



D.C. Board of Psychology



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Winter 2014

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

Board of Psychology
Processing Department
Address/Name Change
899 N. Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington DC 20002

RENEWAL ISSUE

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings fellow psychologists!

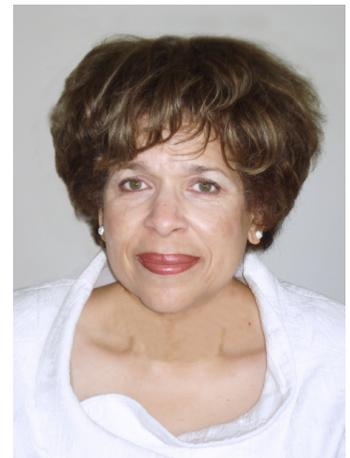
It is, again, a pleasure to have the opportunity to share thoughts with you, on behalf of the District of Columbia Board of Psychology. The Board has had a very busy past few months and, with this issue, thought it would be practical to share some of the work of the Board.

However, please allow me a moment to share, first, the Board's sadness with the departure of Dr. Feseha Woldu, Senior Deputy Director, Health Regulation and Licensing Administration (HRLA). Dr. Woldu, since 1999, was instrumental in the growth and development of what ultimately became HRLA. When his schedule permitted, he attended our Board meetings to provide latest administrative developments within the department. Even more importantly, he stayed to hear issues of the Board and would return with helpful solutions for us—always with the focus on facilitating any administrative barriers to the work of the Board.

His communications to us were always clear: HRLA is here to support the work of the appointed Board members; and, the work of the Board is to protect the safety and welfare of the citizens of the District of Columbia. Through challenging times and cases before the Board and difficult decision-making that followed, Dr. Woldu was **ALWAYS** there to offer 110% support to us.

Although you may not have known him, or of his tremendous support of the work of the Board of Psychology, which, ultimately supports your work as an individual practitioner, please know, next to the Mayor, you had no DC official who was a greater supporter of the field than Dr. Woldu. There is an article in this issue about his life, work with us and his next endeavor to engage his talents.

Dr. Woldu, thank you for your tireless dedication to the Board and the field of Psychology.



Barbara Taylor Roberts, PhD

Beginning with this, and issues to follow, the Board Attorney, Panravee Vongjaroenrat will share some of the legal issues that have come before the Board. Also, our work, in part, and your ability to practice, is bound by regulations. These regulations serve to further ensure the safety and protection of the public we serve. Periodically, these regulations have to be reviewed (for legal sufficiency and applicability to current practice standards)

(continued on page 3)

Upcoming Board Meetings

The DC Board of Psychology

MEETS

THE THIRD FRIDAY
OF EACH MONTH

AT

9:30 AM

at 899 N. Capitol St NE
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Time is allocated at
each Board Meeting
to allow the public
an opportunity to
speak to the Board.
Please notify us in
advance if you plan
to attend a meeting
by sending an email
to hpla@dc.gov.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW TO RENEW

- 1) All licensees will be required to undergo a state and federal Criminal Background Check (CBC). *Licensees are required to undergo a subsequent criminal background check every four (4) years from the date of the licensee's previous background check. (17DCMR §8501.5) If you completed a CBC with the Health Professional Licensing Administration within the last 4 years, you are not required to complete a CBC with this renewal.*
- 2) To access your renewal application, go online at www.doh.dc.gov. **No CBCs will be done/ accepted unless a renewal application has been completed and filed with our office.**
- 3) Answer **ALL** questions completely and truthfully to avoid delays in processing your application. If you are aware of an incident in your past that may result in a positive criminal background check, you must provide the supporting documentation (including court documents) that explains the outcome of the case.
- 4) If you are currently not in compliance with the Board, your ability to renew may be denied until you satisfy the request of the Board.
- 5) The licensure renewal fee is \$203. In addition, Criminal Background Check fee is \$50.*
**varies by state*
- 6) CEUs—All licensees must have completed thirty (30) hours of continuing education (CE) credits prior to renewal to be eligible for renewal. Six (6) of the thirty (30) hours must consist of three (3) hours each in cultural competence and ethics or risk liability. Random audits will be conducted following the renewal.
- 7) All licenses expired on December 31, 2013.

