



Virginia Department of

Health Professions

Board of Counseling

FINAL-APPROVED

Virginia Board of Counseling

Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 17, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, VA 23233

Board Room 2

PRESIDING OFFICER: Terry R. Tinsley, PhD, LPC, LMFT, CSOTP, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Benjamin Allison, Citizen Member
Maria Anastasiou, LMFT
Lester Paul Bernard, PhD, LPC
Marlo Burdge, Citizen Member
Nakeisha Gordon, LPC (*arrived at 10:05 am*)
Luanne Griffin, LPC
Gerard Lawson, PhD, LPC, LSATP, NCC, Vice-Chair, Regulatory Committee Chair
Charlotte Markva, LPC, LMFT, CSAC
Matthew Scott, LMFT
Cyrus Williams, PhD, LPC, LSATP

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Shannon Kuschel, PhD, LPC

BOARD STAFF PRESENT: Latasha Austin, Licensing & Operations Manager
Ashlyn Cole, Administrative Assistant
Jaime Hoyle, JD, Executive Director
Jennifer Lang, Deputy Executive Director - Discipline
Charlotte Lenart, Deputy Executive Director - Licensing
Dalyce Logan, Senior Licensing Specialist
Christy Palmore, Senior Discipline & Compliance Case Specialist

DHP STAFF PRESENT: Erin Barrett, Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, DHP
Arnie Owens, Agency Director, Department of Health Professions
Matthew Novak, Policy & Economic Analyst, Department of Health Professions

BOARD COUNSEL PRESENT: James Rutkowski, Assistant Attorney General

PRESENTERS: Barbara Hodgdon, PhD, Deputy Director, Health Care Workforce Data Center, DHP

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Paige Bennard
Trey Cater, Seven Summits Family Services
Stephen Foster, Foundations to Success
Christopher Sapp, Foundations to Success
K. Shabazz, Seven Summits Family Services
Maria Stransky, LPC, CSAC, CSOTP, Former Vice-Chair

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Tinsley called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM: A formal introduction of all Board members and staff was conducted. At the time of roll call, ten Board members were present, establishing a quorum.

MISSION STATEMENT: Dr. Tinsley read the mission statement of the Department of Health Professions, which was also the mission statement of the Board. Dr. Tinsley also read the emergency egress

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The meeting agenda was adopted as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment was provided.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Board reviewed the minutes from the last quarterly board meeting held on July 25, 2025.

Motion: Dr. Lawson made a motion, which Ms. Gordon properly seconded, to approve the minutes from the July 25, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

AGENCY DIRECTOR REPORT:

Mr. Owens welcomed the Board Members back to the Perimeter Center and extended a special welcome to Ms. Markva and Dr. Williams on their recent appointments to the Board. Mr. Owens provided a verbal report to the Board reporting the following:

- Mr. Owens emphasized that despite the upcoming state-wide elections, the mission of the Department of Health Professions (DHP) remains unchanged. He informed the Board that the Agency's primary focus continues to be on internal management and improving operational efficiency to ensure responsible stewardship of licensee fees.
- Mr. Owens informed the Board that DHP submitted legislative proposals to the Secretary's Office for consideration during the January 2026 General Assembly session. These proposals are currently under review, and updates will be provided as developments occur.
- Mr. Owens informed the Board that although DHP operates as a non-general fund agency, it is still required to submit a biennial budget. Mr. Owens noted that the agency has provided input for the upcoming budget cycle, which will be reviewed by the General Assembly and is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2026.
- He commended the Board for its legislative contributions, particularly efforts to expand the behavioral health profession through the inclusion of Behavioral Health Technicians (BHTs) and Behavioral Health Technician Assistants (BHT-As).

BOARD CHAIR REPORT:

Dr. Tinsley raised concerns regarding the increasing number of fentanyl-related deaths among senior populations, emphasizing the need for further awareness and preventive measures.

Dr. Tinsley and Ms. Hoyle formally recognized former Board member Maria Stransky for her dedicated service to the Board of Counseling from 2017 to 2025, including her role as Vice-Chair from July 2023 through June 2025. Ms. Hoyle offered brief remarks highlighting Ms. Stransky's contributions and commitment during her tenure.

LEGISLATION & REGULATORY REPORT:

- **Current Regulatory Actions**

Mr. Novak reviewed and discussed with the Board the current regulatory actions pertaining to the Board of Counseling, as outlined in the agenda packet beginning on page 11, dated October 10, 2025.

