



MARCH 2024

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NEWSLETTER

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BLSW WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

We are pleased to announce the addition of our newest Board member, Patrick “Paddy” Farr, LCSW. The Governor’s office confirmed Mr. Farr’s appointment as our newest licensed board member and is currently assigned to the Continuing Education & Licensing & Exam Committees.

Welcome to our Team!

BLSW RESOURCES FOR QUESTIONS

If you are unable to reach the BLSW office by calling the main Board line, please refer to the licensing staff directory on the Board website for individual contact information. The topics below may assist you in routing your question to the appropriate person. In general, all BLSW licensing staff can provide assistance with most questions.

→ **Angela Goodpaster Hicks, Application Intake Specialist: (503) 378-5735**

General Questions, application questions, name changes, document requests, supervision credentialing for out-of-state LCSWs and Oregon licensed Psychologists or Psychiatrists, website access, or if you are unsure of who to contact.

→ **Cassie Kanaeholo, Licensing Assistant: (503) 378-2095**

Supervision reports, application processing, document requests, supervision credentialing for Oregon LCSWs.

→ **Wende Thatcher, Licensing Compliance Specialist: (503) 373-1159**

Website access and troubleshooting, continuing education and audits, renewals, plan changes, status changes, licensing administrative compliance, and website feedback.

Answers to our most frequently asked questions can be found in the links below:

- [Licensing Portal Sign in and Instructions](#)
- [CSWA Information Page](#)
- [Application Portal Sign in and Instructions](#)
- [Continuing Education Page](#)
- [Renewals and Status Change](#)



BOARD MEMBER VACANCY & CURRENT STAFFING LEVELS

By Mindy Tucker
Sr. Compliance Specialist

The BLSW currently has 1 vacancy & are looking for individuals who desire to volunteer service on the Board. Currently we have a public member opening.

If you or a licensee you know are interested in serving on the Board, please contact the Board for application information.

Our current BLSW Staff & Board Members includes the following:

- ⇒ (1) Executive Director
- ⇒ (3.5) Licensing Staff
- ⇒ (3) Compliance Staff
- ⇒ (6) Current Board Members; (2 public members, 4 licensees & 1 vacancy)

Board Members Needed!**A message from our Board Chair:**

By Stephanie Manriquez
Current BLSW Board Chair

There have been a lot happening at the BLSW office! The increase in processing applications to just a few weeks is fantastic news for both applicants and the office's efficiency. It was great to hear about the success of the OHA grant program, that funded and helped over 1,200 new applicants with their fees before it expired January 31, 2024.

The Social Workers Census is a significant initiative for gathering important data and ensuring social workers' voices are heard. I hope many people take the opportunity to participate. And the call for new members on the BLSW board is crucial for maintaining diverse perspectives and expertise. Let your voice be heard! Go to <http://www.swcensus.org>

HB 4071 and THE COMPACT sound like they'll be hot topics for discussion this year, especially regarding licensing for social workers. Be sure to read Director Ray Miller's comments on HB 4071 as it will provide valuable insights. Check out the website for more information on The Compact.

Go to: <http://www.swcompact.org>

Lastly, the newsletter welcomes suggestions for topics to address. We are committed to being engaged with the community and addressing their needs and interests. Let us know if there is a topic you want to see discussed! We are here for you!

~ Stephanie Manriquez, Public Member, Current BLSW Board Chair

LICENSING— “Expired and Unauthorized Practice” :

By Wende Thatcher
Licensing Compliance Specialist

IMPORTANT REMINDER: CSWA’s are not authorized to practice without an approved Plan of Supervision. This means that the Board needs to be aware of and supervisors needs to approve all Plans before practice begins.

A Plan of Supervision includes who the supervisor is, the type of supervision (individual, group, or both), and where the CSWA is practicing. If a CSWA has multiple supervisors, all supervisors need to approve the Plan for it to be considered complete. Unauthorized practice occurs when a CSWA’s employer and/or supervisor changes, and a new plan is not submitted or approved by the supervisor(s). These supervision and work hours cannot be counted AND the CSWA is out of compliance. Oregon Administrative Rules do not allow for retroactive approval of hours accrued before a Plan is approved. CSWAs practicing without an approved Plan may be subject to disciplinary action.

