

65-4901. Medical malpractice screening panels; convening; selection of members; list of health care providers maintained by state agency.

(a) If a petition is filed in a district court of this state claiming damages for personal injury or death on account of alleged medical malpractice of a health care provider and one of the parties to the action requests, by filing a memorandum with the court, that a medical malpractice screening panel be convened, the judge of the district court shall convene a medical malpractice screening panel, hereafter referred to as the "screening panel." If a petition is filed in a district court of this state claiming damages for personal injury or death on account of alleged medical malpractice of a health care provider and none of the parties to the action requests that a screening panel be convened, the judge may convene a screening panel upon the judge's own motion. If a claim for damages for personal injury or death on account of alleged medical malpractice of a health care provider has not been formalized by the filing of a petition, any party affected by such claim may request, by filing a memorandum with the court, that a screening panel be convened, and if such request is made the judge of the district court shall convene a screening panel. If a petition or claim is filed naming more than one defendant or more than one person against whom a claim is being made, each defendant or person is entitled to request a screening panel.

(b) The membership of the screening panel shall be selected as follows: (1) A health care provider designated by the defendant or by the person against whom the claim is made if no petition has been filed; (2) a health care provider designated by the plaintiff or by the claimant if no petition has been filed; (3) a health care provider selected jointly by the plaintiff and the defendant or by the claimant and the person against whom the claim is made if no petition has been filed; and (4) an attorney selected by the judge of the district court from a list of attorneys maintained by the judge of the district court for such purpose. Such attorney shall be a nonvoting member of the screening panel but shall act as chairperson of the screening panel.

(c) The state agency which licenses, registers, certifies or otherwise is responsible for the practice of any group of health care providers shall maintain and make available to the parties to the proceeding a current list of health care providers who are willing and available to serve on the screening panel. The persons appointed shall constitute the screening panel for the particular medical malpractice claim to be heard.

History: L. 1976, ch. 249, § 1; L. 1979, ch. 206, § 1; L. 1999, ch. 57, § 63; L. 2008, ch. 80, § 5; L. 2012, ch. 67, § 4; July 1.