

Criminal history and registration: what's changed for practitioners

Reading time:

MIPS Admin

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Ahpra's new Criminal History Registration Standard ("the Standard") commenced on 15 July 2026. The core objective is unchanged: National Boards assess whether a practitioner's criminal history is consistent with suitability to practise. What's new is the detail. The standard is now accompanied by a Guide setting out the specific factors Boards will weigh when considering whether a practitioner's criminal history is consistent with safe practice. This gives practitioners more visibility into how assessments are made.

Who does it apply to?

The Standard applies to anyone applying for initial registration, all currently registered practitioners or students who are renewing their registration, and all currently registered practitioners or students who are charged, convicted or found guilty of a relevant offence at any time during a registration period.

What counts as criminal history?

The definition is broad. It includes every conviction, every guilty plea or finding of guilt (even where no conviction was recorded), and every charge laid against you, regardless of how long ago it occurred. Spent and aged convictions must also be declared, including those arising in Australia or overseas.

How will a board weigh my history?

Not every matter on a criminal history will be inconsistent with suitability to practise. Boards will consider factors relevant to the circumstances, including:

- the nature and seriousness of the offence, and its relevance to practice
- the sentence imposed
- your age at the time of the offence
- whether the offence has since been decriminalised (generally disregarded, unless it raises public safety concerns)
- your behaviour since the offence, including evidence of insight and rehabilitation
- whether your history points to any ongoing risk to future patients
- for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners, whether experiences of racism or systemic inequity contributed to contact with the justice system
- any explanation or context you provide yourself

Boards consider these factors together, taking into account the individual circumstances and the nature of the criminal history. Providing your own account of the circumstances can help the Board understand the context rather than relying on the facts alone.

What can happen if a board has concerns?

A Board may refuse an application or renewal, impose conditions (such as supervised practice, restrictions on scope, or further education), require an examination or assessment, or take no action. Registration standards like this one can also be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings of what constitutes appropriate conduct.

What should I do?

Keep meeting your disclosure obligations: at initial application, at renewal, and whenever a relevant charge or conviction arises. If you do have a criminal history, the circumstances surrounding it and your behaviour since the offence are among the factors the Board will take into account. A considered, honest account can help the Board understand the circumstances. If you are unsure of your disclosure obligations, you can contact MIPS' Medicolegal Advisory Service for more information.

References

- [Ahpra, Registration standard: Criminal history \(effective 15 July 2026\)](#)
- [Guide to the application of the Criminal history registration standard](#)

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