



ARKANSAS BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN COUNSELING



JPRC Meeting Data Requests
November 9, 2015

October 13 Queries:

1. Processing an application takes, on average, two days.
 - a. In-state re-license (Renewal of a License). Renewal letters are sent mid-January and licensees have until May 30 to submit the required documentation of CEUs, forms and fee. Licenses expire June 30.
 - b. Initial applications, from application to orals, varies between 3 - 6 months for many and varied reasons. It can take longer, again, for varied reasons.
 - c. Out-of-State applications vary in length of time dependent on receipt of the out of state licensure Board verification of licensure. Once verified, we have to review to determine if all of our required statutory requirements are met before it goes to the Board for approval. It may take a month, it could take longer. We do license by endorsement, sometimes with stipulations, to accommodate both the applicant and satisfaction of statutory guidelines.
 - d. We do not issue a temporary / provisional license.
2. If by 'error rate for incomplete / inaccurate applications' you mean how long do we keep a file open while missing information is forthcoming, we keep application files active for a year. Most often, missing data (transcripts indicating degree conferred; background checks; letters of reference; verification forms; etc . .) delay completion of file and movement to oral exams.
3. Our disciplines Code of Ethics is built into our law. In the 18 months I've been Executive Director, we average about one complaint per month. Most of the complaints are dismissed for lack of evidence to support the complaint (9). One was resolved without a hearing and involved a written letter of reprimand entered into the licensee's file. Several have been placed on Consent Orders with rather rigorous sanctions that extend for 6 months (2). Several are under investigation by the AGs Medicaid Fraud Office (2). Two cases are under investigation with the likelihood of formal hearings (2). One licensee was formally sanctioned with a 6 month suspension of license & revocation of supervision specialization and this is on appeal. One licensee was formally charged with Medicaid Fraud and the license was voluntarily surrendered. There are several complaints still in the process of data collection to determine if there are ethical / legal violations.
4. Historically, the years prior to my assuming this position, the backlog may have extended to a year or more. Recently, since May, 2014, there is essentially no backlog in working applications through to licensure. Understand, please, this is not (and cannot) be more expedient since there are too many extenuating circumstances out of the control of the Board.

5. I can only venture a guess at how we compare to other states as most of our licensing colleagues around the country experience the same issues we do with time of receipt of transcripts, background checks, etc . . . , but I believe we are as fast, maybe faster, than most.
6. Shortening this process is not advisable. Unless we drop the very core of licensure, the academic preparation & transcripts, background checks, competency examinations, etc . . . , there is no way to 'speed up' the process as we do not have control over those outside entities.

Over the past 18 months we have 'cleaned up' this process with digitizing our office, developed a more accessible & 'user friendly' website, improved office protocols, and in the process of synchronizing our database with the website. In short, we've become far more efficient and I believe you can confirm this with our constituents / licensees.

We are currently engaged in improving office functioning with new cellular technology, static that will enhance our ability to work at our office computer from off-site with 'roll-over' telephone to our personal phone.

November 2, 2015 Queries:

1. First, I can share the 'hard data' for licensees this calendar year to date:

178 total applicants

134	Licensed Associate Counselors (LAC)
21	LACs /Licensed Associate Marriage & Family Therapists (LAC /LAMFTs)
14	Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)
2	Licensed Associate Marriage & Family Therapists (LAMFTs)
2	Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists (LMFTs)
2	LPC / LMFT

The Applicants & Licensees Chart provides these data.

2. There have been a total of 67 complaints filed. For 55 of those complaints, no ethical/legal violations were found. There have been 2 Voluntary Surrender of Licenses, both for Fraudulent Billing
There have been 2 Revocation of Licenses: one for Fraudulent Billing, and one for an Inappropriate Sexual Relationship with a client's family member.
There has been 1 Suspension of a license for 6 months for an Inappropriate / Non- Professional relationship with a client.
There have been 2 Sanctions for Non-professional conduct with clients.
There has been 1 Sanction for an inadvertent breach of confidentiality.
There are 4 Complaints still under investigation.

3.

See the Application and Licensure chart prepared that addresses this query.

Typically, the only time we learn about someone departing the state is when the Board in the new state of residence petitions our Board for verification of records. We place a copy of that verification in the licensee's file but do not keep a separate record regarding numbers departing the state.

There is no way for our Board to respond to the query about those educated in this state who depart to practice. Any number of students at our graduate institutions may never contact this Board for licensure so there is no audit trail for us to follow as to who stays, who departs.

