



Board of Behavioral Sciences



1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 574-7830  
www.bbs.ca.gov

Gavin Newsom, Governor  
State of California

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Department of Consumer Affairs

## LICENSING COMMITTEE MINUTES

A recorded webcast of this meeting is available at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fCCO0uGUvw>

**DATE** January 13, 2023  
**MEETING PLATFORM** WebEx Video/Phone Conference  
**TIME** 9:00 a.m.

### ATTENDEES

**Members Present:** Wendy Strack, Chair, Public Member  
Susan Friedman, Public Member  
Eleanor Uribe, LCSW Member  
Dr. Annette Walker, Public Member

**Members Absent:** Susan Friedman at 12:00 p.m.

**Staff Present:** Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer  
Marlon McManus, Assistant Executive Officer  
Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manager  
Christy Berger, Regulatory Analyst  
Christina Kitamura, Administrative Analyst  
Sabina Knight, Legal Counsel

**Other Attendees:** Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola  
Public participation via WebEx video or phone conference

**I. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum**

Wendy Strack, Chair of the Telehealth Committee (Committee) called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

Strack announced that agenda items would be taken out of order: III, V, VIII, IV, VI.

**II. Introductions**

Committee members introduced themselves during roll call.

**III. Consent Calendar: Discussion and Possible Approval of November 19, 2021 Committee Meeting Minutes**

Motion: Approve the November 19, 2021 Committee meeting minutes.

Strack moved; Walker seconded.

Public Comment: None

Roll call vote:

Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Recusal
Susan Friedman			x		
Wendy Strack	x				
Eleanor Uribe	x				
Dr. Annette Walker	x				

Motion carried: 3 yea, 0 nay, 1 abstention.

**IV. Overview of the Purpose of the Committee**

The last meeting of the Committee was on November 19, 2021. The Committee discussed the six-year limit on experience hours and associate registrations. That discussion was subsequently discussed by the Policy and Advocacy Committee and the Board.

The list of discussion topics that were previously discussed and topics for future discussion were presented.

**V. Behavioral Health Workforce Challenges Presentation by Dr. Sergio Aguilar Gaxiola**

Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, Director of the Center for Reducing Health Disparities, UC Davis School of Medicine, presented An Overview of California’s Behavioral Health Workforce: Challenges and Recommendations.

The California Future Health Workforce Commission kicked off in 2017. Its charge was to develop a strategic plan for building the future health workforce and to develop practical solutions for California, education, and employers to address immediate and longer-term workforce gaps.

Topics that were presented:

- Overview of what constitutes the behavioral health workforce
- Behavioral health workforce challenges
- Workforce in behavioral health occupations
- Regional, age, and racial and ethnic distribution of behavioral health providers
- Supply and demand for psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, LMFTs, LPCCs, and LCSWs
- Behavioral health workforce pipeline
- Conclusions and recommendations

**VI. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding the Practice of Pastoral Counseling (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§4980.01, 4996.13, 4999.22)**

The Board has occasionally received complaints about individuals who appear to be practicing without a license. These individuals are ordained by a religious entity, but not performing services as part of their ministerial duties. Although this is likely not the intent of the law, the Board is typically unable to take disciplinary action. It may be necessary to clarify the circumstances under which pastoral counseling is exempt from licensure.

Laws from Texas, Florida, and Arizona were presented.

Motion: Direct staff to draft language related to pastoral counseling using Arizona and Florida law as examples and by collaborating with pastoral entities and bring back to the Committee for further discussion.

Walker moved; Strack seconded.

Public Comment

C. Atkins, CAMFT: Expressed confusion on the Board's authority when it pertains to authorized practice. CAMFT supports any additional regulation or enforcement ability of those who are practicing without a license and causing consumer harm.

Roll call vote:

Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Recusal
Susan Friedman	x				
Wendy Strack	x				
Eleanor Uribe	x				
Dr. Annette Walker	x				

Motion carried: 4 yea, 0 nay.

**VII. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding the Practice of Life Coaching and the Development of a Consumer Outreach Document**

The Policy and Advocacy Committee discussed life coaching at its meeting last year. It directed staff to collaborate with the Board's stakeholders to identify subject matter experts to draft consumer outreach materials.

