

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

**THIS AGENDA CONSTITUTES NOTICE OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS
IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETING LAW, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20**

**Tuesday, November 10, 2020
12:30 p.m.**

**General Session is open to the public and will be held via Webex at:
<https://statema.webex.com/statema/j.php?MTID=m152bde19a18050751231a043d9504c25>**

Call-In Telephone number 1-866-692-3580 (toll-free)

Meeting Number/Access Code: 171 073 2883

Meeting Password: iQpY3M3cR7i

Agenda

All votes must be via roll call

Time	Item #	Item	Exhibits	Staff Contact
12:30p.m.	I	Call to Order & Introductions Determination of Quorum Notice of Electronic Recording		Board Chair
	II	Conflict of Interest Approval of Agenda	Draft Agenda	Board Chair

		<p>Executive Session (Roll call vote): The Board will meet in Executive Session as authorized pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, § 21(a)(1) for the purpose of discussing the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, individuals, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically, the Board will discuss and evaluate the <u>Good Moral Character</u> provisions of certain applications as required for registration for pending applicants. In addition, the Board will consider approval of prior executive session minutes in accordance with M.G.L. c.30A, § 22(f) for sessions held during for previous executive sessions of the Board. <p>The Board will reconvene in open session subsequent to the closed session(s).</p>		
	III	<p>Approval of Minutes: A. October 13, 2020</p>	Draft Minutes	Board Chair
	IV	<p>CHW Regulatory Amendments and CEU Requirements Revisited A. Experience Only Pathway Sunset Date B. CHW Certification Expiration Date Change C. Waiver of CEU Completion Deadline</p>	Discussion	ED/Board Counsel
	V	CHW Renewal Survey - Update	Discussion	AED
	VI	Board Member Vacancies Update	Discussion	ED
	VII	<p>Role of Board Members A. General Responsibilities of Board Members B. Communications</p>	None	Board Chair and Board Counsel

	VIII	<u>Flex Session</u> A. Announcements 1. Core competency training for formerly incarcerated women 2. CY2021 Board Meeting Schedule B. Topics for future agenda 1. Reciprocity 2. Tiering 3. FAQs	CY 2021 Board Meeting Memo	
	X	<u>65C Session: N/A</u>	N/A	Board Counsel
	XI	<u>Adjudicatory Session: N/A</u>	N/A	Board Counsel
4:00 p.m.	XII	Adjournment: Next meeting scheduled for December 8, 2020.	N/A	Board Chair

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 10, 2020
12:30pm

VIA WEBEX

239 Causeway Street
Room 417
Boston, MA 02114

Board Members

Claire Santarelli, DPH, Chair

Present: Joanne Calista, Community Health Worker Training Organization Representative, Vice Chair
Sheila Och, Community Health Worker 2
Catherine Bourassa, Community-Based CHW Employer
Susan Dargon-Hart, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers Representative
Denise Lau, Public Board Member

Board Members Hugo E. Santos, Community Health Worker 3

Not Present: Sharon George, Community Health Worker 4

Staff Present:

Steven Joubert, Executive Director, BHPL
Karen Geoghegan, Assistant Executive Director, BHPL
Mary Strachan, Board Counsel, DPH
Eleanor Montgomery, Office Support Specialist, BHPL
James D. Neal, Office Support Specialist, BHPL
Walens, Noel, Office Support Specialist, BHPL

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

Ms. Claire Santarelli, Board Chair, called the meeting of the Board of Certification of Community Health Workers to order at 12:38 p.m. and provided verbal notice of recording. A quorum was established with members present via WebEx as follows: Joanne Calista: Present; Susan Dargon-Hart: Present; Denise Lau: Present; Sheila Och: Present; Claire Santarelli: Present. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

Approval of Board Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda was reviewed.

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

Ms. Susan Dargon-Hart made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; Ms. Sheila Och seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote as follows: Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

Document: November 10, 2020 Board Meeting Agenda

II. Executive Session

The Board will meet in Executive Session as authorized pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, § 21(a)(1) for the purpose of discussing the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, individuals, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

Specifically, the Board will discuss and evaluate the Good Moral Character provisions of certain applications as required for registration for pending applicants.

In addition, the Board will consider approval of prior executive session minutes in accordance with M.G.L. c.30A, § 22(f) for sessions held during for previous executive sessions of the Board.

The Board reconvened in open session at 1:36 PM

A quorum of the Board was established with members present via WebEx as follows: Joanne Calista: Present; Susan Dargon-Hart: Present; Denise Lau: Present; Sheila Och: Present; Claire Santarelli: Present. Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

The Board took a break at 1:38 PM.

The Board resumed at 1:43 PM.

III. Approval of Minutes: October 13, 2020

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

Motion to approve the October 13, 2020 minutes as presented by Ms. Joanne Calista seconded by Ms. Santarelli and passed unanimously by roll call vote as follows: Catherine Bourassa: Yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

Document: October 13, 2020 Minutes

IV. CHW Regulatory Amendments and CEU Requirements Revisited

Assistant Executive Director, Ms. Karen Geoghegan, and Board Counsel, Ms. Mary Strachan presented the Board with an overview of the technical and operational issues that were causing challenges. Ms. Strachan explained that in the statute, the language states that a CHW certificate is valid for two years. Based on that, the regulations specified that a certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. However, MLO and CCHWs certification cards indicate that they expire on a fixed date – July 31, 2021. Ms. Strachan went on to explain the process for regulatory review.

