



**SPRING 2015**

# BSWE Newsletter



Maryland State House

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Fee Changes Coming 7/1/15
- License Verification
- License Renewal

Fellow Licensees:



Spring has finally arrived and the folks currently serving on the Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE) hope you are enjoying the longer days, warming temperatures and early buds of the season. It was a hard long winter, but a productive time for the Board of Social Work Examiners. We have worked diligently with our new Executive Director, Dr. Stanley Weinstein, and new members of the staff to catch up on assignments subsequent to the recent retirements of his predecessor and our former investigator.

In late 2014, the Continuing Education Webpage Survey of active and inactive licensees was conducted via email to learn how effective and useful it is in meeting your needs. We were pleased to receive responses from 1,223 social workers approximately 8% of all licensees in Maryland. As a result, the Board and staff will be working hard to incorporate some of the respondents' suggestions. One of the findings from the survey revealed that many licensees do not use the Board web site and seem to prefer using colleagues or supervisors for their Maryland social work practice questions. I would like to encourage our readers to use the web site frequently as word of mouth from a colleague or supervisor may be well intentioned but possibly mistaken and would not be a reasonable defense in the event of possible disciplinary investigation. Another finding was some confusion regarding CEUs and Board staff will be making some changes to the BSWE web site with the intention of providing clarification regarding CEUs.

In other housekeeping business from the most recent licensing cycle, we noted a number of late requests due to changed addresses. Please be reminded to keeping your email and mailing addresses up-to-date with the Board.

Since the Board's prime responsibility is to "protect the public", I want to offer some insight into common mistakes or poor practices that referred cases for investigation have recently revealed. In a nut shell, Benjamin Franklin's quote "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is appropriate for our practice efforts. Apart from the clear cut cases of sexual misconduct, felony conviction, theft or practicing under the influence of drugs and alcohol by licensees, many of the cases that result in a disciplinary action are the result

of poor or no record keeping by the social worker. So your ounce of prevention is to keep good legible records that describe the date, time and place of the social work intervention. The note should explain the rationale for the intervention and client's response so that any social worker or investigator could easily read what took place and understand why. In regard to social work investigations, the lack of or presence of inadequate documentation will be a significant factor in how the full Board determines culpability and subsequent disciplinary steps. So keep good records and store them in a safe, secure place to avoid the anxiety and stress that will come if your practice is ever investigated. I will share that a number of cases referred for investigation are dismissed every year because the social worker was able to present good case records.

In other business, I want to encourage licensees to consider becoming a Board member sometime during your career. It has been an enlightening experience and I have been blessed to meet some marvelous and brilliant people. If being a Board member is not your thing, please be reminded that the Board meeting's Open Session is available and open to the public. I would encourage anyone who wants to address the Board to submit the request in writing to me, as Chairman. We usually meet the second Friday of every month.

In ending, on behalf of the Board and all licensees, I want to thank Senator Barbara Mikulski for her long and productive career in the United States Senate and wish her the very best in her upcoming retirement. She has made all of us proud to be social workers.

Wishing you a wonderful spring and summer. Enjoy!

*Mark Lannon, LCSW-C, Board Chair*

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## **CONGRATULATIONS AND HAPPY RETIREMENT TO ANNE E. WALKER, LCSW-C**

Ms. Anne Walker's association with the Board began in 2000 when she was appointed by Governor Parris N. Glendening to serve as a Board member for four years as the designated representative from the Department of Human Resources.

In February 2006, Anne returned to the Board as the Staff Social Worker and was subsequently promoted to Social Work Supervisor. Essentially, Anne has "done it all" while at the Board. She is an extremely talented and dedicated social worker and we have been so fortunate to have Anne work at the Board.

Anne's 44 years as a licensed social worker have been in the areas of mental health, family services, adolescent treatment, administration, and the Maryland Department of Human Resources

If you would like to send Anne a message, please email Gloria Jean Hammel, LCSW-C, Director, Licensing Unit at [gloria.hammel@maryland.gov](mailto:gloria.hammel@maryland.gov). Ms. Hammel will forward your message.



Dr. Anna McPhatter  
Dean , School of Social Work, Morgan State University

## **The Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners and the Morgan State University, School of Social Work, Make History**

*By Thelma P. Rich, LCSW, Board Member*

The Field Education Department at Morgan State University School of Social Work hosted the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners for the March 13, 2015 Board meeting. This was a mutual historic occasion. It was the first time in the history of the Board that a meeting was convened away from the office site and the first time a School of Social Work hosted the Board. Both the closed and open sessions were held as required.

