

# BSWE Newsletter

Greetings to my fellow Social Workers.



This is my final article as Chair of the BSWE. As I look back over the past 2 years, I have mixed emotions about what was accomplished by the Board and what is still left to do. However, I am certain that Gerald Farrell, our chair elect, will be an excellent leader of the Board. Jerry brings with him a wealth of experience as an officer in the Navy and he has chaired the Disciplinary Committee of the Board for the past 3 years. I have found Jerry to be a strong and fair leader and I know I am leaving the Board in his capable hands.

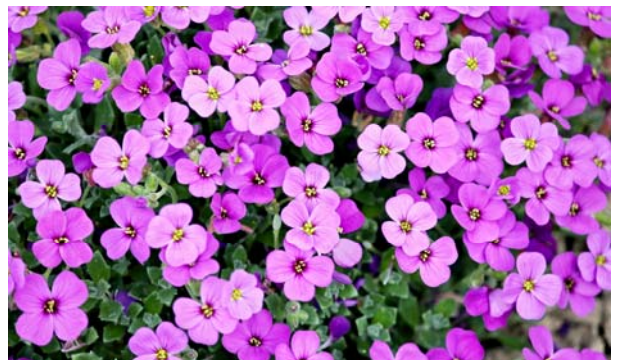
I'd like to thank all of the staff and members of the BSWE for their tireless efforts in the work they do. Without the constant support of the staff, the Board would be unable to function. The Board members, volunteers all, offer their time, commitment, skills and talents to the work we do. I am grateful to all and I thank you for working beside me in the important tasks we are asked to do.

It is mid May as I write this letter. I have been sheltering in place, working from home and like most of you, wondering what the future holds. Now, more than ever, as human beings and social workers, we are facing uncertain times. I'm sure most of you share my experience or at the least, my wonderings about what the world will look like over the next few months, the rest of this year and for years to come.

I take comfort in the fact that I believe in the resilience of the human race. But I also realize there will be a great deal of pain and suffering as we navigate the path to healing. There is a critical need for Social Workers now, to assist with first responders and families who have been directly and indirectly affected by the pandemic. The need for Social Work services will be even greater in the coming months and years. There is already an increase in need for basic services such as food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. Behavioral health services will be in greater demand as well. Advocacy for immigrant, impoverished and all underserved communities will be needed. The aftermath of this virus will be traumatic for scores of individuals. While all of this may seem

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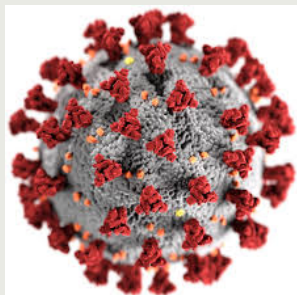


daunting, even overwhelming, it speaks to the need and value of Social Workers.

I am and always have been proud to call myself a Social Worker. I know I am a part of a group of individuals who, by and large, are socially conscientious and willing to devote their careers to the greater good.

I am grateful to have had this opportunity to serve as Chair of the BSWE. I wish all of you the best of health and well being.

Most sincerely,  
Sherryl Silberman, LCSW-C



## THE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS DURING COVID-19

The Board, as with all Marylanders, has been impacted by the many events surrounding COVID-19. Under the Governor's Executive Orders, there have been a number of changes as well as changes implemented by the Board itself.

The offices at 4201 Patterson Avenue have been closed to the public and the Board only accepts mail delivered through the US Postal Service, Fed Ex, and UPS. There have been a few employees in the building who tested positive for the virus and the facility staff has been busy trying to clean and sanitize the building on a regular basis. Staff have been split with some teleworking all the time, some who come in part time and telework part time, and a few who work in the building full time. We are grateful to those employees who keep the board functioning so that all services continue as scheduled and required.

Teletherapy has been approved for LCSW-C social workers and LMSW social workers under supervision of an LCSW-C. An inactive social worker can work in health care facilities. Telephone therapy is also acceptable and it is reimbursable through Medicaid during this State of Emergency.

CE requirements can be met up to 20 (15 LBSW) Category II CEUs through on-line learning provided by Board Authorized Sponsors. However, to receive CEUs in Category I trainings, the webinar training must be live, real-time, and interactive and designated Category I on the certificate.

