



D.C. Board of Social Work

★ ★ ★ District of Columbia
Department of Health
Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor



June 2009

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YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

Changing your mailing address? Send your name, mailing address, and license number to:

Board of Social Work
Processing Department
Address/Name Change
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

BOARD PRESENTS AWARD TO OUTGOING CHAIR



Acting SW Board Chairperson, The Honorable Arlene L. Robinson (in red), presents plaque of appreciation to outgoing Board Chair Dr. Mattie Giles (holding award) to say "Thank You" for her many years of dedicated service to the Board. Thanks, Dr. Giles, for your wise and steady leadership!

Left to right: Gabrielle Schultz, Health Licensing Specialist; Bonnie Rampersaud, Board Executive Director; Willa Day Morris, MSW, LICSW, Board Member; Dr. Mattie Giles; The Honorable Arlene L. Robinson, Consumer Member; Sharon Cascone, MSW, LICSW, Board Member; Deb Moss, Investigator; Eileen Dombo, PhD, LICSW, Board Member; and Carla M. Williams, Assistant Attorney General.

LICENSURE RENEWAL PERIOD

ALL SOCIAL WORK LICENSES (ALL LEVELS) EXPIRE JULY 31, 2009.

- Renewal notices and renewal information will be sent out to all licensees approximately 90 days prior to this expiration date of their licenses.
- At the time of licensure renewal, Social Workers must have completed 40 Continuing Education Hours between the dates of August 1st 2007 and July 31st 2009.
- All first-time renewal licensees are exempt from the requirement of having 40 hours of continuing education. They will be responsible for submitting the 40 hours for the 2011 renewal.
- 60 calendar days after the expiration date of all licenses, the Board will run an audit of 20% of all renewed licensees. If a licensee is audited, they will receive a certified letter in the mail requesting copies of all certificates of completion.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Board of Social Work

MEETS ON THE
"SECOND WEDNESDAY"

at 717 14th St., NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Open Session is
at 11:00 am.

How do I become eligible to take the Social Work exam?

You must be approved by the Board of Social Work prior to taking the Social Work exam. Candidates must submit a complete licensure application package to the Board of Social Work. Then, after your application is approved by the Board, you are eligible to

take the Exam. (Previously, persons wishing to take the exam contacted the Association of Social Work Boards [ASWB] before contacting the DC Board of Social Work.)

After my application is approved by the Board, what period of time am I given to sit for the exam?

Your application remains open for 120 days. During that period, you should sit for the exam and submit your scores back to the Board.

How quickly after I pass the exam will I receive my license?

The Board will receive your Score Report within a week, and your license will be issued within that week.

If I am licensed in Maryland (or another jurisdiction), do I need a DC license to practice?

Yes. You must obtain a DC license to practice Social Work in the District.

When can I sit for the Clinical Exam?

You may sit for the Clinical Exam after you have completed 2 years of licensure experience: 3,000 hours with 100 face-to-face clinical hours, at the graduate level. Be sure to submit an application for approval with all your support documentation of your hours.

What do I do if my license has been expired for over 5 Years?

If your license has been expired for over 5 years, you will have to submit a new application to the DC Board of Social Work and write the National Board Exams again. After all requirements have been met, a new license will be reissued to you. However, if you hold a current license in another jurisdiction, you are able to apply for a license in DC by Endorsement.

Can my 6 contact hours of Ethics that are required for my license renewal be taken online?

No. The Ethics requirement must be satisfied by taking a direct face-to-face course. Distance learning and online courses will not be accepted by the Board.

BOARD-RELATED TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW

CONSENT ORDER: A voluntary agreement entered into by a board and a respondent (person disciplined) in lieu of hearing for violation of the HORA. A Consent Order may or may not be reportable to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO DISCIPLINE (OR DENY): A document requested by a board and prepared by the Office of the Attorney General which places a licensee on notice that he or she is being charged with violating one or more of the health profession laws as outlined in Title 3 Chapter 12 of the D.C. Code. It may also indicate violation of District regulations as found in Title 17 of the District Register, and/or federal law. It will give a summary of the facts which serve as the basis for the violations. The document also contains information about how to request a hearing. The disciplinary action (if any) from a "Notice" is reportable to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