Board staff met with representatives from the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, National Association of Social Workers California Chapter (NASW-CA), and the California Association of School Psychologists (CASP) to discuss creating an outreach document for the Board's website.

Staff suggested producing a consumer-oriented document that would contain a description of life coaching practice and various types of regulated and non-regulated mental health professionals. The document would also provide information about how to file a complaint with the appropriate regulating entity for regulated professions. If unregulated, the document would point out the lack of regulation.

If the Committee chooses to proceed with this document, it could be drafted by a subject matter expert, and staff would bring it back to the Committee for discussion.

Discussion

Strack: Suggested incorporating video and audio, or action-oriented outreach. The document can also be helpful in a workforce development arena and in school settings.

Walker: Expressed concern about potential costs to work with subject matter experts to create the document.

Sodergren: Responded that this is a very minimal cost and not a drain on resources.

### Public Comment

Ben Caldwell: Does not believe that this is a good use of Board resources. Would be helpful to know how many complaints are received. The best way to address concerns would be to enforce existing practice protection law rather than using Board resources to develop a document.

Cathy Atkins, CAMFT: In regard to the practice protection law, questioned whether the statute is written in a way where BBS cannot use it or is it a challenge to pursue action.

### Further Discussion

Walker: Concerned about investing in this due to cost, even though it is a minimal cost. This is not a high priority; barriers to licensure and cultural competency are higher priorities. Does not support investing money into this.

Sodergren: Explained how this document can be leveraged efficiently, such as presenting it to community-based organizations, education days (workforce development).

Helms: Presented ideas: 1) start small and provide a consumer-focused document; ask associations to provide a consumer-focused summary of the work that their professions perform. 2) Put this on hold and see where it circles back after staff and the Committee get more into the details of the workforce action plan.

Knight: Pointed out that the discussion and examination of life coaching is a very important piece of consumer protection part of the Board, because there is a lot of confusion about life coaches.

Motion: Direct staff to move forward collecting data from the stakeholders representing the Board's four license professionals, and use that information to create a comprehensive document and bring it back to the Licensing Committee for discussion; and as part of formulating the workforce development action plan, to consider whether integrating other professions as part of outreach materials would be helpful.

Walker moved; Uribe seconded.

### Public Comment

GK: Asked if life coaches and its organizations are included in the development of the document.

Helms: Responded that they are not included at this time.

Roll call vote:

Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Recusal
Susan Friedman				x	
Wendy Strack	x				
Eleanor Uribe	x				
Dr. Annette Walker	x				

Motion carried: 3 yea, 0 nay, 1 absentee.

**VIII. Discussion and Possible Recommendation Regarding Workforce Development Action Plan**

To develop a workforce development action plan and adhere to its primary mandate of consumer protection, the Board can make an effort to implement policy decisions and perform outreach that will serve to address the workforce shortage. The three areas that the Committee could focus on are:

1. Data Analysis
2. Reducing Barriers
3. Recruitment and Retention

Steve Sodergren presented some ideas for each of the areas to create an action plan in which the Board can consider within its consumer protection mandate.

Discussion

Discussion ensued regarding how to obtain data and use existing data, using outreach efforts, address exam pass rates, cultural competency education, identifying gaps between education and licensure examination - all within the Board's purview.

Public Comment

Caldwell: Access to care is a consumer protection issue. The role of the Board should focus on how to get the best, safest care possible for as many people as possible.

Atkins, CAMFT: This is a global issue, and it should not only be the responsibility of the Board; it is also the responsibility of the other health boards and the associations.

Paige Clark, California Alliance of Child and Family Services (Alliance): The Alliance supports recommendations to wave exam and retake fees, reducing other costs associated with licensure, reviewing the exam pass rates, and increasing transparency of the licensing process.

Rebecca Gonzales, NASW-CA: NASW-CA will assist the BBS in addressing the workforce issues. Agrees that barriers to licensure should be looked at.

Staff will develop a project plan with short term and long-term goal and bring the document back to the Licensing Committee for review and further discussion.

No action was taken.

**IX. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items**

Uribe: "Mentoring along the process to get a license."

**X. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda**

Atkins, CAMFT: Is hopeful that conversations regarding examinations utilized by the Board and the national exam will continue.

**XI. Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 12:09 p.m.