Any false statement on your renewal application will result in disciplinary action being taken against your license.

General Renewal Questions: 1 (877) 672-2174 | Website: www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR (continued from page 1)

and suggested changes in language has to be written by the Board and forwarded to the Council and public, for review and approval, before implementation. Tremendous time is focused on proposed regulatory changes. Attorney Pan (as we fondly call her) spearheads this very time-consuming effort on behalf of the Board and, in this newsletter, shares some of the proposed changes the Board has recommended during the past year.

In 2003, the Board began a process to revise the Jurisprudence Exam which had not been revised since the early 1990s. We approached several large as well as same size States to determine how they initiated a similar process. After some period of time researching firms, the revision process began. We contracted with a firm with vast previous experience in developing State and provincial jurisprudence examinations. Many of you graciously volunteered to participate in the item development process. The firm with whom we worked developed several versions of the exam and, all in all, the Board was satisfied with the final product.

All Jurisprudence Exams administered prior to mid-2005 were paper-and-pencil tests and hand scored. With the revised document, the Board made the decision to have the items in the instrument computer-generated for administration. Periodically, within the last few years, concerns were raised that available choices from which to select an answer did not seem to comport with the vignette and/or accompanying question. On several occasions, not to delay the licensing process, the Board temporarily placed the instrument on hold mode, while attempts were made to discern the nature and extent of the problem, and resolve it. Applicants needing to take the Jurisprudence Exam were asked to sign an Attestation Statement, affirming knowledge of the applicable laws of the District, so they could conclude the licensure process. The Attestation was signed with the knowledge the psychologist might or could be asked to take the exam at some point in the future.

At this time, we feel the problem with the computerized versions cannot be readily solved. While the Board decides on the next steps, anyone who signed the Attestation will not have to take or re-take the Jurisprudence Exam—ever. Your time should not be compromised by the possibility of having to sit for the exam at some undetermined future time, while possible solutions are explored. Some of you have brought to my attention that the Attestation Statement still bears language of the requirement to possibly sit for the exam in the future. The Board will issue a revised letter (no need to sign this one) to all who previously signed the Attestation Statement, and revise the Attestation Statement form for future applicants, to reflect the deletion of the now non-applicable statement.

You should have renewed your license by now. If you have not yet renewed, please see pages 2 and 5 for instructions. Also, please be certain you have the necessary continuing education credits (CEUs) documented and kept in a safe place. All audits of CEUs are randomly selected (unless there was a problem on your last random audit and/or the Board has required a psychologist demonstrate completion of CEUs in a certain area for disciplinary reasons). With the last renewal, the Board seemed to have encountered a more than random chance number of psychologists who failed to complete the necessary 30 CEUs, or who had failed to take the required 3 hours of ethics and/or the 3 hours of cultural competence. Serious fines are levied for two reasons: the first is for having signed a legal document (the renewal application) attesting that you completed the required hours before December 31, 2013; the other reason the fine is stiff is to deter similar acts of failure-to-comply in the future.

This next message applies to the citizens we serve. Let us all be open to sharing our talents by being of service to those in need. The economy, although rebounding, remains quite tough for many. As always, it is with a profound sense of humility to have the opportunity to represent you and to be of service on the Board.

Be well,

Barbara T. Roberts, PhD
Chairperson
DC Board of Psychology

MEET THE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBIN Y. JENKINS

When did you begin serving as Executive Director of the HRLA Allied and Behavioral Health Boards?

I started with the department in August of 2013.

Please tell us a little about your professional experience and areas of expertise.

I have experience within private associations as well as governmental entities. I have a strong regulatory foundation and a long work history in the regulatory arena.

