



Board of Behavioral Sciences



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Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
Department of Consumer Affairs

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Open sessions of this board meeting were webcasted. Click on the following links for Webcast recordings:

[Board of Behavioral Sciences Meeting - August 21, 2025](#)

[Board of Behavioral Sciences Meeting - August 22, 2025](#)

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| DATE | August 21, 2025 |
| LOCATION | Newport Beach Marriott Bayview Newport Ballroom 500 Bayview Circle Newport Beach, CA 92660 |
| TIME | 9:00 a.m. |

ATTENDEES

Members Present at Primary Location

Wendy Strack, Chair, Public Member
Dr. Nicholas (Nick) Boyd, Vice Chair, LPCC Member
Lorez, Bailey, Public Member
Susan Friedman, Public Member
Justin Huft, LMFT Member
Christopher (Chris) Jones, LEP Member
John Sovec, LMFT Member
Rebecca Thiess, Public Member
Eleanor Uribe, LCSW Member
Dr. Annette Walker, Public Member

Members Absent: Kelly Ranasinghe, Public Member

Staff Present: Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer
Marlon McManus, Assistant Executive Officer
Sabina Knight, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Legal Counsel
Rachael Lanzone, Analyst

Other Attendees: Abraham M. Levy, Administrative Law Judge

Blair McGregor, Deputy Attorney General
Steven Mason, Petitioner
Scott Harris, Counsel to Steven Mason
Kelsey Lee Santos, Petitioner
Jessica Hinojosa, Petitioner
In-person public participation

OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum

Wendy Strack, Chair of the Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board), called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

Items 3-10 were taken out of order and heard after item 3.

2. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

Boyd: Discuss how the Board can collaborate with HCAI on scholarships and loan forgiveness programs, particularly for educational psychologists; and discuss how the changes with educational funding will affect recruitment of professionals who must do additional schooling.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

None

Administrative Law Judge Abraham M. Levy presided over the following petition hearings. Deputy Attorney General Blair McGregor presented the facts of each case on behalf of the People of the State of California.

4. Steven Mason, AMFT 124332, Petition for Early Termination of Probation

The record was opened at 9:55 a.m., and Steven Mason was represented by attorney Scott Harris. Deputy Attorney General Blair McGregor presented the background of this case. Mason was sworn-in and was examined by McGregor regarding his request for early termination of probation and information to support the request. He was also questioned by board members. The record was closed at 11:28 a.m.

5. Jessica Hinojosa, LMFT 121817, Petition for Early Termination of Probation

The record was opened at 11:45 a.m., and Jessica Hinojosa represented herself. Deputy Attorney General Blair McGregor presented the background of this case.

Hinojosa was sworn-in and presented her request for early termination of probation and information to support the request. She was questioned by McGregor and board members. The record was closed at 12:45 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

6. **Pursuant to Section 11126(c)(3) of the Government Code, the Board will Meet in Closed Session for Discussion and to Take Action on Disciplinary Matters, Including the Above Petitions.**

The Board entered closed session at 2:10 p.m. and recessed at the end of closed session.

OPEN SESSION: *Open session items 7 through 10 were heard after item 3.*

7. **Consent Calendar: Possible Approval of the February 27-28, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes**

This item was removed from the agenda.

8. **Workforce Development Committee Update**

The Committee discussed the following at its July 2025 meeting:

Education Survey for Educators and Associates

The Committee discussed the results of the education requirement surveys.

Education Requirements for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists

The Committee discussed the initial review of the LMFT education requirements to address confusion and inequalities created by the current three pathway structure. The Committee directed staff to review LMFT education in other states, as well as standards set by LMFT accrediting agencies, and develop language for further consideration at the next committee meeting.

Update on the Department of Health Care Services “Building a Thriving Behavioral Health Workforce”

Staff updated the Committee in the “Building a Thriving Behavioral Workforce” forum that to address challenges in strengthening California’s behavioral health workforce. Key issues included complex and inequitable licensure

processes, gaps between education and real-world practice, limited access to paid training and quality supervision, evolving technology needs, fragmented stakeholder efforts, and workforce burnout.

Review of Action Plan

Staff presented an updated Workforce Goals Status Report. No action was taken.

Discussion/Public Comment: None

9. Strategic Planning Update

In September 2025, SOLID facilitated the second pre-strategic planning session with Board management to brainstorm ideas for the BBS 2026 Strategic Plan. The information generated from these sessions and from the environmental scan report will be used to facilitate the Board's strategic planning session that is planned for the beginning of 2026.

Discussion/Public Comment: None

10. Board Sunset Review Update

In July, the Board testified in front of the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. Amendments were proposed on the Board's sunset bill.

More discussion regarding the amendments to the sunset bill will take place during tomorrow's board meeting.

Discussion/Public Comment: None

11. Recess Until 9:00 a.m., Friday, August 22, 2025

The Board recessed at the conclusion of closed session at 3:29 p.m.

DATE August 22, 2025

LOCATION Newport Beach Marriott Bayview
Newport Ballroom
500 Bayview Circle
Newport Beach, CA 92660

TIME 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDEES

Members Present at Primary Location

Wendy Strack, Chair, Public Member
Dr. Nicholas (Nick) Boyd, Vice Chair, LPCC Member
Lorez, Bailey, Public Member
Susan Friedman, Public Member
Justin Huft, LMFT Member
Christopher (Chris) Jones, LEP Member
John Sovec, LMFT Member
Rebecca Thiess, Public Member
Eleanor Uribe, LCSW Member (*Absent: Item 27-conclusion*)
Dr. Annette Walker, Public Member

Members Absent: Kelly Ranasinghe, Public Member

Staff Present: Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer
Marlon McManus, Assistant Executive Officer
Christy Berger, Regulatory Manager
Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manage
Sabina Knight, DCA Legal Counsel
Rachael Lanzone, Budget Analyst
Syreeta Risso, Special Projects and Research Analyst
Kristy Schieldge, DCA Legal Counsel

Other Attendees: Lois Paff Bergen, Executive Director, AMFTRB
In-person public participation

OPEN SESSION

12. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum

Wendy Strack, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and introduced newly appointed board member, Rebecca Thiess.

Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

Strack announced that items 20, 23, 25, 26 will not be discussed.

