

**GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,
SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**
Conference Call Board Meeting Minutes – March 29, 2017

The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists met Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia with the following members present:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Livingston, MFT, Chair
Kathryn Klock-Powell, MFT
Karen Warren-Rosas, MSW
Endsley Real, CSW, Vice-Chair
Ben Marion, CSW/MFT
Jack Perryman, LPC
Tommy Black, LPC
Bonnie Barker, LPC

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Gerri Ann Robbins, MFT

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT:

Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director, HC 1

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:

Betsy Cohen, Esq., AAG

Mr. Livingston, Chair, established a quorum of the Board was present and called the Board meeting to order at 8:17 a.m.

Agenda: Approved with one additional items:

- Information From Assistant Attorney General Cohen

Rules Discussion:

Chapter 135-12 Testing and Assessment

135-12-.01 Testing and Assessment Instruments

(1) Persons licensed as Professional Counselors, Social Workers or Marriage and Family Therapists are not authorized to perform psychological testing, or represent their use of any testing or assessment instrument as psychological testing, unless he or she is also licensed to practice psychology under O.C.G.A. 43-39.

(2) Persons licensed as Professional Counselors may:

(a) Administer and interpret assessment instruments to evaluate emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, behavioral or affective;

(b) Administer and interpret educational and vocational assessment instruments;

(c) Administer and interpret any other assessments or tests which he or she is qualified to employ by virtue of his or her education, training or experience.

(3) Persons licensed as Social Workers may:

(a) Administer and interpret assessment instruments to provide psychosocial evaluations;

(b) Administer and interpret assessment instruments to provide in-depth analyses and determinations of the nature and status of emotional, cognitive, mental, behavioral, and interpersonal problems or conditions.

(4) Persons licensed as Marriage and Family Therapists may:

(a) Administer and interpret assessment instruments to evaluate emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, affective or behavioral;

(b) Administer and interpret assessment instruments that evaluate marital and family functioning.

(5) The use of these testing and assessment instruments:

(a) By persons licensed as Professional Counselors, Social Workers, or Marriage and Family Therapists may include, but is not limited to, administering and interpreting educational and vocational tests; functional assessments; interest inventories; tests that evaluate marital and family functioning; and mental health symptom screening and assessment instruments that evaluate emotional, mental, behavioral, and interpersonal problems or conditions including substance abuse, health, and disability, provided that the use of these assessment instruments does not include rendering a diagnosis of a mental and nervous disorder or illness, including but not limited to organic brain disorders, brain damage, or other neuropsychological functioning or conditions, and provided that the licensee has obtained university level graduate training or substantially equivalent supervised experience in the use of the test or assessment instrument.

(b) By persons licensed as Professional Counselors may also include other assessments or tests which the licensee is qualified to employ by virtue of his or her education, training, or experience, provided that the use of these assessment instruments does not include rendering a diagnosis of a mental or nervous disorder or illness, including but not limited to organic brain disorders, brain damage, or other neuropsychological functioning or conditions.

135-12-.02 Diagnosis

(1) Persons licensed under this chapter as a professional counselor, clinical social worker or marriage and family therapist who comply with this section shall be authorized to diagnose and treat mental, emotional and behavioral disorders through the use of current classification systems such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and/or the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD).

(2) On or before January 1, 2018, any person licensed under O.C.G.A. 43-10A working with people with mental illness, developmental disabilities, or substance abuse shall complete a curriculum of education relating to diagnosing mental disorders, as reflected on an official transcript, to be submitted to the Board upon request. Existing licensees whose transcripts demonstrate completion of an acceptable three semester hours or five quarter hours (forty-five clock hours) graduate level course or an organized training program recognized by the Board shall be deemed to have met this requirement of training and education. A graduate level course, such as psychopathology, DSM or other course with similar content, by a regionally accredited university or an organized training program recognized and/or approved by the Board in mental disorders and diagnosing mental disorders consisting of a minimum of three semester hours or five quarter hours (forty-five clock hours) may satisfy this requirement. The Board recognizes courses may have a variety of names depending on the course provider; the Board may request additional information to determine course or program approval. The Board will recognize training programs that are approved by the Georgia chapters of the Licensed Professional Counselors Association (LPCA-GA), the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Georgia Society of Clinical Social Work (GSCSW) and/or Georgia Marriage and Family Therapist Association (GAMFT).

(3) As of April 26, 2016, persons licensed under this chapter with at least ten years of experience as a professional counselor, clinical social worker, or marriage and family therapist working with people with mental illness, developmental disabilities, or substance abuse and in good standing with the Board are exempt from this requirement.

(4) Licensees who complete an acceptable graduate level course consisting of three semester hours or five quarter hours (forty-five clock hours), or an organized training program recognized by the Board, relating to diagnosing mental disorders as defined in (2) above, and which was completed between October 1, 2016 and January 1, 2018 will satisfy the required 35 continuing education hours for the renewal ending September 30, 2018.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-IOA-3, 43-IOA-5, 43-IOA-6, 43-IOA-7, 43-IOA-11, 43-IOA-12, 43-IOA-13 43-IOA-16, and 43-IOA-22.

Mr. Black motioned, Ms. Real seconded and the Board voted to post the above proposed new rule Chapter 135-12 Testing and Assessments, and the proposed new rules 135-12-.01 testing and Assessments and 135-12-.02 Diagnosis as presented for the minimum thirty days for public view with a public rules hearing to be scheduled as soon thereafter as possible. None opposed, motion carried.

In addition, the Board voted that the formulation and adoption of this rule chapter and rules does not impose excessive regulatory cost on any licensee and any cost to comply with the proposed rule cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-IOA-3, 43-IOA-5, 43-IOA-6, 43-IOA-7, 43-IOA-11, 43-IOA-12, 43-IOA-13 43-IOA-16, and 43-IOA-22, and that it is not legal or feasible to meet the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-IOA-3, 43-IOA-5, 43-IOA-6, 43-IOA-7, 43-IOA-11, 43-IOA-12, 43-IOA-13 43-IOA-16, and 43-IOA-22 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(3)(A), (B), (C), and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of Professional Counseling, Social Work, and Marriage and Family Therapy. None opposed, motion carried.

Mr. Black motioned, Ms. Barker seconded, and the Board voted to enter into Executive Session in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 43-1-2(k) (1) (2), O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1), O.C.G.A. § 43-1-2(k) (4), O.C.G.A. § 43-1-19 (h) (2) & (4) to receive information from the Boards Assistant Attorney General. Voting in favor of the motion were those present who included Board members: Livingston, Marion, Perryman, Barker, Klock-Powell, Real, Warren-Rosas and Black

Assistant Attorney General B. Cohen, Esq.:

Information presented for Board discussion.

With no additional Board business requiring discussion, Ms. Real motioned, Mr. Black seconded, and the Board voted to adjourn today's conference call meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes recorded, reviewed and edited by:

Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director, HC 1

STEVE LIVINGSTON

Vice- Chair

BRIG ZIMMERMAN

Executive Director HC1

These minutes were approved on: _____