



Our Mission

The legislature declares that, in order to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of this state against unauthorized, unqualified and improper practice of social work, it is necessary that a proper regulatory authority be established and adequately provided for.

SPRING/
SUMMER 2024

News | Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners

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From The Chair

Dr. Hyacinth McKee, LCSW-BACS

Simunye, Unitatem, Itti nan aiya, Unidad, L'unite

Salutations,

All can agree that this Spring and Summer season of the year of 2024 has been a very active one for our public and the profession of social work. It has been my experience that people tend to talk about the weather, sports, or food to start friendly conversations simply to keep a dialogue of openness with one another. Certainly, during this season for the profession of social work, none of these topics required dialogue engagement as the key major issues of **Tele-supervision, Interstate Compact and Workforce Expansion** served as the forefront of discussion for our public. Collectively, the public, grassroots organizations, self-advocates, mental health providers, behavioral health providers, social work associations, individual professionals, elected officials, lobbyists, clients, and individual social workers worked together to ensure the passage of two bills into law;

[HB865 \(now Act No. 457\)](#) and [HB888 \(now Act No. 791\)](#) expanded the accessibility of professional social workers to people who are need of services. Emphatically, the efforts of the collective should be acknowledged, recognized and commended as it took the work of **all** stakeholders to ensure that the voices of the public were realized and actualized.

With this, the role of the Louisiana State Board of Social Workers is to continue to serve as a regulatory body with the charge of adherence and enforcement of the laws for public protection as well as working to advance the will of the public by operating within its scope to do so. This role is exercised while remaining within the requirements of the existing processes and guidelines of our state. Our board is committed to fulfilling its charge. To adhere to the requirements of our laws, rules, inclusive of our professional standards and practice act, LABSWE works to model the standard lawmaking process that is utilized by legislative bodies in our state and nationally. *Continued on page 3*

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Appreciating Candice Sorapuru | CE & Renewal Notice | Board Vacancy | Year End Review | Scam Alert

BOARD MEMBERS

LDH RULES

REGARDING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

The Louisiana Department of Health is promulgating a rule allowing for the expansion of Medicaid reimbursement for mental health therapeutic services provided by licensed master's social workers (referred to by LDH as provisionally licensed mental health providers or PLMHPs). It remains the responsibility of the LMSW to practice within the scope of practice authorized by [La R.S. 37:2707\(B\)](#).

The Louisiana Department of Health reports that implementation is expected to begin on August 1.

Click on the link below to read the press release issued by LDH.

<https://ldh.la.gov/news/provisional-licensure>

Social Work Licensure Compact

House Bill 888 became Act 791 of 2024 on June 25, 2024 and becomes part of Louisiana law on August 1, 2024. The Social Work Licensure Compact facilitates the interstate practice for social workers while maintaining protection of the public health and safety. It is anticipated that the implementation process for the compact will take 18-24 months. Once the data system is operational and the Compact Commission has finalized all necessary rulemaking, licensed social workers will be able to apply for a multistate license to practice in-person and through telehealth in other member states.

For additional information on the Social Work Interstate Compact visit:

Social Work Licensure Compact www.swcompact.org

The National Center for Interstate Compacts - Council on State Governments <https://compacts.csg.org/compact-updates/social-work/>

REMOTE SUPERVISION

Act 457 (2024) <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1381937> relative to telesupervision requires the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners ("Board") to "establish rules and regulations regarding the specific requirements and parameters for telesupervision, including technology standards, documentation, and confidentiality."

The Board is working diligently on drafting the rules required by Act 457. Although Act 457 will become effective on August 1, 2024, the rule promulgation process will take several months to finalize. Until the rules are promulgated, social workers are required to seek approval of remote supervision from the Board pursuant to L.A.C. 46:XXV.503(H). The Board shall consider the request at a regularly scheduled board meeting and notify the supervisor of its decision within 30 business days.

Thank You
Candice
Sorapuru!



The board extends its gratitude to Candice Sorapuru, LCSW-BACS for her work and dedication to the people of Louisiana. As a member of the LABSWE and chair of the Interstate Compact/Teletherapy Committee, Candice provided expertise from her many years as a clinical social worker, clinical supervisor, educator, researcher and change agent. We look forward to her continued service as a member of the Interstate Compact/Teletherapy Committee, your expertise to advance the needs of our public and your work in the community. Thank you!