SUMMARY SUSPENSION: A document requested by the Administrator of the Health Regulation and Licensing Administration (not a Board), and is prepared by the Office of the Attorney General. The purpose of the document is to immediately terminate the right of a person to practice a health profession because the Administrator believes that the person poses an imminent danger, because of his or her misconduct, to the health and safety of the residents of the District of Columbia or its visitors and guests. The "Suspension" informs the person that he or she must request a hearing within 72 hours and is entitled to a hearing within 72 hours – provided that the beginning and ending period for the 72 hours does not fall on a weekend or holiday, in which case it is carried over to the next business day. Failure to request a hearing within the 72 hours results in the suspension remaining in place until it is lifted by the board having jurisdiction over the licensee. A Summary Suspension is reportable to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

CEASE AND DESIST ORDER: A Cease and Desist order is a document requested by the Administrator and prepared by the Office of the Attorney General. It is served on a person whom the Administrator believes may cause immediate and irreparable harm. Unlike a Summary Suspension, it is usually served on persons who are engaging in a health profession while not being licensed, registered, or certified. The person receiving the Cease and Desist must request a hearing within 10 days and is entitled to a hearing within 10 days. If the hearing isn't requested, the Cease and Desist remains in effect. If the person continues to be engaged in the activity after being served a Cease and Desist, the Administrator may ask the Office of the Attorney General to seek a criminal prosecution to enjoin the activity.

THE NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK: A database mandated by federal law and maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the purposes of warehousing disciplinary actions taken by states against health professionals. Each licensing board is required to report to the Data Bank each and every disciplinary action taken against a licensee, registrant, or holder of a certification.

Counsel's Column

IT'S RENEWAL TIME...

ARE YOU READY FOR THE CONTINUING EDUCATION AUDIT?

By Carla M. Williams, Assistant Attorney General & Board Legal Advisor

District of Columbia Social Workers will soon be renewing their social work licenses, which must be renewed on or before July 31, 2009 or else they will expire.

In order to be eligible for renewal of licensure, a social worker must have completed **forty (40) hours** of approved continuing education credit between August 1, 2007 and July 31, 2009, **six (6) of which must have been in ethics.**

When calculating your continuing education credits, remember that a minimum of **fifty (50) minutes is needed to constitute one (1) credit hour.**

At the conclusion of the renewal period, the Board will conduct a random audit to ensure compliance with the continuing education requirements. If you are selected in the audit, you will be notified by letter and

provided instructions for submitting your materials. Please be sure to submit all requested materials within thirty (30) days as requested and to keep a copy of your records in case your original submission is lost or misdirected.

DO NOT send your original certificates to the Board; keep these for your files.

Please take note that the random selections are

generated by computer. This means that an individual can be selected in back-to-back consecutive audits. If you are selected, you must submit proof of completion of the required continuing education courses whether or not you were selected in a previous audit.

Here are a few tips to help ensure you meet your continuing education requirements:

CONTINUING EDUCATION AUDIT TIPS

1. Make sure that you have completed all forty (40) continuing education credits **between August 1, 2007 and July 31, 2009.** You will not receive credit for continuing education courses that were taken before August 1, 2007 or after July 31, 2009. Even if the course was taken one day after the deadline, it is still too late to receive credit and you will be fined if you are selected in the random audit.
2. If the continuing education certificate **does not clearly include the word "ethics" in the title,** you will need to submit the course materials, syllabus, or other documentation to demonstrate that the course subject matter included ethics and the number of credit hours which were devoted to ethics.
3. Please be aware that in the District of Columbia, you **cannot complete ethics courses online or through self study** courses. All ethics courses must have been obtained through a live, face-to-face continuing education course.
4. No more than twelve (12) continuing education hours may be accepted in any renewal period, or for reinstatement or reactivation of a license, for approved **independent home studies and distance learning** continuing education activities. For example, if during the audit, you submit proof of completing forty (40) continuing education credits, but all forty (40) were done online, this would be counted as follows: Zero (0) ethics, and a total of twelve (12) continuing education credits. You would then be fined and ordered to complete the outstanding twenty-eight (28) continuing education units, six (6) of which must be in ethics, within thirty (30) days or else face possible formal disciplinary action.
5. Finally, please take note that you must have already completed all forty (40) continuing education hours at the time you renew your license. If you do not have all forty (40) hours, including six (6) in ethics, **do not renew your license until you do have the hours.** It is insufficient to renew your license with the intention of completing the remaining continuing education hours later.