13. Introductions

Board members, staff, and attendees introduced themselves.

14. Board Chair Report

a. Board Member Attendance

The current fiscal year attendance report was provided.

b. Future Board Meetings

The proposed 2026 board meeting and committee meeting dates were provided.

c. Staff Recognitions

No recognitions this quarter.

15. Executive Officer Report

a. Budget Report

- The Board's budget for fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 is \$14,061,000.
- Fund Condition reflects a reserve of 19.1 months.

b. Personnel

The Board's staffing activity is as follows:

- 6 new hires/promotions
- 0 departures
- 3 vacancies

c. Licensing Report

4th Quarter Statistics:

- 3,995 licenses/registrations issued
- Population of approximately 151,854 licensees/associates as of July 29, 2025
- 2% gain in license/registration population from previous quarter
- 270 supervisor certifications received
- Population of 15,125 supervisors
- 35% more applications received from previous quarter
- Registrant application processing times decreased from 3rd quarter
- LMFT application processing times at 58 days
- LCSW application processing times increased to 58 days
- LPCC application processing times decreased to 7 days

Information provided as attachments in the meeting materials:

- BBS Population Report
- Licensing Applications Received/Processing Times
- Administration Applications Received
- Renewal Applications Received
- License Data Four Year Comparison

d. Examination Report

4th Quarter Statistics:

- 6,367 exams were administered (6.65% increase from 3rd quarter)
- 4 exam development workshops were conducted.

Staff continues to work with the Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) on recruiting Subject Matter Experts for the various Board-administered exams.

OPES Chief, Heidi Lincer, retired in July 2025. Amy Welch-Gandy is the new OPES Chief.

A new contract for July 1, 2025 through June 20, 2030 was executed on July 28, 2025 with the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB).

ASWB recently implemented changes to the administration format of the LCSW Clinical Examination. These changes were made to improve testing conditions for candidates and did not involve any modifications to the exam content itself. OPES conducts a formal review of ASWB's examination development and administration processes every five years. It is anticipated that during the next review cycle, ASWB will have collected sufficient data to assess the outcomes associated with the administration format change and OPES will evaluate those findings accordingly.

The National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE) contract through the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) expired on June 30, 2025. DCA's Contract Unit is working with NBCC to finalize a new contract.

Information provided as attachments in the meeting materials:

- Exam Pass Rate Report
- Exam School Report 4th Quarter FY 2024-2025

e. Enforcement Report

4th Quarter Statistics:

- 686 consumer complaints received
- 257 criminal convictions
- 680 cases closed
- 37 cases referred to Attorney General's (AG) Office
- Average time to complete formal discipline: 464 days
- Average time a case is at the AG's Office: 342 days
- Average time to complete board investigations: 55 days
- 0 petitions for modifications or early termination of probation received

Information provided as an attachment in the meeting materials: Consumer Complaint and Criminal Conviction Report

f. Education and Outreach Report

4th Quarter Statistics:

- Facebook and Instagram reflect an increased following
- 17 outreach events conducted.

The Outreach Event Report provided was as an attachment in the meeting materials:

g. Organizational Effectiveness Report

The following progress updates/4th quarter statistics were reported:

- Staff is working with Office of Information Services (OIS) to add registration applications online
- Consumer Information Center (CIC) handled 3,378 BBS calls.
- Staff received 30,491 emails.

Information provided as attachments in the meeting materials:

- BBS Calls Received/Handled by CIC
- BBS Emails Received

h. Strategic Plan Update

Progress updates on Strategic Plan goals were provided as an attachment: BBS Strategic Plan Update August 2025.

Discussion

Walker: Requested to change the Education and Outreach Update to “Outreach and Education” Update.

Boyd: Suggested that staff explore ways to improve engagement with license holders and registrants, particularly at the point of registration or license renewal. It was noted that participation rates in current outreach efforts are low. One idea proposed was to leverage the BreEZe system to automatically enroll individuals into email communications or similar outreach channels at the time of registration or renewal. He requested staff to consider how existing technology, and resources could be better utilized to increase engagement rates.

Boyd: Noted that while certifications are being captured, there was a question raised about whether any consideration has been given to identifying supervisors who are currently registered and have met the necessary supervision requirements. The intent is to explore ways to make this information accessible for others who may need to verify supervisory qualifications.

Boyd: What is the audit rate of registered supervisors? How is the BBS verifying that supervisors are meeting the requirements to be an eligible supervisor?

Sodergren: Responding to Dr. Boyd, he clarified that supervisor certification is currently based on self-attestation, and staff have not conducted audits of this process to date. However, there is interest in pursuing auditing efforts moving forward. Staff will explore the possibility of adding a modifier in the BreEZe system to indicate supervisor status. In the past, there was discussion about creating a list of certified supervisors, which could be discussed by the Outreach and Education Committee. Additionally, that committee may consider further discussion on strategies to enhance engagement with licensees and registrants.

Uribe: What efforts have been made to communicate to licensees about the incentives for being a supervisor?

Sodergren: Responding to Uribe, that will be discussed at the committee level.

Sovec: Asked about the voluntary collection of demographic information, particularly how the rollout has been going, what types of data are being collected, and whether any of it is being compiled into a report.

Sodergren: Responded that the demographic information is not being pursued.

Sovec: Expressed a concern about not collecting the data and requested the Board be more responsive to the needs of the population through gathering voluntary information.

Sodergren: Demographic information is being gathered by Healthcare and Access Information (HCAI) at the renewal period. HCAI has some reports and will start including that information to the Board.

Sovec: Expressed concern about signing a 5-year contract with ASWB when concerns with the exam have not been adequately responded to and Board concerns have not been addressed.

Public Comments

Dr. Ben Caldwell: Emphasized the importance of examinees knowing what content and format to expect on licensing exams. Concerns were raised about recent changes to the ASWB clinical exam format, noting a lack of pre-testing for measurement equivalency and insufficient communication to examinees. Similar concerns were expressed regarding the MFT exams, specifically the lack of clarity over which code of ethics is tested. It was noted that this issue has been raised multiple times over the past decade, with no resolution to date. The comment highlighted that examinees perceive the process as unfair and called for greater attention to exam standards.