What attributed to the open session being more special was that students comprising three undergraduate classes, accompanied by their instructors, Professors Johanna Cottman, Regina Alston -Simms, and Loretta Wall, were all in attendance. This was an opportunity to learn about the operations of the Board, the Maryland Code of Ethics, the necessity of licensure, governing policies and procedures, and regulations. Prior to the Board's introductions, Dean Anna McPhatter brought greetings and welcomed our first-time campus visitors. She also spoke about the importance of the social work profession.

As Board and staff members introduced themselves, they congratulated the students on their upcoming 2015 graduation. The importance of becoming licensed social workers was stressed. Students were extended the opportunity to ask questions. And they did ...with great enthusiasm and zeal! Board members responded with clarity to provocative and thought provoking questions. Students received insight into the legal responsibilities of social workers as well as the "Gate Keeping" responsibilities of the Board. It was an afternoon to reflect upon the commitment of social workers to this helping profession.

**Effective January 1, 2014, the Board no longer prints paper licenses. Licensees, employers and clients etc., may verify a social work license by selecting "License Verification" on the left side of the Board's homepage. [www.dhmfh.maryland.gov/bswe/](http://www.dhmfh.maryland.gov/bswe/)**

## **OCTOBER 31, 2015 LICENSE RENEWALS**

 Please note that approximately 6,000 licensees will be renewing by October 31, 2015

A notice (yellow post card) will be mailed in July and licensees can begin renewing their licenses effective July 15, 2015.

Check to see if your license expires on October 31, 2015 and, if yes, check to see if you have the required credit hours for renewal. (40 credit hours for LGSWs, LCSWs, and LCSW-Cs / 30 credit hours for LBSWs)

Please be sure that:

- Your mailing and email address are current with the Board
- The 3 Category I credit hours in Ethics was not completed by an online, audio, or home study program
- Legal documentation of name changes are mailed or faxed to the Board
- All dates have to be mm/dd/yyyy
- Credit hours for Ethics must be listed separately on the CE Report Form

### **REMINDERS:**

There is no late renewal period. Licensees who do not renew on or before October 31, 2015 may not practice social work in Maryland on or after November 1, 2015.

Licensees who were issued a new license between January 2013 and October 2013 may use CE credit hours earned from the date the license was issued.

Before calling the Board with a question on continuing education please read COMAR 10.42.06. In addition there is continuing education information on the Board's web site, [www.dhmfh.maryland.gov/bswe/](http://www.dhmfh.maryland.gov/bswe/)

The Board does not accept continuing education credit hours for the following:

Providing or receiving Supervision & Consultation, Field Instruction, Coaching, Computer Software Training (Word; Excel: Access etc.), First Aid and CPR training, Acupuncture, Self-Care and Self- Help, Reiki, Feng Shui, and Qi Gong

Request for Extension is outlined in COMAR 10.42.06.08 and your request must include the following:

- 1) Renewal application (a renewal application can be printed from the Board's website or mailed to you);
- 2) A check or money order for the renewal fee; and
- 3) A written request with supporting documentation

➡ **Extension Requests must be received no later than August 31, 2015.** The Board will review each request and if authorized, a six month conditional license will be issued which will expire on April 30, 2016. Licensees will have six months to meet their CE requirements. If you have additional questions, contact Board staff.

**Note:** The Board has proposed a new regulation to extend the timeline for submission of extension requests to October 1, 2015. Once this regulation is finalized, a notice will be posted on the Board's website.

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### COMAR 10.42.05 Fee Schedule – Effective July 1, 2015

As you may know, The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the "Board") receives no general funds from the State of Maryland. Our Board, like most health boards, are required by statute to cover all costs and expenses through the collection of fees. As a rule of thumb, revenues generally have to be increased every 5 years. However, our last fee increase was in 2008. Due to fiscal efficiency and some vacancies, the Board continued with the same fees for 8 years. It was identified in the FY 2016 projections that the Board would not be able to continue to cover its expenses. Therefore, regulations were recently adopted for some fees to be raised and some fees to either remain the same or lowered.

**Note 1:** Within the licensure renewal fees, a \$36.00 fee paid to the Maryland Health Care Commission is mandated for all social work licensure renewals except for the LBSW. This fee applies to almost all health care Boards. ([click for more information](#)).

