



## Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board

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### Fall 2025

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#### Message from Board Chairwoman Alverta Muhammad, LSW

Dear Licensees and Stakeholders:

Thank you for taking the time to read the Board's newsletter. We hope the information we share supports you in meeting your obligations as a licensee and strengthens your connection to the Board's mission.

As we close another year, I extend sincere appreciation on behalf of myself and my fellow Board Members for the services and support you provide to Ohioans. Your dedication to professional excellence and public service is deeply valued.

This year I completed a term on the Association of Social Work Boards Nominating Committee. The opportunity to help identify future leaders for ASWB allowed me to engage with colleagues across the country. I was reminded of the many committed

professionals working to protect the public through licensure, and of the vital role our Board plays in ensuring competent practitioners serve Ohio. Importantly, we are not alone in this mission—the Board relies on you to uphold standards, mentor others, and remain responsive to the needs of the public and the professions.

Looking ahead, the Board is pursuing several priorities. Staff, in partnership with the Department of Administrative Services, are advancing IT functionality to issue Counseling Compact Privileges. This same infrastructure will support the Social Work Compact, now in development, and we anticipate sharing positive updates in early 2026.

In the new year, Licensed Professional Art Therapists and Licensed Professional Music Therapists will begin renewing their licenses, marking the two-year anniversary of these credentials.

As 2026 unfolds, the Board will continue striving to meet the public's expectations. With the conclusion of the AI and Alternative Therapies ad hoc committee, we will identify new areas requiring focused attention.

Thank you once again for your commitment to professional excellence and to serving the people of Ohio.

### **Exam Change to Qualify for the LPCC**

At its September 2025 meeting, the Counselor Professional Standards Committee voted to revise the licensure process for both Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) credentials. This change in exam use and licensure was made to better align Ohio with other states. Ohio was one of only ten states that required two exams to obtain an independent license. These changes take effect January 1, 2026.

Starting after January 1, 2026, individuals applying for initial LPC licensure may choose to qualify by passing either:

- The NBCC National Counselor Exam (NCE), or
- The National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam (NCMHCE)

Applicants for an LPCC (except those applying via reciprocity) must:

- Pass either the NCE or NCMHCE.
- Hold a master's degree in counseling.
- Have no disqualifying criminal convictions.
- Complete training supervision as required under OAC 4757-17-01.

More details regarding this change can be found here: [https://cswmft.ohio.gov/about-the-board/news-and-events/news/counseling\\_licensure\\_exam\\_change](https://cswmft.ohio.gov/about-the-board/news-and-events/news/counseling_licensure_exam_change).

### **Trainee Renewal Reminders**

Trainees will soon begin submitting renewal requests for the Winter and Spring 2026 terms. If your registration is expiring, you will receive a no-reply email reminder from the Board. Be sure to add [elicense-noreply@das.ohio.gov](mailto:elicense-noreply@das.ohio.gov) to your safe sender list. Below are a few reminders regarding trainee renewals.

### Proof of Enrollment Requirements

The Board has updated the requirements for proof of enrollment. A letter or email from the program director, course instructor, or relevant administrator is required.

- This documentation should be provided to the student, who must then attach it to their renewal request in eLicense.
- Proof of enrollment must clearly include:
  - Student's name
  - Field/practicum/internship course name
  - Beginning and end dates of the term

### Registration Expiration & Renewal

- Trainee registrations will be issued with an expiration date of up to 60 days after the end of the term.
- If a student is enrolled in consecutive academic terms, this information may be included in the proof of enrollment.
- Registrations may be renewed for consecutive terms, for up to a maximum of 12 months.

### Timing of Renewals

We understand that many students will be eager to ensure their registration is renewed and may submit requests early. While renewals can be submitted once proof of enrollment is obtained, please note:

- Renewals may not be processed by Board staff until approximately 2–4 weeks prior to the start of the term.

### Additional Information

Details regarding trainee requirements can be found in the Get Licensed section of the Board's website: <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed>.

