

**September 2019**

**Newsletter**

**Board Members:**

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District 5**

**Sharrie Cranford, LMSW  
Vice-Chair  
District 1**

**Amy E. Smith, LMSW  
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District 2**

**LaShea Cobb-England,  
LICSW  
District 7**

**Marilyn Latham Colson,  
LICSW  
District 6**

**Valeri White, LBSW  
District 3**

**Upcoming State  
Holiday's**

October 14<sup>th</sup>  
November 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>  
December 25<sup>th</sup>

Please note that the  
Board Office will be  
closed on the days  
posted above.

# ABSWE

*Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners 334-242-5860 or 1-888-879-3672*



## **Farewell from the Chair**

**Dr. Michael Smith, LICSW-PIP, MBA**

It is hard for me to accept this is my last month of service on the Alabama State Board of Social Workers. Three years have gone by very quickly. I am thankful for the opportunity to have served on the Board and to have served as the Chair for this year.

The Board has worked diligently on a number of action items over the last year. Some of those include rule changes regarding telehealth and provisional licensing. We've improved the license verification process and are working to improve the supervision standards for social work.

Portability of licensure from state to state is also a hot topic in the social worker regulatory community. The Association of Social Work Boards offers a wealth of information on this topic on their website. Our Board has partnered with ASWB to make the portability of licensure easier for social workers moving into practice in Alabama.

I feel confident the Board will continue to protect the public and advance the standards of professional social work practice in Alabama. I hope all licensed social workers in Alabama will look for opportunities to advance the profession and protect clients.

## Proposed Code Changes

The following is a list of proposed code changes. Written comments will be accepted until **October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 4:00pm**. More information can be found on our website at [www.socialwork.alabama.gov](http://www.socialwork.alabama.gov).

1. Renewal of Expired License
2. Telehealth
3. Classification of Social Workers

## New Rule Changes Effective October 1, 2019

**850-X-2-.01(7) Telehealth.** Telehealth is a mode of providing social work services through interactive audio, video or electronic communication occurring between a licensed social worker and the client, including any electronic communication for evaluation, assessment, treatment, and management of confidential information and case records in a secure platform.

**850-X-6-.03 Provisional License.** After an application is approved by the Board the applicant has twelve months from the date of application to test to become a licensed social worker. During this timeframe the approved candidate is granted a onetime provisional status where they are eligible to practice social work and otherwise exercise the rights and privileges granted to a licensed social worker. After the expiration of twelve months from the date of original application and if the applicant has not become licensed, the provisional license status is no longer active. At that time an applicant must submit a new application and the necessary fees to be eligible for reexamination. During this time, the applicant shall not practice social work or otherwise exercise the rights and privileges granted to a licensed social worker.

## New License Verification Procedures

By the end of September you will be able to direct anyone requesting a license verification to our website, under License Search, where they will be able to print a certified letter that verifies your license status, license number, issue date, expiration date, the date of your ASWB Exam and whether you have had any disciplinary actions. We have put this procedure in place to make verifications faster and easier for you and other states looking to verify licensees. This will be our new method of verification but, should you need an original you can still mail in a request for such and it will be processed as normal.



I am Dr. April Jones, the Department Head of Social Work at Tuskegee University (TU) since summer of 2018. Although my role is to be an assistant professor and administrator, as a lifelong social worker I still like to work in practice or serve the community in some capacity. My contribution to TU's student success and unmet needs started with a conversation with the VP of Student Affairs about my concerns with food insecurity on campus. The discussion leads to an invitation to assist with the relaunch of the campus Tiger Den Food Pantry.

I accepted the invitation and worked outside of my regular work hours to support the relaunch effort by sending resources to the VP of Student Affairs and the students assigned to assist with the food pantry program development. The resources I shared with the students assisted with the creation of the food pantry policies, the needed statistical data about food insecurity; and, sample program models to review to develop TU's program model for the Tiger Den Food Pantry. Also, I had to find the time to be available for meetings in between my classes and other work appointments. Nevertheless, within seven months, we had the food pantry established and donors' interest in the food pantry needs.

The Social Work Alliance (SWA) student members launched a food donation drive to secure donations on campus from students, faculty, and staff who wish to contribute to the relaunch of the food pantry. The donation drive was as a part of the students' National Social Work Month activities to elevate the importance of social workers in the community. I supported the SWA's donation drive efforts by reaching out to the Wesley Foundation, Montgomery Area Food Bank, Federally Employed Women's Program (FEW) Chapter 162 of Montgomery, AL, and other local organizations to secure in-kind and monetary donations valued at \$3,000.00! Food Insecurity was an issue on campus, the social work department's faculty and students decided to be a part of the solution by volunteering our time to the food pantry planning process and supporting any other needs. The VP of Student Affairs asked if the social work department could help the food pantry with intake and referral services. The faculty and I accepted by making this a service-learning project for some classes, and, the students were eager to be a part of community services within their very own community.

It was worth "burning" the midnight oil by using my time to support the development and relaunch of the campus pantry. The NASW Alabama Chapter recognized Tuskegee Universities efforts at the Advocacy Day at the State Capitol. The assistance provided by the social work department and SWA, initiated long-term sustainment of the food pantry through pro bono services from students to their peers in need of services (e.g., food stamp applications, nonperishable food items, toiletries, etc.); and, linkage to a local food bank for affordable bulk purchases of food. Moreover, the relaunch of the food pantry has resulted in TU alumni association members donating in-kind and monetary donations to sustain the food pantry as well. The ultimate reward was seeing the students faces and gratefulness of having the food pantry relaunch as a resource to meet their unmet needs!

Learn more details about the stories at these links <https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/tuskegees-social-work-department-seeks-to-feed-hope-to-students> and <https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/tuskegee-university-campus-food-pantry-to-host-grand-reopening-feb-14> YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoBRcIHzwzU>

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**Board Reminders**

- **CE requirements – you must have 3 CE’s in the following – Ethics, Clinical and Supervision (if you are under contract to supervise). Please remember that you need 10 traditional classroom-based CE hours as part of your 30 CE total.**
  - **You can no longer earn your Ethics CE’s during your grace period! You must earn them before your license expires!**
  - **We are allowing you to earn your Clinical and Supervision (if needed) CE’s during your grace period. By December 31, 2019 you will no longer be able to take advantage of this extension.**
  - **The Board will meet again October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in our Montgomery office.**
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