BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING

Issue #1

Summer-Winter 2026

Message from the Executive Director, District of Columbia Board of Professional Counseling

The District of Columbia Board of Professional Counseling remains dedicated to protecting the public by upholding the highest standards of professional practice and supporting excellence across the various professions represented by this board. On behalf of myself and the board staff, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the many professionals who serve the District with compassion, integrity, and expertise. Your commitment to serving the residents of the District of Columbia, and our communities, plays a vital role in strengthening the support systems that residents rely on every day. Thank you for your continued dedication to promoting overall emotional wellness, personal growth, healing and advocating for the individuals and families of the District. You matter and your work makes a difference!

— **LaTrice Herndon, MS Executive Director**

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Welcome & Introduction

The **Health Systems and Preparedness Administration (HSPA) at the District of Columbia Department of Health (DC Health)** is committed to ensuring that all licensed health professionals meet the highest standards of competence, ethics, and public safety.

This newsletter serves as a communication bridge between DC Health, the professional boards, and licensees. Each issue highlights important regulatory updates, continuing education opportunities, public health initiatives, and professional achievements.

Through collaboration, transparency, and accountability, DC Health continues to advance our mission of protecting, promoting, and improving the health of all District residents.

About DC Health | HSPA

The Health Systems and Preparedness Administration (HSPA) is one of five administrations within DC Health. Within HSPA, the Office of Health Professional Licensure (OHPL) oversees the regulatory operations of 15 professional licensing boards, the Investigations Division, and the Pharmaceutical Control Division.

Each respective board under OHPL ensures that all health professionals practice safely and effectively through:

- **Licensing and renewals** for health professionals
- **Policy development and enforcement** of laws and regulations
- **Board support** for disciplinary actions, rulemaking, and continuing education
- **Public-health partnerships** promoting safe, ethical, and quality care

Each professional board is composed of members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the DC Council, representing both professional expertise and public interests. Together, these boards uphold DC Health's core values: integrity, excellence, accountability, and service.

About the Board

The **Board of Professional Counseling** has the responsibility to regulate the practice of professional counseling, marriage and family therapy, art therapy, dance therapy and certified addiction counseling, in the District of Columbia. Its mission is to provide oversight to licensed professionals and ensure the health and safety of citizens and visitors in the District of Columbia through the provision of health care services.

The Board currently by statute is composed of seven members appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Council:

- 1 professional counselor licensed in the District
- 1 professional counselor licensed in the District who is an educator engaged in teaching counseling
- 1 professional counselor licensed in the District at least 3 years of experience in the field of addiction counseling
- 1 professional art therapist licensed in the District
- 1 marriage and family therapist licensed in the District
- 1 member licensed or certified under this Board (professional counselor, a professional art therapist, a marriage and family therapist, or an addiction counselor)
- 1 consumer member

Currently there are 5 Board vacancies for 3 professional counselors, 1 of any other professional license under the board and 1 consumer member For additional information regarding vacancies and how to join the Board, please visit the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments (MOTA) at: https://motaboards.applytojob.com/apply/cqq2bQ/Board-Of-Professional-Counseling

Mailing address:
2201 Shannon Pl SE, Washington, DC 20020
All Board inquiries can be sent to:

- **dclpc@dc.gov** for professional counselors, professional art therapist and dance therapist
- **dclgpc@dc.gov** for graduate professional counselors and graduate art therapist
- **dccac@dc.gov** for certified addiction counselors
- **dcbomft@dc.gov** for marriage and family therapist

Board Members

- Ms. Rhonda Pope-Brown, LPC
- Ms. Laura Golojuch, MFT

Board Updates & Priorities

We are excited to share several important updates as we continue strengthening and supporting the behavioral health professionals who serve our community. As of July 2025, the Board of Professional Counseling officially absorbed the Board of Marriage and Family Therapy. We are proud to now oversee an expanded and diverse group of professions: Professional Counselors, Licensed Graduate Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Professional Art Therapists, Licensed Graduate Art Therapists, Dance Therapists, Certified Addiction Counselor I, and Certified Addiction Counselor II.

To ensure our regulations remain current and responsive to the needs of each profession, the Board will be forming subcommittees to update regulations across all fields under this board, beginning with Marriage and Family Therapy. The Marriage and Family Therapist Subcommittee will also be developing new regulations for the Licensed Graduate Marriage and Family Therapist (LGMFT) credential as we prepare to formally stand up this profession within the Board. We look forward to engaging our licensees in this important work.

