



Board of Behavioral Sciences



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Gavin Newsom, Governor  
State of California

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Department of Consumer Affairs

## LICENSING COMMITTEE MINUTES

A recorded webcast of this meeting is available at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fCC00uGUvw>

**DATE** July 21, 2023

**MEETING PLATFORM** WebEx Video/Phone Conference

**TIME** 9:00 a.m.

### ATTENDEES

**Members Present:** Wendy Strack, Chair, Public Member  
Eleanor Uribe, LCSW Member  
Dr. Annette Walker, Public Member

**Staff Present:** Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer  
Marlon McManus, Assistant Executive Officer  
Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manager  
Christy Berger, Regulatory Analyst  
Christina Kitamura, Administrative Analyst  
Sabina Knight, Legal Counsel

**Other Attendees:** Public participation via WebEx video conference/phone conference and in-person at Department of Consumer Affairs

**1. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum**

Wendy Strack, Chair of the Telehealth Committee (Committee) called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

**2. Introductions**

Committee members introduced themselves during role call; staff and public attendees introduced themselves.

**3. Consent Calendar: Discussion and Possible Approval of January 13, 2023**

Two amendments were suggested.

Motion: Approve the January 13, 2023 Committee meeting minutes as amended.

M/S: Walker/Uribe.

Public Comment: None

Motion carried: 3 yea, 0 nay, 1 abstention.

Member	Vote
Wendy Strack	Yes
Eleanor Uribe	Yes
Dr. Annette Walker	Yes

**4. Overview of the Purpose of the Committee**

The last Committee meeting was held on January 13, 2023. The Committee heard a presentation regarding behavioral health workforce challenges, discussed the practices of pastoral counseling and life coaching, and discussed creating a workforce development action plan.

The list of discussion topics for future discussion were presented.

**5. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding the Development of a Consumer Outreach Document Defining the Board’s Professions**

At the previous meeting, the Committee discussed creating an outreach document designed to help consumers better understand the types of mental health professionals available.

Staff worked with the professional associations to develop an overview of each profession. Staff drafted a document, which was presented to the Committee for discussion and approval.

Public Comment

Ben Caldwell: Social workers currently have a title protection bill moving through the legislature; questioned whether the description of social worker should be tightened in the language to refer to a licensed clinical social worker. Referred to a paragraph that states “To be a social worker a person must have either their bachelor’s in social work (BSW), a master’s degree in social work (MSW) a Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) or a PhD in Social Work.” Currently, that statement is not accurate.

Rebecca Gonzales, National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW-CA): Although it is not yet in California statute, the description of social work is appropriate because this is how the NASW and the profession defines it.

Discussion

Strack: Noted that in other sections, the professions are referred to as “licensed.” For consistency, she recommended to reference social workers as licensed clinical social workers.

Helms: Explained that social work is different than the other professions because some social workers use that title and have a degree, but are not licensed. Will work with NASW-CA on that language and bring edits back to the Committee.

Motion: Direct staff to work with NASW-CA to adjust the language to social work and bring it back to the Committee for consideration in October.

M/S: Strack/Walker

Motion carried: 3 yea, 0 nay, 1 abstention.

Member	Vote
Wendy Strack	Yes
Eleanor Uribe	Yes
Dr. Annette Walker	Yes

**6. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Workforce Development Action Plan**

At its January 2023 meeting, the Committee discussed creating a workforce development plan that would focus on three main efforts: data analysis, reducing barriers to licensure, and recruitment and retention.

Any effort in workforce development must be within the scope of the Board’s mandated authority of public protection. Therefore, the focus for the action plan must be on licensure requirements and processes to become licensed.

First, barriers must be identified. Second, formulate short-term and long-term goals to assist in workforce development. Additionally, the Committee must also consider the Board's current licensing population to identify any trends that may affect workforce development and retention.

### Board/Staff Discussion

Strack: Noted the geographical areas that are dramatically underserved; wants to make sure that the population of therapists reflects the diversity of the state and that the needs of the population are being met.

Berger: Outlined the work staff is doing on licensing applications, publications, and information on the website to help reduce deficiencies.

### Public Comment

Caldwell: Referred to Sean O'Connor's master's thesis on why social workers did not get through the licensure process; indicated that this could be a good starting point when looking at explanations for why people are not completing the licensure process and demographic factors.

Atkins, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) and Gonzales, NASW-CA: Thanked the Board for doing this work and offered to be resources to the Board.

Leslie Lieberman: Commented on the limitations created by only being able to work in non-profit settings (for subsequent interns) and stated that this is a large reason for people dropping out and contributes to the workforce shortages. Urged the Board to consider removing this policy or reconsider the usefulness of the policy.

Lisa Wenninger: The licensure requirements are obstacles for the associate trying to navigate the system; the length of time that it takes to navigate the system becomes a disadvantage. For example, the communication process of the licensing exam between NBCC and BBS is 60 days.

Motion: Direct staff to continue to research and develop reports that will assist in constructing workforce development strategies.

M/S: Strack/Walker

No further public comments.

Motion carried: 3 yea, 0 nay, 1 abstention.

Member	Vote
Wendy Strack	Yes
Eleanor Uribe	Yes
Dr. Annette Walker	Yes

**7. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items**

Uribe: Mentoring people going through the licensing process – are there resources?

**8. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda**

None

**9. Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 10:03 a.m.