

**GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PODIATRY EXAMINERS**  
**Board Zoom Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, September 10, 2021 - 1:00 p.m.**

The Georgia State Board of Podiatry Examiners met via Zoom meeting on Friday, September 10, 2021. The following members were present:

**Board Members Present**

Dr. Leonard La Russa, DPM, Chair  
Dr. Sarvepalli Jokhai, DPM, Board Member  
Ms. Judy Sanders, Consumer Board Member

**Administrative Staff Present**

Adrienne Price, Executive Director  
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist  
Meagan Doss, Complaints/Compliance Analyst

**Board Members Not Present**

Dr. Joseph Giovinco, DPM, Vice Chair

**Office of Attorney General**

Mary Brannen, Assistant Attorney General

**Visitors Present**

Marit Sivertson, J.D., Executive Director,  
Georgia Podiatric Medical Association (GPMA)

**Administrative Staff Absent**

Charlotte Mason, Licensing Supervisor

**Call to Order** Dr. La Russa established that a quorum of the Board was present and the meeting was called to order at 1:21 p.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

**Agenda** The Board accepts the agenda as presented.

**Open Session Minutes – May 12, 2021 Open Session Board Zoom Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. Jokhai seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the May 12, 2021 Open Session Board Zoom Meeting Minutes as presented.

**Licenses to Ratify: May 5, 2021 – July 2, 2021**

Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. Jokhai seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to ratify the licenses by application and by reinstatement that were issued in accordance with Board Rules and Policies between Board meetings.

**Correspondence – Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) – Call for Comments**

The Board accepts the correspondence provided regarding CPME, as information.

**Discussion – Board Rules**

**1. Board Rule 500-5-.01. Continuing Education Hours. Amended.**

The Board entered into a discussion concerning additional amendments to Board Rule 500-5-.01, to include further comments from Marit Sivertson on behalf of GPMA. The Board indicated that the additional amendments further establish options for providers and adapts to the current directives of the Board, clarifies the continuing medical education (CME) requirements for reinstatement, provides more options for continuing education, and provides for minimum standards to be met by those who desire to reinstate. The rule amendment expands access to care and services by allowing more options so licensees have the proper medical education training and requires all licensees to adequately maintain their required CME as well as make the language of the rule less ambiguous.

**Rule 500-5-.01. Continuing Education Hours. Amended.**

- (1) The purpose of continuing education hours for podiatrists is to maintain and enhance the professional competence of podiatrists licensed to practice in Georgia for the protection of the health and welfare of the people of the State of Georgia.
- (2) As a requirement for the biennial renewal of his/her license, a podiatrist must certify to the Georgia State Board of Podiatry Examiners the completion of not less than fifty (50) hours of approved continuing education in the preceding two (2) years prior to the license expiration date.
  - (a) No more than ten ~~twenty-five (4025)~~ hours shall be obtained from online courses/correspondence courses/webinar, and such courses must be approved by the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME).
  - (b) ~~No more than~~ Up to ten (10) hours ~~shall~~ may be obtained live (in person) from any healthcare related source.
  - (c) At least thirty (30) continuing medical education hours must be approved by the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) and/or the Georgia Podiatric Medical Association (GPMA) and must be obtained live (in person).
  - (d) Every Podiatrist who maintains an active DEA certificate and prescribes controlled substances, except those holding a residency training permit, shall complete, at least one time, three (3) hours of CME that is specifically designed to address controlled substance prescribing practices. The controlled substance prescribing CME shall include instruction on controlled substance prescribing guidelines, recognizing signs of the abuse or misuse of controlled substances, and controlled substance prescribing for acute pain management.
    - (i) Beginning the biennium ending August 31, 2023, Podiatrists must certify on their renewal application that the controlled substance prescribing CME requirement has been met. Once completed, this specific CME requirement shall not be required for subsequent renewals.
    - (ii) Any controlled substance prescribing guidelines coursework that meets the requirements of this rule will count toward completion of this requirement provided that the podiatrist can submit documentation of such to the satisfaction of the Board.
    - (iii) Completion of this requirement may count toward the CME requirement for license renewal if submitted during the biennium in which the coursework was taken.
- (3) A podiatrist who has obtained a Georgia license ~~by reciprocity, reinstatement~~ or by examination, and who must renew his or her Georgia license for the first time, shall obtain the following number of continuing education hours prior to renewal of the license:
  - (a) If the license was issued or reinstated during the first six (6) months of the biennial renewal period, from September of the odd numbered year to the end of the following February, the full fifty (50) hours of continuing education shall be required for renewal in accordance with (2)(a-d) of this rule;
  - (b) If the license was issued or reinstated during the following twelve (12) months of the biennial renewal period, from March of the even numbered year to February of the odd numbered year of the licensure period, thirty (30) hours of continuing education shall be required for the license renewal;
    - (i) No more than five (5) hours shall be obtained from online courses/correspondence courses/webinar, and such courses must be approved by the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME).
    - (ii) Up to five (5) hours may be obtained live (in person) from any healthcare related source.