Dr. Leah Brew: The LMFT law and ethics exam pass rate was only 58% for first time test takers. The pass rate typically runs between the upper 60s to lower 70s. Her students only passed at 60%.

Cathy Atkins, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT):

- Reported that it frequently receives inquiries from its members regarding which code of ethics is used for examination purposes. CAMFT requested clarification and guidance from the Board on this matter.
- Noted that both CAMFT and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) are currently in the process of revising their respective codes of ethics, which adds complexity to the issue.
- Encouraged the Board to collaborate with professional associations when disseminating or gathering information related to supervision
- Regarding demographic data, CAMFT recommended that the Board refer to the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) as a resource.
- CAMFT also conducts its own demographic survey of its membership and indicated a willingness to share this data with the Board, if helpful.

Dr. Leah Brew: Noted that the American Counseling Association is also changing their code of ethics in the next few years.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, National Association of Social Workers California Division (NASW-CA):

- Expressed concerns regarding potential racial and cultural bias in the ASWB exam, citing notably low pass rates among Black test takers, individuals whose first language is not English, and older test takers.
- Agreed that there is a lack of transparency around the knowledge being assessed and the overall validity of the exam.
- Expressed interest in continuing dialogue and offering support to address these issues.
- While acknowledging that ASWB has made some efforts to address exam-related concerns, NASW-CA noted that the emphasis on free exam resources may imply that the issue lies with test preparation rather than with the structure or framing of the exam questions themselves.
- Emphasized the importance of ensuring cultural responsiveness in the development and administration of the exam.

16. Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Report Which May Include Updates on DCA's Administrative Services, Human Resources, Enforcement, Information Technology, Communications and Outreach, and Legislative, Regulatory, or Policy Matters

Steve Sodergren presented the DCA updates:

- The Governor's FY 25/26 budget includes a plan to split DCA's oversight into two new agencies: the California Housing and Homeless Agency and the Business and Consumer Services Agency. The reorganization was enacted on July 5, 2025, and will become operative July 1, 2026
- An Executive Order issued on March 3, 2025, requires state agencies to increase in-office workdays from two to four per week starting July 1, 2025. However, labor agreements delayed this requirement by one year for most DCA employees.
- On June 9, 2025, the Department of Finance issued guidance limiting out-of-state travel to essential, mission-critical business. Requests must be submitted to DCA's budget office at least 8 weeks in advance.
- Board members and staff were reminded of the collective responsibility to minimize the costs to the state when planning and scheduling travel, especially when traveling for board business. Carpooling is highly encouraged when renting vehicles.
- The Annual Report is one of DCA's major projects that is submitted to the Legislature. The Director thanked the board staff for their effort and contributions. This report is available on the DCA website.

Discussion/Public Comment: None

17. Discussion and Possible Action to Initiate a Rulemaking to Accept the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards' Marital and Family Therapy National Examination as the Clinical Exam for California Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations (16 CCR) §§ 1816.2 and 1829.1)

Since the initial discussion of adopting the AMFTRB National Exam in November 2022, staff have worked with AMFTRB to address concerns regarding exam content, scope, and accessibility. The identified acceptance criteria and status of each are as follows:

1. Collaborate with AMFTRB on addressing examination content and measurement scope concerns. (Content & Scope)

The Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) reviewed the AMFTRB National Exam and presented its findings in a closed session at the November 2022 Board meeting. OPES found that the national exam measures broad practice competencies, while California's LMFT Clinical Exam focuses on state-specific competencies.

AMFTRB is conducting a Job Task Analysis with significant input from California LMFTs. AMFTRB noted that national trends are increasingly aligning with California's practices, which may influence future exam content and scope. AMFTRB also plans to incorporate items from California's LMFT Clinical Exam to support content alignment

2. Collaborate with AMFTRB on addressing accessibility for testing candidates to ensure exam candidates are not adversely affected by the transition to the AMFTRB National Exam. (Accessibility)

AMFTRB is actively exploring options to expand exam availability, including both frequency and capacity, to meet California's candidate volume.

3. Work with DCA's Office of Information Services to ensure an automated system is in place for transferring national examination eligibilities and test scores. (System Changes)

Initiating system changes will require the Board to adopt the AMFTRB National Exam by approving the necessary regulatory language.

4. Pursue the statute and regulatory amendments necessary to accept the AMFTRB National Exam for licensure.

The statutory amendments were approved by the Board at the September 2024 meeting and are currently included in the Board's sunset bill, SB 775.

Implementation Timeline

- Staff estimate full implementation of the AMFTRB National Exam will take 12–18 months after Board approval of the regulatory language.
- Key transition steps have been identified, but substantive work cannot begin until the Board confirms its intent to adopt the exam.
- Implementation activities will include completing the rulemaking process, preparing systems for transferring exam eligibilities and scores, and working with stakeholders to establish clear administrative procedures.
- Once approved, staff will coordinate with AMFTRB, provide regular updates to the Board, and continue efforts toward final adoption.
- The proposal allows continued use of the Board-administered exam through December 31, 2026, with full transition to the AMFTRB exam effective January 1, 2027.

Discussion

Lois Paff Bergen, Executive Director of AMFTRB: Noted that AMFTRB is revising its code of ethics. AMFTRB is waiting for the Board's final vote to adopt the AMFTRB exam before proceeding with in-person meetings and planning the transition. Transition planning will focus on ensuring exam content and measurement alignment, as well as addressing accessibility—both in terms of physical access to the exam and statewide availability across California.

Sodergren: If any concerns are raised, it can be discussed in future discussions when approving regulatory language.

Boyd: Expressed concern regarding accessibility as it deviates from California's current offering. What will be the frequency of contact with the Board to ensure there will not be disruptions to the implementation?

Sodergren: If this is approved, staff will work with AMFTRB over the next year or more. If accessibility becomes a concern, the Board could look at the regulation and extend it or not approve the regulation.

Knight: Clarified that if language is approved today, it's not the last time the Board can address it. There will opportunities for change.

Huft: Expressed concerns with transparency on pass rates and racial disparities. Expressed concerns regarding exam vendors in California and whether the Board will have oversight determining if the vendors are meeting its needs. Expressed concerns regarding the extent to which exam content will be updated and how much oversight the Board will have in the content. Board has previously requested exam data and has not received it to date.