He further informed the Board that subsequent to the report date, the fast-track regulatory action concerning the reduction of residency requirements had been approved by the Governor. The action was submitted for publication on October 15, 2025, and is scheduled to become effective on December 18, 2025.

- **Consideration of Petition for Rulemaking**

Mr. Novak provided an overview of the petition for rule making process to both new and returning Board members.

Mr. Novak reviewed and discussed with the Board the Petition for Rule Making received requesting that the Board amend 18VAC115-20-52 to create an exception to the residency hours requirement for individuals who have engaged in providing clinical counseling services under supervision prior to holding a temporary license.

There were 14 public comments received. Ten comments in support of the petition, two opposed, and two responded to the comments that were made.

During the Board's discussion, concerns were raised about how this petition would allow individuals to begin clinical practice and supervision without prior approval from the Board.

Motion: Dr. Lawson made a motion, which Mr. Scott properly seconded, to take no action on the petition, as the petition is inconsistent with the Board's mission to protect the public and protect client welfare. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Readoption of Electronic Meeting Policy**

Ms. Barrett reviewed and discussed with the Board the **electronic participation policy** as presented in the agenda packet. Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.3(D) requires public bodies to adopt electronic participation policies. The policy presented in the agenda packet is consistent with the law and is applied across the Department of Health Professions.

Motion: Ms. Griffin made a motion, which Ms. Burdge properly seconded, to re-adopt the electronic participation policy as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Issuance of Periodic Review for Chapter 15**

Mr. Novak reviewed and discussed with the Board 18VAC115-15 (Regulations Governing Delegation to an Agency Subordinate).

Motion: Dr. Bernard made a motion, which Ms. Gordon properly seconded, to issue a periodic review for 18VAC115-15. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Adoption of Guidance Document Related to AI in Practice**

Ms. Barrett presented and discussed the draft guidance document related to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in practice, including revisions made by the Regulatory Committee.

The Regulatory Committee reviewed the draft guidance at its meeting on September 19, 2025, and recommended that the Board adopt the document.

During discussion, Mr. Rutkowski raised concerns regarding the inclusion of hyperlinks in the guidance, noting that linked content may change over time. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that any changes to linked documents remain consistent with Board standards.

Board counsel advised that key information from the linked resources could be incorporated directly into the guidance document to mitigate this concern.

Ms. Griffin and Dr. Lawson expressed support for retaining the links as references, stating that licensees are still required to comply with Board laws and regulations regardless of the tools or resources cited.

The Board discussed the potential addition of a clarifying statement such as “as of the date of this document” to indicate the currency of referenced materials.

Motion: Dr. Lawson made a motion, which Ms. Anastasiou properly seconded, to accept the recommendation of the Regulatory Committee and adopt Guidance Document 115-4 with the addition of a reference date statement as of October 17, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Ms. Hoyle provided a verbal report covering the following topics:

- **Board Appointments**
 - Ms. Hoyle welcomed new Board members, Ms. Markva and Dr. Williams.
 - She noted that Ms. Anastasiou was recently reappointed for a second term.
- **Counseling Compact Updates**
 - As of September 30, 2025, the Counseling Compact is operational in Arizona and Minnesota.
 - Virginia is not yet participating, as the state still requires the authority to mandate criminal background checks and the implementation of enabling regulations.
 - Ms. Hoyle shared updates from the Compact Rules Committee meetings held in August, September, and October, which focused on Dataset rules.
 - Future meetings will address rules regarding the conversion of Privilege to Practice into a home state license.
 - The next Commission meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2026, following the conclusion of the AASCB meeting.
- **Outreach**
 - Ms. Hoyle informed the Board that the AASCB Conference is scheduled for January 2025.
 - She also reported changes to the Department of Health Professions (DHP) travel policy:
 - Unless fully funded by the hosting conference, DHP is currently limiting Board-funded conference attendance to one individual.
 - DHP prefers staff to attend unless a Board member’s expertise is specifically required.
 - It is anticipated that this restriction may be relaxed as budget constraints ease.

