

**Board of Registration for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology**

**Meeting Held by Phone**

**DATE: April 7, 2020 TIME: 9:30 a.m.**

**Public Session Minutes**

**A regularly scheduled open public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“the Board”) was held via Conference Call due to the Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.**

**Board Members Present by phone:**

Nicole Laffan  
Donna Noonan  
Kristin Bresnahan  
Sarah Young-Hong

**Staff Present by phone:**

Michael Hawley, Executive Director  
Lynn Read, Board Counsel

**Members of the Public Present by phone:**

Multiple attendees were present by phone

**Housekeeping**

- Meeting Called to Order: At 9:38 a.m., Dr. Laffan called meeting to order.

**Board Business**

- Approve Minutes
  - Minutes of 12/16/2019 meeting – Tabled
  - Minutes of 3/23/2020 meeting – Tabled
  - Minutes of 3/31/2020 meeting – Tabled
- Report from Executive Director, Michael Hawley
  - Mr. Hawley reported that renewals are now only being accepted electronically and that the process appears to be working well. He also reported that staff are working almost entirely from home with staff members going in to the office only a few times per week to check mail and perform the few tasks that must be performed in person.
- Report from Board Counsel, Lynn Read
  - Ms. Read’s comments will be made during discussion of agenda items.

**Discussion**

The Board agreed to reorganize the Agenda to discuss issues related to COVID-19 first, given that members of the public were attending for that discussion.

- Covid-19 related issues
  - Telepractice for clinical fellows, students and assistants.

The Board has received many inquiries from licensees and the public regarding the use of telepractice by individuals who practice as students enrolled in graduate programs, externships, post-graduate clinical fellowships and as licensed speech pathology and audiology assistants. The Board reviewed the temporary telepractice policy and discussed considerations for individuals in each of those situations.

The Board agreed that, with respect to telepractice by clinical fellows, one should look to ASHA guidelines. The Board further indicated that graduate student clinicians may utilize telepractice provided that they receive 100% of direct supervision in real time by a licensed clinical supervisor.

Assistants should look to their supervisors for guidance and board staff will research how the regulatory requirements apply in the case of assistants using telepractice.

- Other issues.

The Board received a question seeking clarification regarding the requirement that clients receiving services via telepractice be “clinically appropriate” and have “medical need.” The Board indicated that the forgoing requirement refers to the normal professional judgement employed in determining that a client is eligible to participate in speech-language pathology or audiology services.

- Wet Signatures on application documents and other licensing application issues.

Mr. Hawley reported that, since Covid-19 state of emergency, there have been problems with availability and timely processing of hard copy documents. For instance, many schools are not able to send paper transcripts and staff are not in the office as often to accept hardcopy documents. He asked that the board consider alternatives to hardcopy paper documents usually submitted in support of licensure applications.

**Dr. Laffan moved to accept transcripts, licensure verifications, and ASHA verifications submitted electronically from the source institutions (i.e., not copies submitted by the applicant) and to accept Form 1 and Form 2, submitted electronically by the applicants’ supervisors. Ms. Noonan seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “yes”; Ms. Noonan – “yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “yes”**

### **Compliance Monitoring.**

- F.M. The Board received required documents associated with the consent agreement for case number 2019-000634-IT-ENF.

**After discussion, Dr. Laffan moved to accept the reports. Ms. Noonan seconded.**

**The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “yes”; Ms. Noonan – “yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “yes”**

- Review Regulations for Potential Changes – Tabled
- CORI Policy and Delegations - Tabled

**Open session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting:**

- There were no unanticipated topics discussed.

**10:59 a.m. Investigative Conference [Closed session pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C]:**

**At 10:59, Dr. Laffan moved to adjourn the public session and to enter investigative conference [Closed session pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C] to discuss an investigative matter. Bresnahan seconded. Motion passed on a roll call vote: Ms. Noonan – “yes”; Dr. Laffan – “yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “yes”**

- 2020-000398-IT-ENF                      Board gave guidance to Office of Prosecutions

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Hawley" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Hawley  
Executive Director

**Documents Used in the Open Meeting:**

- Agenda
- Board Guidance on License Renewal, Continuing Education, and Telepractice During the State of Emergency for Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- MSHA Telepractice Questions, dated March 30, 2020