My areas of expertise include operations management, application processing, board operations, policy development, monitoring and compliance.

What position did you hold prior to accepting the position at HRLA?

Prior to joining the Department of Health, I served as the executive director for the District of Columbia's Higher Education Licensure Commission. I was responsible for all daily operations including governance management, staffing, budgeting, strategic planning, and external communications. I implemented regulations governing all colleges, universities, trade and professional institutions, as well as the compliance, and monitoring programs.

What is your background with regard to working for private associations?

Before joining the District of Columbia government, I served as Senior Policy Associate for the National Association of Social Workers as the regulatory liaison to 56 chapters. I also served as the liaison to the examination test vendor

"I would let licensees know that Board members are not scary people or out to get them. Board staff is here to assist and educate them. A board exists for their protection as consumers of service, too."

and managed professional credentials and certifications for the organization.

Have you had the opportunity to interact with regulatory professionals outside of the District of Columbia?

I have served on national and international regulatory committees and boards. I am currently a member of the board of directors for the Council on Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation and the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools. I am also a faculty member for the Council on Licensure Enforcement and Regulation and the Association of Social Work Boards board member training programs.

What is your educational background?

I have a B.S. degree from George Mason University, an MSW from Howard University, a certificate in Public Management from George Washington University and a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Georgetown University.

What is your top priority in your new position?

After an opportunity to spend time with each board chairperson as well as observe the boards and board staff in action for a few months I decided to engage my team in developing the priorities. We will first work to develop policies and procedures so that we work smarter. As staff, one aspect of our job is to ensure that board members are provided with all the information and data available to be adequately prepared to carry out their mandated duties in the areas of setting standards, codes of ethics, competencies, and continuing competency requirements for practitioners.

What would you say to someone who is interested in applying to become a Board member?

I would tell them that serving on a board is a public service privilege. I would inform them that citizens of the District of Columbia will have trust and confidence in the board to ensure that there is accessibility to competent, safe, and ethical practitioners.

What message would you like to convey to the licensees of the boards you serve?

I would let licensees know that Board members are not scary people or out to get them. Board staff is here to assist and educate them. A board exists for their protection as consumers of service, too.

Any tips for licensees who may be called to appear before the Board?

Honesty is the best policy.

LICENSURE RENEWAL PROCESS

LICENSES EXPIRED DECEMBER 31, 2013

RENEW YOUR LICENSE VIA THE INTERNET.

TO RENEW ONLINE YOU MUST USE INTERNET EXPLORER 6.0 OR HIGHER AND PAY BY MASTERCARD OR VISA. OUR SYSTEM IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH GOOGLE CHROME OR SAFARI.

Before you log-on to our website, please have these items available:

- Your Social Security number
- Your Visa or MasterCard, in order to pay your renewal fee of \$203 online.

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO LOG-ON TO OUR WEB SITE:

- Enter www.hpla.doh.dc.gov into the address field of your web browser
 - Click on Online License Renewal
 - Type in your Social Security number and last name and click on "Search" tab
 - At the Registration page, you must create a User ID and Password
 - Type in your newly created User ID and Password and follow the step-by-step instructions to complete the renewal process.
- Please be sure to printout a copy of the "Confirmation Page" for your records.

AFTER YOU FINISH THE ON-LINE RENEWAL AT OUR WEB SITE, SEND US:

- If you do not currently have a photo on your license, you will need to send TWO (2) 2"x2" photos of yourself (identical passport-size photos; plain background, front-view, fade-proof), and write on the back of the photos your full name and license number or Social Security number.
- If you answer "yes" to the question in "Section 6", please mail the supporting document(s).
- Mail the items to:

HPLA - ATTN: Psychology Renewal
899 North Capitol Street NE-First Floor
Washington, DC 20002
- After 24 hours, you may verify your completed renewal at: <http://hpla.doh.dc.gov/weblookup>

NOTE: Please do not submit copies of CEs unless selected for the CE Audit.
CEs are NOT required for first-time renewals.