Behavioral Sciences Updates

- *Board of Psychology*
 - Will begin licensing Psychological Practitioners effective November 3, 2025.
 - Supporting regulations will take effect on November 1, 2025.
- *Board of Social Work*
 - Continues to explore alternative pathways to licensure examinations.
 - The regulations for Music Therapists have been approved, and the Board will begin issuing licenses effective December 5, 2025, in support of the regulations taking effect on December 1, 2025.

DISCIPLINE REPORT:

Ms. Lang referenced the discipline report, beginning on page 35 of the meeting agenda, and noted the following:

- Since the last report in April 2025, the Board of Counseling received 237 new investigative files from Enforcement and closed 195 cases.
- Discipline staff consists of Ms. Lang and 2 Senior Discipline and Compliance Specialists, Christy Palmore and Krystal Blanton. The 3 staff members are shared by the Boards of Counseling, Psychology, and Social Work.
- Currently, discipline staff is actively working on 273 cases for the Board of Counseling, and 639 cases for the combined behavioral science boards.

Ms. Lang also referenced recent board Orders, beginning on page 39 of the meeting agenda, and provided a brief overview of the mandatory suspension process to new board members.

LICENSING REPORT:

Ms. Lenart referenced the licensing report, beginning on page 69 of the meeting agenda and notes the following key updates:

- **Licensing Volume & Operations:**
 - The Board of Counseling currently regulates approximately 39,000 licensees, certificate holders, and registrants.
 - Monthly activity includes processing ~800 applications, handling ~2,000 phone calls, and responding to 4,000–5,000 emails.
 - The Board ranks among the largest within the Department of Health Professions (DHP), following Nursing and Medicine, and closely aligned with Pharmacy in application volume.
- **Customer Satisfaction:**
 - Recent survey results indicate a 92.6% satisfaction rate with customer service provided by Board staff.
- **Efficiency Improvements:**
 - Transitioned from paper-based systems to digital platforms, including BOT emails and online applications.
 - Streamlined instructions and requirements to improve processing times.
- **Staffing Challenges:**
 - A senior licensing specialist recently resigned, exacerbating workload pressures.
 - Staff have been working extended hours and weekends; current pace is unsustainable.
 - Two new positions are pending approval through HR and executive leadership, but onboarding and training will take several months.
 - Due to current staffing levels, the 30-day application processing goal may not be met in the near term.
- **Regulatory Updates:**
 - Preparations underway for upcoming residency regulation changes effective December 18, 2025.
 - Updates will be required across multiple platforms including handbooks, forms, FAQs, website content, automated emails, and internal systems.
- **Outreach & Engagement:**
 - Attended the Virginia Network of Private Providers (VNPP) meeting to provide updates on QMHPs, BHTs, and new licenses:
 - Master's-level Psychology license effective November 1, 2025.
 - Music Therapy license effective December 1, 2025.
 - Presented at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College on CSAC, CSAC-A, QMHP, and BHT credentials.
 - Participated in monthly AASCB administrative hangouts (with Dr. Lawson) to discuss Board challenges and solutions.

Continuing Education Audit:

Ms. Austin provided an overview of the 2025 Continuing Education Audit. Key findings included:

- Total Individuals Audited: 448
- Responses Received: 356
- Compliant Responses: 207
- Non-Compliant Responses: 89
- Pending Responses to be Reviewed: 60
- No Response Received: 92
- Overall Non-Compliance (including no response): 181

Ms. Austin noted that the majority of non-compliant individuals fall under the CSAC (Certified Substance Abuse Counselor) and QMHP (Qualified Mental Health Professional) categories. For CSACs, while continuing education was submitted, it often lacked content specific to substance abuse, which is required by regulation. QMHPs were primarily non-compliant due to either failing to respond to the audit request or expressing unawareness of the continuing education requirement necessary for registration renewal.

REGULATORY COMMITTEE REPORT:

Dr. Lawson expressed appreciation to staff for their continued hard work and extended thanks to the Board for approving the A.I. Guidance Document.

He noted that key discussion topics remain focused on Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHPs), Behavioral Health Technicians (BHTs), and the Counseling Compact.

As past president of the American Association of State Counseling Boards (AASCB), Dr. Lawson informed the Board that monthly Hangout Meetings are open to all members and encouraged participation from fellow Board members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Updates to Policy Documents**

Ms. Lenart discussed with the Board four programs that were submitted to the Board for Board Approval:

1. **Foundations to Success** – Proposed training for BHTAs, BHTs, QMHP-Trainees, and QMHPs.
2. **Camp Community College** – Proposed a Behavioral Health Technician Assistant Certificate program.
3. **Seven Summits Family Services** – Submitted an 80-hour curriculum for QMHP-Trainees and QMHPs.
4. **Relias** – Submitted four curricula to meet didactic education requirements for BHTAs, BHTs, QMHP-Trainees, and QMHPs.

