

# Mississippi Legislation Update

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We have already encountered a problem in our [newly enacted acupuncture law](#). The Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure Board meeting was on the morning of July 2, 2009. The bimonthly meeting of nine physicians was held to discuss, among many agenda items, the proposed Rules and Regulations for the practice of acupuncture in Mississippi.

Our association, the [Mississippi Oriental Medicine Association](#), has been working diligently with the licensure division to create these rules for the profession, which is new to our state. When our agenda item came up, there was instantly an adversarial tone from two of the doctors. One said he couldn't believe this law even passed. His issue was with the scope of practice. He didn't understand how the medical board could regulate this profession when they didn't understand our modalities, such as herbs and cupping. So, to allay those fears, we will have an informational meeting with the Scope of Practice Committee to discuss and educate. No problem.

The next physician, a psychiatrist and attorney, did not like the fact that in the statute, acupuncturists could practice independently (meaning outside of a doctor's office). Our law does require a written referral from the patient's physician, who is considered the "supervising physician" for the patient. However, this physician wanted to have the Attorney General look over the law and hand down a decision on the matter, and to delay any licensing until the Rules have been adopted. Basically, he is looking for a way to change the new statute before it has even begun. The law explicitly states that acupuncturists and physicians do not have to be on the same premises.

We are so frustrated. It was one thing to get our bill through the legislature, for the people of our state. Now, we have a different hurdle to jump. I have to say that I am feeling at my wits end due to the uncalled for hindrance. The law is in place, yet the Medical Board wants to delay. I mostly wanted everyone to know what was taking place. I will keep everyone up to date on the status. Please forward to those who might be interested.