Out of state clinical social workers can practice teletherapy for existing clients who have returned to Maryland so long as they have an endorsement application pending before the Board. The Board waived the application fee to facilitate this continuity of care. The endorsement is for 6 months and the waiver exists until the State of Emergency is over (see article below).

Lastly, our license renewal period begins July 15, 2020. It is usually scheduled to end on 10/31/20. However, under the Governor's Executive Order the end date will be extended if the State of Emergency continues after 10/1/2020. It will then end 30 days after the State of Emergency ends. For example, the State of Emergency ends on November 15, 2020. The expiration date will become 12/15/2020 and license renewals must be completed by the end of 12/15/2020.

The Board held open board meetings in April and May, 2020 to discuss the issue of temporary licenses due to the issues with the testing sites by Pearson Vue. Many attendees spoke including representatives from schools of social work and professional associations as well as graduates. The end result was that the Board voted to support the position of the Association of Social Work Boards who collaborated with the Council on Social Work Education and NASW-National to not support such a temporary license. This is consistent with all but a few states, and consistent with other helping professions in Maryland. The Board continues to monitor this situation and Pearson Vue is working hard to expand testing services while adhering to safety and health guidelines.

Stanley E. Weinstein, Ph.D, LCSW-C  
Executive Director

## THE BOARD RESPONDS TO OUT-OF-STATE LICENSED SOCIAL WORKERS

In March 2020, the Board received numerous calls and emails from social workers licensed in other jurisdictions asking about a temporary or provisional license. The social workers wanted to provide continuity of social work services to established clients like students who returned home to Maryland from an out-of-state college/university or to clients who could not travel to their social worker's office in another jurisdiction.

Since the Board's statute and regulations do not provide for temporary or provisional licenses, the Board decided to use an existing section in regulations: **COMAR 10.42.01.13 to practice social work while a license application is pending**. A specific endorsement application and application process were developed for this purpose. For more information, please email Gloria Jean Hammel, LCSW-C at [Gloria.Hammel@maryland.gov](mailto:Gloria.Hammel@maryland.gov)

This regulatory requirement permits **social workers, actively licensed in another jurisdiction**, to provide teletherapy to established clients, in Maryland, for up to 6 months. Since April 7, 2020, approximately 150 applications have been received, reviewed and are considered pending.

**NOTE:** If you, as a Maryland licensed social worker, want to provide continuity of social work services to a client who is out-of-state, you need to contact the Board of Social Work in that State.

## 2020 Maryland Legislative Session *Bills Passed That Impact Social Workers*



### **HB 448/SB 402:**

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/hb/hb0448E.pdf>

*Health Care Practitioners – Telehealth and Shortage*

**STATUS: Passed as amended.** This was approved as an **Emergency Bill** and became **effective on April 3, 2020.**

**SYNOPSIS:** The bill authorizes certain health care practitioners to establish a practitioner-patient relationship through telehealth interactions; requires a health care practitioner providing telehealth services to be held to the same standards of practice that are applicable to in-person settings and, if clinically appropriate, provide or refer a patient for in-patient services or another type of telehealth service; prohibits a health care practitioner from prescribing a certain opiate through telehealth except under certain circumstances; etc.

### **HB 527/SB 245:** <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/sb/sb0245E.pdf>

*Health Occupations – Social Workers – Scope of Practice, Supervision, and Application Decision Appeal Process*

**STATUS: Passed as amended.** HB 527 crossed over to the Senate EHE Committee but was not voted on; **SB 245 passed as amended. To be effective 10/1/2020.**

**SYNOPSIS:** This alters the definition of "practice social work" to include counseling for alcohol and drug use and addictive behaviors and to clarify that it includes, for certain individuals, the treatment of biopsychosocial conditions under the supervision of a licensed social worker-clinical; requires the State Board of Social Work Examiners, under certain circumstances, to approve licensees approved to engage in independent practice to provide supervision; etc.

## DOES YOUR LICENSE EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 31, 2020

A licensee can check the status of her/his license by going to the Board's Verification page:

Website link - <https://www.health.maryland.gov/bswe/>

On or after July 15, 2020 a licensee may renew her/his license which expires October 31, 2020.



Be sure your name, mailing address and email address are current with the Board.

