject to the agency's Drug Testing policies, including but not limited to, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe a student may be impaired, or is using or has used illegal drugs and/or alcohol, the student may be tested in accordance with the "affiliating agency's" policies. Prior to being assigned to an affiliating agency, the student shall sign a consent to allow the affiliating agency to release any drug testing results to the College. If tested by an "affiliating agency" the student shall provide his/her dean/program director with a copy of any test results. Failure to promptly do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. A positive drug or alcohol test result shall also be grounds for dismissal from the program. Students and employees who are under clinical affiliation agreements who test positive for marijuana are unable to continue in clinical placement, which will affect their status in the Health program. A student who has a prescription for medical marijuana and tests positive for marijuana will also be ineligible to participate in clinical placement due to the federal restriction on the use of marijuana. While the use of medical marijuana is permitted in Florida, marijuana remains classified as a controlled substance under federal law and its use, possession, and cultivation at educational institutions and clinical affiliates remains prohibited. \*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*This paragraph also applies to students already enrolled in a health related program at the time of the effective date of this Rule.