TO REQUEST A PAPER RENEWAL APPLICATION OR APPLY FOR PAID INACTIVE STATUS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.DOH.DC.GOV OR CALL 1-877-672-2174 BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:30 AM AND 4:30 PM EST - MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK (CBC) PROCESS

WHERE CAN I GET MY CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK DONE?

Health professionals licensed in the District of Columbia can now receive live scan Criminal Background Check services with MorphoTrust USA (formerly called "L-1 Enrollment"). For more information on how to receive a live scan Criminal Background Check via MorphoTrust Services visit the MorphoTrust USA website or call 1-877-783-4187.

APPLICANTS COMPLETING CBC THROUGH MORPHOTRUST USA

Applicants choosing to use MorphoTrust USA for CBC will pay MorphoTrust directly for this service. Applicants have the following options to schedule fingerprinting appointments with MorphoTrust USA.

1. On-line Live-Scan Scheduling

- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
 1. Go to the MorphoTrust website, www.L1enrollment.com.
 2. Click on the map link to D.C.
 3. Choose Online Scheduling and enter required information and select desired appointment.

2. Call Center Scheduling

- Available Monday - Friday, 9am – 5pm EST.
Call **(877) 783-4187** and speak to one of the operators.
 1. Operators will collect required information and schedule your appointment.
 2. Be sure to write down your appointment date, time and location provided by the operator.
 3. Out of State Applicants who reside out of the District of Columbia, or are physically unable to go to a location to be fingerprinted may use MorphoTrust USA's Card Scan Processing Program.

This program utilizes advanced scanning technology to convert a traditional fingerprint card (hard card) into an electronic fingerprint record. Converting a "hard card" into an electronic record enables an applicant to have their fingerprint record processed as quickly as if they had traveled to an electronic fingerprint processing location. Applicants must go online to the MorphoTrust USA website or call 1-877-783-4187.

** A FBI Name Search request will be requested by MorphoTrust on behalf of D.C. DOH if an applicant has received two fingerprint rejections based on quality. Once MorphoTrust personnel receive notice that an applicant has received a second rejection, a name search request form will be submitted by approved MorphoTrust personnel directly to the FBI.

CAN I APPLY FOR A TEMPORARY LICENSE IN THE DISTRICT? The Board does not issue Temporary Licenses.

LIVE SCAN FINGERPRINTING



TWO CHECKS!

Your first check, made payable to "DC Treasurer", will cover the fee for your renewal. Your second, separate check will go towards the Criminal Background Check (CBC); that fee is \$50 for D.C. residents. **CBC fees vary by state.**

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENT FOR RENEWAL

Licensees are required to undergo a subsequent criminal background check every four (4) years from the date of the licensee's previous background check. (17DCMR §8501.5) If you completed a CBC with the Health Professional Licensing Administration within the last 4 years, you are not required to complete a CBC with this renewal.

CBC FINGERPRINT VENDOR LOCATED AT DOH

You can get your CBC fingerprinting done at the MorphoTrust location on the first floor at the Health Professional Licensing Administration. We are located at 899 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington DC 20002 (across the street from Gonzaga High School).

SUBMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION BEFORE CBC

No CBCs will be done/accepted unless a renewal application has been completed and filed with our office.

If a CBC was completed within the last four years, with the Department of Health, you are not required to complete it for this renewal cycle.

BOARD WELCOMES NEW ATTORNEY ADVISOR PANRAVEE VONGJAROENRAT, ESQ.



Panravee Vongjaroenrat, Esq.

How long have you been the attorney for the Board of Psychology?

I began serving as attorney advisor to the Board of Psychology in March 2012, taking over from Van Brathwaite.

Can you briefly tell us about your background as an attorney?

I graduated from Georgetown University Law Center in 1995 and, prior to my current position, practiced immigration law for 15 years. My work experience has been in the private sector – law firms – and non-profit organizations. I represented individuals and business entities in their attempt to navigate and comply with immigration law. Consequently, I have a still-fresh appreciation of the “compliance” end of the table.