## **Navigating Gift-Giving and Boundaries During the Holidays** **By: Whitney Caudill, CSWMFT Board Investigator**

The holiday season brings many opportunities for gratitude and appreciation, and it can also present unique challenges for professional boundaries. Licensees often find themselves balancing increased client needs and personal responsibilities, all while striving to uphold the highest standards of professional ethics.

The Investigations team would like to take this opportunity to share some reminders and reflections on maintaining healthy professional boundaries that protect both clients and practitioners.

### *Gift-Giving*

Many clients like to express their gratitude and appreciation through gifts. We encourage you to review OAC 4757-5-03(A)(6), which addresses gift-giving.

Because of the close and personal nature of the therapeutic relationship, declining a gift can sometimes feel uncomfortable or even hurtful to a client. However, thoughtful communication can make all the difference. Here are a couple examples of how licensees might decline a gift with empathy and professionalism:

Express gratitude, then explain the ethical obligation:

"I really appreciate that you thought of me - that means a lot. Our ethics rules require us to not accept gifts because it is known to blur professional boundaries that help keep our work safe and focused on you. The best gift you can give is to keep showing up for yourself in sessions."

Acknowledge the sentiment and offer an alternative:

"I can tell this gift was given with a lot of care, and I truly appreciate that. I'm not able to accept gifts based on our ethical rules, but if you'd like, you could write a note about what our work has meant to you – I always value hearing that kind of feedback."

These responses validate the client's thoughtfulness, reference the ethical codes (so it's not just at personal preference), and redirect the focus to the client's progress and wellbeing.

If declining a small gift could risk harm to the therapeutic relationship, the rule allows acceptance of a nominal gift – provided the ethical reasoning is discussed with the client and is clearly documented in the client file. The licensee should be prepared to explain why acceptance was necessary for client care.

These situations can be complex. When in doubt, consult with a supervisor and trusted peer, and always document both the decision and the discussion.

#### *Additional Considerations*

- **Scheduling and Communication:** Clearly communicate office closures, emergency contact procedures, and response times. Consistency and transparency help ensure client safety and maintain professional trust.
- **Dual Relationships and Community Involvement:** In smaller communities or shared faith and cultural events, it's common to encounter clients outside professional settings. Licensees should plan ahead for these situations in ways that protect confidentiality. If you do encounter a client, it is best practice to document that interaction.
- **Self-Care:** The holidays can be a time of increased emotional demands and compassion fatigue. Licensees are encouraged to take a moment and re-evaluate the caseload they are carrying. Taking personal time to rest and recharge is not only healthy but aligned with ethical expectations for maintaining proper standards of care.

The Board sincerely appreciates the commitment that every licensee has to ethical practice, especially during a season that can be both joyful and demanding. Upholding these principles ensures that the care you provide continues to make a lasting, positive impact. Thank you for your heart to serve others and for the important work you do every day. Happy Holidays!

## **Getting to Know Board Member Arianna Galligher, MSW, LISW-S**

**By: Tracey Hosom, CSWMFT Board Investigator**

**“The right thing to do isn’t always obvious; students will face some discomfort, so supervision and support help to build a good foundation.” Arianna Galligher.**

Arianna Galligher was appointed to the Board by Governor DeWine in 2021. She is the current Social Worker Professional Standards Committee Chair. Ms. Galligher works for The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center as the Director of STAR Recovery Center and the Gabbe Well-Being Office. She oversees funding and operations at STAR’s patient-facing Trauma Recovery Center, and she also teaches social work courses at OSU. Ms. Galligher, originally from Zanesville, resides in Columbus with her husband Dana.

Hosom: Why did you apply to become a Board member?

Galligher: I want to make the broadest impact possible. I really appreciate the Board’s role. I get to offer guidance and perspectives. It is interesting to see the issues that each profession faces. The newest licensed professions – Music Therapists and Art Therapists – have different considerations than social workers, because they are just starting out with having a license.

