



# ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

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## MINUTES Board Meeting July 23, 2021

The Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy met on Friday, July 23, 2021 at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road in Montgomery. Members present were Mr. Douglas Cooke (Board Chair), Dr. Karly Downs (Board Vice Chair), Dr. Mark Westfall (member), Ms. Raven Pyle (member) and Dr. Samuel Jones (member). Also participating in the meeting were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Mr. Michael Nunnelley (Board Legal Counsel), Ms. Hope Childers (Board Administrator) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary).

The regularly scheduled meeting was advertised on the Board's website, [www.mft.alabama.gov](http://www.mft.alabama.gov), and the Secretary of State's website, [www.sos.alabama.gov](http://www.sos.alabama.gov), in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Cooke, Board Chair, at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Warren called Board roll and reported that a quorum of the members was present to conduct business. Mr. Cooke welcomed everyone in attendance.

Mr. Cooke presented the April 23, 2021 Board meeting minutes for the Board's approval. A copy of the minutes was provided to the Board prior to the meeting for their review. Dr. Downs made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes with correction to the spelling of her name (Dr. Karly Downs) and pages be correctly dated and numbered. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and the corrected minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

Report by Board Chair: Mr. Cooke led discussions about the topics presented at the AMFTRB annual meeting and CACREP revised standards regarding educational hours for MFT and LPC and potential changes to universities' curricula and effect on immediate graduates. The Board agreed to continue, at future meetings, discussions about the CACREP changes and review Board's licensure requirements. Mr. Warren reported that the Board was a member of AMFTRB and he would review the AMFTRB delegate information since former Board member, Jeremy Blair, had served as AMFTRB delegate for the Board.

Executive Director's Report: Mr. Warren presented the Executive Director's Report and reviewed the financial activities of the Board for the period ending June 30, 2021. He reported that the Board had made substantial improvements in their financial situation and reviewed the fluctuation in funds, in a two-year period, due to the number of licenses being renewed. Also reported was a line-item summary of expenses for this same period, current number of licensees and number of complaints received to-date (copy of the report available for review in Official Book of Minutes). Dr. Jones made the motion to approve the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and was unanimously approved by the Board.

Board Administrator's Report: Mr. Warren presented the Administrator's Report listing activities performed by the staff since the last Board meeting held in April, along with a list of 17 new licenses issued during this reporting period (reports available for review in Official Book of Minutes).

Mr. Warren commented on the recent audit in which the language regarding Associate License was not adequately address in earlier changes to the Board's statute. He explained that the Board had addressed this matter years ago and it had resurfaced as an audit finding that was not corrected. referred to Rules 536-X-3-.01 Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Designations. He recommended that former Board member, Dr. Ketring be asked to prepare proposed changes to the Board's statute specific to this matter and pursue legislative changes to the statute.

Board Approved Designations: The Board also discussed the Associate license as a prerequisite to the LMFT licensure, etc. Dr. Downs made the motion that the Executive Director be given the authority to include the change in the rules that the Associate licensure be a required prerequisite to the LMFT license. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pyle and unanimously approved by the Board.

The Board was also interested in instituting an examination timeline between an Associate license and LMFT licensure. This matter would be discussed at a future meeting, along with the following statute changes: (1) Associates license in statute, (2) establishing a time limit to not exceed when an Associate, (3) establishing a limit of time to take the exam between Associate and LMFT licensure, (4) establish limit of time for Interns, (5) review supervision requirements and reporting, (6) consequences to exceeding time limits in these categories, (6) review licensure obstacles and incentives for licensure in rule-setting, (7) review fees, (8) review CE requirements when establishing licensure criteria and (9) consider work setting experience and exclusions.

Mr. Warren reported that Warren & Company's legislative liaison, Mr. Mike Weeks, would assist in the presenting the proposed Bill to the legislative and meeting with legislative sponsors.

Mr. Cooke called a 10-minute recess of the Board at 11:15 a.m.  
Mr. Cooke reconvened the Board meeting at 11:26 a.m.

Mr. Warren commented on the financial situation of the Board and indicated that the process of online renewals was being reviewed and developing plans to track non-renewals of license and include a notification process.

Legal Counsel Report: Mr. Nunnelley reported that he had no new business to report for the Legal Counsel's report.

Emergency Rule: Mr. Warren reported that the emergency rule concerning teletherapy had expired and the Board's rule to require training certificates prior to providing teletherapy services was reinstated.

The Board agreed that allowing CE hours online be continued. Ms. Pyle made the motion to adopt rule changes to allow accepting no restriction on acquiring CE hours between April 21, 2021 to April 30, 2022 online through eligible CE programs. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Administrative Services Contract: Mr. Warren requested the Board's approval of an emergency contract with Warren & Company, Inc. to continue management services beyond the five-year contract. Dr. Westfall made the motion to approve the emergency contract for one year with Warren & Company, Inc. The motion was seconded by Dr. Jones and unanimously approved by the Board.

Other Business: The Board continued discussions from a previous meeting about the Medicaid Agency guidelines about services provided by LPC and psychologists and excluding MFTs as a provider in some treatment category. Mr. Cooke deferred discussion of this matter to a future meeting to allow the Executive Director time to obtain more information on this matter.

Applications: Ms. Childers presented a list of applicants for the Board's approval. The list consisted of four (4) Associate and one (1) LMFT. Dr. Downs made the motion to approve the Associate applications and LMFT application as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Next Meeting: Mr. Cooke announced that the next business meeting of the Board was scheduled for Friday, October 22, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Warren stated that he would keep the members advised about any changes requiring the members to meet in-person after the COVID 19 State of Emergency was lifted.

Adjournment: With no further business to discuss and Mr. Cooke adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Douglas Cooke  
*Board Chair*

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Keith E. Warren  
*Executive Director*

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