Are there any legal/regulatory matters that the Board currently addressing?

The Board is currently considering a few significant amendments to the regulation, notably with regard to the supervised practice provisions. The main purpose of these regulatory amendments is clarification since some of the current provisions do not contain clear details of what is permissible or required.

What concerns do you foresee the Board might be considering in the coming years?

I believe telecounseling has already emerged as a major concern for the Board. Information technology has led to many positive changes in the way we live and conduct business but they also raise new questions and challenges. It has made health care more accessible but has triggered the question of accountability. The Board's paramount mandate is to protect the public. Consequently, the Board's task will be to fashion the regulatory framework that will enable the residents of the District to benefit from the greater and richer access to psychological care while ensuring that their health and safety remain well-protected. The D.C. Council has also begun to consider telehealth and telemedicine.

Another issue of current interest is broader Medicaid reimbursement for psychological services. The District currently reimburses for substance abuse recovery programs and psychological services rendered in qualified health centers. However, the Board hopes to advocate for greater

accessibility of psychological counseling to District residents through expanding Medicaid-covered services to include counseling provided in psychological practices.

Licensees and the members of the public who wish to be informed of any proposed regulations or regulatory amendments should subscribe to the D.C. Register, which can now be done on the internet and sends alerts and notifications by e-mail. The D.C. Register can be accessed at www.dcregs.org.

What advice would you give to Board of Psychology licensees (so they won't get in trouble with the Board)?

I would like to refer to my short article on disciplinary actions during 2012 to begin with (see page 4-5). Generally, however, the areas that frequently raise unexpected difficulty are continuing education and criminal background clearance.

The Board does not require that licensees provide proof of continuing education at the time of the renewal but instead conducts a random audit to determine compliance. According to the regulation, to be eligible for renewal, licensees are required to have completed thirty (30) hours of approved continuing education between January 1 of an even-numbered year to December 31 of the next odd-numbered year. Six (6) of the thirty (30) hours must consist of three (3) hours each in cultural competence and ethics or risk liability. Licensees who keep good record of continuing education will find it easy to stay in compliance. Specifically speaking, I would like to recommend

“I would like to urge licensees to err on the side of full disclosure even when in doubt. The relevant question on the renewal question is: ‘Since your last application, have you been arrested, convicted or charged for a felony or misdemeanor including DUI, OWI, DWI’s (other than minor traffic violations for which a fine or ticket is the maximum penalty)?’ Frequently, we encounter licensees who checked “NO” to this question but their CBC was returned showing that there had been arrests and in some cases convictions.”

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that all licensees gather record of all continuing education completed since January 1, 2012 and ensure that they have taken all the necessary continuing education by December 31, 2013.

With regard to criminal background check (CBC), the District law prohibits issuance of a license to an applicant who has not completed a criminal background check and requires all licensees to undergo a check every four (4) years. This law went into effect in 2010 and psychologists licensed in the District have undergone the first CBC during the renewal season of 2011. The next renewal season in which CBC will be required is 2015.

I would like to urge licensees to err on the side of full disclosure even when in doubt. The relevant question on the renewal question is: “Since your last application, have you been arrested, convicted or charged for a felony or misdemeanor including DUI, OWI, DWI’s (other than minor traffic violations for which a fine or ticket is the maximum penalty)?” Frequently, we encounter licensees who checked “NO” to this question but their CBC was returned showing that there had been arrests and in some cases convictions. In this situation, the Board is forced to consider whether the licensees had intentionally lied on the application (which is in itself a separate cause for discipline) or whether the incorrect