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS



Continuation from Cover

From the Chair

Dr. Hyacinth McKee, LCSW-BACS

Aligned with transparency, to initiate the process of rules promulgation, rules are established inclusive of data collection, committee review/approval, full LABSWE review/approval and legal review. For many years, this has been the standard of practice for proposed rules promulgation for LABSWE and other state boards. In addition to its charge, our board continues to educate our public on matters that impact their service received from licensed social workers. The following is a brief recap of some of the work of LABSWE regarding the new laws that impact our public:

ACT No. 467: Tele-supervision

- December 8, 2023: First meeting of the re-established Supervision Committee for FY 24
- April 9, 2024: LABSWE attended Health and Welfare Committee meeting at the State Capitol
- June 3, 2024: Supervision committee finalized a draft of the proposed rule for Tele-supervision
- June 21, 2024: LABSWE reviewed the proposed draft developed by Supervision Committee, approved a draft of the proposed rule for Tele-supervision and submitted for legal review
- July 2, 2024: Notice to the public and licensees posted on LABSWE website regarding ACT 467 and remote supervision

ACT No. 791: Interstate Compact

- February 11, 2024: First meeting of the Interstate Compact/Teletherapy Committee (ICTC) convened and reviewed model language of the interstate compact
- April 9, 2024: LABSWE attended Health and Welfare Committee meeting at the State Capitol
- April 16, 2024: ICTC members attended virtual town hall meeting facilitated by NASW-LA
- June 3, 2024: ICTC was informed that proposed bill HB 888 passed making Louisiana the 15th state to join the compact and developed a survey to be disseminated to social work licensees
- July 2024: Notice to public and licensees posted on website regarding HB 888

“The Board exists because the legislature declared “in order to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of this state against unauthorized, unqualified and improper practice of social work, it is necessary that a proper regulatory authority be established and adequately provided for.” La R.S. 37:2701

As a “macro-clinician” it is my experience that LABSWE and its staff continue to work to exceed the requirements of its existence. The board’s emphasis on work ethics, transparency, and accessibility aligns with the voices of the public as being of paramount importance. It is of significance that our public be provided with information pertaining to the status of the work of LABSWE relative to all laws that have an impact on our public and profession. The intention of LABSWE is to continue its work to keep the public informed as evidenced by the re-instituted board Facebook page, provided messaging through email notifications, published newsletters and other pertinent information made available on the board website.

The public is highly encouraged to attend our open meetings and to stay informed with *accurate* information provided from the board.

LABSWE enters FY 25 with *Inform, Implement, and Impact* as the platform to address and meet the needs of our public. As we embark on this frontier of solidarity, it is the belief that collectively together we can continue to accomplish great things for the people of our state.

“Some people don’t want to be part of the process they just want to be part of the outcome. It is during the process is where you figure out who is worth being part of the outcome.”---Author Unknown

Many thanks to *all* those for being part of the process.

**In community,
Dr. Hy**

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

NOTICE REGARDING CONTINUING EDUCATION RENEWAL

Social workers can now renew their license for 2024-2025. Social workers should complete the renewal workflow that indicates August 2024 as the due date on or before August 31, 2024 to avoid paying a lapsed license fee in addition to the renewal fee. If a renewal workflow is not assigned to your Certemy account, please notify the board office at least a week before August 31, 2024 to ensure that a renewal is added to the workflow prior to August 31st.

The current rules allow social workers to obtain continuing education virtually and in-person. For this continuing education collection period September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024, the maximum number of hours that social workers are allowed to obtain virtually is ten. The remaining number of hours must be obtained in-person. The board has drafted a proposed change to the existing rule regarding continuing education. Until such a rule is promulgated, social workers must adhere to the existing rules. For more information visit [https://www.labswe.org/rules-standards-and-procedures/Rule 317 Continuing Education Requirements](https://www.labswe.org/rules-standards-and-procedures/Rule%20317%20Continuing%20Education%20Requirements)

LABSWE In Action

It has been a very active season for our board and board staff. Here are a few highlights of LABSWE in Action!



Board Members and Board staff presenting at NASW-LA conference March 2024

Pictured from left to right: Candice Sorapuru, LCSW-BACS, Emily DeAngelo, Administrator, Lisa Lipsey, LCSW, Complaint Consultant, and Jamie Barney, DSW, LCSW-BACS

Board Members and Board Staff, pictured with past board member Carla Moore, ASWB Director-At-Large at the Association of Social Work Board's Annual Education Meeting in Arlington, VA April 2024

Pictured left to right: Blake Williamson, Board staff, Candice Sorapuru, LCSW-BACS, Hyacinth McKee, DBH, LCSW-BACS, Carla Moore, LMSW, Trinity George, RSW, Sara Banks, Board Staff and Emily DeAngelo, Board Administrator



Board Member and Board Staff at the Louisiana State Capitol April 2024

Pictured left to right: Emily DeAngelo, Board Administrator, Hyacinth McKee DBH, LCSW-BACS, Board Chair and Shelly Weaver LCSW-BACS, President, NASW-LA Chapter



Board Members Engaging with Other Professionals During Social Work Month



Board Member at the National Association of Black Social Workers Annual Conference in New Orleans March 2024

Pictured to the right Melissa Smith Haley, LMSW

Board Member presenting at Louisiana Support Enforcement Association Conference March 2024

Pictured Bora Sunseri, LCSW-BACS



LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

BOARD VACANCY

A position currently being held by a LCSW with a practice specialty other than clinical expires in August.

