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April 5, 2023

### Important Updates to New Board Regulations

Dear Licensed EHSs:

As you are aware, all licenses to practice as an environmental health specialist (“EHS”) issued by the Maryland Board of Environmental Health Specialists (the “Board”) are scheduled to expire on **June 30, 2023**. In order to renew an EHS license, the law requires licensees to submit a completed renewal application and payment, plus proof to the Board that the licensee completed 20 hours of approved training in environmental health in the previous 2-year period. This requirement applies to all licensees, regardless of when their initial license was issued. Consequently, depending on when you were issued your initial license, you may have a shortened window of time (particularly if recently issued) to achieve the required 20 hours of training for license renewal.

As reported back in December 2022, the Board had submitted proposed regulations that (1) split the license renewal cycle, such that licensees with an even-numbered birth year would renew by June 30 of every even-numbered year and licensees with an odd-numbered birth year would renew by June 30 of every odd-numbered year; and (2) made clarifications to CEU requirements, including the requirements for licensees who would be applying for renewal at the same time. Initially, the Maryland Department of Health only approved the first portion of the proposed regulations concerning the license renewal period and not the second portion concerning clarifications to the CEU requirements. Consequently, at the December 7, 2022 Board meeting, the Board voted to give credit for training completed by licensees prior to licensure, so long as the training was “pre-approved” by the Board and was completed during the current renewal cycle (beginning July 1, 2021). In addition, the Board voted to waive the requirement that proof of completion of training be submitted within 90 days of the date of completion for any individuals who seek credit for training taken prior to their initial license issue date.

The proposed regulations were published in the January 13, 2023 Maryland Register, with MDH thereafter approving both portions of the Board’s proposed regulations. The submission has gone

through the initial 30-day comment period (no public comments were received), the 15-day mandatory holding period, a follow-up Board vote on March 8, 2023 to reaffirm the proposed regulations, and the MDH Secretary sign off of the final regulations on March 31, 2023. The final step in the process is for the proposed changes to be republished in the Maryland Register (date TBD) and then become effective 10 days from the publication date.

### **What this Means to You**

Though the actual effective date is currently not known, the Board expects the amended regulations to be effective prior to the completion of this renewal cycle. So as licensees enter the renewal cycle, there is important information to know.

#### **1. New Renewal Cycle Depending on Your Birth Year**

Beginning with the July 1, 2023 renewal period, the Board will be **splitting licensees into two separate renewal cycles**. This is being done to balance the renewal cycle crunch for Board staff, allow for more timely distribution of renewed licenses, and more evenly balance funds received by the Board.

If your Birth Year is an **Even Numbered Year** (e.g., 1980, 1992, etc.), you will go through an initial **One-Year** renewal cycle (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024), followed by a return to the traditional two-year renewal cycle. The one-year renewal cycle is a necessary, one-time occurrence to accomplish the goal of splitting licensees into two separate renewal cycles. This means that licensees with an even-numbered birth year will have to apply for renewal again by **June 30, 2024**. However, for the June 30, 2024 renewal, you will only be required to complete 10 hours of approved training in environmental health and pay a \$100 renewal fee. Following June 30, 2024, you will once again only be required to renew every two years.

If your Birth Year is an **Odd Numbered Year** (e.g., 1981, 1993, etc.), you will remain on the **Two-Year** renewal cycle (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025, etc.) with the existing fee and CEU requirements.

The Board plans to send out color coded renewal post card reminders corresponding to an individual's Birth Year. When you go to the website to download and complete the renewal application form, choose the version that corresponds to the correct Birth Year. If you have already completed the requisite approved 20 CEUs and the Implicit Bias training, you will be able to submit the renewal application and corresponding fee for your upcoming renewal cycle.

#### **2. CEUs**

The Board continues to review, approve and update individual licensee's CEUs. There remains a backlog that we continue to work through. If you have already submitted course information, please **DO NOT** resubmit that information unless specifically requested to do so by Board staff.

For individuals who were initially licensed during this license renewal cycle (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023), please continue to follow the guidance given in the December email update (covered in paragraph 2). Once effective, the Board's amended regulations will also provide that for a licensee applying for renewal for the first time, the Board shall grant 5 hours of approved training for each full 6-month period within the license renewal period that the licensee participated in (a) on-the-job

training in an environmental health specialist program under the supervision of an environmental health sponsor; or (b) practiced as an EHS or its equivalent in another state or territory of the United States, as approved by the Board.

There are other provisions that I haven't specifically reviewed here but should help clarify and update various provisions. We should be updating the website shortly to include the renewal forms. We will also update the website with the various regulation updates once finalized and published, as well as our proposed statute changes currently going through the legislative process.

Thank you for your continued support as we endeavor to improve things for all licensees.

Bert Nixon, Executive Director  
Board of Environmental Health Specialists