Hosom: You also serve as one of the professional standard’s investigative liaisons. Is there anything that has come as a surprise to you in this role?

Galligher: I was expecting to see people generally making mistakes. Unintentional mistakes. I think the level of unethical behavior... it has been disheartening to see. But bad actors can be everywhere. It makes me even more grateful for the Board’s role in protecting the public.

Hosom: There are more social workers than any of the other professions. Does this work with the Board impact you professionally?

Galligher: I have lots of opportunities to shape the profession as someone who oversees initiatives and programs at the hospital and who teaches college level courses. Working with the Board has influenced how I set boundaries, how I offer feedback with interns and fellow licensees at my agency, making sure they have support.

Hosom: Yes, support and supervision are important. I have had calls from social workers who are in positions where they are being asked to go against the code of ethics, but they need their job.

Galligher: I have been in that position. I loved my job, loved the population, but there were some administrative choices that threatened what was best for following the code of ethics. The right thing to do isn’t always obvious; students will face some discomfort, so supervision and support help to build a good foundation.

Hosom: Supervision is frequently a topic of discussion at the board.

Galligher: Supervision is so important. There are only so many hours in the day. Oftentimes supervisors want to offer more structured supervision, but the systems issues don’t support that.

Hosom: In some of the investigation cases you see that.

Galligher: The system has played a part in the lack of guidance and support and missed opportunities for intervention.

Hosom: How can a newly licensed social worker advocate for themselves?

Gallagher: Good question. It goes back to boundaries. Do you understand the code of ethics? Are you clear about your professional boundaries? A job that tests either of those will require hard choices. Challenge the belief that this is the only place you could ever work. Social work opportunities are high in Ohio.

In an article written about Ms. Gallagher for the OSU Advocate she was asked “If you could have any one superpower, which would you choose?” She said, “I’d like the power to inspire others to behave with compassion.”

That is a superpower she has already obtained.

For information on how to apply to become a Board member, visit this link.

<https://cswmft.ohio.gov/about-the-board/board-resources/becoming-a-board-member>

### **AI Use in Practice – Some Initial Guidance**

**By: Whitney Caudill, CSWMFT Board Investigator and AI Ad Hoc Committee Facilitator**

The Board recently created an Artificial Intelligence Ad Hoc committee to explore the ethical and practical implications of emerging AI technologies in clinical helping professions licensed by the board. The committee’s goals include developing guidance for licensees and recommending updates to the Ohio Administrative Code to ensure our rules reflect best practices as the field evolves.

While this work is underway, the committee would like to encourage licensees to keep the following considerations in mind when using AI in any aspect of their practice:

1. Informed Consent and Transparency – Clients should be told when and how AI tools are being used, including their purpose, benefits, limitations, and any potential risks. For clients that wish to opt-out of having AI tools used, they should be able to do so without an impact on their access to care.
2. Privacy and Confidentiality – Protect client information by using only HIPAA compliant platforms and avoiding inputting sensitive information into AI tools unless security standards are confirmed. Licensees purchasing AI tools for use in clinical practice should ensure that the licensing agreement for the tool includes verbiage that addresses the following:
  - a. Limited retention (time and nature of the data) based on legal requirements
  - b. Outline the specific purposes for which data will be used
  - c. Describe the methods of storage and usage clearly and simply
  - d. Directions for how people can request access to or remove their personal data
3. Professional Competence and Clinical Oversight – Licensees must understand the tools they use and remain aware of AI’s limits. AI-generated notes, assessments, or suggestions must ALWAYS be reviewed by the therapist – clinical judgement and decision-making remain solely the responsibility of the therapist.
4. Appropriate Use and Avoiding Overreliance – AI should support, not replace, the therapeutic relationship or clinical judgment. Monitor for client overdependence on digital tools and ensure AI use enhances, rather than substitutes, human interaction. Think

through the trade-offs of leveraging any new tool (what is gained? what is lost?) to ensure maximum benefit and minimal risk of harm.