(iii) At least twenty (20) continuing medical education hours must be approved by the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) and/or the Georgia Podiatric Medical Association (GPMA) and must be obtained live (in person).

(iv) Podiatrist who maintain an active DEA certificate and prescribes controlled substances, except those holding a residency training permit, shall complete, at least one time, three (3) hours of CME that is specifically designed to address controlled substance prescribing practices. The controlled substance prescribing CME shall include instruction on controlled substance prescribing guidelines, recognizing signs of the abuse or misuse of controlled substances, and controlled substance prescribing for pain management. Completion of this requirement may count toward the CME requirement for license renewal if submitted during the biennium in which the coursework was taken.

(c) If the license was issued or reinstated during the last six (6) months of the biennial renewal period, from March of the odd numbered year to August of the odd numbered year, the licensee shall be exempt from the continuing education requirements for that biennial licensing cycle and no continuing education hours shall be required to renew the license.

~~(4) This rule shall become effective with the 2013–2015 renewal cycle.~~

**Cite as GA Regs. 500-5-.01**

**Authority:** O.C.G.A. §§ [43-1-4](#), [43-1-25](#), [43-35-9](#), [43-35-15](#).

**History.** Original Rule entitled "General Requirements" adopted. F. Sept. 7, 1989; eff. Sept. 27, 1989.

**Repealed:** New Rule of same title adopted. F. May 15, 1995; eff. Jun. 4, 1995.

**Repealed:** New Rule entitled "Continuing Education Hours" adopted. F. May 7, 2012; eff. May 27, 2012.

**Amended:** F. Sep. 4, 2015; eff. Sep. 24, 2015

**Amended:** F. Mar. 1, 2017; eff. Mar. 21, 2017

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to post BR 500-5-.01. Continuing Education Hours. Amended for a Public Rules Hearing and incorporates the economic impact discussion from the March 31, 2021 meeting herein.

## **2. Board Rule 500-2-.01. Requirements for Examination and Licensure**

The Board noted that the current rule does not accurately reflect the entity that approves podiatric residency programs nor does it indicate the appropriate title of the national examination approved by the Board. The amendments to the rule were made to identify the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) as the entity that approves podiatric residency programs and the American Podiatric Medical Licensing Examinations (APMLE) as the title of the national examination approved by the Board for licensure.

### **Rule 500-2-.01. Requirements for Examination and Licensure. Amended.**

Any person desiring to take the examination and be licensed to practice podiatry in this State shall meet the following qualifications and requirements.

(a) Qualifications for Examination.

1. Has attained the age of 21 years;
2. Be a graduate of an accredited college of podiatric medicine approved by the Board;
3. Holds a doctoral degree or its equivalent;

4. File a completed application for examination with required attachments with the Board 45 days prior to the examination date. The following items shall be submitted with the application:
  - (i) Certificate of Podiatric education;
  - (ii) Photo;
  - (iii) Proof of completion of a minimum one year's residency in podiatric medicine and surgery in a program based at a hospital approved by the Council of Podiatric Medical Education (CPME)~~American Podiatric Medical Association~~ and the Board or a letter dated within 90 days of the expected date of completion of residency from the Director of Training, Registrar; or Head of the Department on official letterhead documenting the date on which the applicant is expected to complete the one year's residency. License will not be issued until Certificate of Residency is received and exams passed.
  - (iv) All applicants for licensure, after January 1, 1999, shall submit proof of having successfully passed the ~~PMLE~~PMLE American Podiatric Medical Licensing Examinations (APMLE) administered by the National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners with a passing score determined by the Board;
  - (v) Proof of having passed the ~~PMLE~~PMLE APMLE shall be a certified copy of the applicant's transcript of scores from the National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners; and
  - (vi) Required Fees.
  
- (b) Licensure Requirements. Any Person desiring to be licensed to practice podiatry in this State must have satisfactorily passed an examination approved by the Board.
  
- (c) The Americans with Disabilities Act. The Board will provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant with a disability in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. The request for an accommodation by an individual with a disability must be made in writing and received in the Board office by the application deadline along with the appropriate documentation, as indicated in the Request for Disability Accommodation Guidelines.

