

***USING D.C. AFTER YOUR  
NAME TO INDICATE YOU  
ARE A DOCTOR OF  
CHIROPRACTIC COULD  
COST YOU YOUR LICENSE***

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Did you know that just by putting D.C. after your name might be a violation of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code, which could get your license suspended? Ohio Revised Code 4734.31(C)(7) and Ohio Administrative Code 4734-9-02(G), states that any advertisement, whether it be written or verbal, must fully and explicitly disclose that it is an ad for “chiropractic” services, or an ad for a “chiropractor”, “doctor or chiropractic”, or “chiropractic physician.” Using the abbreviation D.C. is not enough.

The Ohio Court of Appeals for the Tenth District recently upheld the decision of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court to suspend a chiropractor’s license for 180 days and impose a \$2,000 civil fine. See, *Wilson v. Ohio State Chiropractic Board*, Case No. 18AP-739 (2019)

In this case, the chiropractor used D.C. after his name in his television and internet advertising. The chiropractic doctor did not indicate in the advertisements that he is a chiropractor, chiropractic physician, or Doctor of

Chiropractic. Ohio Administrative Code 4734-9-02(F) states that “all advertisements and solicitations shall clearly reveal that the advertisement and/or solicitation is being made on behalf of a chiropractic physician.”

The Ohio State Chiropractic Board stated in their adjudication order that using only D.C. is misleading because the general public does not know what D.C. represents. The Board amended the rule in 2007 to include language that using the abbreviation of D.C. is not enough to state the ad is being made on behalf of a chiropractor. Kelly Caudill, the Ohio State Chiropractic Board’s Executive Director, testified that the Board, prior to amending the rule, received numerous complaints from people who said they did not know they were going to a chiropractor after seeing an advertisement which stated D.C. Furthermore, Ms. Caudill testified that advertisements that do not explicitly state it is a chiropractic ad are confusing to general consumers.

The Appellate Court agreed with the Administrative Code’s language that a chiropractor must use only one of the four terms outlined in the Code to “clearly reveal” him or herself as a chiropractor. The Appellate Court further noted that Ohio has an interest in preventing misleading information from being given to the public. Therefore, implementing disclosure requirements relating to the prevention of misleading information does not violate advertisers’ First Amendment rights.

Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code violations come with severe penalties, specifically violations that deal with licensing healthcare professionals. Therefore, it is

highly essential that chiropractic physicians make sure they fully disclose themselves in accordance with the Codes' provisions when advertising and/or soliciting. Failure to include a short term fully revealing yourself as a chiropractic doctor in your advertising is not worth losing your license to practice.

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