

REVISED JUDICATURE ACT OF 1961 (EXCERPT)
Act 236 of 1961

600.2169 Qualifications of expert witness in action alleging medical malpractice; determination; disqualification of expert witness; testimony on contingency fee basis as misdemeanor; limitations applicable to discovery.

Sec. 2169. (1) In an action alleging medical malpractice, a person shall not give expert testimony on the appropriate standard of practice or care unless the person is licensed as a health professional in this state or another state and meets the following criteria:

(a) If the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is a specialist, specializes at the time of the occurrence that is the basis for the action in the same specialty as the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered. However, if the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is a specialist who is board certified, the expert witness must be a specialist who is board certified in that specialty.

(b) Subject to subdivision (c), during the year immediately preceding the date of the occurrence that is the basis for the claim or action, devoted a majority of his or her professional time to either or both of the following:

(i) The active clinical practice of the same health profession in which the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is licensed and, if that party is a specialist, the active clinical practice of that specialty.

(ii) The instruction of students in an accredited health professional school or accredited residency or clinical research program in the same health profession in which the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is licensed and, if that party is a specialist, an accredited health professional school or accredited residency or clinical research program in the same specialty.

(c) If the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is a general practitioner, the expert witness, during the year immediately preceding the date of the occurrence that is the basis for the claim or action, devoted a majority of his or her professional time to either or both of the following:

(i) Active clinical practice as a general practitioner.

(ii) Instruction of students in an accredited health professional school or accredited residency or clinical research program in the same health profession in which the party against whom or on whose behalf the testimony is offered is licensed.

(2) In determining the qualifications of an expert witness in an action alleging medical malpractice, the court shall, at a minimum, evaluate all of the following:

(a) The educational and professional training of the expert witness.

(b) The area of specialization of the expert witness.

(c) The length of time the expert witness has been engaged in the active clinical practice or instruction of the health profession or the specialty.

(d) The relevancy of the expert witness's testimony.

(3) This section does not limit the power of the trial court to disqualify an expert witness on grounds other than the qualifications set forth in this section.

(4) In an action alleging medical malpractice, an expert witness shall not testify on a contingency fee basis. A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(5) In an action alleging medical malpractice, all of the following limitations apply to discovery conducted by opposing counsel to determine whether or not an expert witness is qualified:

(a) Tax returns of the expert witness are not discoverable.

(b) Family members of the expert witness shall not be deposed concerning the amount of time the expert witness spends engaged in the practice of his or her health profession.

(c) A personal diary or calendar belonging to the expert witness is not discoverable. As used in this subdivision, "personal diary or calendar" means a diary or calendar that does not include listings or records of professional activities.

History: Add. 1986, Act 178, Eff. Oct. 1, 1986;—Am. 1993, Act 78, Eff. Apr. 1, 1994.

Constitutionality: MCL 600.2169 is an enactment of substantive law. As such it does not impermissibly infringe the Supreme Court's constitutional rule-making authority over "practice and procedure." *McDougall v Schanz*, 461 Mich 15; 597 NW2d 148 (1999).

Compiler's note: Section 3 of Act 178 of 1986 provides:

"(1) Sections 2925b, 5805, 5838, and 5851 of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as amended by this amendatory act, shall not apply to causes of action arising before October 1, 1986.

"(2) Sections 1483, 5838a, and 6304 of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as added by this amendatory act, shall apply to causes of action arising on or after October 1, 1986.

“(3) Sections 1629, 1653, 2169, 2591, 2912c, 2912d, 2912e, 6098, 6301, 6303, 6305, 6306, 6307, 6309, and 6311 of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as added by this amendatory act, shall apply to cases filed on or after October 1, 1986.

“(4) Sections 1651 and 6013 of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as amended by this amendatory act, shall not apply to cases filed before October 1, 1986.

“(5) Chapter 49 of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as added by this amendatory act, shall apply to cases filed on or after January 1, 1987.

“(6) Chapter 49a of Act No. 236 of the Public Acts of 1961, as added by this amendatory act, shall apply to cases filed in judicial circuits which are comprised of more than 1 county on or after July 1, 1990 and shall apply to cases filed in judicial circuits which are comprised of 1 county on or after October 1, 1988.”