

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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**IN THE MATTER OF:
MELVIN MORRIS, M.D.
(Certificate No. 016660)**

OPINION AND RULING 99-A-006

This matter comes before the Board pursuant to an Administrative Complaint charging Melvin Morris, M.D., with violating R.S. 37:1285A(11) by submitting a false report for the purpose of obtaining something of economic value, and R.S. 37:1285A(18), by assisting an unlicensed person to practice medicine. This matter was heard by a panel of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") consisting of Drs. Mary Lou Applewhite, Elmo J. Laborde, and Trenton L. James, II, constituting a quorum of the Board.

The facts of the case are undisputed, having been stipulated to by the Complainant and the Respondent. Dr. Morris was retained by H. P. & Associates Safety, Inc. as an examining physician. Physical examinations were done by an employee of H.P. & Associates Safety, Inc. and the results reported to Dr. Morris. He would examine the data thereon, and, if appropriate, would certify that the subject was physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle according to the requirements of the Department of Transportation.

The certificate on the Physical Examination form stated that Dr. Morris had conducted the examination, when he had not actually done so. It further appears that the person who conducted the examination, and obtained the data reviewed by Dr. Morris, was not legally qualified to do so. Dr. Morris was paid \$200.00 a week for his services.

(Morris, November, 1999)

Dr. Morris testified that he was under the impression that all he was required to do was review data obtained by a technician. He had watched the technicians work, and believed they were competent and legally authorized to conduct physical examinations.

He admitted that he did not see most of the patients, but stated that he did not gather the full import of the certificate on the examination form. He now realizes that he made a mistake, which will not happen again.

Dr. Morris is a 1982 graduate of the LSU Medical School in New Orleans, and did a three year residency in Family Medicine, in which he was Board Certified. His certification has lapsed, and he has not yet sought recertification.

We think it clear that Dr. Morris is guilty of the charges against him. He did certify that he had performed an examination which he had not performed, and he based his opinion on data obtained by an unlicensed and unauthorized individual. However, we accept Dr. Morris's explanation of how he came to make the certificates, and believe that this will not happen again.

Accordingly, the license of Melvin Morris, M.D. to practice medicine in the State of Louisiana, Certificate No. 016660, is hereby suspended for a period of thirty days, effective as of the date of this opinion, but the said suspension is hereby stayed.

Dr. Morris shall pay a fine of \$500.00 and all costs of this proceeding. The Board strongly recommends that Dr. Morris seek recertification in his specialty.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, this 2nd day of November, 1999.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

BY: Mary Lou Applewhite M.D.
MARY LOU APPLEWHITE, M.D., PRESIDENT

(Morris, November, 1999)