Texas Mental Health Counselor's Association

Spring 2019

2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: JANUARY 8 – MAY 27, 2019

In this newsletter: HB 501, New LPC Rules, & Member Spotlight Ideas

Several primary action alerts are relevant from this year's legislative session. If you are a licensed counselor in the State of Texas, it is critical to remain aware of the issues and proposed changes that will affect the profession.

One way to stay informed is through membership with Texas Counseling Association (TCA). TCA is the largest state division of the American Counseling Association. You can further show your support by joining TMHCA, where quarterly newsletters will also keep you informed. TCA sends weekly legislative alerts during sessions, as well as information on action items that rely on your voice for advocacy.

The 2019 Texas Legislative Session is critical for the counseling profession. Please plan to attend a TCA Advocacy Day if possible.

You will receive breakfast, coaching and information on talking points, and various other resource materials.

TCA also provides regular updates on social media, including Facebook and Twitter. Thus, there are many ways to not only get involved, but to stay informed about happenings that potentially affect our profession.

Join TCA: www.txca.org/join, and select TMHCA as your division.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

86TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE ENDS MAY 27, 2019

TCA ADVOCACY DAYS AT THE CAPITAL: MARCH 19, APRIL 16, AND MAY 14 (REGISTER AT WWW.TXCA.ORG)

AMHCA CONFERENCE

JUNE 26 – 28, 2019

HERNDON, VIRGINIA

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PROFESSIONAL GROWTH CONFERENCE

FORT WORTH, TX

NOVEMBER 13-16, 2019

***PRE-REGISTRATION IS OPEN THROUGH JUNE 30, 2019**

HB 1501 – Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council

On Wednesday, March 13, 2019, Elizabeth Dossman (President of Capitol of Texas Counseling Association) and Jan Friese, Executive Director of TCA, testified during the legislative session. They spoke on behalf of support for House Bill 1501, which establishes authority for mental health counseling licensing boards. HB 1501 also establishes the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (BHEC).

While HB 1501 is supported by TCA, licensed counselors, marriage and family therapists, and licensed social workers, psychologists strongly oppose the bill and do not want to be part of BHEC. Their strong opposition was evidenced at the hearing despite testimonies in support of the bill.

As of now, the bill remains pending. As stated in the TCA Legislative Update from the week of March 15, TCA is working with some of the divisions, as well as the Texas division of the National Association for Social Workers, to clarify - with the bill sponsor - what it would look like for each board to maintain autonomy as part of BHEC.

If you have not read the bill in its entirety, we recommend everyone familiarize themselves with the provisions. You can go to this link and click to read either a pdf or Word document copy:

https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=HB1501

TMHCA LEADERSHIP

President: Tara Warner

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Secretary: Carolyn Burleson

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TCA Senator: Barry Blackmon

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Board Member: James Smith

Board Member: Kim Hatley

Board Member: Susan Stahlman

Board Member: Rebecca Smith

Past President: Joanne Christian

Emerging Leader: Rachel Mickelson

NEW LPC BOARD RULES

If you attended the TCA Conference in Dallas in November, you may have heard the LPC Board discuss the proposed rules in the content session. The TMHCA luncheon speaker also spoke about the various changes.

Since the conference, the Texas State Board of Professional Examiners for Counselors adopted the rules with an effective date of February 28, 2019. As indicated on TCA's Facebook page, the association is reviewing the final version as some changes were made from what was originally published on October 12, 2018.

The new rules are not live on TSBPEC's website at this time, but your TMHCA Board encourages everyone to review a copy of the changes online which is possible at this link, which summarizes the changes:

https://www.sos.state.tx.us/texreg/archive/February222019/Adopted%20Rules/22.EXAMINING%20BOARDS.html#50

You can also monitor the LPC website as an ongoing resource for materials and meeting dates:

https://www.dshs.texas.gov/counselor/

https://www.dshs.texas.gov/counselor/lpc_meetings.shtm

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AMHCA HIGHLIGHTS

The American Mental Health Counselors Association is the national extension of TMHCA. Several of our members are active in the organization. The AMHCA Conference is June 26 – 28, 2019 in Herndon, Virginia, which is close to the Washington, D. C. area. Registration is now open at www.amhca.org. Multiple CE opportunities are available at the conference. This year, the AMHCA secured a lower hotel rate and added more amenities to hopefully allow more people to attend the conference.

AMHCA publishes The Advocate Magazine, which is sent quarterly to members, and contains useful information on best practices, self-care, and other topics relevant to mental health. The winter edition was released to members this week. They have a wealth of information online, including access to previous issues of the magazine, the Clinical Mental Health Counselor's Declaration of Fundamental Values, and discussion on current trends and issues in mental health. You can also join the AMHCA list serv, where topics are discussed informally among professionals.

Nominations for professionals or state chapters are open for the 2018-2019 AMHCA Awards. The nominations are due online by April 30, 2019. You can submit a nomination form at www.amhca.org/about/awards.

As this newsletter remains in the developmental stage, what else would is beneficial to include? We would love to hear from you.

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