

Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists

Autumn Quarterly Meeting

October 19, 2020; 8:30 AM (break 11:47–12:45); adjourned 3:20 PM

- Because of the social distancing requirements, this meeting was conducted on a Zoom video conference call, rather than the normal face-to-face meeting.

My public comments are noted in italicization.

Board Members: Smothermon (Chair), Merchant, Miller, Scoma, Husband-Thompson, Stoglin, Bateman, Francis

This is almost certainly Smothermon's and Miller's final board meeting, as the governor has appointed new members to fill those spots. The new members will be officially added to the board before the next meeting on January 22, 2021.

- Some committee meetings may no longer be announced to the public and may be held as needed. This is to allow the committees to be more flexible. Any changes in policy, rules, or other relevant issues will still be done with the public notice, and decisions may still require discussion and vote of the board.
 - *I too echo the concern already expressed about the holding committee meetings without notice to and participation from the public. The possible exceptions regarding Rules Committees is nice, but having the ability to witness the processes and deliberations of the committees is extremely valuable, not only the outcomes, which may be reported in the full board meeting. I would ask that as often as possible the public be included in committee meetings so that we have context for understanding decisions that are made.*
- The [BHEC website](#) continues to grow and contains more resources for licensees and the public.
 - One of the more useful BHEC now maintains [a web page](#) about applying for a license and the current timelines of application processing. Applicants can consult the chart of current timelines,

rather than waiting in the dark or making unnecessary calls to the TSBEMFT office.

- Another benefit is [a new consolidated LMFT rulebook](#) that is easier to download and reference
- BHEC is moving up its timeline for taking all applications online.
 - Although applicants can apply online currently, soon all license applications will be online, no longer allowing mail-in applications. This should happen before the end of the year, perhaps as early as November.
 - The goal for BHEC is to take all systems online, rather than paper forms (licensing, supervision, ethics complaint paperwork, etc.). This will eventually include the ability of supervisors to manage the information for LMFT Associates under their supervision.
- The board expressed concern about the upcoming legislative term in the midst of an ongoing current economic crisis and how that could effect mental health budgets, perhaps limiting the resources the boards and BHEC may have at their disposal.
- There continues to be much discussion about removing AAMFT Approved Supervisor **Candidates** from automatic approval as a Board-Approved Supervisor. (Full AAMFT-Approved Supervisors will be unaffected.) This is due to a loophole caused by the fact that AAMFT does not actively monitor the progress of Supervisor Candidates, meaning that an individual could begin the candidacy process but never complete or even progress in the process, thereby failing to meet the basic board requirements for supervisors.
- There is one current proposed rule under consideration.
 - The rule, [22 TAC §801.206](#), specifies which criminal convictions directly relate to the duties & responsibilities of a licensee and could be cause for revoking a license or denying an application for a license.
 - Public can submit comment about the rule by submitting to Brenda Skiff by fax (512-305-7701) or email (Open.Records@tsbep.texas.gov). Comment period ends November 20.
- Future Meetings:
 - Rules meeting to review public comment about proposed rule previously mentioned: December 11, 8:30 AM (online)
 - Upcoming BHEC meetings: January 12 and May 5
 - Future TSBEMFT meetings: January 22, April 16, July 23, Oct 22, Jan 21, April 8, July 22