**Cite as GA Regs. 500-2-.01**

**Authority:** O.C.G.A. Secs. [43-35-4](#), [43-35-5](#), [43-35-9](#), [43-35-11](#), [43-35-12](#), [43-35-14](#).

**History.** Original Rule entitled "Application for Examination; Fee" adopted. F. and eff. June 30, 1965.

**Amended:** F. June 19, 1979; eff. July 9, 1979.

**Repealed:** New Rule of same title adopted. F. June 24, 1991; eff. July 14, 1991.

**Repealed:** New Rule entitled "Requirements for Examination and Licensure" adopted. F. May 15, 1995; eff. June 4, 1995.

**Amended:** F. Feb. 17, 1998; eff. Mar. 19, 1998.

**Amended:** F. Apr. 26, 2005; eff. May 16, 2005.

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously that there was no economic impact to the amendment and to refer 500-2-.01. Requirements for Examination and Licensure to the Attorney General's Office for a Memorandum of Authority, and if no objections, vote to post.

**Discussion – Federation of Podiatric Medical Boards (FPMB)**

1. 2021 Q2 Newsletter
2. New Resource – Joint Task Force \_AMA Resolution \_CPME Fellowship Survey Invitation
3. Request for Information – CA Radiology Project

Ms. Sivertson addressed the Board and volunteered to conduct a survey of their membership in order to gather information to send to directly to California and copy Dr. La Russa.

4. **Annual Membership Packet & Additional Notes**
5. **Cover Letter – 2021-2022**
6. **Dues Statement – 2021-2022**
7. **Disciplinary Action Report Form – Fillable – 2021-2022**
8. **Annual Meeting - Meeting Recap – 2021**

The Board accepts the correspondence provided regarding FPMB, as information.

**Petition for Rule Variance – BR 500-2-.01(a)(4)(iv) Alan Tajerstein**

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant he petition for variance of BR 500-2-.01(a)(4)(iv) based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

**Executive Director’s Report – A. Price**

Executive Director’s Report presented the Board with statistical data relevant to the processing of applications, the number of licensees, and complaints/compliance matters.

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented.

**Board President’s Report – L. La Russa, DPM**

Dr. La Russa discussed the fact that there will be some board seats available with FPMB. Ms. Sivertson clarified that the number of seats are based on the number of podiatrists who are members of GPMA, so at this time, Georgia has four (4) delegates.

**Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. Jokhai seconded, and the Board voted to enter into Executive Session in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-2 (k); 43-1-19 (h) and 50-14-2 (1) to receive and review information pertaining to applications, pending cases, investigative reports and enforcement matters and to receive the Assistant Attorney General’s report. Voting in favor of the motion were those Board members present: Dr. La Russa, Dr. Jokhai, and Ms. Sanders.**

**At the conclusion of the Executive Session on Friday, September 10, 2021, Dr. La Russa declared the meeting to be “open” pursuant to the Open and Public Meeting Act O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. No votes were taken during executive session.**

**OPEN SESSION**

**Executive Session Minutes – May 12, 2021 Executive Session Board Zoom Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the May 12, 2021 Executive Session Board Zoom Meeting Minutes as presented.

**Attorney General’s Report – M. Brannen**

Dr. Jokhai motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Attorney General’s Report as presented.

**Cognizant Report – J. Giovinco, DPM**

Dr. La Russa motioned, Ms. Sanders seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

1. **POD210004** Close the case with a Letter of Concern regarding pre-operative testing, especially vascular.
2. **POD220005** No deviation from standard of care. Close the case.
3. **POD210013** Close the case.
4. **POD210014** Close the case.
5. **POD220001** Table pending additional information. Dr. Giovinco recused himself as Cognizant regarding this complaint.

**Miscellaneous Executive Discussion**

**1. POD210015**

Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. Jokhai seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to renew the license with a reservation of rights letter with terms as discussed in Executive Session.

**2. POD180019**

Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. Jokhai seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the request to terminate probation and flag for CE audit.

**3. POD210002**

Ms. Sanders motioned, Dr. La Russa seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to close the case with a Letter of Concern regarding sanitary conditions of facility.

**Adjournment** With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

**Minutes recorded by:** Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist  
**Minutes reviewed and edited by:** Charlotte Mason, Licensing Supervisor & Adrienne Price, Executive Director  
**Minutes approved on:** October 15, 2021

LEONARD LA RUSSA  
**BOARD CHAIRPERSON**

ADRIENNE PRICE  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**