

<< DRAFT >>

## ADVISORY BOARD ON GENETIC COUNSELING

### Minutes

June 9, 2025

The Advisory Board on Genetic Counseling met on Monday, June 9, 2025, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lydia Higgs, CGC, Chair  
Meghan Archer, Citizen Member  
Tiffany Lewis, CGC  
Richard Scott Lucidi, MD

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Martha Thomas, CGC, Vice-Chair

**STAFF PRESENT:** Arne Owens, Director of Department of Health Professions  
William L. Harp, M.D., Executive Director  
Michael Sobowale, LLM, Deputy Executive Director - Licensure  
Jennifer Deschenes, Deputy Executive Director – Discipline  
Colanthia M. Opher, Deputy Executive Director – Medical  
Licensure and Administration  
Kathleen LaMotte, Board Administrator  
Matthew Novak, DHP Policy and Economic Analyst  
Roslyn Nickens, Licensing Supervisor  
Sonya Armstead, Licensing Specialist

**GUESTS PRESENT:** None

#### Call to Order

Lydia Higgs called the meeting to order @ 1:00 p.m.

#### Emergency Egress Procedures

Kathleen LaMotte announced the emergency egress instructions.

#### Roll Call

Ms. LaMotte called the roll; a quorum was declared.

## **Introduction of Members**

Ms. Higgs asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Higgs moved to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2024, meeting. Dr. Lucidi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Higgs moved to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lewis and passed unanimously.

## **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

None received

## **New Business**

### **1. Legislative Report**

Matthew Novak reviewed items pertaining to the Board of Medicine from the 2025 General Assembly (GA) session. This included two vetoed bills supporting unconscious bias training, a new reporting system for threats made against healthcare professionals, a study to be completed by the DHP regarding the scope of practice for physician assistants, a new license type for anesthesiologist assistants, a faster regulatory pathway to allow for licensure by endorsement for professions that do not currently have one, a recommendation for education on communication with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder to be disseminated to DHP licensees, the elimination of the Board of Health Professions and the absorption of the Board's duties by boards and divisions of DHP.

### **2. Report on Status of Regulatory /Policy Actions**

Matthew Novak reviewed the status of the Advisory Board's regulatory actions. Only one regulation impacts this Advisory Board, the periodic review changes recommended in October of 2022. The changes will become effective July 3 and will eliminate some unnecessary requirements. This report was for informational purposes only.

### **3. Recommendation of draft amendments for licensure by endorsement**

The Advisory Board was asked to review draft regulatory changes for licensure by endorsement to create a separate path to licensure in Virginia when applicants are licensed in other states. This will allow a slightly easier process to become licensed in Virginia. The Advisory's recommendation will be sent to the Executive Committee in August to consider adoption of an exempt regulatory action

Subsequent to the package being released to the Advisory Board, the language stricken in 18VAC85-170-51 was re-inserted. There are some professions that do not use the

National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB), so the language requiring verification of no disciplinary action is re-inserted. Additionally, the words “substantially similar” were struck from 18VAC85-170-51(1) as that language was not needed.

Mr. Novak reported that about 40% of professions under DHP umbrella do not have licensure by endorsement. Many are under the Board of Medicine as allied health professions.

The Advisory discussed concerns that other jurisdictions may not have the same requirements for licensure as does Virginia. After a discussion of certification standards, the Advisory endorsed the addition of “certification by ABGC or ABMG”.

**MOTION: Ms. Higgs moved to recommend to the full Board of Medicine that it adopt an exempt regulatory action to amend the regulations pursuant to SB1438. Dr. Lucidi seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

#### 4. Orientation to the Board

Dr. Harp shared a presentation to welcome new Advisory Board members to their role and serve as a refresher for members that have served on the Advisory for a while. He reviewed the structure of the Department of Health Professions and how the Board of Medicine receives oversight from the Commonwealth.

#### Licensing Report

Sonia Armstead provided the following licensing statistics for behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts:

Total number Licensed:  
Genetic Counselor - 634  
Genetic Counselor-Temporary - 6

Total License issued since January 1, 2025 to Present:  
Genetic Counselor - 25  
Genetic Counselor-Temporary - 2

Current Processing Time: 25 days

Clearance Rate: 116%

#### Announcements

Mr. Sobowale advised that at future meetings, there will be no paper agenda packet, and Advisory members will have their items pre-loaded on a laptop. The agenda will also be projected in the room for guests to see. Agency staff will continue to send out notice of the meeting by email ahead of time.

**Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, October 20, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Higgs adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

---

William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director

DRAFT