A. Waiver of CEU Completion Deadline

The Board discussed this first, as they had voted to waive the CEUs at their last meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Board staff noted that the timeline that the Board had voted on in the previous month could create issues and confusion, as the new deadline for CEUs was halfway through the following renewal cycle. Ms. Strachan explained to the Board that they could revisit their vote from last month in order to waive the CEU requirements for the 2021 renewal cycle rather than just extending the deadline, now that they understood that certified CHWs have a fixed expiration date of July 31, on the odd numbered year.

Ms. Santarelli clarified that the Board voted against waiving the deadline completely at the last meeting but would open it to the Board. Ms. Strachan noted that in the last meeting, she had been under the impression that CHWs who had been certified in

December 2018 had December 2020 listed as the expiration date on their certification cards. Ms. Sheila Och asked if the Board waived CEUs for the first renewal cycle, would that mean that CHWs have to do 30 CEUs in their second renewal cycle? Board staff clarified that they would only have to do 15 CEUs in each renewal cycle.

Ms. Santarelli read a question from a member of the public: what would happen for CHWS who get certified very close to the renewal date? Ms. Geoghegan explained that most of the Boards within Multi-Boards have a fixed renewal date and that the Board has the authority to write a policy to waive CEUs if someone is certified close to the renewal date.

ACTION:

Motion by Ms. Denise Lau, seconded by Ms. Catherine Bourassa to waive CEUs for the current renewal cycle, ending July 31, 2021 and unanimously approved by roll call vote as follows: Catherine Bourassa: Yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

Ms. Santarelli noted that both of the other discussion points under this agenda item would require regulatory review.

B. CHW Certification Expiration Date Change

Ms. Strachan explained that the Board that this item is to correct the issue that MLO and the issued certificates contradict the Board's regulations regarding the expiration date of certification for Community Health Workers.

DISCUSSION:

Initially, the Board's regulations have a rolling expiration date for CHW– certifications; certifications expire two years from the date of issuance. Ms. Och asked what would happen to applicants until the regulatory review process, i.e. when would certificates expire for newly certified CHW? Ms. Geoghegan explained that, due to this discrepancy between the regulations and systems, the Board is technically out of compliance. She further elaborated that anyone who gets certified in that time frame would be in the same boat as folks who were already certified and that adjusting the regulations would ultimately give everyone the date-certain expiration of July 31st on odd years.

Ms. Calista asked if it would be possible to change MLO rather than go through the process of regulatory review. Ms. Strachan explained that she believed that the former Executive Director had made the executive decision to change certifications to expire on a fixed date, without consulting legal. This change should not have been made without going through regulatory review and ultimately put the Board out of compliance with their own regulations. Current Board staff do not know reason the MLO was configured with a start-certain expiration date of July 31 on odd years. She also noted that the expiration of July 31, 2021 appears on the certification cards that had been issued to date. Ms. Och asked how the Board would get back into compliance. Ms. Geoghegan answered that adjusting the regulations to be in line with the practice demonstrated that the Board was moving towards compliance.

Ms. Santarelli asked Board staff what other Boards have adopted as a policy for folks who get their initial certification close to the date of renewal, noting that she wanted the process to be fair to all. Ms. Geoghegan answered that each Board handles it differently, but emphasized that it was a one-time event at initial certification. She stated that BOCHW could opt to be more generous about the timeline. Ms. Santarelli asked if the Board could opt to waive CEUs completely for every first renewal cycle going forward. Ms. Strachan replied that she had not given much thought to that and that she would need to consult with Legal in order to give an informed answer.

ACTION

Motion by Ms. Santarelli and seconded by Ms. Lau to open the regulatory review process in order to change the expiration of certification from the anniversary of certification to a "date certain" i.e. every two years on July 31 and unanimously approved by roll-call vote as follows: Catherine Bourassa: Yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

C. Experience-Only Pathway Sunset Date

Given the absence of approved training programs and the approaching sunset date (June 29, 2021) for the experience-only pathway to CHW certification, the Board is considering extending the sunset date.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Santarelli asked if the Board was voting to simply extend the pathway or if they needed to determine a new sunset date. Ms. Geoghegan recommended that the Board consider lining up the sunset date with the new renewal date. Ms. Strachan added that the Board could consider extending the experience-only pathway for four years, noting that it would be a hassle to go through the process of regulatory review, only to have to do it again in two years if there are not enough approved training programs, or if there is not enough capacity to meet the demand of Certificants up for renewal. A few Board members asked if they needed to vote on a fixed date today. Board staff responded that they did need to vote on a date in order to go through the regulatory review process. Ms. Strachan cautioned the Board that the experience-only pathway is set to expire in six months, which isn't all that far away. Ms. Dargon-Hart agreed that the Board needed to be generous with the timing.