Notification of renewal will be **EMAILED on July 15, 2020** to each licensee at the last known E-MAIL address on file with the Board

☀ **Criminal History Records Checks are NOT required to renew in October 2020.**

☀ **Obtaining 3 credit units in Ethics can be earned in Category I or II.**

☀ **Obtaining 3 Category I or II credit units in supervision IS required for renewal for all Board Approved Supervisors who were approved on or before October 31, 2018. Social Workers who were approved as a supervisor on or after November 1, 2018 are NOT required to submit the required CEUs in supervision during this renewal cycle.**

## CONTINUING EDUCATION REMINDERS

The Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners accepts continuing education units offered by Association of Social Work Boards, National Association of Social Workers, and Board Authorized Sponsors. Not only must the continuing education sponsor be approved, but the content must meet the Board's continuing education regulations (COMAR 10.42.06). The objectives of the continuing education requirements include: maintenance and enhancement of professional competence, ongoing improvement of professional skills and knowledge, and enrichment of social work services provided to the citizens of Maryland.

- ❖ Licensees may earn Category I CEUs for completing a **Live, Real-Time, Interactive Webinar provided by a Board Authorized Sponsor**. The Sponsor must meet the same requirements as outlined in COMAR 10.42.06.05.A.(1) and 10.42.06.05.E. Evaluations must be completed before a continuing education certificate can be issued.
- ❖ An official transcript for CEUs earned for a course taken from an academic institution may be electronically sent from an academic institution to the Board. This format is accepted as well as paper transcripts with an official seal.

- ❖ Board Authorized Sponsors determine the social work training content, learning objectives, agenda, and other items outlined in COMAR 10.42.06.05.E. Their policies and procedures determine:
  - ❖ The cost of the training,
  - ❖ Whether or not a refund will be provided under certain circumstances,
  - ❖ The number of CEUs earned and if they will grant a modified CE certificate for partial attendance,
  - ❖ The course of action if the trainer is unable to present, and
  - ❖ How they will communicate with registrants in case of an emergency.

NOTE: The Continuing Education requirements remain in effect. As you know, the Board continues to review and monitor Governor Larry Hogan's Executive Orders during the COVID 19 emergency. As these Executive Orders are updated and modified, the Board receives guidance as to the impact it may have on the Boards and Commissions.

The BSWE will first determine what changes may be needed and then notify and update licensees by sending future Emails.

## **BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS LICENSING REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **HISTORY**

Pursuant to the Maryland Social Workers Act, an applicant who meets the minimum qualifications for licensure but is denied an initial license by the Board is entitled to a hearing, See H.O. §§ 19-312 *et seq.*, COMAR 10.42.01.04.05C

However, no Maryland statute or regulation grants the right to a hearing for an applicant denied a license based on failure to meet minimum qualifications. See H.O. §§ 19-101 *et seq.*, COMAR 10.42.01.01 *et seq.* and Md. State Gov't Code Ann. §§10-201 *et seq.*

### **ESTABLISHMENT AND PROCESS**

The Board recently established a Licensing Review Committee, composed of the Executive Board Members and designated Licensing Staff, to review applications which are not approved by the licensing staff. The Licensing Review Committee meets once a month and the process is as follows:

1. The application is reviewed by the Staff Social Worker and if the documentation submitted does not meet the licensing requirements the applicant is informed that the application is pending additional documentation.
2. When additional documentation is received from the applicant, the Staff Social Worker re-views the documentation and determines if it does or does not meet the requirements.
3. If the additional documentation does not meet the requirements, the Staff Social Worker re-views the application and all documentation with the Social Work Supervisor.
4. If the review conducted by the Social Work Supervisor does not resolve or address the issue or issues then the Social Work Supervisor reviews the application with the Director of the Licensing Unit.
5. If the matter is still unresolved then the application is presented to and reviewed by the Licensing Review Committee.
6. The Licensing Review Committee can approve or disapprove the application.

↑ Referred to the Licensing Review Committee – Renders a final decision

↑ Social Work Supervisor ↔ Director of Licensing Unit – if unresolved, the applicant is informed of next step

↑ Staff Social Worker ↔ Social Work Supervisor – if unresolved the applicant is informed of next step

↑ Staff Social Worker ↔ Applicant – if unresolved the applicant is informed of the next step

As a product of this review process, the Board will strive to provide ongoing evaluation and possible revisions to the statute, regulations, forms and instructions resulting in an improved application process. Please feel free to write to the Board with suggestions and recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact Gloria Jean Hammel, LCSW-C, Director, Licensing Unit at [Gloria.hammel@maryland.gov](mailto:Gloria.hammel@maryland.gov). (During the COVID-19 Emergency, Ms. Hammel is teleworking full time and sending an email is the best way to reach her.)

