



## Our Mission

The legislature declares that, in order to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of this state against unauthorized, unqualified and improper practice of social work, it is necessary that a proper regulatory authority be established and adequately provided for.

2023 EDITION  
SUMMER | FALL

# News | Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners

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Melissa Smith Haley, LMSW  
**Board Member**  
New Orleans

Candice Sorapur, LCSW-BACS  
**Board Member**  
LaPlace

## From The Chair

*Chair- Dr. Hyacinth McKee, LCSW-BACS*

### *The future is today.*

Greetings,  
Our state has endured historical record temperatures during this summer and fall season. For eight consecutive weeks the climate in our area sustained heat in the triple digits. The impact of the extreme heat caused a significant drought as well as numerous burn bans across the state. Like the climate, our profession continues to make historical records with the impact of the work that is done for our public, our clients that we serve. I am certain that our Environmental and Social Justice social workers were very busy in their continued diligence working to assist our clients who have been affected by the climate shift experienced these past summer months and entering the fall season. Assisting clients, our public, in preparing for the shift in climate requires reflection, action, and vision. LABSWE in its current composition has worked and continues to adjust with the climate shift in our profession to address the needs of our public with *reflection, action, and vision.*

A more detailed description of the work that our board has been able to accomplish can be found in the later portion of this newsletter. However, for the purpose of speed reading, in *reflection*, I will do my best to highlight some of the “climate shifting” work in this opening of the newsletter. LABSWE committees continue the work by *action* of the board by convening committee meetings at a minimum on a quarterly basis. On any given month, at least one committee meeting is being conducted. The work of LABSWE this past season is inclusive but not limited to the following: strategic plan for FY 24, development of board policies and procedures, selection of a new licensing platform, purchasing of modern technology equipment for office use, hiring of a second licensing analyst for full staffing, serving as subject matter expert as a task force member for matters that impact public protection, researching best practices for continuing education, competency examination review, clinical supervision and making history by proposing twenty-three rules for promulgation clearly demonstrated collective responses to the climate shift in our profession and our dedicated work of service.

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## Welcome STAFF!

Our board welcomes Sharon Duronslet as our Administrative Coordinator 3. Sharon is the first point of contact and the first gentle voice that everyone hears when the public is greeted. Sharon comes to us with experience in customer service and state agencies. Welcome Sharon!

Our board also welcomes our second licensing analyst Blake Williamson. We are delighted that he has joined our staff. Blake comes to us with experience in state agencies. His responsibilities include approving supervision forms, processing applications to retake the exam as well as applications for Board-Approved Clinical Supervisor, pre-eligibility determinations for early testers, and issuing licenses. He will be working alongside Sara, our other licensing analyst utilizing all his talents. Welcome Blake!

## BOARD MEMBER WELCOME

## Welcome

## Candice Sorapuru

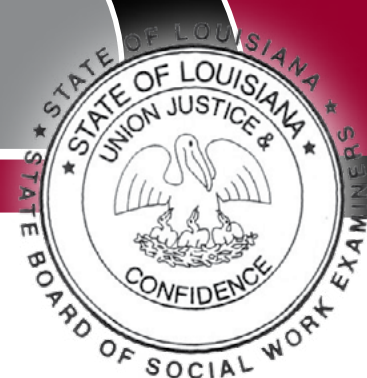
Candice Sorapuru, LCSW-BACS, is a highly experienced and accomplished social worker with over 20 years of professional experience. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of New Orleans and a Master of Social Work degree from Tulane University School of Social Work. Currently, she is enrolled in the Doctorate of Social Work program at the University of St. Thomas, MN expecting to graduate in May 2025.

Throughout her career, Candice has worked in various areas of the social work field, showcasing her versatility and expertise. Her experience spans case management, geriatrics, sexual assault, domestic violence, criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse, employee assistance programs, private practice, and administration. As a clinical practitioner, she has a particular focus on providing treatment to children, adolescents, and families.

Candice has pursued extensive training and certifications to enhance her clinical practice. She is trained and certified in a range of therapeutic approaches, including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Triple P Positive Parenting Program, Pediatric Behavioral Therapy for OCD, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Moral Reconciliation Therapy, and Client-Centered Play Therapy.



As the Co-Founder and Director of Clinical Services of Innovative Approaches Counseling Center, LLP, located in the River Parishes, Candice plays a crucial role in providing comprehensive and innovative counseling services. Additionally, she serves as a Clinical Consultant for Orleans Parish Criminal Court, Drug Court, and the Louisiana Department of Education, further extending her impact in the community. Candice's expertise and contributions extend beyond her direct practice. She has presented on numerous topics at the local, state, and national levels, sharing her knowledge and insights with fellow professionals. Her dedication to continuous learning and professional development is evident through her pursuit of a doctoral degree. Born and raised in New Orleans, Candice remains deeply connected to her community. She is a native New Orleanian and balances her professional commitments with her personal life as a married mother of three. Her multifaceted experiences and commitment to improving the lives of others make her an invaluable asset to the field of social work and the community she serves.