Ms. Calista noted that the original intent of the experience-only pathway was to have it open for a limited period of time, though the Board didn't anticipate all the delays and challenges. She asked that the Board consider the implications of having the experience-only pathway open for too long. Ms. Geoghegan noted that the experience-only pathway could exist alongside the work and experience pathway. Ms. Calista recalled that when the Board set up the regulations, they identified that a combination of work experience and training was the best practice and recommended going forward with a two-year extension of the pathway.

Ms. Santarelli asked if the regulatory review process would incorporate public comment in their revision. Ms. Strachan stated that yes it would but, from a practical standpoint, she recommended extending it for more time rather than less. She gave an example of the Board of Respiratory Care that amended their regulations to update the number of CEUs required for a renewal cycle and explained that the process took two years. Ms. Santarelli stated that she didn't want the process to carry on to a point where the CHW workforce has been impacted and asked if there was an update on the Board's ability to begin receiving training program applications. Executive Director, Mr. Steven Joubert stated that he didn't yet have an estimated start date but emphasized that Board staff had clarity on their next steps and that there had been positive movement on the process.

Ms. Calista asked if the Board could compromise by extending the experience-only pathway for three years. Ms. Geoghegan explained that this would mean that there would be two groups of CHWs with certifications that expire in different years, which operationally could cause problems and confusion, as the group that was certified under the experience-only pathway would have a different expiration date than the rest of the Certificants. Ms. Och asked if the Board could base the experience-only sunset date on the renewal cycle and proposed that the Board extend this pathway for up to two renewal cycles, giving the Board the option to extend, or not, depending on whether or not training programs were up and running at this time. Ms. Strachan stated that she did not know for certain but that she would run it by legal in order to get an answer.

As she was not Board Counsel at the time of writing the regulations, Ms. Strachan asked what the initial reasoning for creating a sunset for this pathway. Ms. Calista responded that it was created as a way to encourage CHWs who have been practicing for a long time to get certified without changing the nature of the field. Ms. Gail Hirsch added that a combination of work experience and training was identified as a best practice for the field and additionally that many CHWs requested training for credibility of the field.

ACTION:

Motion by Ms. Santarelli and seconded by Ms. Lau to extend the sunset date of the experience-only pathway up to two full certification renewal cycles at Board discretion, pending legal review. If legal does not approve then the Board moves to extend the experience-only pathway to July 31, 2023. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote as follows: Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes.

Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

V. CHW Renewal Survey – Update

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Geoghegan explained that she and Mr. Joubert were not familiar with the history regarding the CHW renewal survey. She understood that the Board wanted this survey to be an optional survey but noted that the system does not have the capability of making a survey optional for renewal. Ms. Hirsch noted that she would be happy to set up a meeting with Ms. Santarelli, and the Multi-Board staff team to explain the history of the renewal survey. Ms. Calista additionally noted her interest in a meeting. Ms. Hirsch noted that it was a workforce tracking mechanism that was developed as collaboration between BHPL and the Office of Primary Care.

Ms. Santarelli clarified that she believed that the survey was initiated by BHPL and the Office of Community Health Workers collaborated Board staff to use it as an opportunity to evaluate the impact of certification on the workforce. She emphasized that the survey was always intended to be voluntary. Ms. Strachan noted that it might be worth holding off on a survey until the second renewal. Ms. Geoghegan stated that no matter how the Board decides to do it, they will run into a barrier with IT and MLO. The Board decided to revisit this after some internal meetings to clarify the process.

VI. Board Member Vacancies Update

Mr. Joubert explained that there are currently four open seats on the Board. Ms. Dargon-Hart noted that she would be willing to reach out to leaders at MACHW to see if they had any nominees for the seats. Mr. Joubert explained that currently, all the open seats must be filled by MACHWA.

VII. General Responsibilities of Board Members

Ms. Santarelli had requested that this topic be discussed. She noted that there had been confusion among Board members regarding what they were able to discuss outside of meetings. Ms. Strachan had earlier clarified that anything discussed at the general session of the meeting of the Board can be discussed elsewhere. However, any Board member who wishes to make a presentation on certification should use the preapproved slide deck so that language is consistent with the regulations. Board staff would recirculate documents regarding general Board member responsibilities.

Ms. Santarelli additionally reminded Board members to review the Board packet in advance of the meeting. Ms. Lau asked how soon in advance of the meeting the materials would be circulated. Board staff answered that the Board packet was usually sent out 4-5 days in advance of the meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Ms. Lau made a motion at 3:59 to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Calista. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote as follows: Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Sheila Och: yes; Claire Santarelli: yes. Abstained: None; Recused: None; Absent: Sharon George, Hugo Santos.

The next meeting of the Board of Certification of Community Health Workers is scheduled for Monday, November 23, 2020 at 2:00 pm **via WebEx** for additional Executive Session, followed, by Monthly Meeting on December 8, 2020.

Respectfully submitted:

The Board of Certification of Community Health Workers

Board Meeting Agenda and Minutes; November 10, 2020
Board of Certification of Community Health Workers