Walker: Requested clearer reassurances regarding consumer protection. Noted that the goal of adopting the AMFTRB exam is to reduce administrative barriers for licensees and ease the Board's administrative demands, while maintaining strong consumer protections. Raised concerns about the vagueness of this language and how it translates to actual consumer benefits. Questioned how consumer needs are being addressed and whether consumer voices have been included in the process over the years.

Sovec: Following OPES's findings presented in November 2022, the Board raised specific concerns. The Board has not yet received responses to a series of follow-up questions submitted after that meeting.

Strack: Requested a closed session item for the November meeting to address the Board's concerns/questions with AMFTRB staff.

Further discussion took place about whether to take action or table this item until November.

Schildge: Explained that the proposed January 1, 2027 implementation date allows time for the regulation to become effective (approximately one year) and for necessary implementation steps. The Board was asked to consider whether it is comfortable with this timeline or would prefer to adjust it, especially considering additional information expected at the November meeting

Walker: Asked if the Board tabled this item to November, would it affect the timeline, especially if comments are received, which would have to be brought to the following Board meeting.

Berger: In response to Walker's question, it was noted that the timeline could potentially be affected. If comments are received, they would have to be brought to the following board meeting. The agency is required to review the regulations. With the upcoming agency reorganization, it is currently unclear how or if this reorganization will impact their regulatory review.

Walker: Requested to involve more voices in this process and requested that staff reach out to consumers and stakeholders to attend the November meeting.

Huft: It was noted that in February 2024, the Board received a confidential packet during closed session, outlining several concerns that could be of interest to stakeholders. Requested for clear and direct responses to each of the issues identified in that packet during the November meeting. Meaningful progress may be difficult until these concerns are fully addressed.

Public Comment

Dr. Ben Caldwell:

- While expressing general concerns about clinical exams, voiced support for the transition to the AMFTRB exam.
- Noted that the AMFTRB exam offers improvements over the California exam, particularly in collecting demographic data and identifying potential bias.
- Acknowledged concerns about differences between California and national standards but emphasized the importance of consistency, as national exams are already used for other professions
- Encouraged the Board to use its influence to ensure AMFTRB meets testing standards, publishes pass rate data disaggregated by various demographic factors, and evaluates its exam for differential item functioning and differential test functioning.
- Supported moving the regulatory language forward, with flexibility to adjust the timeline if needed.

Cathy Atkins, CAMFT:

- CAMFT strongly supports the transition to the AMFTRB exam and urged the Board to vote to move it forward.
- Noted that California is the only state not using the national exam, which negatively impacts license portability, job access, and federal employment opportunities for California MFTs.
- Stated that BBS staff have structured the process to allow the Board to move forward while continuing to gather data, with the option to pause if needed.
- Emphasized that AMFTRB may be less likely to invest in improvements without a clear commitment from the Board.
- Acknowledged the exam is not perfect but believes it is a better option than the current California exam.
- Highlighted AMFTRB's efforts to address exam bias and improve access.
- Urged the Board to take action on behalf of the 39,000 MFTs represented by CAMFT.

Motion: Approve the proposed regulatory text as presented in Attachment A and submit the approved text to the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency for review, and if no adverse comments are received, authorize the Executive Officer to take all steps necessary to initiate the rulemaking process, make any non-substantive changes to the text and the package, and set the matter for a hearing if requested. If after the 45-day public comment period, no adverse comments are received and no public hearing is requested, authorize the Executive Officer to take all steps necessary to complete the rulemaking, and adopt the proposed regulations as noticed for Title 16, California Code of Regulations sections 1816.2 and 1829.1.

M/S: Bailey/Huft

Public Comment: None

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

18. Discussion and Possible Action to Initiate a Rulemaking to Amend the Board's Experience Requirements for Licensed Educational Psychologists (16 CCR § 1856)

Staff presented potential amendments to the Board's regulations that specify experience requirements for LEP applicants. Staff also requested the Board initiate rulemaking after related statutory changes are enacted. Previous discussions took place in January and August 2024, and July 2025 at the Policy and Advocacy Committee meetings. Since that time, previously discussed statutory changes have been included in SB 775, which is currently pending legislative review.

The proposed regulation amendments if SB 775 is enacted were provided as Attachment A in the meeting materials. Proposed statutory amendments to LEP licensure requirements currently pending via SB 775 were provided as Attachment B.

Requirements for LEP licensure:

- 60 semester hours of postgraduate work in pupil personnel services; and
- Two years of full-time or equivalent experience as a credentialed school psychologist; and
- One of the following:
 - One year of supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program; or
 - One additional year of full-time or equivalent experience as a credentialed school psychologist in the public school under the direction on an LEP.

Pending Statutory Amendments (Attachment B): BPC § 4989.20 via SB 775

a. Specifying Experience Requirements in Greater Detail

- Replace the current measurement of experience in “years” to instead be measured in “school terms.”
- Provide a definition of “full time” and “equivalent to full time.”
- Specifying that all required experience as a credentialed school psychologist be gained over a period of at least one or two school terms.
- Clarifying that supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program must be 1,200 hours.
- Clarifies that for California credential holders, the one school term of additional experience must be under the direction of a LEP with a California license.

b. Clarifying Requirements for In-State Versus Out-of-State School Psychologists

Specifies that if the required two school terms of experience as a credentialed school psychologist was not gained with a California credential in a school located in California, that an additional one school term of experience must be gained with a California credential in a school located in California and under the direction of a California-licensed LEP.

c. Adding an Age Limit to a Passing Score on the LEP Exam

Proposed Amendments to Regulation (16 CCR §1856) (Attachment A)

The following proposed changes to LEP experience requirements in 16 CCR §1856 will be run after related statutory changes are enacted into law.

1. Strike language that would be covered by statute as follows:

- Delete subsection (a) which specifies that no more than one year of experience will be granted for any 12-month period.
- Delete subsection (b) which specifies requirements pertaining to part-time experience.

2. Specify documentation required for experience gained in a private or parochial school (subsection (a)):

Proposed language would require a supervisor or authorized school representative to certify, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant performed the full range of school psychologist duties as defined by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) regulations in Title 5, CCR § 80049.1(a)(3).

