

## **Probation Of Escambia Doctor May Be Revoked**

Dr. Mark Peter Koch, an Escambia County doctor who pleaded guilty to participating in a steroids ring, is facing new allegations that he has violated the terms of his probation of 2012.

Koch waived his right to a preliminary hearing on the matter. He was ordered by a magistrate judge to appear for a revocation hearing on December 19 before Chief U.S. District Judge William Steele. In September 2011, Koch, who had offices in Atmore and Monroeville, admitted that he sold and consumed [anabolic steroids](#).

It was alleged by law enforcement authorities that Dr. Koch conspired with Ashley Dewayne Rivers, a satellite technician from Morgan County. It was later acknowledged by Koch that the conspiracy involved more than 300 grams of anabolic steroids. Chief U.S. District Judge William Steele sentenced Koch in February 2012 to five years' probation. However, Dr. Koch remains licensed to practice in Alabama but faced regulatory difficulties in rebuilding his career while serving probation.

Drug Enforcement Administrator Michele Leonhart determined in March that Koch "lacked condor" about his association with anabolic steroids and failed to accept complete responsibility for his conduct. Michele Leonhart, following the recommendations of Administrative Law Judge Gail Randall, revoked Koch's DEA certificates of registration in Minnesota and Alabama that had allowed him to prescribe [Controlled Substances](#).

First licensed to practice medicine in Alabama in 1993, Koch accepted restrictions in 1997 after an evaluation for substance abuse while he was practicing in Russellville. In the past, the FBI contended that Dr. Koch used the [performance enhancing drugs](#) and sold them to at least 2 other people after buying steroids from an underground lab run by a north Alabama man.

Last year, Leonhart wrote respondent has been granted numerous opportunities to act as a responsible DEA registrant and has failed each time and added she does not see any conditions that could be placed on Respondent's registration now that would ensure that Respondent would be a responsible DEA registrant. Earlier this year, Defense attorney Ken Nixon asked Steele to end the probation of Koch early and he noted that Koch had paid his \$10,100 fine and completed more than 300 hours of community service ordered by the judge. Nixon wrote the probation was hurting the case of his client with the DEA and medical authorities in Pennsylvania.

The court file contains a letter from Elizabeth Borg, an attorney representing Koch in the DEA proceedings, which indicated that Dr. Koch has been drug- and alcohol-free since entering an Atlanta treatment facility in 2005. She wrote while the conviction is something which Dr. Koch will face for the rest of his life, the fact that he remains under probation may result in him being unable to earn a living practicing medicine. The request to end the probation early was denied by Steele after federal prosecutors objected. Assistant U.S. Attorney Gina Vann wrote the Defendant received as a result of his conviction was lenient, and serving the remainder of his

sentence would not be onerous or burdensome. The Assistant U.S. Attorney added it would in fact would send a message to the community he served that people entrusted with the health of the citizens should be held accountable for their actions.