**Note 2:** The Board may not refund a fee.

1. Application processing fee .....\$100 (unchanged)
2. Initial License fee .....\$75 (unchanged)
3. License renewal fee:
  - (a) Bachelor level .....\$100 (increased by \$20)
  - (b) Graduate level .....\$200 (increased by \$35)
  - (c) Certified level .....\$275 (increased by \$50)
  - (d) Clinical level ..... \$275 (increased by \$50)
4. Inactive status fee.... \$15 (decreased by \$10)
5. Reactivation processing fee
  - (a) Bachelor level .....\$125 (increased by \$20)
  - (b) Graduate level .....\$225 (increased by \$35)
  - (c) Certified level .....\$300 (increased by \$50)
  - (d) Clinical level ..... \$300 (increased by \$50)
6. Reinstatement processing fee
  - (a) Bachelor level .....\$125 (decreased by \$55)
  - (b) Graduate level .....\$225 (decreased by \$40)
  - (c) Certified level ... \$300 (decreased by \$25)
  - (d) Clinical level .... \$300 (decreased by \$25)
7. Application for authorization to sponsor continuing education programs (required only if not automatically entitled to sponsor programs under COMAR 10.42.06):
  - a. Application - \$200 (increased by \$100)
  - b. Each Program approval - \$100 (new)
8. License verification fee .... \$20 (unchanged)
9. Penalty for returned checks – \$50 (increased by \$25)
10. Failure to notify the Board of change of address – \$50 (increased by \$25)
11. Supervision Registration fee – \$20 (increased by \$10)
12. Rosters:
  - a. Bachelor or Graduate levels - \$80 (unchanged)
  - b. Certified or Certified –clinical levels - \$150 (increased by \$70)





## LICENSEE VERIFICATION BY EMPLOYER

*By Denise Capaci, LCSW-C, Board Vice Chair*

In the State of Maryland, the licensure of professional social workers protects the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens. Prior to hiring a social worker, all employers should check the on-line Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners (the Board) verification page. This on-line resource is available as a tool to check the status of a license and the standing of the licensee. Although some potential employees may present with a paper license or a copy of one's on-line license verification, employers are encouraged to verify the license using the Board's website, where you can view the most current status of the licensee.

A social worker has to do more than just renew the license to maintain it. This is done through the effective regulation of social workers by setting requirements for social work education, professional preparation and continuing education, establishing ethical standards for licensed social workers and offering consumers legal recourse in the event of unethical or improper social work services. Hiring qualified, licensed social workers also promotes increased accountability in all health, social service, and other delivery systems.

Employers are encouraged to systematically check the Board's website as a regular part of an aggressive quality assurance program. Credentialing should include reviews of the licensee and good standing twice per year. One might consider asking the social worker to sign an agreement which ensures that they report to the employer any change of status to their license. A suspended license can lead to fraudulent billing, contract violations, and harm to citizens.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Employers should ensure that their social work employees are fully licensed and in good standing with the Board of Social Work Examiners.

**To Verify a license , go to Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners website ([www.dhmh.maryland.gov/bswe](http://www.dhmh.maryland.gov/bswe)) and click on the VERIFICATION link on the left menu.**

## PEER CASE CONFERENCES

Since the Board of Social Work Examiners receives questions in the area of continuing education, we wanted to provide our licensees updated and useful information regarding Peer Case Conferences. Per the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners continuing education regulation 10.42.06.04E(1). CEU's maybe earned in this Category II activity: "Peer Case Conferences among licensed social workers designed to promote more effective interventions and advance practice".

A licensee can earn up to a maximum of 20 (15 for LBSWs) Category II continuing education credits.

Peer case conferences are considered in-service training, and usually are held within a setting consisting of a group of licensed health professionals.

### What type of documentation is needed?



1. Sign-In Sheet and notes should reflect;
  - a. Name of Agency
  - b. List of Attendees (including yourself)
  - c. Date
  - d. Time and Length
  - e. Topic of Discussion and
  - f. Number of continuing education units earned
2. Brief summary for each peer case conference without identifying client / patient information.
3. Maintain copies of the above materials for 3 years.



## SOCIAL WORK LICENSING

*By Judy Levy, LCSW-C, Board Member*

As the population ages, many people are retiring from a job only to begin a new career or to do part time work for another employer. However, regardless of whether you are working part time or full time, seeing one or a few clients, in an agency or in a home office, doing paid or volunteer work, you are practicing social work. Please refer to the Social Work statute, Health Occupations Article Title 19, Social Workers, which may be accessed at the Board's website, [www.dhmh.maryland.gov/bswe](http://www.dhmh.maryland.gov/bswe). Refer to §19 – 101, (m). Definitions, which further defines the practice of social work. There are no exceptions and there are monetary and other penalties for not being licensed.

If you are fulfilling a job description that includes social work skills gained as part of your social work education, and calling yourself a social worker, you need to be licensed. In some cases, graduates of schools of social work are called social services director or case manager and they are, in reality, practicing social work without a social work license.