3. Specify documentation required for experience gained while employed by a temporary employment agency (subsection (b)):

Proposed language would require a supervisor or authorized school representative to certify, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant performed the full range of school psychologist duties as defined by the CTC regulations in Title 5, CCR § 80049.1(a)(3).

4. Specify the documentation of experience required to be submitted by applicants:

The proposal adds subsections (c), (d), and (e) to specify the minimum documentation needed to verify completion of experience required for licensure.

5. Specify additional requirements for experience gained under the direction of an LEP:
 - Subsection (e)(1) defines “under the direction of” and “supervision” to clarify expectations.
 - Subsection (e)(2) requires supervisors to hold a current, active, and unrestricted California LEP license and prohibits specified conflicts of interest.
 - Subsection (e)(3) would require the supervisor to be competent in the areas of practice and techniques being supervised and would provide a definition for “competent.”

Discussion/Comment

Jones: Comfortable with the proposed amendments as it will increase accountability for LEPs and will ensure safety, specifically from applicants that come from out-of-state.

Motion: Approve the proposed regulatory text as presented in Attachment A, and submit the approved text to the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency for review, and if no adverse comments are received, authorize the Executive Officer to take all steps necessary to initiate the rulemaking process, make any non-substantive changes to the text and the package, and set the matter for a hearing if requested. If after the 45-day public comment period, no adverse comments are received and no public hearing is requested, authorize the Executive Officer to take all steps necessary to complete the rulemaking, and adopt the proposed regulations as noticed for Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 1856.

M/S: Jones/Walker

Public Comment: None

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

19. Discussion and Consideration of:

a. Comments Received on Modified Text During the 15-Day Public Comment Period and Proposed Responses Thereto for the Board's Rulemaking to Amend 16 CCR § 1811 (Advertising Regulations)

b. Adoption of Amendments to 16 CCR § Section 1811 (Advertising Regulations)

a. Comments Received on Modified Text During the 15-Day Public Comment Period and Proposed Responses Thereto for the Board's Rulemaking to Amend 16 CCR § 1811 (Advertising Regulations)

The Board received one written comment during the public comment period to the advertising regulations. The written comment was read aloud and provided as Attachment C in the meeting materials.

The written comment was submitted by Shanti Ezrine, State Government Affairs Associate and Cathy Atkins, Deputy Executive Director on behalf of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT).

To summarize, CAMFT expressed concern about requiring licensees to include their middle name and/or suffix, in advertisements. They argued that omitting the middle name does not mislead the public, especially since license numbers are already required and verifiable. They noted practical challenges, confusion among licensees, and potential costs related to implementation and enforcement. CAMFT requested clarification on whether the middle name is essential for consumer protection and asked about penalties for unintentional omissions.

Recommended Response to Comment: The Board accepted this comment and proposed the following amendment to subsection (a)(1), which was provided as Attachment A in the meeting materials.

(1) The ~~full name (First Name, and Last Name, and any Middle Name and/or Suffix)~~ of the licensee, or registrant, ~~or registered referral~~

Discussion

Schildge: Believes that removing the existing requirement for licensees and registrants to disclose their full names in advertising and replace it with a requirement to disclose only the first and last name is problematic.

- Cited the First Amendment limitations on regulating speech and referenced the Bonnie Moore v. California State Board of Accountancy case, which held that only potentially misleading terms may be restricted.
- Requiring the full name helps prevent public confusion, especially when aliases are used, and that removing this requirement could risk noncompliance with BPC section 651. Attachment B, subsection G, was referenced to support this point.
- Recommended that if the Board accepts the staff's recommendation to remove the full name requirement, it should consider making further edits to subsection G to require that licensees using a nickname or former legal name also include their full name as filed with the Board in the same advertisement to avoid public confusion.

Sovec: Noted that a licensee or associate's full name appears on the Board's license verification page, even when searched using only the first and last name.

Helms: Confirmed Mr. Sovec's observation is correct. When multiple licensees or associates share the same first and last name, advertisements must also include the license or registration number to ensure accurate identification.

Public Comments

Cathy Atkins, CAMFT: While CAMFT defers to the Board and its counsel, they emphasized the practical concerns and thanked the Board for considering their input.

Dr. Ben Caldwell: Reiterated Mr. Sovec's point, stating that if a licensee is listed with the Board as "Benjamin Everett Caldwell," using "Benjamin Caldwell" or "Ben Caldwell" in advertising—along with the required license type and number—should not cause public confusion.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, NASW-CA: Agreed with Dr. Caldwell's comment. Noted that although many individuals share her name, entering her license number on the Board's license verification page accurately brings up her information.

Sierra Smith, Open Paths Counseling Center: Noted that she did not have a middle name until she was married.

Motion: Option No. 1: Direct staff to proceed as recommended as specified and provide the responses to the comment as indicated in the staff recommended responses.

M/S: Huft/Friedman

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

b. Adoption of Amendments to CCR, Title 16, Section 1811

Staff recommended that the Board review the proposed regulatory text shown provided in Attachment A of the meeting materials and consider whether to approve it as written, or to suggest changes to the proposed modified text.

Motion: Approve the proposed modified regulation text for CCR section 1811 as set forth in Attachment A, and direct staff to take all steps necessary to complete the rulemaking process, including preparing modified text for notice of a 15-day public comment period. If after that 15-day comment period, the Board does not receive any objections or adverse recommendations specifically directed at the modified text, the notice, or to the procedures followed by the Board in proposing or adopting this action, authorize the Executive Officer to make any non-substantive changes to the proposed regulations and rulemaking file, and adopt amendments to Title 16, CCR, section 1811 as set forth in Attachment A.

M/S: Huft/Friedman

Public Comment: None

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

20. Discussion and Consideration of Amendments to Title 16, California Code of Regulations Section 1815.5 (Telehealth Regulations)

This item was removed from the agenda.

21. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Restructuring the Pathway to Licensure for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§4980.397, 4980.398, 4980.399, 4980.40, 4980.41, 4980.43, 4980.50, 4984.01, 4984.7, 4984.72, 4989.20, 4989.68, 4992.05, 4992.07, 4992.09, 4992.1, 4996.1, 4996.3, 4996.4, 4996.23, 4996.28, 4999.46, 4999.46.1, 4999.50, 4999.52, 4999.53, 4999.55, 4999.64, 4999.100, 4999.120)

At previous meetings, the Workforce Development Committee considered several potential modifications to the licensure process aimed at reducing barriers to entry.

The Board's licensing and examination statutes are complex, and any amendments must be carefully evaluated to prevent unintended consequences and ensure effective implementation. Staff recommends a phased approach to implementing changes to the licensure and examination process.

- Phase I would involve amendments to the licensing and examination framework.
- Phase II would implement the transition to the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) national exam as the clinical exam for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs).
- Phase III would adjust the timing of the Board's clinical examinations to allow candidates to take those exams earlier in the licensure process.

Discussion focused on Phase 1 changes provided as Attachments A-1 through A-4 in the meeting materials.

Phase I: General Licensing Process Changes: LMFT, LCSW and LPCC

The following changes are proposed to take place in Phase I and have been drafted into the LMFT, LCSW, and LPCC practice acts.

a. Timing of the California Law and Ethics Exam

Under the proposal, associates would take the Law and Ethics Exam when ready, rather than annually for registration renewal. Passing the exam would still be required before a subsequent registration number is issued and before becoming eligible for the clinical exam. This change aims to prevent renewal delays if the exam is missed in a given year.

b. Age Limit for the California Law and Ethics Exam

The proposal places an age limit of 7 years on a passing score for the California Law and Ethics Exam.

c. Change in Registration Number Length and Time Supervised Experience Hours Valid

The proposal extends the extend the validity of registration numbers and supervised experience hours from 6 years to 7 years.

d. Add an Exception to the Prohibition on Working in a Private Practice with a Subsequent Registration Number

Under the proposal, the law would continue to prohibit associates with a subsequent associate registration number from working for a private practice or professional corporation. However, it would allow a one-time, two-year hardship extension for associates with a subsequent registration number to work in these settings.

e. Technical Clean-Up Changes

The proposal makes minor, technical clean-up changes:

- Deleting outdated exam transition and rescoring provisions
- Removing the 7-year retake requirement for the law and ethics exam
- Clarifying acceptance of early clinical exam scores from other states
- Removing repetitive language in statute
- Clarifying when eligibility is granted for the law and ethics exam

Phase I for LEPs

The following changes are proposed to take place in Phase I for LEPs:

- This proposal extends the time limit on qualifying experience hours to 7 years.
- Technical clean-up to delete outdated exam rescoring fee.

Need for Regulations

If the proposed statutory amendments are successfully adopted, corresponding regulatory changes will be required to ensure consistency with the statute.

Committee Discussion

Workforce Development Committee, April 2025: This committee reviewed the draft LMFT practice act language and directed staff to make revisions. The Committee also requested draft language for the LCSW and LPCC practice acts, and limited amendments for the LEP practice act, to be presented at the next Policy and Advocacy Committee meeting.

Policy and Advocacy Committee, July 2025: This committee reviewed the proposal and directed staff to make clarifying revisions to the exception to the prohibition on working in a private practice with a subsequent registration number in BPC §§4984.01(e), 4996.28(d), and 4999.100(e) as follows:

- Clarify it is a one-time extension;
- Clarify that work for the employer must not begin or continue until the Board approves the extension; and
- Clarify that applicants must specify the date the extension is needed to begin or continue work.

The committee directed staff to bring the revised proposal to the Board for consideration as a legislative proposal.

Discussion

Boyd: Asked how “hardship” would be defined.

Helms: Staff will take a lenient approach when evaluating hardship extension requests. “Good cause” may include medical leave, family caregiving, difficulty finding employment, or other circumstances beyond the applicant’s control. Staff will develop an FAQ to provide guidance.

Procedural questions were asked during the discussion. Staff provided responses and confirmed that an FAQ will be developed to address common questions and provide guidance.

Public Comment

Dr. Leah Brew: Expressed concern about maintaining continuity of care for clients during the turnaround time for processing extension requests, and asked whether there is a way to expedite the processing of the requests?

Sodergren: Currently, subsequent registrations requests are prioritized to support continuity of care. It is expected that extension requests will be processed even faster than subsequent registrations.

Sierra Smith:

- Noted the ongoing challenges nonprofit community mental health centers face in hiring associates due to limited funding and lack of a sustainable revenue stream.
- Noted that many nonprofits cannot bill Medi-Cal unless providing specialty mental health services, making it difficult to employ associates for general mental health care.
- Expressed support for allowing associates to gain hours in private practice, given the current financial constraints in the nonprofit sector.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, NASW-CA:

- Asked if BBS will be sharing processing times for subsequent registration approvals so the public will know how long it is taking to approve those.
- Acknowledged concerns about exploitation in private practice but noted that similar concerns exist in agencies and government organizations due to limited staffing, particularly a shortage of LCSWs for supervision.
- Mentioned that organizations like Motivo are hiring LCSWs to provide supervision where agencies cannot.
- Noted that private practices may offer better supervision, higher income, and lower caseloads, which can improve client care.

Motion: Direct staff to make any discussed changes to BPC Sections 4984.01, 4996.28, 4999.100 and any non-substantive changes to the language, and to pursue as a legislative proposal.

M/S: Strack/Uribe

Public Comment: None

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

22. **Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Statutory Amendments Related to the Practice of Pastoral Counseling (Amend BPC §§4980.01, 4996.13, 4999.22)**

At the January 2023 Licensing Committee meeting, the topic of pastoral counseling was discussed with the intent to propose clarifying the exemption language in the Board's practice acts. Staff presented examples of exemption laws from other states that offer clearer guidance for individuals operating in religious or faith-based roles.

Staff collaborated with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to conduct further research. This included a review of pastoral counseling practices in comparison to those used in mental health professions. Staff also compiled and cited relevant materials on the subject.

Given the religious and cultural diversity across the United States, staff and SMEs expanded their review to include additional exemption laws from other states. The findings were presented at the Policy and Advocacy Committee meeting in January 2025.

Exemption laws in the states of Texas, Florida, and Arizona were provided in the meeting materials as Attachment B. Research findings of additional exemption laws in other states were provided as Attachment C.