answer was the result of inadvertence or forgetfulness. Licensees should note that the law requires the Department of Health to consult the FBI record, which is very extensive and inclusive. Each time someone is arrested or required to go to a criminal court, an FBI entry is created. Many licensees erroneously believe that if a charge was dismissed and did not result in a conviction, the charge would “go away” and disappear from record. This is not the case. The information remains in the FBI record for a very, very long time. Thus, if a licensee is stopped and had to answer any questions posed by the police, he or she should disclose it fully so as to avoid the misrepresentation review – except in the case of speeding tickets, traffic signal or stop sign violations. For the 2013 renewal period, licensees are required to report any arrests, charges, or convictions occurring between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013. For the 2015 renewal period, licensee should report arrests, charges, or convictions occurring between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2015. Licensee should bear in mind that the CBC will be required in 2015 and will disclose all arrest information in the FBI record.

Reporting arrests, charges, or convictions to the Board does not mean that a license will be in jeopardy. The law authorizes the Board to issue or deny licenses in the way that best serves and protects the public. To

that end, the law identifies “crimes of moral turpitude” (CMT) as the category of criminal issues that may affect the public health and safety. CMTs may include such charges as theft, assault and battery, domestic violence, child abuses, robbery, and murder, to name a few. However, the Board’s licensure authority requires the Board to consider all information relevant to a licensee’s fitness to practice, not just CMTs. Due to this broad authority, the Board reviews a license or renewal application to see “the full picture,” which includes the review of the number and types of criminal issues as well as whether the applicant has fully and truthfully disclosed all relevant information. Licensees can best support the Board’s efforts in this area by disclosing all information even when it may seem trivial or irrelevant at first glance.

I would like to note further that in all CBC matters, the Board will need to review the official court or police documents. Licensees reporting arrests, charges, and/or convictions should obtain records showing disposition directly from the court or the police and not from internet inquiry or any other means. This may be a hassle and an inconvenience but it will help prevent prolonged and costly reviews that will occur when the CBC results is returned with a positive “hit” and the Board finds that the licensee had answered “NO” to the relevant question on the renewal application.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE BOARD'S HEALTH LICENSING SPECIALIST



If you have questions about licensing or renewal requirements, continuing education requirements, or renewal policies and procedures, please contact the Board of Psychology's Health Licensing Specialist Nakia Snider by email at:

nakia.snider@dc.gov

WHEN YOU MOVE (OR CHANGE YOUR NAME)

Licensees sometimes forget to inform the Board of Psychology when they move or change names. If we do not have your current address, you may not receive your renewal mailing because we may send it to your former address. **All name and address changes must be submitted in writing to our office within 30 days of the change.** 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) 724-5145, or mail your name and address change to:

DC Board of Psychology
Attn: Processing Department
Address/Name Change
899 N. Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington DC 20002

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:

Ms. Alma White
Health Licensing Specialist
DC Board of Psychology
899 North Capitol Street NE
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20002

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

Please feel free to contact Ms. Alma White at **202-724-7325** or by email at **alma.white@dc.gov**.

CE AUDIT RESPONSE FORM

The Board of Psychology has implemented a new audit form for licensees selected during the CE Audit. **If you have been selected for Audit, please submit the form below** to the Board of Psychology at: DC Board of Psychology, Attn: CE Audit, 899 North Capitol Street NE, First Floor, Washington DC 20002.

Name (please print): _____

License Number: _____ Total CE hours completed between **January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2013:** _____

Please fill out chart below: (30) hours of approved continuing education. Six (6) of the thirty (30) hours must consist of three (3) hours each in cultural competence and ethics or risk liability.

NAME OF COURSE & ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDED THE PROGRAM	Date course was taken	Number of Contact Hours	Was it Live or Distance/ Online?	Hours of Ethics / Cultural Competence
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

DR. FESEHA WOLDU STEPS DOWN AS SENIOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION (HRLA)

By Gerald Filbin, PhD, and Juliet Francis, Psy.D.
Board of Psychology Consumer Member and Board Member

The DC Department of Public Health's long-time Senior Deputy Director for Health Regulation and Licensing Administration, Dr. Feseha Woldu, left that position on October 25, 2013.