## WANTED!!!

### Licensed Social Workers Needed to Provide Ethics Tutorial Services or Supervision to Social Workers on Probation

#### Criteria

The Supervisor and Ethics Instructor will:

1. Hold an active license in Maryland and in good standing (no sanctions by disciplinary proceeding);
2. Be Registered and Board approved Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) or a Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical (LCSW-C);
3. Supervision: Have to be trained in supervision and continue to complete ongoing training and to participate in the professional development of supervision. In addition, complete additional training in areas such as but not limited to maintaining client confidentiality with respect to privileged communications; defining boundaries; setting limits, assessing the client for risk of imminent danger, etc.;
4. Ethics: Have to be trained in ethics and continue to complete ongoing training. The content area should focus on ethics and professional conduct, including boundary issues, avoiding dual relationships, accepting gifts, etc.;
5. Have experience and knowledge in the supervisee work setting and population such as DSS services, individual, family, marital counseling, substance abuse, mental illness, and child custody issues;
6. Have Practiced as a licensed social worker for a minimum of ten(10) years;
7. Be a Current Board Approved Supervisor, and
8. Have a Minimum of seven years of supervisory experience.
9. Ethics Tutorial Services and Supervision will be Face-to-Face.

**NOTE:** Social workers are needed statewide especially on the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland

If you meet the criteria and would like to be considered, please send the documentation listed above to Stanley E. Weinstein, Ph.D., LCSW-C, Executive Director, at [Stanley.Weinstein@maryland.gov](mailto:Stanley.Weinstein@maryland.gov)



## HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS EDUCATION RESOURCE?

### TRAIN Learning Network

The following information was gathered from the TRAIN website:

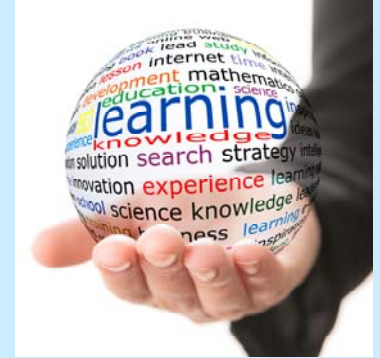
<https://www.train.org/main/welcome>

TRAIN is a national learning network that provides thousands of quality training opportunities to more than one million professionals who protect and improve the public's health.

Powered by the Public Health Foundation (PHF), the TRAIN Learning Network brings together agencies and organizations in the public health, healthcare, and preparedness sectors to disseminate, track, and share trainings for the health workforce on a centralized training platform.

The TRAIN Learning Network is comprised of:

- State and federal TRAIN Affiliates that operate branded TRAIN web portals, have administrative access to the TRAIN platform, and work together to coordinate and share workforce training efforts.
- Government agencies, academic institutions, and other nationally-recognized and respected organizations that post content to the TRAIN Learning Network in order to disseminate and track their trainings to the health workforce.
- TRAIN learners from all US states and territories, as well as other 177 countries. Anyone can register as a learner on TRAIN at no cost and access thousands of openly available course offerings, the majority of which are free.



## REMINDERS

### ***Per The Association of Social work Boards' website:***

“The Association of Social Work Boards' Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program identifies and recognizes high-quality continuing education providers that can deliver quality programs in many topics, through in-person or distance learning settings.”

For more information, click on <https://aswb.org/ace/>

### ***Sponsors***

If you have a concern around an approved sponsor and/or the trainings or activities you have taken, please contact the approved sponsor directly.

If you would like to speak with a staff member, please contact:

Stacie Rigby, Continuing Education Associate at [stacie.rigby@maryland.gov](mailto:stacie.rigby@maryland.gov)

### ***Discipline***

Public Orders (formal disciplinary actions) from 2005 – present may be viewed on the Board's website: [www.health.maryland.gov/bswe](http://www.health.maryland.gov/bswe) . The link to the Public Orders is on the left menu.

### ***Post Renewal Continuing Education Audit***

If one is chosen for the Post Renewal Continuing Education Audit, the licensee may want to consider sending a copy of the required documentation to the Association of Social Work Boards via certified mail. As you know, mail can get lost and without a receipt of your documentation being sent, one may not be in compliance.

Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners  
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