5. **Safety and Ongoing Monitoring** – Be mindful of potential bias in AI systems and regularly assess the AI tools you use for accuracy, reliability, and ethical impact. Have contingency plans in place in case an AI system fails or provides incorrect information. The Board will continue to share updates as the committee's work progresses. Thank you for your continued commitment to ethical and informed practice as technology advances.

## **Supervision Hours – Recent Questions**

Supervision is central to the professional life of CSWMFT licensees. To address recent questions, the following clarifications are provided:

### **1. Where Do Submitted Hours "Go"?**

Training supervision hours submitted by an LISW-S, LPCC-S, or IMFT-S are recorded in eLicense under the dependent license record (LSW, LPC, or MFT). Licensees can confirm submitted hours by selecting Options on their license tile and choosing View Supervised Training Hours.

### **2. Do Supervision Hours Expire?**

Supervision hours do not currently expire. However, supervision is designed to support professional growth. Licensees who have more recently completed supervision often find greater success on required exams and during the early stages of independent practice.

### **3. When Must Supervision Hours Be Completed Again?**

Additional supervision hours may be required if:

- A supervisee is not recommended by their supervisor, or
- The hours cannot be substantiated through a detailed supervision log.

### **4. Who Can Submit Hours?**

At present, only CSWMFT Board licensees who hold an "S" designation may submit supervision hours for their supervisees in eLicense.

## **CE Reporting – LPATs and LPMTs**

LPATs and LPMTs can now open their accounts in CE Broker. Navigate to <https://cebroker.com/> and select Get Started. You will be asked to pick the state in which you are licensed and the license type. You will next be asked to choose a plan. Ohio licensees are not required to pay for a CE Broker plan. However, many licensees do choose one of the fee-based plans depending on the features they prefer. After selecting a plan, you will be prompted to enter your license number. This is the full license number starting with ART. or MUS. Follow the prompts to finish your account set up.

CE Broker has resources on its site regarding reporting CEs and using CE Broker. Access <https://help.cebroker.com/hc/en-us/categories/15226509166612-Licensed-Professionals> for assistance. Renewal information for all CSWMFT licensees can be found at <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/license-renewal>.

To help you prepare for your renewal, you are encouraged you to review the CE rules found at <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/chapter-4757-9>. These rules outline which programs qualify for CE as well as some additional criteria.

### **Counseling and Social Work Compacts**

State of Ohio IT staff are working on changes to eLicense that will allow the Board to start issuing privileges Counseling Compact Privileges. The changes will establish the process for transferring data to Compact Connect to allow Ohio LPCCs to apply for privileges as well. The changes will also create a privilege to practice "license" that can be verified in eLicense by members of the public and potential employers. The Board will send an email to LPCCs when LPCCs can start applying for privileges.

The Social Work Compact is drafting rules and establishing a budget. A database vendor has been identified. A specific timeline for issuing multi-state licenses has not been established.

### **Team Tressel Fitness Challenge**

The Team Tressel Fitness Challenge, led by Lieutenant Governor Jim Tressel, is helping young people in grades 3-8 across Ohio build lifelong healthy habits through fitness, nutrition, and sleep. It's a statewide movement designed to empower students with the tools they need to feel stronger, more confident, and ready to take on anything — inside and outside the classroom.

But to reach more kids, Lt. Gov Tressel needs your help to ensure more kids have the chance to participate in the challenge and develop good fitness habits.

You may have children of your own in school. You may have nieces, nephews, family friends, or former classmates now raising families, or you may have strong ties to a local school district in your community. Whatever your connection, you can play an important role by encouraging these schools to sign up and take part.

A conversation, a forwarded link, or a quick note can make a difference. Schools can sign up now at [TeamTressel.Ohio.gov](https://TeamTressel.Ohio.gov). The building principal must be the person to sign the school up.

### **Board Actions/Discipline - September and November 2025 Board Meetings**

Consent agreements for the actions listed below can be found at <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/for-the-public/disciplined-licensees>.

