

**GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**  
**Board WebEx Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, November 7, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

The Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy met via WebEx on Friday, November 7, 2025. The following members were present:

**Board Members Present**

Robert McClellan, OTR/L, Chairperson  
Rebecca Hammad, OTR/L, CLT, Vice Chair  
Deborah Hinerfeld, PhD, OTR/L, Board Member  
Rachele Branson, OTR/L, Board Member

**Administrative Staff Present**

Adrienne Price, Executive Director  
Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor  
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist  
Sherry Strong, Complaint/Compliance Analyst

**Board Members Absent**

Betsy McDaniel, OTA, Board Member

**Attorney General's Office**

Craig Pake, Assistant Attorney General

**Visitors Present**

Sandra Eskew-Capps, PT, DPT, American Physical Therapy Association-Georgia (APTA-GA)  
Call-in User 1  
Call-in User 2  
Sharon Hagan  
Janae Williams  
Corey Whigham  
Dr. M. Irma Alvarado, PhD, OT/L, FAOTA, Professor, School of Occupational Therapy, Brenau University,  
Georgia Occupational Therapy Association (GOTA) Liaison  
ALewi  
Kaylan

**Call to Order** Mr. McClellan established that a quorum of the Board was present, and called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

**Board Meeting Agenda**

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the agenda as presented.

**Open Session Minutes – August 15, 2025 Open Session WebEx Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Branson motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the August 15, 2025 Open Session WebEx Meeting Minutes, as presented.

**Ratification List: August 8, 2025 – October 31, 2025 Licenses, Reinstatements and PAMs**

Ms. Branson motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the list of licenses issued from August 8, 2025 – October 31, 2025, licenses issued by reinstatement, the Physical Agent Modalities certifications, and limited permits issued between Board meetings.

**National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)**

1. Follow-Up & Thank You!
2. Inside NBCOT's State Regulatory Research Initiative
3. When Failure is the Best Option, Lead Through Fear and Risk (Failure)
4. Explore State Practice & Prescriptive Authority Changes

5. **How AI is Reshaping Professional Standards in Real Time**
6. **OT Licensure Compact Milestones - Join the OTCC Panel for Key Updates & What's Ahead!**
7. **The NBCOT Occupational Therapy State Regulatory Leadership Forum**
8. **Letter of Support for Comments on BR 671-3-.05 - Angela Macauley, President and CEO, & Barbara Williams VP of External and Regulatory Affairs**
9. **Session Recordings – 2025 NBCOT OT State Regulatory Leadership Forum**
10. **OT State Regulatory E-newsletter**
11. **Important News**

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to NBCOT, as information.

**Discussion – Georgia Occupational Therapy Association (GOTA) – Debi Hinerfeld, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA**

1. **2025 Annual Conference Theme - Digging Deep: Uncovering the Root Cause and Discovering Practical Solutions**
2. **2025 Annual Conference Schedule**

Dr. Hinerfeld provided a report on the GOTA Annual Conference held at Unicoi State Park in Helen, Georgia, October 24-26, 2025, which she attended as the Board Delegate. She said the leadership is in very good hands and the presentations were well curated with a wonderful Keynote speaker, Tom Bauer, Legislative Consultant and Public Policy Advisor, who gave a two (2) hour Ethics presentation.

Dr. Hinerfeld continued that there were several business owners in attendance at the conference who are concerned with the application processing timetable. They reported difficulty in recruiting new graduates and applicants from other jurisdictions. She was contacted by several conference attendees on this concern and wanted to bring those concerns to the Board and to the administrative staff as her due diligence. She asked if there was anything that can be done to help people navigate the process more readily, such as videos.

Ms. Price stated that it may be possible for the Georgia Secretary of State Information Technology department to create a micro-learning video, but the capacity to maintain them on the site is limited. She said she will make the ask for them to create this for the Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy. Ms. Price continued that the videos they have previously created are essentially a user guide power point with a demo of someone going through the application process and is not live. She also stated this could help to resolve reciprocity and PAMS application issues as well. Ms. Price will bring back their answer during the February 2026 full Board meeting.