Unauthorized practice can also occur if a CSWA does not complete their annual renewal. **Please note: the annual renewal is a separate process from the Six Month Supervision Report.** If a CSWA does not renew, their Plan of Supervision is terminated and their authorization to practice expires. Expired CSWA’s must cease all clinical practice until they renew or reapply with a new Plan of Supervision. Expired CSWA’s who continue to practice may be subject to disciplinary action and will need to contact the Board’s Licensing Compliance Specialist, Wende Thatcher, to determine how to proceed.

Please bookmark and refer to the Board website section “CSWA Information”. It is a great source for all relevant CSWA details, administrative rules, and statutes. It is the responsibility of CSWAs and supervisors to understand these regulations.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

2024 Remaining Scheduled CPC & Board Meetings

- ÷ Friday, March 15th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ Friday, April 19th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ Friday, May 17th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ Friday, June 21st, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ Friday, July 19th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ August 2024.....No Meetings
- ÷ Friday, September 20th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ Friday, October 18th, 2024.....Meeting
- ÷ November 2024.....No Meetings
- ÷ Friday, December 6th, 2024.....Meeting

HB 4071 & POTENTIAL IMPACT TO THE BOARD

By Ray Miller
Executive Director

HB4071 was introduced in the 2024 regular Legislative session. It started as a bill which stated, “A health professional regulatory board shall, within 10 days of receiving an application for licensure, issue to the applicant a temporary authorization to practice the health profession regulated by the health professional regulatory board”. This bill would have required all health profession regulatory boards, including BLSW, to issue a temporary license or certificate within 10 days of request.

BLSW’s concerns with this bill were:

1. BLSW would have needed additional staff to be able to prioritize issuing temporary licenses within 10 days of applications. These licenses would have been an additional workload to staff.
2. 10 days would not have allowed time for other states to respond to a request from BLSW inquiring on the applicants good standing within the state the applicant would have been applying from.
3. BLSW already has legislative authority to issue temporary licenses, so the bill would not have any affect on how BLSW currently operates.

The bill ultimately contained 10 amendments. Some of these amendments would have mandated a Task Force on Health Professional Licensing Modernization. This task force would, “Review what changes in health professional regulatory board processes have been successful in shortening application timelines and can be replicated” and other activities designed to leverage Health Professional Licensing best practices and reduce Health Professional Licensing processing times along with other improvements.

Finally, a major amendment would have mandated a Statewide Social Worker Compact. The Compact was a 38 page, 16 session document stating, “The purpose of this Compact is to facilitate interstate practice of regulated social workers by improving public access to competent social work services. The Compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to protect public health and safety through the current system of state licensure.”

BLSW concerns with this Compact were:

1. The Board did not have enough time, between notice and introduction to short session, to perform a collaborative and intentional evaluation of the Compact.
2. Implementation of a Statewide Compact needs to include an education period on the specifics of the Compact and its impacts to Oregon Social Workers and those receiving services from Social Workers. Passing a Compact through short session would not have allowed for that process.
3. A Statewide Compact will require an evaluation of its impact on current rule and statutes as well as an intentional plan to change those rules and statutes in order to comply with the Statewide Compact. Passing a Statewide Compact during the 2024 short session would have circumvented this process.

BLSW will proactively communicate with those affected by the Statewide Compact prior to the upcoming session. BLSW promotes a collaborative and intentional approach to evaluation, planning and public communication as these concepts relate to a Statewide Social Worker Compact.

