

Minutes

RED TAPE REDUCTION WORKING GROUP (RTRWG)

Monday, September 17, 2018

9:00 A.M.

Big Mac Building

5th Floor Room-B

Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee Members Present

Senator John Cooper, Co-Chair, Senators Jane English, Bart Hester, and Trent Garner; Representatives LeAnne Burch, Milton Nicks, and Richard Womack; Brian Bowen, Attorney General's Office; Charles Lyford(Proxy) Arkansas Career Education (ACE); Lula Dixon, Retired Licensed Social Worker (LSW)/Consumer Representative; Bill Gossage, Governor's Office; and Bob Kucheravy, Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC)/Consumer Representative.

Committee Members Absent

Representative Bruce Cozart, Representative Jeff Williams, Senator Missy Irvin, Leon Jones, Arkansas Department of Labor (ADOL), Charisse Childers, Arkansas Career Education(ACE), Daryl Bassett, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services(ADWS)

Senator Cooper called the meeting to order

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to accept and approve the minutes from the August 20, 2018, RTRWG meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Corrections to the July 17, 2018, minutes submitted by Michael Wooldridge of the Arkansas State Board of Barber Examiners, were submitted and approved.

Update From The OLAG Chairman Gary Isom

Mr. Isom presented a draft licensing report to the RTRWG.

- The Executive Summary section lists action items for legislation as well as items recommended for future study.
- Recommendations include action to extend Act 781 to allow repeal of subsections of rules/regulations.
- Final touches will be made and recommendations from the RTRWG are welcome.

- Final report due to be submitted prior to the October 2018 RTRWG meeting
- Approximately eighty percent of the questionnaires have been received, and the committee is following up with the agencies that have not yet submitted the questionnaire
- Discussion followed regarding the draft report that was submitted

Peggy Tidmore-White, Licensed Certified Social Worker; Ruthie Baine, Social Work Licensing Board Executive Director; Harold Dean, former board member.

Ms. Tidmore-White spoke from the viewpoint of a current licensee with 40 years of experience as a social worker who has been licensed in four states.

- Some issues she noted with her experience obtaining an Arkansas license
 - With 20 years of experience, she was told she would need to sit for/retake the licensing exam
 - She had to wait more than one year for reciprocity to be granted with Ohio before she received her Arkansas license
 - Current Arkansas social work licensing statutes prohibit reciprocity without first retaking the exam
- With regard to renewing a license once granted, she feels the renewal process is very easy.

Ruthie Bain stated that the Social Work Licensing Board is currently exploring the following.

- Potential changes to the requirement of retaking the exam
- Changes in reciprocity in considering “substantial equivalency”
- Changing “reciprocity” to “endorsement” to allow more flexibility in accepting applicants who have experience and are proven practitioners

Discussion followed regarding licensure for military spouses, licensure ban procedures/processes, substantial equivalency with regard to requirement differences between Arkansas and other states, timeline for licensure, licensure fees and the board fund balance.

Arkansas State Board of Collection Agencies (Peggy Matson, Executive Director)

Ms. Matson shared the following information.

- The Board issues licenses to collection agencies (businesses, not individuals) which collect debts on behalf of clients (i.e., 3rd party debt collection)
- License is more similar to a registration than a license
- Licenses issued by the Board protect Arkansas’s citizens from harassing tactics that could be used by unscrupulous collection agencies
- Licenses do not transfer from state to state
- No criminal background check is required to obtain a license
- The Board did not issue any licenses in 2017, nor to military families by reciprocity or endorsement
- There is not any formal education or training required for a license

Arkansas Board of Hearing Instrument Dispensers (Barry Sellers, Executive Director, and Angela Gibson, Board Assistant)

Mr. Sellers and Ms. Gibson provided the following information.

- The agency received sixteen (16) applications and issued eight (8) licenses in 2017
- Licenses are issued upon passing the required examinations
- The average turnaround time for licensure is 1 ½ years
- Application fee is \$200.00 and renewal is \$225.00 annually
- Proof of an education equivalent of two years of college-level work at a regionally accredited college or university
- No criminal background check is required
- There is not any reciprocity with or endorsement from other states at this time
- The Board is working on proposed legislation to reduce application fees and to issue reciprocal licenses to applicants licensed in other states with equal or greater requirements than Arkansas, including the issuance of a temporary license allowing individuals up to six months to take and pass the Arkansas exam portion while also allowing them to work during that same initial six month time period.

Discussion followed regarding specific proposed fee reduction amounts and the current annual board budget.

Arkansas Board of Examiners in Counseling and Marriage & Family Therapy (John Carmack, Executive Director; Cheryl Edwards, Board Member; Ryan Martin, Board Member ; Suzanne Casey, Board Member ; Michael Kelly, Board Member; Justin Moore, Board Member; and Lenora Erickson, Board Member)

Mr. Carmack shared the following information:

- Provided a report to the RTRWG on the Board's recent efforts following completion of the self-assessment tool
 - Identified changes necessary to increase the efficiency of the application to licensure process, including a) increasing the number of oral interviews each month, which was implemented July 1, 2018, b) enabling applicants to bundle submissions of paperwork, c) revising the requirements for primary source documents, and d) allowing candidates more time to submit an official transcript.
 - Identified changes to licensure by endorsement, including: a) allowing the ability to transfer a full license held for MORE than 3 years from another state, b) also providing a pathway to transfer a full license for those who have held a license for LESS than three years in another state, and c) creating a new rule allowing military and military spouses holding an out-of-state license to obtain an Arkansas license at the equivalent level of the out-of-state license.
 - Identified the need for and working to implement fee reductions
 - Identified the need for and implemented the requirement of an Arkansas Jurisprudence Exam.

Discussion followed regarding the requirement of the oral exam and how the addition of the Jurisprudence Exam might negate the need for some parts or potentially all of the oral exam.

Arkansas Board of Examiners of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (Pamela Fite, Board Administrator)

Ms. Fite offered the following information.

- The board has a licensing cycle every two (2) years
- Reported zero complaints for 2017
- Licensed Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Counselor (LADAC) and Licensed Associate Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Counselor (LAADAC) are the two type of licenses issued by the agency
- Application fee for LADAC is \$265 and LAADAC is \$215 every two years
- Must have a Master's degree in Behavioral Science field for LADAC and Bachelor degree in Behavioral Science field for LAADAC
- No criminal background check required at this time
- Anyone coming from another state has to apply as a new licensee
- The Board does not have any language for military veterans and/or spouses at this time
- The Board is aware of the issue of reciprocity and endorsement and has begun studying possible recommendations.

Discussion followed regarding the need for some changes regarding licensure for military and military spouses prior to the RTRWG's report to the Governor due at the end of November. Ms. Fite indicated she will send a message to the Board's members notifying them of the November deadline.

Other Business

The next meeting will be Monday, October 22, 2018, 9:00 am, Big Mac Building, 5th Floor, Room-B. A preliminary date of November 19, 2018, was discussed for the November 2018 meeting. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned approximately 10:45 am.