

State of Alaska
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

Alaska State Board of Marital and Family Therapy
April 16, 2020
COVID-19 Emergency Board Meeting

*These are draft minutes prepared by staff of the Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing.
These minutes have not yet been reviewed or approved by the Board.*

By Authority of AS 08.01.070(2) and in compliance with the provisions of AS 44.62, a regularly scheduled meeting of the Alaska State Board of Marital and Family Therapy was held April 16, 2020 via Zoom.

April 16, 2020

Agenda item #1 Call to order/Ethics Reporting

This meeting was called to order by Chairperson **Karen Cunningham** at **9:02AM**.

Board Members present, constituting a quorum:

Karen Cunningham, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Noah Shields, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Nicole Jenkins, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Natalie Lewis, Public Member
Kayla Green, Public Member

Division Staff present were:

Andy Khmelev, Acting Records & Licensing Supervisor
Sher Zinn, Regulations Specialist
Gina Ritacco, Boards & Commissions
Lauren Bales, Occupational Licensing Examiner

Agenda Item #2 Review Agenda

A motion duly made by Noah Shields, seconded by Nicole Jenkins, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

Resolved to approve the agenda as presented.

Agenda item #3 New Board Member Introductions

The new board member, Kayla Green, was introduced to the board and the board made their introductions back. Ms. Green was grateful for the opportunity to serve on the board and looked forward to navigating the future together.

Agenda Item #4 Administrative Business

Examiner Bales presented the board with examples of the correspondence received, the largest questions being centered around Teletherapy across state lines. Alaska statute and regulations require an individual to hold a license

in this state to provide marital and family therapy services. Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 and the need to provide services through a distance method, it's was recommended the board develop an Emergency Courtesy License to license individuals quickly and fill service gaps because of travel restrictions. This license would be available on an expedited basis to individuals who hold an unencumbered license in another jurisdiction.

The board discussed how the Emergency Courtesy License could look. It was discussed some board in other jurisdictions had licenses for 30 days, some 90 days, and some with very little needed to obtain permission to practice during this time. Examiner Bales explained SB241, if approved, would give the board the powers to create this license and in the future, look to make these regulations permanent. Health Mandate 15 was also released and provided firm guidance on how medical and in-person services were to be conducted.

Board members continued discussion and questioned if there has been an increased need or request for providers. It was agreed there has been an increase in demand for access to services by providers directly and in correspondence to the division. Out of State Teletherapy was one of the greatest requests both from consumers and providers. Members of the board raised concerns about losing customers to out of state providers. The board discussed how to form the Emergency Courtesy License, its fees, its limits and

A motion duly made by Nicole Jenkins, seconded by Natalie Lewis, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Marital & Family Therapists moves to create an Emergency Courtesy License available to therapists who hold unencumbered licenses in another jurisdiction by submitting an application to the division and verification of license.

Another block the division brought to the boards attention was the ability to obtain notary signatures. Online notary services have become used more frequently and was agreed that is acceptable. The board discussed additional alternatives to a notary and they were informed other boards had used 2 forms of government issued identification in place of a notary signature. After board discussion:

A motion duly made by Nicole Jenkins, seconded by Noah Shields, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Marital & Family Therapists move to accept 2 forms of government issued ID in lieu of the notary requirement on the application.

The ability to collect continuing education via in person means due to the cancellation of in person conferences and trainings. To address the need to obtain continuing education but recognize the lack of in person trainings:

A motion duly made by Noah Shields, seconded by Nicole Jenkins, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Marital & Family Therapists move to accept that all continuing education hours may be obtained online for the 2019-2020 licensing period.

Agenda item #5 Adjourn

A motion duly made by Nicole Jenkins, seconded by Noah Shields, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

Resolved to adjourn the meeting at 10:35am.

Adjourned at 10:35 AM

Respectfully Submitted By:

Lacey Derr
Records & Licensing Supervisor
State of Alaska, CCED

Date

Noah Shields
Board Chairperson
Alaska State Board of Marital and Family Therapy

Date

draft