Ms. Price also reported that there are workflow changes that are being instituted in the application process where it will not let the applicant move forward without having each section completed with all requisite information and/or documentation provided. Applicants will not be able to move forward in the process until they have satisfied those requirements. This will create a hard stop until that section is fully completed. The update will reduce the number of deficiency letters an applicant receives as well as significantly reduce the burden on staff by making the application process more intuitive for the applicants in general. A complete application expedites the process for all interested parties. The hard stop will force applicants to fully read the requirements, and fulfill each one, which in turn provides for a complete application. Dr. Hinerfeld and Mr. McClellan both agreed this change will be great to accelerate the process for those seeking licensure. It was the consensus of the Board for Ms. Price to make the request of the Information Technology department.

**2025 Annual Board Member Elections**

Ms. Branson motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to maintain the current Board member positions, with Debi Hinerfeld as the Complaints/Disciplinary Cognizant and Rachele Branson as the Alternate Complaints/Disciplinary Cognizant.

- Chair – Robert McClellan
- Vice Chair – Rebecca Hammad
- Applications Cognizant – Rebecca Hammad

- Complaints/Disciplinary Cognizant – Debi Hinerfeld, with Rachele Branson as Alternate Cognizant
- Rules Committee – Chair – Robert McClellan, Committee Member – Betsy McDaniel, Alternate Committee Member – Deborah Hinerfeld
- National Conference Representative – Betsy McDaniel

**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, renewal audits and complaints/compliance matters and the status of renewal applications. Additionally, the Executive Director’s Report addressed the following:

- OT Compact
- Board Rules
- PLB Updates

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

**Miscellaneous Discussion – Subcommittee for Webinar on the License Renewal Process**

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to create a Subcommittee of the Board for the purpose of developing a License Renewal Navigation Process Tutorial. Ms. Hammad motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion for Dr. Hinerfeld to act as Chair of this Subcommittee. The Subcommittee members are responsible for creating the content of the webinar and Ms. Price will review the GOALS information for clarity. The Subcommittee will convene following the next renewal cycle and after the latest rule amendments that are currently in the Governor’s Office for review have been adopted and posted. The tutorial will be in place to assist licensees for the 2028 renewal.

**Board Chair’s Report – R. McClellan**

Mr. McClellan shared that American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) has addressed Synchronous vs. Asynchronous CE certificate documentation which will assist in application processing. This change will allow staff to more quickly discern if the course meets the live/ interactive requirement.

Mr. McClellan also brought forward a legislative update on dry needling for OTs. He reported that language in the bill has been accepted by the subcommittee and is moving forward. He continued that he is unclear where the bill is currently in the process but as he was elected as the Board liaison to the legislative process, he will be updated as it moves forward and will share that update during upcoming meetings.

Ms. Branson motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Board Chair’s Report as presented.

**Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad 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 deliberate on Applications. Voting in favor of the motion were those present who included Board Members: Robert McClellan, Rebecca Hammad, Rachele Branson, and Deborah Hinerfeld.**

**At the conclusion of Executive Session on Friday November 7, 2025, Mr. McClellan 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 obtained during Executive Session.**

<b>OPEN SESSION</b>
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### **Board Meeting Scheduled**

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to schedule a meeting via WebEx to review petitions for rule waiver/variance Thursday, December 4, 2025, at noon.

### **Rules Committee**

Ms. Hammad motioned, Mr. McClellan seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer Board Rules that require verification of employment to the Rules Committee to review alternative methods for evaluating last date of practice.

### **Executive Session Minutes – August 15, 2025 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minute**

Ms. Branson motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the August 15, 2025 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minutes as presented.

### **Attorney General's Report**

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Attorney General's Report and advice as presented.

### **Board Member Training**

The Attorney General's Office provided the Board Members Training on the Code of Ethics for Government Service, the Code of Conduct, and potential Conflicts of Interest. Mr. Pake reiterated the importance of the confidentiality of matters discussed in Executive Session. He reminded Board members that they cannot give advice to applicants who may contact them directly, especially regarding applications, because they must act as a whole and not as part of the Board. If incorrect information is provided or the applicant or interested party misconstrues what is being relayed, it could create a situation that would prohibit representation by the Attorney General's Office as the Board's legal counsel.

