

GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,
SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
Rules Committee Conference Call Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2016

The Rules Committee of the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists met by teleconference on Thursday, May 19, 2016, at 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia with the following members present:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Livingston, MFT, Chair
Bonnie Barker, LPC
Endsley Real, CSW
Katherine Klock-Powell, MFT, Vice-Chair

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT:

Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director, HC 1
Amanda Allen, Licensing Supervisor

GUESTS:

Gale Macke, GA LPC Association
Lisa Morris, Shannon Georgecink,
Metropolitan Counseling Services

The Rules Committee met by telephone to review and discuss changes, additions and amendments to Board rules. Recommendations will be presented to the full Board at the June 10, 2016 scheduled meeting.

The meeting of the sitting committee of the Board called the teleconference meeting to order at 09:35 a.m. The meeting's agenda was approved as presented and discussion followed on the following rules:

- **Rule 135-3-.04. Licensure by Endorsement**

(1) The Board may license without examination any Professional Counselor or Marriage and Family Therapist currently licensed in another state or jurisdiction, so long as that other state or jurisdiction's requirements for the license in question are substantially equal to ~~or greater than~~ those in Georgia.

(2) The applicant must ~~file~~ submit a written an application, and the non-refundable fee, for licensure by endorsement on Board approved forms available on the website: www.sos.ga.gov/plb/counselors.

(3) The applicant shall direct the licensure regulatory entity of ~~the every~~ every state or jurisdiction the applicant has ever been licensed in, currently active or not, in which the license is held to complete and submit the Georgia Board's Form N of the application, or similar official documentation provided by the state or jurisdictions licensure entity, which indicates that such license is in effect and in good standing.

(4) In addition, for only Professional Counselor Applicants by Endorsement, the following shall be submitted with the application materials:

(a) Verification of a passing score for the national written exam approved by the Georgia Board for licensure; and,

(b) Verification of a minimum of two years of unrestricted licensure at the level of a Georgia licensed professional counselor, in good standing, from every state licensure Board in which the applicant is currently, or has ever been, licensed; and,

(c) Verification of active, unrestricted practice at the level of a Georgia licensed professional counselor in the two (2) years **immediately preceding the date of application** for licensure by Endorsement to the Georgia Board.

(5) The Board may request further verification of any credential or documentation submitted if deemed necessary to evaluate the application.

- **Rule 135-9-.01. Requirements**

(1) Thirty five (35) clock hours of continuing education are required biennially to renew each license.

(2) A minimum of five (5) of the thirty-five (35) hours shall be specifically designated as continuing education in professional ethics relating to any of the specialties of Professional Counseling, Social Work, or Marriage and Family Therapy. Ethics hours may be obtained from any of the sources listed in paragraphs (5) and (6) ~~(a)–(d)~~ below. Continuing education hours in professional ethics cannot be obtained through independent study; or ~~online~~ by distance learning. Independent study is defined in paragraph (7) below. Distance learning activities are defined, non-inclusive, in paragraph (4) (b) below.

(3) Of the remaining thirty (30) hours, a minimum of fifteen (15) shall be core hours and not more than fifteen (15) shall be related hours.

(4) A maximum of ten (10) hours of continuing education may be obtained ~~online~~ by distance learning for each two-year renewal period.

(a) Distance learning is defined as (non-inclusive), and must include at a minimum, the following:

1. Must meet criteria for acceptable continuing education hours as defined within Board rules;

2. Include a mechanism for evaluation of the course content and activities;

3. A Certificate(s) that verifies the attendance of, actual participation in, the full length of the distance learning course or activity.

(b) Webinars where participation involves the licensee being able to interact with, and/or ask questions of, the presenter and/or others participating in the course or activity may be counted as part of the remaining twenty (20) hours required for renewal. The webinar hours shall not be accepted as distance learning hours or activities, and may total only up to five (5) hours of the remaining twenty (20) hours (i.e. excludes the five ethics and ten distance learning hours). In addition, all criteria in rule section (4)(a) above must be met for documentation of these (up to) five (5) webinar hours.

(5) Core hours are continuing education hours acquired in activities in the specialty in which the license is held; e.g. PC core hours must reflect PC content, SW core hours must reflect SW content and MFT core hours must reflect MFT content. Core hours may be obtained through graduate level education, conferences, workshops, seminars, or ~~online~~ distance learning courses approved for continuing education by organizations authorized to offer continuing education credit. Such activities shall be sponsored, co-sponsored or approved by:

(a) a A professional association in the specialty in which the license is held; or

(b) A n academic department in the specialty in which the license is held:

1. Graduate level coursework will meet continuing education requirements only when offered by an academic department in the specialty in which the license is held and when the department is in an education institution accredited by a body acceptable to the Board. Graduate level coursework listed on the transcript as "independent studies" must be well documented in order to be accepted by the Composite Board. Documentation can include, but is not limited to, a contract signed by the instructor of record.