~ Ray Miller, BLSW Executive Director



CURRENT LICENSING NUMBERS

By Kim Coleman
Licensing Manager

Current Licensed Numbers by Licensure Type & the increase since the December 2023 Newsletter:

LCSW — **6,410** (Active: 5,973, Semi-Retired: 252; Inactive: 185) Increase of + 216 licensees (3% +)

CSWA — **1,925** (Active: 1,843, Inactive: 82) Increase of + 131 licensees (6% +)

LMSW — **340** (Active: 324; Inactive: 16) Increase of + 9 licensees (2.6% +)

RBSW — **33** (Active: 32; Inactive: 1) Increase of +1 licensee (3% +)

Total licensees for the BLSW =....

8,708

→ That represents a total increase of +357 added licensees since
December 2023, which is a 4% growth.

We appreciate your patience as we continue to work through our pending applications. As you can see in the above numbers, the applications just keep on coming in and we are doing our best to process them as quickly as we can.

AS A REMINDER: If you have submitted it, or requested it, we most likely have it. Your application will be updated with the received documents when Board staff review the application. Applications are reviewed in the order they are received.

BLSW HIRING FOR OFFICE SPECIALIST POSITIONS

The Board of Licensed Social Workers are seeking to hire two upcoming Office Specialist positions that are currently approved as limited-duration positions. These will be for one-year positions and will be working in an office environment full-time. If you know of anyone who would be an asset to the Board in these positions, please have them contact the Board for further information.

COMPLIANCE INVESTIGATIONS UPDATES

Here are some statistics of Compliance Investigations

By Mindy Tucker

Sr. Compliance Specialist

Here are some statistics since our last newsletter for Board complaint investigations:

2023:

(48) Cases Opened

(43) Cases Closed

(4) Application investigations with background disclosures for Board approval

2024: (to date)

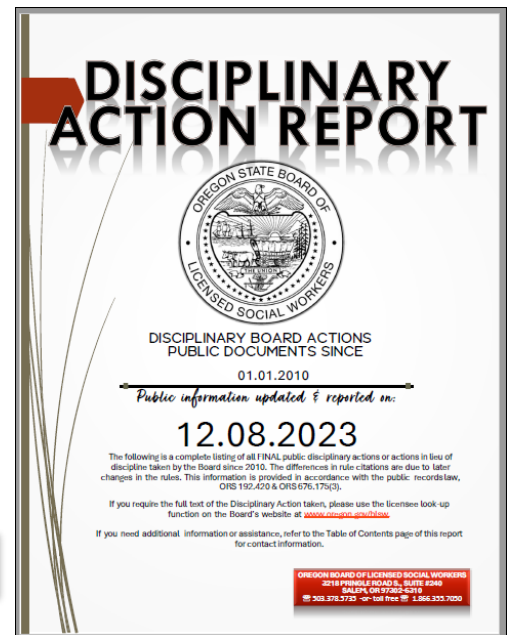
(3) Cases Opened

(27) Cases Closed

+ (8) Additional cases pending closure at the March 2024 meeting

Compliance staff are working at reducing the Board's backlog of cases. At our current rate of closure for 2024, we are looking at closing 100 cases for 2024.

The Board's Disciplinary Action Report is updated following each Board meeting. If there were no disciplinary actions taken at the last board meeting, then only the date changes on the cover page of the report. The Report is then posted to our website for access and looks like the following:



BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF DIRECTORY

BOARD STAFF

- Ray Miller, Executive Director
- Kim Coleman, Licensing Manager
- Wende Thatcher, Licensing Compliance Specialist
- Angela Goodpaster, Licensing Assistant
- Cassie Kanaeholo, Licensing Assistant (part-time)
- Mindy Tucker, Sr. Compliance Specialist, Investigations
- Troy Clinton, Investigator
- Abe Dedek, Investigator

BOARD MEMBERS

- Stephanie Manriquez, Public Member, Board Chair
- Amy Ashton-Williams, LCSW, Vice Chair
- Mollie Janssen, LCSW, CPC Chair
- John Fant, Public Member
- Scott Wilson, CSWA Position
- Paddy Farr, LCSW Position
- **Vacant**, Public Member