

# ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN COUNSELING

2777 Zelda Rd  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
334/240-7229 Fax: 334/263-6115  
[www.abec.alabama.gov](http://www.abec.alabama.gov)

## MINUTES

Board Meeting

July 16, 2021

The Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling (ABEC) held its regular meeting on Friday, July 16, 2021 to conduct business. The meeting was held at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road in Montgomery, Alabama. Members in attendance were Ms. Anna Barksdale (Board Chair attended virtually), Dr. Latofia Parker (Vice Chair), Dr. Debra Atchison (member), Ms. Karole Ohme (member), Dr. Jennifer Brown (member), Dr. Sheila Webb (member attended virtually) and Dr. Robyn Simmons (member). Also in attendance were Dr. Keith Cates (Executive Director), Mrs. Hendon Coody (Legal Counsel), Mr. Keith Warren (Administrative Director), Mrs. Cindy Edgar (Assistant Administrator), Ms. Charlotte Daughhete (Academic Reviewer), Ms. Karen Harlow (Legal Assistant) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Board Chair, Ms. Barksdale, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The regular meeting was advertised to the public on the Board's website, ([www.abec.alabama.gov](http://www.abec.alabama.gov)), as well as the Secretary of State's website, ([www.sos.alabama.gov](http://www.sos.alabama.gov)), in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. A quorum of the members was in attendance in-person and Ms. Barksdale welcomed all participants.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA:** Ms. Barksdale presented for the Board's approval the Board meeting agenda. A copy of the agenda was provided to the Board members prior to the meeting for their review. Dr. Brown made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Webb and unanimously approved by the Board.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:** Ms. Barksdale presented the minutes from the June 11, 2021 regular meeting. Dr. Brown made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ohme and unanimously approved by the Board.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Dr. Cates reported on progress with having the iGOV database online with the merging of the two databases maintained by the Board's staff. He also reported that the benefits of the iGOV reporting system for licensee activities and number of licensees.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Warren reported on the financial activities of the Board for the period ending June 30, 2021. He also reported on the status of the complaints received by the Board during fiscal years 2018 through current date. He also reported that an audit of the Board was scheduled and an auditor would be onsite to review records for FY 2018 through FY 2020.

**LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT:** Ms. Coody reported that the Investigative Committee had met the day before the Board meeting to review complaints. Following a presentation by Mrs. Coody of the recommendations of the Investigative Committee, the Board approved the following action:

Dr. Brown made a motion to fine the Respondent in Complaint Case 2020-09 for each client visit in this matter, for a total of \$2,000. The motion was seconded by Dr. Atchison and unanimously approved by the Board.

Dr. Brown made a motion, in Case 2021-013, to close the case indicating to the complainant that no violations were found. The motion was seconded by Dr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board.

Ms. Ohme made a motion, in Case 2021-014, to close the case due to unsubstantiated allegations. The motion was seconded by Dr. Webb and unanimously approved by the Board.

Dr. Brown made a motion, in Case 2021-016, to close the case indicating to the complainant that no violations were found. The motion was seconded by Dr. Atchison and unanimously approved by the Board.

Dr. Parker made a motion, in Case 2021-018, to close the case due to lack of jurisdiction by the Board. The motion was seconded by Dr. Brown and unanimously approved by the Board.

CONFERENCE AND TRAVEL: Dr. Cates reported that the annual meeting of the Alabama Counseling Association (ALCA) was scheduled in November 2021 in Birmingham and he and Ms. Edgar were interested in attending. It was the consensus of the Board that Dr. Cates, Ms. Barksdale, Ms. Edgar and Mr. Warren be approved to attend this meeting and expenses be reimbursed.

SPECIAL LICENSURE: Dr. Cates presented special licensure requests for the Board's approval:

A request for Provisional LPC by two individuals (MLJ and MTJ) who did not have the required face-to-face hours documented in their Endorsement application (Arkansas) and had obtained a signed Plan of Supervision to acquire those hours. Dr. Atchison made a motion to approve the request for Provisional licensure for the two individuals. The motion was seconded by Dr. Simmons and unanimously approved by the Board.

A request for Provisional LPC by an individual (SP-W) who did not have the required face-to-face hours documented in their Endorsement application (Virginia) and presented a Plan of Supervision to acquire those hours. Dr. Parker made the motion to approve the request for Provisional licensure. The motion was seconded by Dr. Webb and unanimously approved by the Board.

Dr. Brown made the motion to approve the eight (8) requests for Inactive status. The motion was seconded by Dr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board.

A request for LPC application (by BLC) (and status of COVID 19 temporary waiver-supervision). Following a review by the members, Dr. Brown made a motion to deny the application. The motion was seconded by Dr. Simmons and the motion was approved by the majority of the members, with Dr. Parker and Dr. Webb abstaining from vote.

Chairperson Barksdale called a 10-minute recess of the Board at 9:54 a.m. She reconvened the Board meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Dr. Cates presented proposed changes to Rule 255-X-3-.01 Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). A copy of the proposed changes was provided to the members prior to the meeting for their review. He indicated that these changes were in line with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) increasing the minimum hours for a master's degree in counseling toward licensure. The Board had a lengthy discussion about extending the implementation date from the January 1, 2022 proposed date. Included in the discussion were proposed notification processes to education institutions about the proposed rule changes.

Dr. Brown made a motion to approve the proposed changes to Rule 255-X-3-.01 as present, to include the addition of *community counseling* and *marriage couples and family* in the definition of master's degree in the Education section of Rule 255-X-3-.01(2)(a). The motion was seconded by Ms. Ohme and the motion was approved by the majority of the members, with Dr. Parker and Dr. Webb opposing the motion and no members abstaining from vote.

NEW BUSINESS – REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS: Dr. Cates presented applications for the Board's approval (list available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

Initial ALCs: Dr. Brown made the motion to approve the initial ALC applications as recommended by Dr. Cates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board.

ALC to LPC: Dr. Parker made the motion to approve the ALC to LPC requests as recommended by Dr. Cates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Simmons and unanimously approved by the Board.

Inactive Status Request: Dr. Cates reported that these requests had been approved earlier in the meeting.

Reactivation: Ms. Ohme made the motion to approve the application to reactivate their license as recommended by Dr. Cates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Brown and unanimously approved by the Board.

LPC Endorsement: Dr. Atchison made the motion to approve the LPC Endorsement applications as recommended by Dr. Cates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Simmons and unanimously approved by the Board.

Provisional Licensure: Dr. Cates reported that these requests had been approved earlier in the meeting.

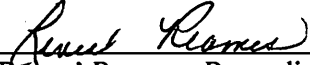
LPC Supervisor: Dr. Simmons made the motion to approve the LPC Supervisor request as recommended by Dr. Cates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Brown and unanimously approved by the Board.


The Board discussed the status of the waivers under the COVID State of Emergency, noting that the ALC and LPC waiver would end July 31, 2021. The Board discussed the supervision waiver. Dr. Cates indicated that he would present a supervision rule change for the Board's consideration, e.g., 75% synchronous and 25% other and supervision CE hours.

Ms. Barksdale announced that the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting was September 17, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

There being no further business of the Board, Dr. Parker made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Dr. Atchison and unanimously approved by the Board. Ms. Barksdale adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
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Renee' Reames, Recording Secretary

  
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Anna Barksdale, Board Chair

Approved on: 9-17-2021 /rr