The renewal question asks, "Have you completed the required continuing education..." If you answer "yes" on the application but do not actually have the hours completed, this may be considered as submission of a false or misleading statement to the Board.

For example, if you renew your license on July 1, 2009, but do not complete the last of your continuing education requirements until July 31, 2009, because you had not in fact actually completed all of your required continuing education at the time you attested to such on your renewal application, you could be subject to a fine or formal disciplinary action.



Willa Day Morris

MEET BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK MEMBER WILLA DAY MORRIS, MSW, LICSW

"I think that it is particularly important for us to help better define what Licensed Social Workers can do that is different than what people employed as Counselors or Case Managers can do. My sense is that there's some uncertainty out there in the field, and getting some clarity on this issue should be a high priority for the Board."

When were you appointed to the Board?

I was appointed to the Board in November of 2008.

Why and how did you first get involved with the Board? What sparked your interest in serving as a Board member?

I have been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the District since 1994. I am a District native, and have spent the bulk of my professional career working here. I am very committed to making this city a great place to live for all its residents, and I saw serving on the Social Work Board as an opportunity to further that goal.

Is there any aspect of your service as a Board member thus far that has surprised you (or has the experience been what you expected it to be)?

I've followed the work of the Social Work Board for a number of years, so I was somewhat familiar with what the Board members do. Now that I'm on the Board, it has been a good experience to see first-hand the level of commitment that the staff have in carrying out the

day-to-day work. They really do a great job.

What issues, related to the regulation of your profession, interest you most?

I am particularly interested in making sure that social workers understand the rules and regulations that govern our profession, and properly apply these standards in situations that come up in daily practice. The District's rules are in place to ensure that clients are served in a professional and ethical manner, and it is very important that everyone practicing have a comprehensive understanding of what they can and cannot do as a licensed social worker.

What challenges lay ahead for the Board?

The Board is committed to continuing to serve the Social Work community and the clients with integrity. We will continue to review cases and questions as they come up, in a timely manner, and review and improve the standards and regulations as necessary.

Is there anything about the District of Columbia or the DC population that poses a unique challenge to your profession?

My greatest concern is the high level of poverty in the District, and how this impacts the physical and mental health of many of our residents.

Are there issues regarding your profession that pose special challenges for establishing regulations?

I think that it is particularly important for us to help better define what Licensed Social Workers can do that is different than what people employed as Counselors or Case Managers can do. My sense is that there's some uncertainty out there in the field, and getting some clarity on this issue should be a high priority for the Board.

What future goals do you have as a Board member?

As noted previously, I would like to be part of an effort to better define what Licensed Social Workers do that is different than what Counselors or Case

Managers do. I also look forward to the opportunity to help educate the general public on the important role that Social Work, as a profession, performs throughout the community.

Based on your familiarity with the Board, what do you feel is the greatest recent accomplishment of the Board?

I think the Board continues to serve as a resource and point of information for social workers. The Open Session every month allows for citizens and others to come before the board with comments and suggestions. I would like to expand the role of public feedback to the Board.

What unique perspective do you bring to the Board (if any)?

I think the fact that I've done extensive one-on-one clinical work as well as run a non-profit brings a unique perspective. Based on the variety of roles that I've worked in, I've got the experience to see the tension

(continued on page 5)



Sharon R. Cascone

MEET BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK MEMBER SHARON R. CASCONE, MSW, LICSW

"I was very interested in making further contributions to the residents of the District of Columbia and my Social Work colleagues. There is a pressing need for competent service delivery in our work and I am pleased to be part of regulating the practice of social work in DC."

When did you get appointed to the Board?

I was appointed to the Board on October 27, 2008.

What sparked your interest in serving as a Board member?

When the opportunity to serve presented itself, I was very interested in making further contributions to the residents of the District of Columbia and my Social Work colleagues. There is a pressing need for competent service delivery in our work and I am pleased to be part of regulating the practice of social work in DC.

Is there any aspect of your service as a Board member thus far that surprised you?