Motion: Dr. Lawson made a motion, which Ms. Gordan properly seconded, to approve the four programs. The motion passed unanimously

Action Item: Ms. Lenart will update the policy documents accordingly.

- **Additional Updates**

Ms. Lenart informed the Board of the following additional updates:

- **DBHDS Behavioral Health Academy** has paused its training program; proposed removal from the approved provider list.
- **American Association of Psychiatric Technicians** is unresponsive; may be removed from the approved list if no further contact is made.
- **DBHDS providers** are independently developing or enhancing training/onboarding programs; encouraged to ensure certificate integrity.
- **Supervisor Registry:**
 - Ms. Lenart has scheduled a meeting with I.T. to finalize registry for QMHPs and BHTs.
 - Internal tracking has begun; public posting methods are still under discussion.
 - Noted pushback on new training requirements, particularly regarding differences from resident supervisor training.

Dr. Lawson recommended that the Regulatory Committee place the policy document on supervision be placed on the next meeting agenda.

The Board took a break at 11:39am and the meeting was reconvened at 12:01pm

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Presentation of Workforce 2025 Survey Findings**

Dr. Hodgdon presented the Board with the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) Workforce 2025 Survey Findings. The LPC survey concluded the following:

- Noted increases in the number of licensees, overall workforce size in Virginia, and full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- Age distribution has remained stable since 2021, while the diversity index continues to rise.
- Median education debt exceeds median income among LPCs.
- Majority of LPCs accept cash/self-pay; there has been an increase in the percentage accepting Medicare.
- Decline observed in LPCs working within community boards and clinics; conversely, there is an increase in those working in private practice (both solo and group settings).
- Growing interest in joining licensure compacts; most LPCs provide in-state telehealth services.

Dr. Hodgdon also presented the Board with the Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHP) Workforce 2025 Survey Findings. The QMHP survey concluded the following:

- Reported decreases in the number of registrants, Virginia's workforce size, and FTEs.
- Workforce is predominantly female with a high diversity index.
- Most QMHPs have held registration for over five years and report high levels of job satisfaction.
- Majority are actively engaged in care coordination and client education.
- Over 40% of QMHPs intend to pursue further education to become residents.

CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDED DECISION:

Closed Meeting: Dr. Lawson moved that the Board of Counseling convene in a closed meeting pursuant to § 2.2-3711(A)(27) of the *Code of Virginia* to consider a recommendation of the agency subordinate. He further moved that James Rutkowski, Jaime Hoyle, Jennifer Lang, Charlotte Lenart, and Latasha Austin attend the closed meeting because their presence was deemed necessary and would aid the board in its deliberations. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Recommendations Considered:

Katherine Arciniega, Resident in Counseling

License No. 0704015092

Case No. 232611

Ms. Arciniega did not appear before the board and did not submit a written response. The board considered the agency subordinate's recommendation to indefinitely suspend Ms. Arciniega's license to practice as a Resident in Counseling, for no less than 36 months.

Reconvene: Dr. Lawson made a motion to certify, pursuant to § 2.2-3712 of the *Code of Virginia*, that the Board of Counseling heard, discussed, and considered only those public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as identified in the original motion. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Decision: Dr. Bernard made a motion to accept the agency subordinate's recommendation as presented, in the matter of Katherine Arciniega, Resident in Counseling. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING DATES:

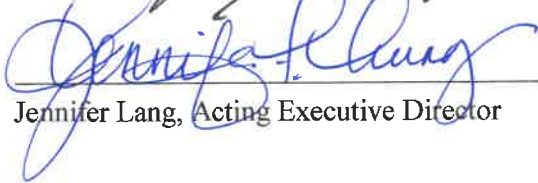
The next quarterly full board meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 16, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT:

Dr. Tinsley adjourned the October 17, 2025, meeting at 12:34 p.m.



Terry R. Tinsley, PhD, LPC, LMFT, CSOTP, Board Chair



Jennifer Lang, Acting Executive Director