Dr. Woldu came to the Department of Health in 1999, moving from the Office of the DC Chief Financial Officer, as Anthony Williams moved from the CFO position to become DC's Mayor. In 1998 the Department of Health was created and Health Professions Boards were transferred from the District's Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

From the time of his arrival at HRLA, Dr. Woldu focused on the establishment of accountability and fiscal integrity, as well as promoting innovation and a comprehensive approach to all aspects of licensing, inspection and regulatory administration. In 1999, DC's licensing and regulatory process was ranked last among the states. Dr. Woldu focused immediately on a review of licensing and regulatory processes for the health professions. In an interview in November, Dr. Woldu told some of the members of the Board



DOH Director Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA, (right), reads plaque for outgoing Senior Deputy Director Feseha Woldu, PhD, on behalf of the Department.

of Psychology that he was distressed to find the licensing process in very bad condition in DC, noting that licenses to practice medicine were taking an average of 212 days to process. He immediately began a review of the process and identified five states with model best practices that could be implemented in DC. These included elimination of an outdated and flawed application form and implementation of an expeditious on-

line application process. He also focused on updating regulations that were outdated.

Ultimately, he was able to eliminate the use of a contractor-managed licensing process to create considerable savings with which he built an able staff to support volunteer professional licensing boards.

Dr. Woldu also instituted a system to make compliance information available online including information about discipline by other medical

boards, felony convictions and payments for malpractice claims, providing much greater transparency to licensing and regulation.

Today, DC's regulation of health professions is ranked well within the top third of the states. HRLA is responsible for licensing, and regulation of over 50,000 health-licensed professionals in more than twenty-two (22) professions and occupations. HRLA also is responsible not only for licensing of health professions but also for the inspection, licensing and certification of health care facilities, Pharmaceutical control, Animal Disease Prevention and control, Food Safety Protection and control and Rodent Control. These critical activities impact the daily lives of over 580,000 residents in the District of Columbia.

In the November interview with two of the Psychology Board members Dr. Woldu gave credit to the licensing boards at HRLA, saying that the boards, "gave him the energy" to pursue a pathway of continuous improvement and transparency. He said that the boards provide critical leadership and energy to advance competency

(Continued on page 12)

"THE BOARDS," HE SAID, "HAVE THE ABILITY TO LOOK AT THE TOTALITY OF ANY CASE TO CONSIDER THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A COMPLAINT OR AN APPEAL IN THE CONTEXT OF A PRACTITIONER'S HISTORY." HE ALSO SAID THAT BOARDS SUCH AS THE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY WHICH ARE COMPRISED OF PRACTITIONERS AND CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVES PROVIDE A DEGREE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY THAT ARE ESSENTIAL AND ARE THE HALLMARK OF BEST PRACTICE AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

(Continued from page 11)

within the various health professions in DC. Pondering the possible effect of his departure, Dr. Woldu said that he hoped it would not negatively impact the function of the boards. He said the licensing boards provide a perspective in their investigations and deliberations that is important and cannot be provided in an administrative review.

“The boards,” he said, “have the ability to look at the totality of any case to consider the significance of a complaint or an appeal in the context of a practitioner’s history.” He also said that boards such as the Board of Psychology which are comprised of practitioners and consumer representatives provide a degree of accountability and transparency that are essential and are the hallmark of best practice and community involvement.

Dr. Woldu also stated the working relationship between the Board and the Executive Director and staff is of the highest importance. Cultivated in trust, respect and a shared understanding of their respective roles, the Executive Director and Board staff play a key role in supporting the Board’s leadership in establishing policy for the practice of Psychology in the District. Dr. Woldu also suggested that the Chairs of the various Boards in the health



Dr. Feseha Woldu and Councilmember Yvette M. Alexander pose for a photo with current and former Directors of the Department of Health (left to right) Dr. Gregg Pane, Dr. Joxel Garcia, Dr. Pierre N.D. Vigilance, and Dr. Ivan Walks.

professions should be engaged in the recruitment of his successor to ensure that practitioners and consumers have adequate input into decision process.