I was pleasantly surprised to be working with such a strong team that does the work of the Board. Board member colleagues and the staff of the Board have been a delight to work with. I'm very excited about the months ahead given such a strong team.

Is there anything about the District of Columbia or the DC population that poses a unique challenge to your profession?

The lack of full representation in Congress is unique to the District. Social workers are particularly interested in equal rights and issues of justice as part of our professional creed. Our lack of representation affects DC residents in a multitude of ways.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about applying to serve on the Board?

I would strongly recommend it. I have had a rich experience thus far. I am learning a great deal about the role of being a Board

member and the ins-and-outs of regulation and protocol.

Any message you would like to convey to licensees?

I would like to convey to licensees that each be very mindful of her/his professional obligations. Matters that come before the Board are taken very seriously. We are committed to regulating the practice of Social Work for the well-being and safety of the residents of the District of Columbia.

(continued from page 4)

that can sometimes exist between those managing a program and those providing the clinical services. Managers often have to balance trying to carry out a vision while sticking to a budget, and clinicians need to be solely focused on doing their best—clinically and ethically—to help the person they are working with, and this can create some challenging situations. I've been on both sides of this equation,

and having that perspective helps guide me on some of the issues that come before the Board.

What knowledge or skills have you developed as a Board member that you had not developed before?

I am certainly getting a broader perspective on the many roles that Social Workers have in promoting the health and safety of people in our city. I've had

the opportunity to meet professionals working in specialized areas of practice that I had not had much exposure to, and that's been enlightening and educational.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about applying to serve on the Board?

I would tell them that it is a very fulfilling experience for anyone that wants to help improve the training and

professionalism of those working in the Social Work field.

Any message you would like to convey to licensees?

If you aren't sure about something, call the staff; they are there to help. And make sure that you fulfill your annual CEU requirement. Not only will it make you a better professional, it's also the rule!



Eileen Dombo with Mayor Adrian Fenty

MEET BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK MEMBER EILEEN A. DOMBO, PHD, LICSW

"I am surprised by how few Social Workers attend the Open Session that is held each month. I would think this would be a wonderful opportunity for the professional community to become more engaged in issues related to the regulation of the practice of social work."

When were you appointed to the Board?

I was appointed to the Board of Social Work in October of 2008.

Why and how did you first get involved with the Board? What sparked your interest in serving as a Board member?

I was motivated to serve on the Board by my desire to enhance the Social Work profession in the District of Columbia.

Is there an aspect of your service as a Board member thus far that has surprised you (or has the experience been what you expected it to be)?

Having served on the Board for a few months, I

am surprised by how few Social Workers attend the Open Session that is held each month. I would think this would be a wonderful opportunity for the professional community to become more engaged in issues related to the regulation of the practice of social work.

What issues, related to the regulation of your profession, interest you most?

I am most interested in ensuring that social work jobs are done by Licensed Social Workers. This is crucial to both the protection of the title of "Social Worker," which is related to the integrity of the profession, and to consumer protection. This will be a big challenge for

the Board in the future, as we struggle with what it means to regulate social work positions that are being filled by non-social workers.

My goal is to generate more connection between the Board of Social Work and the professional community.

What challenges lay ahead for the Board?

I hope the Board is able to educate the community about the importance of licensure and the consequences of practicing without a license.

I am pleased that the Board has begun to hold [in-house] retreats to look at some issues more in-depth, outside of our regular monthly agenda.

I am very excited about working with my fellow Board members who bring wonderful experience in the field to their work on the Board. I believe I bring an important perspective to the Board as a clinical social worker who has served in agency settings in the past and is currently in private clinical practice and in an academic setting, teaching future social workers.

Any message you would like to convey to licensees?

I encourage all licensees—and those wishing to pursue a license to practice social work in the District of Columbia—to attend the [monthly] Open Session of the Board to get more involved.

PAID INACTIVE STATUS

If you intend to retire your license, or if you would like to place your license on Inactive Status, you must explicitly inform the Board of your intention before the renewal date expires. If you fail to pay renewal fees on time, your license is not inactive; it is delinquent (expired). It is unlawful to practice as a Social Worker while your license is delinquent/expired.