Staff began drafting amendments to statute, using Business and Professions Code section 4996.13 as the foundational model due to its more comprehensive and detailed language compared to the other practice acts.

In consultation with SMEs and legal counsel, it was determined that the amendments should focus on faith-based counseling rather than pastoral counseling. The proposed language aims to establish clear criteria to distinguish faith-based counseling from clinical mental health counseling. Key differentiating factors include:

- Services are performed under the direct auspices of a recognized faith-based entity (e.g., church, synagogue, mosque, or other recognized religious organization);
- No fees are charged or received beyond the religious official's compensation from the faith-based entity;

- Individuals do not claim or imply to be licensed or registered to practice clinical social work, and they do not hold themselves out to the public by any title or description of services incorporating the words psychosocial, psychotherapy, or clinical social worker; and
- Services are limited to counseling in a religious or spiritual context and do not involve the diagnosis or treatment of mental health disorders.

The proposed amendments for the three license types were presented before the Policy and Advocacy Committee in July 2025. The Committee directed staff to revise the proposed language.

The revisions to the proposed amendments were provided in the meeting materials as Attachments A-1 through A-3.

Discussion: None

Motion: Direct staff to make any discussed changes and any non-substantive changes, and to pursue as a legislative proposal.

M/S: Boyd/Strack

Public Comment

Cathy Atkins, CAMFT: Expressed appreciation for the inclusion of the word “psychotherapy.”

Vote: Yea 9; Nay 0, Abstention 1, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|---------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | abstain |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

23. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Assembly Bill 489 (Bonta) Health Care Professions: Deceptive Terms or Letters: Artificial Intelligence

This item was removed from the agenda.

**24. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Assembly Bill 742 (Elhawary)
Department of Consumer Affairs: Licensing: Applicants who are the
Descendants of Slaves**

AB 742 would require boards within DCA to expedite applicants seeking licensure if they are certified by the State Bureau for Descendants of American Slavery as a descendant of American slaves.

This bill provides that this requirement becomes effective only if the companion bill, SB 518, is enacted. SB 518 proposes the establishment of the Bureau for Descendants of American Slavery. The effective date would commence once that bureau implements a process to certify Descendants of American Slavery.

AB 742 includes a sunset date of four years from the operative date, or until January 1, 2032, whichever occurs first.

At its May 2025 meeting, the Board adopted a support position on AB 742. Since that time, the bill undergone substantive amendments. The primary amendment clarifies that boards under DCA are required to expedite licensure applications for descendants of slaves.

Discussion

Thiess: Asked for distinction between expedite and prioritize.

Helms: The Medical Board uses the term “priority review status”. The term “expedite” is consistent with BBS’ current practice.

Motion: Support AB 742.

M/S: Huft/Walker

Public Comment

Sierra Smith: Expressed support for AB 742. Noted that if the bill is enacted, outreach to registrants will be important to ensure they are informed that state certification is required in order to qualify for the expedited application process.

Vote: Yea 10; Nay 0, Absent 1. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | Y |
| Annette Walker | Y |

25. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Senate Bill 497 (Wiener) Legally Protected Health Care Activity

This item was removed from the agenda.

26. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Senate Bill 641 (Ashby) Department of Consumer Affairs and Department of Real Estate: States of Emergency: Waivers and Exemptions

This item was removed from the agenda.

27. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Senate Bill 744 (Cabaldon) Accrediting Agencies

SB 744 safeguards California's higher education institutions, financial aid eligibility, and licensure pathways from potential federal disruptions by providing that any national or regional accrediting agency that was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) as of January 1, 2025, will retain recognition under California law through January 20, 2029, provided it continues to operate in substantially the same manner.

Author's Intent

The author's fact sheet expresses concern over recent federal actions, including Executive Order #14279 and a May 1, 2025 memo from the U.S. Department of Education, which direct accreditors to eliminate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) standards and threaten accreditation for institutions that maintain such initiatives. The author notes that California statutes often rely on federal recognition of accrediting bodies for eligibility in financial aid and licensure pathways. The bill aims to address the risk that federal pressure on accreditors could unjustly impact California institutions, potentially making them ineligible for state programs and services.

Background

The Board relies on degrees and coursework from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by USDE. If federal actions result in the loss of USDE-recognized accreditation, it could create significant challenges for the Board. This bill establishes a contingency plan to mitigate resulting challenges.

Measuring Compliance

In its July 8, 2025 analysis, the Assembly Committee on Higher Education raised a policy question regarding whether the state would be responsible for ensuring that educational institutions continue to operate in a substantially similar manner if the bill is triggered by federal action. The appropriate mechanism to address this concern has yet to be determined.

Motion: Support SB 744.

M/S: Walker/Jones

Public Comment: None

Vote: Yea 9; Nay 0, Absent 2. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | absent |
| Annette Walker | Y |

28. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Senate Bill 775 Amendments (Board of Psychology and Board of Behavioral Sciences) (Ashby) (BPC §§: 25, 28, 29, 4980.11, 4990, 4996.16.1, and 4999.23)

SB 775 is the Board's sunset bill. The bill proposes to extend the Board's sunset date until January 1, 2030. At its May 2025 meeting, the Board adopted a support position on that provision of the bill.

The Board is also sponsoring several amendments in SB 775 related to its practice acts. One of these amendments proposes extending the sunset date of the temporary practice allowance from January 1, 2026 until January 1, 2030.

As part of the Board's 2025 sunset review, the Senate Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development, and the Assembly Committee on Business and Professions requested an additional amendment be added to the temporary practice allowance statute in SB 775 (BPC §§ 4980.11, 4996.16.1, and 4999.23). The following amendment would strengthen accountability of the out-of-state licensee providing services to a client temporarily located in California, by requiring them to submit a signed statement, under penalty of

perjury, acknowledging the Board's jurisdiction and agreeing to comply with California law:

(c) A person who provides services pursuant to this section ~~is deemed to have agreed to practicing under~~ *shall submit a signed statement, under penalty of perjury, acknowledging that they are subject to* the jurisdiction of the board and *agreeing* to be bound by the laws of this state.