Mr. Pake continued that Board members must disclose all questions received from applicants to Board staff to prepare for the Board to review whenever they are contacted personally. He advised that the more questions you answer, the more times you will be contacted going forward, and it gives an appearance of impropriety. Since Board members do not have access to applications, except for those brought forth to Board meetings, and those reviewed by the Cognizants, they cannot ensure they are receiving the full picture from any applicant. Board members must also recuse themselves from voting where any information of a personal nature is divulged on an application beforehand.

Mr. McClellan further instructed the Board members to refer those who reach out to them directly to contact the Board offices as well as to refer them to the Board website as it often provides the primary answers to applicant questions.

### **Cognizant Report – R. Branson**

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Mr. McClellan seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

- OT190018**      Refer to the Attorney General's Office for Revocation of Licensure on violations of a Private Consent Order to include failed drug screening and failure to comply with quarterly reporting [O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19(a)(6)&(8) and 43-28-13(a)].
- OT250240**      Close the case due to no jurisdiction and insufficient evidence to initiate further investigation.
- OT250296**      Schedule an Investigative Interview.

**OT220038** Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order for falsifying patient records. Terms and conditions include two (2) hours of ethics and a three (3)-hour HomeCEU course on Effective and Efficient Documentation in Home Health Care. Courses must be completed within 90 days after the docket date of the order. CE taken to satisfy the terms of the order may not be used to meet CE Requirements for license renewal. Flag for CE Audit.

**OT260005** Close the case due to no jurisdiction.

**OT260014** Table pending receipt of a certified copy of the drug court evaluation. Upon receipt, refer to the Cognizant for review.

**Adjournment** No further business was discussed, and the meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

**Minutes recorded by:** Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist  
**Minutes reviewed and edited by:** Adrienne Price, Executive Director & Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor  
**Minutes approved on:** December 4, 2025

**ROBERT McCLELLAN**  
**BOARD CHAIR**

**ADRIENNE PRICE**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF BIBB

**AFFIDAVIT SUPPORTING CLOSING OF  
PUBLIC MEETING**

The Georgia Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.*, requires that all meetings of an entity covered by the statute must be open to the public unless there is some specific statutory exception which permits the closing of the meeting. If such a meeting is to be closed, the law requires that the presiding person execute a sworn affidavit stating that the subject matter of the meeting or the closed portion thereof was devoted to matters within the statutory exceptions and identifying those specific exceptions relied upon. O.C.G.A. §50-14-4(b). A copy of this affidavit must be filed with the minutes of the meeting in question.

Comes now Robert McClellan the presiding officer identified below and, before an official duly authorized to administer oaths, makes this affidavit in satisfaction of the statutory requirements outlined above.

1. I am the presiding officer of the GA Occupational Therapy Licensure Board.
2. I am over the age of 18 and in all other aspects competent to make this sworn statement. I acknowledge that I am giving this statement under oath and penalty of perjury and that I have read the contents of this affidavit prior to signing it.
3. On, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 this entity, which is subject to the Open Meetings Act, met. A majority of the quorum of the members present voted to close the meeting or a portion thereof for the following indicated reason(s). I hereby certify that during the closed portion of the meeting, only those subjects indicated below were discussed. I also certify that I have reviewed the exceptions provided under the Open Meetings Act that may permit the closing of a meeting and that, to the best of my knowledge, the reasons I have described in detail below meet the requirements for closing this public meeting.
4. The legal authority for the closure of this meeting was:  
O.C.G.A. §43-1-2(k) and 43-1-19(h)
5. The subject(s) discussed and the underlying facts supporting the closing of this meeting are:  
To deliberate applications and enforcement matters and to receive information on applications and investigative reports.

FURTHER THE AFFIANT SAYETH NOT

Robert McClellan  
Presiding Officer

Sworn and subscribed before me  
This 6<sup>th</sup> day of December 2025

Mary

Notary Public

MAI ELSAYED  
Notary Public - State of Georgia  
Cobb County  
My Commission Expires Jul 24, 2029