At the end of October, Dr. Woldu, joined Howard University as Associate Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Quality. In announcing Dr. Woldu’s appointment, the Provost at Howard said that Dr. Woldu is a seasoned public health administrator with more than 13 years of experience

working with various health professionals, community-based organizations, and consumer groups. In his new role, Dr. Woldu will partner with the chief executives of the Howard University Hospital and the Faculty Practice Plan and the deans of the Health Sciences colleges to foster a culture of excellence for all health sciences clinical programs.

Dr. Woldu earned his doctorate in medicinal chemistry from Howard University, and completed

the Strategic Management of Regulatory and Enforcement Agencies Program at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government.

We will miss Dr. Woldu’s leadership and the very high level of support he provided for the Psychology Board. We wish him the very best of luck in his new position at Howard University and we are glad that he has decided to remain in Washington because he will continue to be an incredible resource for our health care community.

DR. WOLDU INSTITUTED A SYSTEM TO MAKE COMPLIANCE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE, INCLUDING INFORMATION ABOUT DISCIPLINE BY OTHER MEDICAL BOARDS, FELONY CONVICTIONS AND PAYMENTS FOR MALPRACTICE CLAIMS, PROVIDING MUCH GREATER TRANSPARENCY TO LICENSING AND REGULATION. TODAY, DC’S REGULATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS IS RANKED WELL WITHIN THE TOP THIRD OF THE STATES. HRLA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LICENSING, AND REGULATION OF OVER 50,000 HEALTH-LICENSED PROFESSIONALS.

FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE BOARD

To file a complaint against a licensed psychologist, 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.

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

You should mail the complaint to:

DC Board of Psychology
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

You can also fax the complaint to the Board at (202) 724-8677.

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

Supervisory Investigator
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

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

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.

HELP US TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU!

Please send an email informing the Board of your email address at:

NAKIA.SNIDER@DC.GOV

The Board will be distributing the Board newsletter electronically.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

The DC Board of Psychology meets the third Friday of each month at 9:30 am at 899 N. Capitol Street, NE, Second Floor, Washington, DC 20002. Time is allocated during Open Session at each Board Meeting to allow the public an opportunity to speak to the Board. Please notify us in advance if you plan to attend a meeting by sending an email to:

HPLA@DC.GOV

SERVE ON THE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY

Community service is one of the highest forms of citizenship. Please consider applying to serve on the Board of Psychology. If you are a resident of the District of Columbia, and interested in serving on the Board, please contact the Mayor's Office of Boards and Commissions:

Email: boards.commissions@dc.gov

Website: <http://obc.dc.gov/>

Phone: (202) 727-1372

Fax: (202) 727-2359

TTY: 711

Address: Office of Boards and Commissions, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW,
Suite 302, Washington, DC 20004

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 Psychologist while your license is delinquent/expired.

PAID INACTIVE FEE:	\$203 (one-time fee)
TIME LIMITATION:	UNLIMITED
FEE TO REACTIVATE YOUR LICENSE:	\$ 34
CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE):	Licenses on Paid Inactive status must continue to meet the continuing education requirements; CE must be presented to the Board when applying for licensure reactivation.

Contact Customer Service at **1 (877) 672-2174**,
or Ms. Nakia Snider at: **(202) 724-4900** for further information.



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Health Professional
Licensing Administration

Address

DC Board of Psychology
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Phone (202) 724-4900

Fax (202) 724-8677

Webpage

www.doh.dc.gov

DC Government website

www.dc.gov

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of The District of Columbia
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Gerald Filbin, PhD
Consumer Member

Newsletter Coordinator
Juliet Francis, Psy.D.

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Investigator
Emilia Moran

Newsletter Layout
Nancy Kofie

Questions for the Board? Please submit them in writing to nakia.snider@dc.gov.