Lastly, we are pleased to share that the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) has launched the HBCU MFT Program Development Grant to support the growth of the mental health workforce. Learn more at: https://www.aamft.org/hbcugrant

Board Chair Corner

We would like to take a moment to recognize outgoing Board Member and Board Chair, Victoria Sherk, LPC, who stepped down from her roles effective July 1, 2026. Victoria has served on the DC Board of Professional Counseling since 2017, taking on the role of Chairperson in 2021.

Over the better part of a decade, she has been a steady and thoughtful voice for our profession, guiding the Board through regulatory updates, licensure policy discussions and the everyday work of protecting DC residents seeking mental health care. Her dedication to getting the details right, and to treating both licensees and the public with fairness and respect, has left a lasting mark on this Board. We are deeply grateful for the countless hours Victoria has volunteered, the wisdom she has brought to every meeting and the collaborative spirit she modeled, as Chair. Her leadership helped shape a stronger, more responsive Board for the counseling community in the District. Please join us in thanking Victoria for her years of service and dedication.

- The DC Board of Professional Counseling

Upcoming Meetings

The Board meets on the third Friday of every month at 10:00 a.m., unless otherwise indicated by the board webpage. Additional information and meeting links can be found on the Board of Professional Counseling webpage.

2026 meeting dates:

- June 26, 2026: Meeting Cancelled
- July 17, 2026 (Rescheduled to July 24, 2026)
- September 18, 2026 (Rescheduled to September 25, 2026)
- October 16, 2026
- November 20, 2026
- December 18, 2026

Closing Note

DC Health thanks all licensed professionals for their service and commitment to public health. Together, we advance to a stronger, healthier, and more resilient District. Board of Professional Counseling Webpage

Emergency Informational Alert - Ongoing Scam Targeting DC Health Licensees

Dear Licensee:

DC Health continues to receive reports of fraudulent communications in which scammers impersonate DC Health representatives, law enforcement officers, or other government officials. These individuals contact licensees by phone, email, or fax, often using "spoofed" numbers to appear legitimate, and falsely claim the licensee is under investigation.

Recent Activity:

A District licensee reported repeated scam calls from individuals identifying themselves as "Carlos Rivero" and "Ben Martin," using the number **202-442-8955**, which is a spoofed version of a DC Health main line. Similar tactics have been reported in previous cases and mirror national fraud patterns targeting health professionals.

What Scammers Are Doing

- Impersonating DC Health or federal officials
- Claiming the licensee is under investigation or legally required to respond
- Requesting money, personal information, or immediate action
- Using spoofing technology so calls appear to come from DC Health numbers
- Sending follow-up emails or faxes to appear official

IMPORTANT: Please be advised that **DC Health representatives will never contact you with a request for money**. Any legitimate payment or fee will only be associated with a license application, an official Board order or consent agreement, or a formal civil infraction citation. DC Health only accepts payments via check or money order. Additionally, any check or money order payment made to DC Health must always be made payable to DC TREASURER. Any request to make payment to an individual or entity other than DC TREASURER is not valid.

Immediate Actions If You Are Contacted by a Scammer

1. Do not provide personal information or payment under any circumstances.
2. Do not return calls or respond to emails/faxes from the suspected scammer.
3. Verify the communication directly with DC Health:
    - **Email:** ohplb@dc.gov
    - **Phone:** (202) 724-8800
4. Report the scam attempt: Licensees should send any details; including names used, phone numbers, email addresses, fax numbers, documents, or screenshots to ohplb@dc.gov. This information helps us identify patterns, understand how licensees are being targeted, and strengthen protective advisories.
5. File a police report: If you were contacted or threatened by scammers, filing a report ensures documentation and allows law enforcement to investigate.

How DC Health Contacts Licensees

To protect your information, please remember: DC Health does not demand immediate payments by phone.

- Staff do not request personal documents through phone calls or unsecured email.
- Official messages come only from an @dc.gov email addresses.
- Payments are submitted through secure DC government systems, never to an individual.

Stay Informed and Vigilant

For more information on avoiding government impersonator scams, visit the Federal Trade Commission: https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-avoid-government-impersonator-scam . DC Health will continue to monitor scam activity and update licensees as new patterns emerge. By sharing this information proactively, we aim to help ensure that no other licensee experiences the confusion, fear, or delay recently reported.