



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Drug Enforcement Administration

John Hanley, P.A.; Decision and Order

On February 13, 2025, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA or Government) issued an Order to Show Cause (OSC) to John Hanley, P.A. of Santa Fe, New Mexico (Registrant). Request for Final Agency Action (RFAA), Exhibit (RFAAX) 1, at 1, 4. The OSC proposed the revocation of Registrant’s Certificate of Registration No. MH4317702, alleging that Registrant’s registration should be revoked because Registrant is “currently without authority to prescribe, administer, dispense, or otherwise handle controlled substances in New Mexico, the state in which [he is] registered with DEA.” *Id.* at 2 (citing 21 U.S.C. 824(a)(3) and 21 CFR 1301.37(b)).

The OSC notified Registrant of his right to file a written request for hearing, and that if he failed to file such a request, he would be deemed to have waived her right to a hearing and be in default. *Id.* at 2 (citing 21 CFR 1301.43). Here, Registrant did not request a hearing. RFAA, at 2.¹ “A default, unless excused, shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of the registrant’s/applicant’s right to a hearing and an admission of the factual allegations of the [OSC].” 21 CFR 1301.43(e).

Further, “[i]n the event that a registrant . . . is deemed to be in default . . . DEA may then file a request for final agency action with the Administrator, along with a record to support its

¹ Based on the Government’s submissions in its RFAA dated April 7, 2025, the Agency finds that service of the OSC on Registrant was adequate. The included declaration from a DEA Diversion Investigator (DI) indicates that on February 24, 2025, the DI, an additional DI, and other members of law enforcement attempted to personally serve Registrant with a copy of the OSC at Registrant’s last known home address but were unsuccessful. RFAAX 2, at 1. The DI then emailed a copy of the OSC to Registrant’s registered email address on February 26, 2025, and received a confirmation message from the Mail Delivery Subsystem that the OSC was relayed to that email address. In sum, the Agency finds that the DI’s efforts to serve Registrant by email and other means were “reasonably calculated, under all the circumstances, to apprise [Registrant] of the pendency of the action.” *Jones v. Flowers*, 547 U.S. 220, 226 (2006) (quoting *Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust Co.*, 339 U.S. 306, 314 (1950)); *see also Mohammed S. Aljanaby, M.D.*, 82 Fed. Reg. 34,552, 34,552 (2017) (finding that service by email satisfies due process where the email is not returned as undeliverable and other methods have been unsuccessful). Therefore, due process notice requirements have been satisfied.

request. In such circumstances, the Administrator may enter a default final order pursuant to [21 CFR] 1316.67.” *Id.* 1301.43(f)(1). Here, the Government has requested final agency action based on Registrant’s default pursuant to 21 CFR 1301.43(c), (f), and 1301.46. RFAA, at 1; *see also* 21 CFR 1316.67.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Agency finds that, in light of Registrant’s default, the factual allegations in the OSC are admitted. According to the OSC, on or about February 27, 2024, the New Mexico Medical Board revoked Registrant’s New Mexico physician assistant license. RFAAX 1, at 2.

According to New Mexico online records, of which the Agency takes official notice, Registrant’s New Mexico physician assistant license remains revoked.²

<https://nmrldlpi.my.site.com/nmmb/s/searchlicense> (last visited date of signature of this Order).

Accordingly, the Agency finds that Registrant is not licensed to practice as a physician assistant in New Mexico, the state in which he is registered with DEA.³

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 824(a)(3), the Attorney General is authorized to suspend or revoke a registration issued under 21 U.S.C. 823 “upon a finding that the registrant . . . has had his State license or registration suspended . . . [or] revoked . . . by competent State authority and is no longer authorized by State law to engage in the . . . dispensing of controlled substances.” With respect to a practitioner, DEA has also long held that the possession of authority to dispense controlled substances under the laws of the state in which a practitioner engages in professional practice is a fundamental condition for obtaining and maintaining a practitioner’s registration.

² Under the Administrative Procedure Act, an agency “may take official notice of facts at any stage in a proceeding – even in the final decision.” United States Department of Justice, Attorney General’s Manual on the Administrative Procedure Act 80 (1947) (Wm. W. Gaunt & Sons, Inc., Reprint 1979).

³ Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 556(e), “[w]hen an agency decision rests on official notice of a material fact not appearing in the evidence in the record, a party is entitled, on timely request, to an opportunity to show the contrary.” The material fact here is that Registrant, as of the date of this decision, is not licensed to practice as a physician assistant in New Mexico. Accordingly, Registrant may dispute the Agency’s finding by filing a properly supported motion for reconsideration of findings of fact within fifteen calendar days of the date of this Order. Any such motion and response shall be filed and served by e-mail to the other party and to the DEA Office of the Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration at dea.addo.attorneys@dea.gov

Gonzales v. Oregon, 546 U.S. 243, 270 (2006) (“The Attorney General can register a physician to dispense controlled substances ‘if the applicant is authorized to dispense . . . controlled substances under the laws of the State in which he practices.’ . . . The very definition of a ‘practitioner’ eligible to prescribe includes physicians ‘licensed, registered, or otherwise permitted, by the United States or the jurisdiction in which he practices’ to dispense controlled substances. § 802(21).”). The Agency has applied these principles consistently. *See, e.g., James L. Hooper, M.D.*, 76 Fed. Reg. 71,371, 71,372 (2011), *pet. for rev. denied*, 481 F. App’x 826 (4th Cir. 2012); *Frederick Marsh Blanton, M.D.*, 43 Fed. Reg. 27,616, 27,617 (1978).⁴

According to New Mexico statute, “dispense” means “to deliver a controlled substance to an ultimate user or research subject pursuant to the lawful order of a practitioner, including the administering, prescribing, packaging, labeling or compounding necessary to prepare the controlled substance for that delivery.” N.M. Stat. Ann. § 30-31-2(H) (2024). Further, a “practitioner” means “a physician . . . physician assistant, certified nurse practitioner . . . or other person licensed or certified to prescribe and administer drugs that are subject to the [New Mexico] Controlled Substances Act.” *Id.* § 30-31-2(P). “Physician assistants may prescribe, administer, dispense and distribute dangerous drugs; including Schedule II-V controlled substances, where there is an established physician assistant-patient relationship.” N.M. Admin. Code 16.10.16.8(A) (2024). In this context, the physician assistant must be licensed by the New Mexico Medical Board to practice as such. *Id.* §§ 16.10.16.1, 16.10.16.7(E).

⁴ This rule derives from the text of two provisions of the CSA. First, Congress defined the term “practitioner” to mean “a physician . . . or other person licensed, registered, or otherwise permitted, by . . . the jurisdiction in which he practices . . . , to distribute, dispense, . . . [or] administer . . . a controlled substance in the course of professional practice.” 21 U.S.C. § 802(21). Second, in setting the requirements for obtaining a practitioner’s registration, Congress directed that “[t]he Attorney General shall register practitioners . . . if the applicant is authorized to dispense . . . controlled substances under the laws of the State in which he practices.” 21 U.S.C. § 823(g)(1). Because Congress has clearly mandated that a practitioner possess state authority in order to be deemed a practitioner under the CSA, DEA has held repeatedly that revocation of a practitioner’s registration is the appropriate sanction whenever he is no longer authorized to dispense controlled substances under the laws of the state in which he practices *See, e.g., James L. Hooper, M.D.*, 76 Fed. Reg. at 71,371-72; *Sheran Arden Yeates, M.D.*, 71 Fed. Reg. 39,130, 39,131 (2006); *Dominick A. Ricci, M.D.*, 58 Fed. Reg. 51,104, 51,105 (1993); *Bobby Watts, M.D.*, 53 Fed. Reg. 11,919, 11,920 (1988); *Frederick Marsh Blanton, M.D.*, 43 Fed. Reg. at 27,617.

Here, the undisputed evidence in the record is that Registrant lacks authority to practice as a physician assistant in New Mexico because his New Mexico physician assistant license has been revoked. As discussed above, an individual must be a licensed practitioner to dispense a controlled substance in New Mexico. Thus, because Registrant lacks authority to practice as a physician assistant in New Mexico and, therefore, is not authorized to dispense controlled substances in New Mexico, Registrant is not eligible to maintain a DEA registration in New Mexico. Accordingly, the Agency will order that Registrant's DEA registration be revoked.

ORDER

Pursuant to 28 CFR 0.100(b) and the authority vested in me by 21 U.S.C. 824(a), I hereby revoke DEA Certificate of Registration No. MH4317702, issued to John Hanley, P.A. Further, pursuant to 28 CFR 0.100(b) and the authority vested in me by 21 U.S.C. 823(g)(1), I hereby deny any pending applications of John Hanley, P.A., to renew or modify this registration, as well as any other pending application of John Hanley, P.A., for additional registration in New Mexico. This Order is effective **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

This document of the Drug Enforcement Administration was signed on July 2, 2025, by Acting Administrator Robert J. Murphy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DEA. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DEA Federal Register Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication, as an official document of DEA. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the Federal Register.

Heather Achbach,
Federal Register Liaison Officer,
Drug Enforcement Administration.