La. R.S. 37:2704 specifies that the board shall consist of:

- 1 RSW with at least 3 years of social work experience
- 1 LMSW with at least 3 years of social work experience
- 3 LCSWs with at least 3 years of clinical social work experience
- 1 RSW, LMSW or LCSW
- 1 Consumer Member

Furthermore, § 2704 specifies that the board shall consist of at least 3 members rendering direct services and at least 1 member engaged in social work education or a practice specialty other than clinical.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, email a letter stating your interest along with a current resume to the NASW-LA Chapter at info.naswla@socialworkers.org.

The submission deadline for the position expires at the close of business on July 31st.

FAQs about serving on the Board:

What is the time commitment for serving?

An appointment to the Board is made by the governor for three consecutive years. Meetings are held approximately every 5 weeks on a Friday at the board office in Baton Rouge. Meetings begin at 8:30 a.m. and carry-over to Saturday, if necessary. Other examples of board activities include, presenting at the NASW-LA Annual Conference and serving on committees.

Are board members paid?

Board members are reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred on board business. For example, mileage driven to and from a meeting is reimbursed. We also reserve a hotel room for board members that are required to travel a significant distance to meetings. We provide breakfast and lunch at the meeting. If you need to stay overnight, dinner can be reimbursed up to the amount allowed by the state's travel guidelines.

If you have any questions concerning the board's activities or the time commitment required of board members, please email the board's Administrator, Emily DeAngelo at edeangelo@labswe.org.

SCAM ALERT



The board office was notified by a LCSW in private practice about a scam attempt. The information supplied below is an edited excerpt taken from the therapist's narrative of events.

I am in private practice and received an email from a "father" wanting services for his "daughter". He said he is out of the country, but his daughter is coming to my area, and he wants to set up twice a week sessions for 4 weeks. He will self-pay.

He tells me he is going to send a cashier's check for the whole amount in advance by Fed Ex. He has a "customer" in the States who will send the cashier's check right away. Then he sent an email letting me know to expect the check, however, it will be more than our agreed amount. His "customer" didn't have time to make 2 cashier's checks, so he put his daughter's money onto the same check that was to be used for the daughter's therapy sessions. Father explained that the additional money is for food and essentials for his daughter while she is staying here and that he knows I am reliable and can be trusted to hold this money for her safely and will give it to her guardian when she arrives.

Now this sounds fishy so I go online and look up "Can you fake a cashier's check?"

Yes, you can. It's difficult because it needs a watermark, but you can. On Monday, the check arrives and sure enough it looks real, watermark and everything. The online article says to contact the issuer of the cashier's check to confirm they issued the check. I did so and the representative confirmed that they did not issue the check. The article advised that the suspected fraud should be reported to the Federal Trade Commission, the US Postal Service, and my State Attorney General's office.

What happens in this scam is once you deposit the funds, the scammer will ask you to Venmo the remainder of the amount. It will take 1-2 weeks for the bank to realize it is counterfeit. When they do, they will deduct the amount deposited.

This is being shared for awareness. Please be cautious if a client/potential client wants to pay upfront with a cashier's check. Don't accept the check if it is more than the agreed upon amount. Do not deposit it. Do not call the number on the check. Rather, google the issuer on the check for the accurate contact information to verify the validity of the check.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

YEAR END REVIEW FY 23-24

Some Highlights

- Finalized contract with new licensing platform provider
- Upgraded phone system
- Hired a 2nd Licensing Analyst to expedite the licensing process efficiently
- Creation of Interstate Compact/Teletherapy Committee
- Re-institution of the Supervision Committee
- Consistent committee meetings inclusive of members of the public and licensees
- Collaboration with social work associations and stakeholders on matters impacting the public

DATA REPORTED:

Applications Processed

BACS	124
RSW	290
LMSW	534
LCSW	417
Retake	857
Total	2,222

Licenses Issued Upon Passage of Exam

LMSW	338
LCSW	210

License count by type as of July 2024

RSW	CSW	LMSW	LCSW	BACS	Total
1,908	550	2,611	3,247	1,425	9,741

Complaints Received – There were a total of 139 complaints received, 35 of which were not lodged against a social worker.

	Received	Accepted	Dismissed	Pending
RSW	23	12	1	11
CSW	7	4	0	4
LMSW	21	18	6	12
LCSW	30	23	10	12
BACS	21	8	4	9
Applicants	2			2

Other Data

Referrals to Impaired Professional Program	3
# of CE Approval Organizations	90
License Verifications Completed	543
Presentations to Social Work Students About Licensure	4

Disciplinary Action by License Type

RSW	CSW	LMSW	LCSW	BACS
7	3	6	7	2

DID YOU KNOW?

LABSWE has a Facebook page.
Follow us at facebook.com/labswe.