2. One (1) academic semester hour of graduate level coursework shall be equivalent to fifteen (15) hours of continuing education, and an one (1) academic quarter hour of course credit shall be equivalent to ten (10) clock hours of continuing education, or (c) ~~a~~ A licensing or certification board in another jurisdiction which regulates the specialty in which the license is held. If the board is a composite board, the activity must be specifically approved for continuing education in the specialty in which the license is held.

(6) Related hours are continuing education hours acquired in activities in a specialty other than the one in which the license is held or in the allied professions of Psychiatry, Psychiatric Nursing, ~~or Psychology, or Pastoral Counseling~~. Related hours may be obtained from:

(a) ~~a~~ Activities sponsored, co-sponsored, or approved by professional associations in the specialties of Professional Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy or the allied professions for Psychiatry, Psychiatric Nursing, Psychology, Pastoral Counseling, or allied health specialties, or

(b) ~~a~~ Activities sponsored, co-sponsored, or approved by an academic department in the specialties of Professional Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy or the allied professions of Psychiatry, Psychiatric Nursing, Psychology, or Pastoral Counseling.

1. Graduate level coursework will meet continuing education requirements only when offered by an academic department in the specialties of Professional Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy or the allied professions of Psychiatry, Psychiatry Nursing, ~~or Psychology, or Pastoral Counseling~~ and the department is in an education institution accredited by a body acceptable to the Board.

2. One (1) academic semester hour of graduate level coursework shall be equivalent of fifteen (15) clock hours of continuing education, and an one (1) academic quarter hour of course credit shall be equivalent to ten (10) clock hours of continuing education; or

(c) ~~a~~ Activities sponsored, co-sponsored, or approved by a licensing or certification board in another jurisdiction which regulates the specialties of Professional Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy or the allied professions of Psychiatry, Psychiatric Nursing, Psychology, or Pastoral Counseling; or

(d) ~~a~~ Activities sponsored by federal, state, or local government agencies, public school systems and licensed hospitals; or

(7) Independent Study is limited to five (5) hours in activities such as: teaching a course, presenting a lecture, or conducting a workshop for the first time; listening to audiotapes; viewing videotapes; reading books or articles which may contain exit quizzes; editing or writing professional books or articles; and conducting professional research. The licensee shall submit an affidavit attesting to number of hours of independent study completed. No more than five (5) hours of continuing education shall be in independent study. Ethics

hours may not be obtained through independent study; or ~~online~~ by distance learning.
Core hours may not be obtained through independent study.

(8) The professional association, academic department, licensing or certification board, state, or local government agency, public school system or licensed hospital that sponsors, co-sponsors or approves the continuing education activity shall certify the number of clock hours of education content in each activity.

(9) A Standards Committee may, in its discretion, accept continuing education hours obtained from sources substantially similar to those listed in (5) and (6) above.

(10) No more than twenty (20) hours of continuing education shall be from any one continuing education or academic course, workshop, or presentation. This limit does not apply to professional conferences which offer multiple presentations.

(11) Any continuing education hour may be applied towards the renewal of a license in more than one specialty, provided that the continuing education hour meets the requirements set out in (5) or (6) above.

(12) Continuing education hours earned in professional ethics exceeding the five required for renewal may be applied to meet requirements for core or related hours when they meet the requirements set out in (5) or (6) above.

(13) If, at the Board's request, a licensee completes a peer review of an alleged violation of the law or the Board's Rules, the licensee shall satisfy the five (5) hours of continuing education required in professional ethics. Such a review must be submitted as a written report to the Board.

(14) When the license is initially issued during the second year of the renewal period on or after October 1st of the odd numbered year the continuing education requirements are deemed, by the Board, to impose an undue hardship upon the licensee; therefore, no continuing education is required for the subsequent initial renewal on or before September 1st of every even numbered year. ~~At the next renewal cycle the licensee must comply with all continuing education requirements specified in the Board Rules, Chapter 135-9.~~

(a) At the next renewal cycle the licensee must comply with all continuing education requirements specified in the Board Rules, Chapter 135-9.

(b) Initial licensure applies to the APC, AMFT, LPC, MFT, MSW, or CSW license issued by the Georgia Composite Licensure Board. Associate level licenses issued are considered the individuals initially issued Georgia license for the purposes of this rule.

Recommendations for the proposed rule amendments discussed this date, listed above, will be presented to the full Board during their next scheduled meeting June 10, 2016.

There being no further business to discuss, the sitting committee of the Board adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Minutes recorded, reviewed and edited by: Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director, HC 1

STEVE LIVINGSTON
Steve Livingston, LMFT, Chair

BRIG ZIMMERMAN
Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director HC1

These minutes were approved on: June 10, 2016