September and November 2025 Board Meetings:

#### **Social Workers:**

- Ollie Collier-Jones (LISW-S) 4757-11-01 (C)(19). Notice of Opportunity for Hearing. Did not request Hearing. License Revoked.
- John Bender (LISW) 4757-5-04 (C). Surrender.
- Shelly Horn (LSW) 4757-5-04 (C). Surrender.



- Jennifer LaCortiglia (LISW-S) 4757-5-04 (C). Suspension; Monitored supervision; no solo private practice; EBAS exam.
- Kristen Pal (LISW) 4757-5-02 (B); 4757-5-09 (B). Monitored supervision; EBAS exam.
- Kellie Sheets (LISW) 4757-11-01 (C)(4). Reprimand.
- Raveen Singh (LSW) 4757-5-02 (E); 4757-5-04 (A). Suspension; Monitored supervision; EBAS exam.
- Glenn Byers (LISW-S) 4757-5-04 (A). Suspension; Monitored supervision; no solo private practice; EBAS exam.
- Patrick Chavis (LSW) 4757-5-02 (A)(2); 4757-5-05; 4757-5-09 (C). Inactive – Escrow; mental health/fitness for duty assessment.
- Tamara Coleman (LSW) 4757-5-09 (B). Monitored supervision.
- Mandi Jester (LSW) 4757-5-03 (A). Monitored supervision.
- Tim Klett (LISW-S) 4757-5-02 (F); 4757-5-03 (A); 4757-11-01 (C)(20). Monitored supervision; supervision designation revoked; EBAS exam.
- Crystal Land (LSW) 4757-5-05. Reprimand; personal counseling.
- Latosha Stoker (LSW) 4757-5-09 (B). Monitored supervision; CEUs.
- Mary Suwinski (LSW expired) Suspension of new LSW; mental health/fitness for duty assessment; monitored supervision.
- Sarah Wernke (LSW) 4757-5-02 (A)(1); 4757-11-01 (B). Reprimand; EBAS exam.

#### **Counselors:**

- Taylor Johnson (LPCC suspended) 4757-11-01 (C)(19). Notice of Opportunity for Hearing. Did not request Hearing. License Revoked.
- Karli Ruggiero (LPC) 4757-11-01 (C)(19). Notice of Opportunity for Hearing. Did not request Hearing. License Revoked.
- Kathleen Aurigema (LPC) 4757-11-01 (C)(4). Suspension; Monitored supervision.
- Nina Visconti (LPC) 4757-5-05. Suspension; mental health/fitness for duty assessment; monitored supervision; no solo private practice.
- Scott Culver (LPC) 4757-11-01 (C)(4). Reprimand.
- Michael Fitzpatrick (LPC) 4757-5-05. Inactive – Escrow; mental health/fitness for duty assessment.
- Katherine Galland (LPC) 4757-5-03 (A); 4757-5-09 (B). Reprimand; EBAS exam.
- Patricia Leistiko (LPCC-S) 4757-5-03 (A). Suspension; personal counseling; EBAS exam; monitored supervision; no solo private practice.
- Tyler Smith (LPCC) 4757-5-02 (E)(1); 4757-5-03 (A). Monitored supervision; EBAS exam.
- Stephanie Spisak (LPCC-S) 4757-5-03 (A). Reprimand; Monitored supervision; EBAS exam.
- Mandi Workman (LPCC) 4757-5-03 (A). Reprimand; EBAS exam.

#### **MFTs:**

- Elizabeth Wagner (MFT) 4757-11-01 (C)(6). Suspension; monitored supervision; EBAS exam.

## 2026 Board Meeting Dates

The CSWMFT Board meets at least six times per year. Below are the planned meeting dates. Usually, the Board only meets on the first day listed but reserves the second day in case there is sufficient business or a hearing. Details regarding Board meetings are posted to the CSWMFT Board website a week or so prior to the meeting. You can access meeting information at <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/about-the-board/news-and-events/events>.

- o January 15
- o March 12
- o May 14
- o July 9
- o September 10
- o November 12