## Continued From The Chair

Cover story

We continue to address climate shifts as our four FY 24 Key Priorities are **#1 Operational Improvement, #2 Exam and Competency Measures, #3 Staff Employment and #4 Rules and Practice.**

Additionally, as discussed at our July 2023 Strategic Planning meeting, our decision-making process will be inclusive of research, collaboration, and data collection with full intention to provide the best information possible to our public. A fellow colleague of mine and social work practitioner, Dr. Dorothy Jimenez said this past summer during a workshop addressing self-care, *“The Future is Today.”* This quote is transformational in that asserts that each step we take today impacts the future. Even the small steps in the present build the future. By this and working diligently and starting now, we embrace our *vision* that *the future is today.*

Our board sends warm greetings to Candice Sorapuru LCSW-BACS. We welcome her many years of expertise in clinical social work, independent practice, professional consultation, micro practice, and mental health. We are confident that her expertise will compliment the needs of the board and bring added value to our work of service.

As always, it is with gratitude to serve as the Chair of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners. Enjoy this “summer like” Fall Season!

*“Live Life. Engage in it. Give it all you got. Love it with passion because life truly does give back, many times over, what you put in it”---Dr. Maya Angelou*

### July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 Fiscal Year Data Applications Processed

## Year in Review

New	1,172
Retake	740
Total	1,912

### Complaints Accepted by License Type

	RSW	CSW	LMSW	LCSW	BACS	Total
Accepted	33	13	24	29	12	111
Dismissed	31	10	20	25	2	107
Disciplined	2	3	4	4	0	13

### Other Data

Referrals to IPP	4
Open/Pending Complaint Files	126
# of CE Pre-approval Organizations	57

### Highlights of LABSWE accomplishments FY 22-23

- ✓ 23 proposed rules for promulgation
- ✓ Public town hall meetings to engage public input on ASWB test data
- ✓ Approval of a 5th staff position - Licensing analyst
- ✓ Appointment of ADA Coordinator
- ✓ Decreased the use of paper by transitioning to a “LEANER” office
- ✓ Clean audit of finances and fiscally solid budget
- ✓ Reinstitution of newsletter
- ✓ Established new committees to address the needs of the public

## List of Proposed Rules for Promulgation

The Rules Committee has been working for several years on recommendations for additions and amendments to the Rules, Standards and Procedures. The product from the committee includes referrals from the board, changes in response to the last amendment to the Louisiana Social Work Practice Act enacted on January 1, 2022 (Act 215), and removal of duplicative language. The recommended language is currently undergoing a legal sufficiency review by board counsel. The specific language of the proposed promulgation will be provided to all social workers with a period set for making public comments.

### Chapter 1. Standards of Practice

§101 & §103 – changes due to definition of social worker in Practice Act

§111(F)(1) – revising to require written informed consent

§113(A) – further clarifies exploitation and includes prohibition of personal, political, or religious agenda of social work

§113(B) – provides expanded description of dual relationships

§125 – addition addresses social work educators

### Chapter 3. General Provisions

§301 – definitions to correlate with rewrite of Chapter 9; definition of client revised for clarification

§305(D) – changes due to changes in Practice Act for LCSW requirements

§307(E) – addition of early testing criteria

§309 – changes address current procedure and eliminates requirements already mandated by the Practice Act

§311 – change adds requirement of listing supervisees on renewal and deletes requirements mandated by the Practice Act

§313 – increases renewal fees and lapsed fees and revises dates to coincide with Practice Act changes

§315 – addresses election of officers

§317 – repeal due to addition of Chapter 11

§319 – rewording only

§323 – addition of inactive status

§325 – addition of emeritus status

§327 – addition of discrimination prohibition language

§329 – addition of rules for public comments

### Chapter 5. Minimum Supervision Requirements

§503 – changes due to Practice Act

§505(A) – revised to reflect Practice Act

### Chapter 7. Impaired Professional Program Authority

Rename program Recovering Professional Program and revise to mirror current procedures

### Chapter 9. Procedural Rules

Complete rewrite

### Chapter 11. Continuing Education

Adds rules regarding continuing education approval organization, allows for credit for attending LABSWE board meetings and committee meetings, creates a separate section for credit for teaching, and allows for synchronous, interactive webinars to be considered in-person learning

Your Opinion

Matters!