### CONTINUING EDUCATION WEBPAGE SURVEY REQUEST

One of the requests submitted by licensees during the recent Continuing Education Webpage Survey was to create an on-line document to track CEU trainings/courses taken. Various options were proposed and the Board is interested in moving in this direction. The initial phase is to create a Word Document and also an Excel Worksheet for licensees to download so that you can keep track of the approved CEU trainings and activities you have completed during the two year licensing renewal period. In the future, Board staff will work with IT staff to explore options around CEU record-keeping.

Please go to the Board's website:

- Click on the CEU Tab, and in the Block marked Forms, the CEU Reporting Form is re-created as a Word Document and also an Excel Worksheet.
- Save this Form so that you can update your CEUs real time.

**Note:** When it becomes time to renew your license, you will need to re-type the trainings/courses/activities completed into the renewal application.

## TEN REMINDERS FOR SUPERVISORS



1. Remember: You must meet the qualifications to be a supervisor for ANYONE in the practice of social work. (COMAR 10.42.08.04)
2. Remember: In order to supervise LGSW social workers for the purposes of advanced licensure, you must submit a registration to be approved by the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners.
3. Remember: A Contractual Agreement Form must be established with the LGSW who is pursuing advanced licensure. It must have all three signatures and the original is to be maintained by the LGSW for inclusion in the advanced licensure application.
4. Remember: If you supervise an individual for the purposes of advanced licensure, you are expected to complete the Supervision Verification Form, which is a required document in the advanced licensure application. A former supervisee may well contact you to complete the Form when he/she is preparing to submit the application. The responsibility of a supervisor includes the completion of that Form.
5. Remember: The responsibilities of a supervisor include regular evaluations of the supervisee's practice. This should include the individual's readiness to move to an advanced level of practice.
6. Remember: One of the greatest components of supervision is teaching.
7. Remember: Being a supervisor carries the responsibility of oversight of the supervisee's knowledge, skills and abilities. This responsibility includes the "gate-keeper" function.
8. Remember: A supervisor should always consider the professional growth and development of the supervisee as a significant "work in progress" – there should be no "entitlement" to an advanced licensure.
9. Remember: Do not become "stale" as a supervisor. Your own professional growth and development is also an on-going process and your knowledge, skills and abilities as a supervisor deserve your attention.
10. Remember: Remain knowledgeable regarding the state of the profession in Maryland, the Regulations governing our practice, and the work of the Maryland Board of social work Examiners.

**WANTED!!!**

**Licensed Social Workers Needed to Provide Ethics Tutorial Services or Supervision to Social Workers on Probation**

**Criteria**

The Supervisor and Ethics Instructor will:

1. Hold an active license in Maryland and in good standing (no sanctions by disciplinary proceeding);
2. Be Registered and Board approved Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) or a Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical (LCSW-C);
3. Have to be trained in supervision and ongoing training and participation in the professional development of supervision; also have additional training in areas such as but not limited to maintaining client confidentiality with respect to privileged communications; defining boundaries; setting limits, assessing the client for risk of imminent danger, etc.;
4. Have to be trained in ethics - the content area should focus on ethics and professional conduct, including boundary issues, avoiding dual relationships, accepting gifts, etc.;
5. Have experience and knowledge in the supervisee work setting and population such as (DSS services, individual, family, marital counseling, substance abuse, mental illness, etc.);
6. Have Practiced as a licensed social worker for a minimum of ten(10) years;
7. Be a Current Board Approved Supervisor, and
8. Have a Minimum of seven years of supervisory experience.

**NOTE:** Social workers are needed statewide especially on the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland

If you meet the criteria and would like to be considered or need additional information, please contact Kara Tyson, LCSW at [kara.brooks-tyson@maryland.gov](mailto:kara.brooks-tyson@maryland.gov)

## REMINDERS

### **Per THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK BOARDS' website:**

"The Association of Social Work Boards' Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program identifies and recognizes high-quality continuing education providers that can deliver quality programs in many topics, through in-person or distance learning settings."

For more information, click on <http://www.aswb.org/ace/>

### **Sponsors**

If you have a concern around an approved sponsor and/or the trainings or activities you have taken, please contact the approved sponsor directly. If you would like to speak with a staff member, please contact:

Deborah A. Evans, Continuing Education Coordinator at [deborah.evans@maryland.gov](mailto:deborah.evans@maryland.gov)

### **Discipline**

Public Orders (formal disciplinary actions) from 2005 – present may be viewed on the Board's website: [www.dhmf.maryland.gov/bswe](http://www.dhmf.maryland.gov/bswe) . The link to the Public Orders is on the left menu.

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