At its July 2025 meeting, the Policy and Advocacy Committee reviewed the proposed amendments to BPC §§4980.11(c), 4996.16.1(c), and 4999.23(c), and recommended that the Board adopt a support position on the amendments.

The amendments were provided as Attachment A in the meeting materials.

Additional Amendments

Since the July 2025 Policy and Advocacy Committee meeting, the Senate Business and Professions Committee has proposed additional amendments to three sections of the Business and Professions Code (BPC) related to the Board. The proposed amendments would relocate the provisions from general BPC sections into each licensing board's specific administrative statutes.

- BPC §25 – Requires training in human sexuality for applicants and new licensees with this Board or the Board of Psychology.
- BPC §28 – Mandates this Board and the Board of Psychology to establish required training for its applicants in child abuse assessment and reporting, and encourages both boards to require coursework in elder and dependent adult abuse assessment and reporting.
- BPC §29 – Requires this Board and the Board of Psychology to consider adopting continuing education requirements for its licensees in chemical dependency and early intervention.

The proposed amendments will be incorporated into three newly created sections: BPC §§ 4990.26.1, 4990.26.2, and 4990.26.3. The intent is to preserve existing law without making substantive changes. Upon reviewing the draft language, staff identified the need for technical revisions to ensure the timing of the Board's licensure requirements remains consistent. Staff will continue to provide technical assistance as the amendments move forward.

Motion: Support on SB 775 amendments, and direct staff to continue working with the Senate Business and Professions Committee on the additional amendments they are pursuing to BPC §§4990.26.1, 4990.26.2, and 4990.26.3.

M/S: Strack/Huft

Public Comment

Dr. Ben Caldwell: Asked about the first proposed amendment, specifically what it would mean on a practical level for the out-of-state practitioner to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Board. Noted that such individuals would not hold a California license or registration, raising questions about the Board's ability to enforce disciplinary action.

Helms: Explained that out-of-state practitioners would be required to comply with California laws. If they fail to do so, they could be subject to enforcement for unlicensed practice and may be fined. Helms acknowledged that the Board's jurisdiction in these cases is limited, which highlights one of the challenges associated with temporary practice allowances.

Vote: Yea 9; Nay 0, Absent 2. Motion carried.

| Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------|
| Lorez Bailey | Y |
| Dr. Nick Boyd | Y |
| Susan Friedman | Y |
| Justin Huft | Y |
| Christopher Jones | Y |
| Kelly Ranasinghe | absent |
| John Sovec | Y |
| Wendy Strack | Y |
| Rebecca Thiess | Y |
| Eleanor Uribe | absent |
| Annette Walker | Y |

29. Update on Board-Sponsored and Board-Monitored Legislation

The following bills were highlighted:

Board-Sponsored Legislation

SB 775 (Ashby) Board of Psychology and Board of Behavioral Sciences: This bill is currently in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Board-Supported Legislation

- AB 742 (Elhawary) Department of Consumer Affairs: Licensing: Applicants who are Descendants of Slaves: This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- AB 489 (Bonta) Health Care Professions: Deceptive Terms or Letters: Artificial Intelligence: This bill is in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

- SB 579 (Padilla) Mental Health and Artificial Intelligence Working Group: This is a 2-year bill.

Board-Opposed Legislation

AB 427 (Jackson) Social Workers: Interstate Compact: This is a 2-year bill.

The full update was provided in the meeting materials.

30. Update on Board Rulemaking Proposals

Disciplinary Guidelines

Status: In the final phase and is close to being submitted to Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for its final review.

Telehealth

Status: Approved by OAL and will go into effect January 1, 2026.

Continuing Education

Status: Submitted for DCA Production Phase Review April 8, 2025; Staff Working on Requested Edits to Documents

Advertising

Status: Comment Period Ended July 1, 2025; Comments to be Reviewed by the Board at August 2025 Meeting

English as a Second Language: Additional Examination Time

Status: In preparation for DCA Production Phase Review

Fee Reductions

Status: Submitted for DCA Production Phase Review

Discussion/Public Comment: None

31. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

Boyd: Requested discussion on the following topics:

- Requested continuing education audit rates on supervisors and license holders in the EO Report.
- Request to discuss a legislative proposal for the Board to pursue adding an additional LPCC member.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, NASW-CA: Requested discussion on the following topics:

- Licensure Readiness Survey: Proposal for the Board to consider developing a survey targeting LCSWs, ASWs, educators, and MSW students to assess perceptions of readiness for licensure and clinical practice.
- Transparency in Registration Data: Interest in increasing transparency around subsequent ASW registration numbers, in addition to how data is shared for initial ASW applications.
- Title Protection for Social Workers: Although previous legislative efforts have not been successful, there is interest in re-engaging the conversation around title protection for the social work profession.
- Exam Disparities
- Federal Legislation – Senior Access to Mental Health Services: Monitoring a federal bill that would expand access to mental health services for seniors and individuals with chronic illnesses by LCSWs to bill for services in skilled nursing facilities and for health and behavioral assessments.
- Concerns Regarding Online Therapy Platforms: Interest in examining the services provided by organizations such as BetterHelp.

Sierra Smith: A request was made for the Board to take a stronger stance in support of an initiative addressing Medi-Cal reimbursement barriers for nonprofit counseling centers. Currently, 501(c)(3) nonprofit agencies employing BBS-licensed therapists are unable to receive Medi-Cal reimbursement for services provided, despite therapists being licensed and qualified.

32. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

Jones: Reported that John Sovec will be a keynote speaker for LGBTQ+ at the California Association of School Psychologists convention in October.

Cathy Atkins, CAMFT: Expressed appreciation to the Board for moving forward with the AMFTRB national exam.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, NASW-CA: Expressed appreciation for the Board's support in reducing barriers to licensure. NASW-CA will hold its annual conference November 14-15 in Irvine.

Nick McCarthy, LMFT: Recommends and requests the reinstatement of the oral examination as an essential component of the licensure process.

Kelly Michael Kilcoin: Endorses reinstatement of the oral examination.

Dr. Jasmine Smith, NASW-CA: In light of ongoing discussions around bias and the importance of cultural humility and responsiveness, it was emphasized that these considerations must remain central in the development of any standardized examination—whether written or oral.

33. Adjournment

The Board adjourned at 1:25 p.m.