The IOC needs your input in a discussion about LMSWs engaging in the independent practice of macro social work. The IOC is holding focus groups across the state in person and virtually. If you would like your opinion heard, email the person associated with [your region](#) for more information and to indicate your preference of in-person or virtual, and day or evening. For Regions A, B, and C, contact Jill Murray at [jmurray@suno.edu](mailto:jmurray@suno.edu); for Regions D, F, and G, contact Michelle Livermore at [mliver@lsu.edu](mailto:mliver@lsu.edu); and for Regions E, I, and J, contact Andrew Wilson at [awilsonsocialwork@comcast.net](mailto:awilsonsocialwork@comcast.net)

(The IOC is an Interorganizational Committee which includes representation from LABSWE, NASW-LA, Association of Black Social Workers, Louisiana Association of Clinical Social Workers, Louisiana State University School of Social Work, Southern University at New Orleans School of Social Work, Tulane University School of Social Work, Department of Children and Family Services, Louisiana Department of Health, and other interested persons.)



## OTHER NOTABLE NEWS

### Federal Association of Regulatory Boards (FARB) Regulatory Law Seminar September 19-21, 2023

Our board chair Dr. Hyacinth McKee attended the Federal Association of Regulatory Boards (FARB): Regulatory Law Seminar. Topics covered at the seminar included social media and Licensure Violations, board communication in remote settings and subject matter experts to advance DEI goals in competency measurements. The following additional Louisiana regulatory boards were in attendance: LA Department of Justice, LA Real Estate Commission and Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Dr. McKee is pictured with Nikki Wallace, JD Director of Compliance LA Real Estate Commission. For more information visit website: [www.farb.org](http://www.farb.org)



### Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) New Board Member Training September 28-30, 2023

Our Policy and Procedure Committee Chair, Melissa Smith Haley attended New Board Member Training provided by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). Topics include board regulation, ethics, and the Model Practice act for Social Work Regulatory Boards. For more information visit: [www.aswb.org](http://www.aswb.org)

### Suicide Prevention Task Force- House Concurrent Resolution 84 of the Louisiana Legislature

As per HCR 84, according to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration,

- African American adults were at the highest risk for past-year suicide attempts in 2019.
- A suicide rate peaked during the adolescence and young adult life of African American populations from the year 2010 to 2019.
- Among those suicide deaths in the African American population, the suicide death rate for men has reached more than four times the rate of women.
- The state of Louisiana has reported six and four-tenths African American deaths from suicide to every ten-thousand-person population in comparison to the seven and three-tenths rate reported for the United States

Under the leadership of State Representative Edward Jordan, a task force inclusive of our chair Dr. Hyacinth McKee of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners and other chairs of licensing boards and associations in Louisiana was established to study death by suicide statistics for African Americans in this state and to propose recommendations regarding suicide prevention. Other members on this task force included but are not limited to: Southern University Baton Rouge-Nelson Mandela College of Government and Social Sciences, The New Orleans Chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers, Louisiana Department of Health: Office of Behavioral Health, Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, Louisiana Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Louisiana Psychiatric Medical Association, Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists and The Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center. The Task Force on African American Suicide Rates will submit its findings in the form of a written report to the legislature and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library no later than February 1, 2024. Two meetings were held this season whereby the Louisiana Suicide Prevention plan by Dr. Robyn Thomas of LDH: OBH and research provided by LSU Department of Psychiatry and SUBR Nelson Mandela College of Government and Social Sciences were reviewed. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 10:00 am at the State Capitol Building. It is open to the public.

# LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

## LABSWE BOARD

### Committee Information

Our board continues to work in a climate of collaboration as evidenced by the composition of our committees inclusive of licensees of multi-scope practices and specializations throughout the state of Louisiana. This ensures that the voices of licensees are represented in the establishment of rules, processes, and procedures of the LABSWE.

Each committee is chaired by a member of the full board.

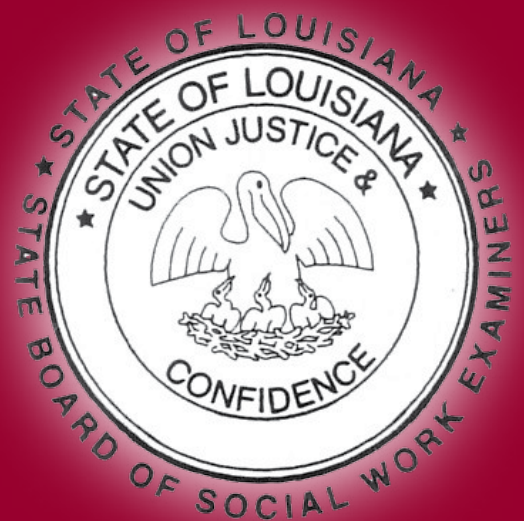
*THANK YOU, COMMITTEES AND STAFF, FOR YOUR Hard Work and Commitment!*

## FUTURE

### BOARD MEETING DATES

Our last board meeting for the 2023 calendar year is scheduled for December 1, 2023. The meeting dates for the [2024 calendar](#) year will be set at the October board meeting.

*License Count*  
**BY TYPE**  
RSW 1,765  
CSW 459  
LMSW 2,454  
LCSW 3,023  
LCSW-BACS 1,334



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