EXPEDITE YOUR LICENSE

- Make sure to have your entire application filled out and signed.
- Provide official court documents of final case dispositions for any felonies or misdemeanors that you incurred.
- Case dispositions should include a case number, jurisdiction, year, all the defendant names, all plaintiff names, a brief summary of the case, and final disposition, such as judgment dollar amount, dismissed with or without prejudice, or settlement dollar amount—this information must be sent with your application.

FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS & STUDENTS

The Board of Social Work extends an **open invitation** to Field Placement Supervisors and Students to attend the **Open Session** of the Board's monthly meetings (every second Wednesday of the month, from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon). Hearings on disciplinary matters are also open to the public. If you would like to attend, please call Health Licensing Specialist Gabrielle Schultz at (202) 724-8739 or via email at gabrielle.schultz@dc.gov.

FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE BOARD

To file a complaint against a licensed Social Worker, simply write a letter that describes your complaint. The letter must be signed, and you should attach copies of any pertinent documents that you may have. The letter must also include your address, so we may contact you as necessary and notify you of any findings.

You should mail the complaint to:

DC Board of Social Work
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

You can also fax the complaint to the Board at (202) 727-8471.

If your complaint alleges unlicensed activity, you should address your complaint to:

Supervisory Investigator
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005

You can also fax your complaint about unlicensed activity to (202) 724-8677.

PLEASE NOTE:

You can print a complaint form from our website at www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

Please be advised that the health professional licensing boards do not have jurisdiction over fee disputes, except for billing for services that were not provided. If you have a fee dispute with a health professional, you can seek redress through the civil courts.

BOARD ORDERS

February 2008 through March 2009

Revoked

Priyanthi R Marzorati (5/19/08) - Filed a false statement with the Board.

Probation

Abdulai S. Jalloh (3/18/09) - Filed a false or misleading statement with the Board.

Orlando Marshall (2/15/08) - Filed a false or misleading statement with the Board.

Peter Noble (11/24/08) - Filed a false or misleading statement with the Board.

Probation Lifted

Shirley Singer (9/17/08) - Probation lifted.

Denied

Corrine Simons (11/18/08) - Social Work Applicant filed a false or misleading statement with the Board.

Verification of Licensure

Licensing authorities and some health facilities often require a letter of verification of the licenses you currently hold or have held in the past. These letters of verification are sometimes called "letters of good standing," even though your DC license may have expired.

If the jurisdiction or institution to which you wish the letter sent gave you a form, simply forward the form, with a check or money order payable to "DC Treasurer" in the amount of thirty-four dollars (\$34.00) to:

DC Board of Social Work
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

Be sure to include your name and the address where the form is to be sent on the form.

If the jurisdiction or institution that you wish the letter sent to did not give you a form, send the payment referenced above and a short note requesting a letter of verification. The note should include your name, and the name and address of where you want the letter of verification sent.

WHEN YOU MOVE (OR CHANGE YOUR NAME): All name and address changes must be submitted in writing to our office within 30 days of the change. Failure to do so may result in a \$100 fine per section 16 DCMR § 3601.3(b). Please include your name, address, Social Security number, and license number, if you know it. If you have a name change, you must also enclose a copy of your certificate of marriage, divorce decree, or court order that authorizes the change. Fax your request to (202) 727-8471, or mail your name and address change to: DC Board of Social Work, Attn: Processing Department, Address/Name Change, 717 14th Street, NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005.

D.C. BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005



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Government of the District of Columbia
Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor



Health Professional
Licensing Administration

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DC Board of Social Work
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Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

Phone
(202) 724-8739

Fax
(202) 727-8471

Webpage
www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

DC Government website
www.dc.gov

**Current Members
of The District of Columbia
Board of Social Work**

Sharon R. Cascone, MSW, LICSW,
Board Member

Willa Day Morris, MSW, LICSW,
Board Member

Eileen A. Dombo, PhD, LICSW,
Board Member

The Honorable Arlene L. Robinson,
Consumer Member

Director, Department of Health
Pierre N.D. Vigilance, MD, MPH

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Carla M. Williams

Investigator
Mark Donatelli

Newsletter Editor/Layout
Nancy Kofie

To use HPLA's website to check and verify a license, go to: www.hpla.doh.dc.gov