



STATE OF ARIZONA  
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGIST EXAMINERS  
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KATIE HOBBS  
Governor

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Executive Director

## Committee on Behavior Analysts

### REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

March 31, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.  
Held via Zoom

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Byra, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

##### Committee Members Present

Kristen Byra, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Chair  
Bryan Davey, Ph.D., BCBA-D.  
Paige Raetz, Ph.D., BCBA-D  
Donald Stenhoff, Ph.D., BCBA-D

##### Staff Present

Heidi Herbst Paakkonen, Executive Director  
Jennifer Michaelson, Deputy Director  
Zakiya Mallas, Licensing Specialist

A quorum of the Committee was confirmed.

#### 3. REMARKS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **General Committee Remarks, Announcements and Updates**

Dr. Byra thanked the members for volunteering their time, not just to attend the meeting, but for all the time required to review the applications and the complaints. She also thanked Board staff noting that without them, the meeting would not be possible.

- **Continuing Education Credit for Maintenance of BACB Certification**

Dr. Byra announced that the Board of Psychologist Examiners is approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) as an ACE continuing education provider. To claim credit, attendees are to make note of the code words provided hourly throughout the meeting. A code word reporting form is posted on the Board's Meetings page. She also noted that CE credits will be entered and validated by Board staff to licensees' CE Broker accounts.

#### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 28, 2025 Regular Session Minutes
- February 28, 2025 Executive Session Minutes

**MOTION:** Dr. Stenhoff moved to approve both sets of the February 28, 2025 draft minutes. Dr. Davey seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

**5. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD FOR COMPLAINT NO. 25-12 AGAINST JOANNA BURNETT, M.A.**

Dr. Byra provided an overview of the Committee's complaint review process. Dr. Davey summarized the complaint against Joanna Burnett who was granted licensure in 2023. He noted she was the sole BCBA at the agency called Charlie's House, but in July of 2024, citing various reasons, Ms. Burnett resigned with her last day intended to be August 30, 2024.

On August 8, 2024 Charlie's House decided to close, informing families that on August 20, 2025 services would end. Dr. Davey observed Ms. Burnett then elected to expedite her resignation to be effective immediately. Parents, including the complainant, alleged that Ms. Burnett abruptly terminated services without adequate notice or a transition plan, effectively abandoning her approximately seven clients who were informed by email of the service termination around the same time as Ms. Burnett's departure. Dr. Davey stated the purpose of the complaint review is to probe the reasons for Ms. Burnett's departure, the transition planning (or lack thereof), and the timeline of events.

Ms. Burnett was present for the review, and was not represented by an attorney. She apologized for her sudden departure, stating it was due to a lack of support and concerning circumstances at Charlie's House. She acknowledged that she could have sought consultation regarding her concerns. She explained that she initially gave ample notice hoping the agency could find a replacement for her, however, she was asked by the owner to remain. Later, she was verbally told the agency found a replacement starting August 16, 2024, but shortly thereafter she learned the clinic would close. Ms. Burnett stated the owner then asked her to work remotely, which made her uncomfortable due to the operations director's lack of ABA background and inappropriate influence. Ms. Burnett also mentioned concerns about an RBT being paid and using PTO to babysit a client, and the termination of a staff member who raised concerns about care quality. She explained these issues led to her decision to take an earlier departure.

With respect to the transition, Ms. Burnett noted she provided parents with a list of other ABA therapy resources in a July 26, 2024 email, stating the agency was actively seeking her replacement. However, she admitted she did not directly coordinate care with these external providers as she believed her replacement would be found and the agency would remain open when she sent the initial referral list. After learning of the closure on August 8, 2024 and being asked to work remotely, she commented that she continued some parent training but did not further coordinate transitions. She stated she had hoped parents found other services. She confirmed she did not create specific transition plans beyond the general information in the initial treatment plans for her seven clients.

The committee discussed Ms. Burnett's supervision experience, her outreach efforts to seek guidance from a former supervisor, and her self-reporting of this matter to the BACB. It was noted Ms. Burnett did not recommend her new part-time employer to families due to uncertainty about it being appropriate.

**MOTION:** Dr. Byra moved to meet in Executive Session to receive legal advice. Dr. Davey seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

The Committee met in Executive Session from 9:03 a.m. to 9:08 a.m.

Upon resuming the meeting in public session, the committee deliberated whether the lack of client transition planning and execution on the part of Ms. Burnett constituted a possible violation and whether disciplinary or non-disciplinary corrective action is appropriate. The members acknowledged Ms. Burnett as a novice behavior analyst, and the difficult circumstances she had to navigate.

**MOTION:** Dr. Davey moved to recommend to the Board issue a non-disciplinary Letter of Concern and a non-disciplinary order for completing continuing education as a resolution of complaint 25-12. The motion included the provision that three continuing education courses be completed, focused on the topics of

collaborating with colleagues in the best interest of clients and stakeholders, addressing conflicts by compromising when possible, and always prioritizing the best interest of the client. The courses cannot be used for license renewal. Dr. Stenhoff seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** The committee members acknowledged the lack of clear evidence of harm to the complainant and emphasized the educational aspect for Ms. Burnett and the broader professional community.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

**6. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RACHEL VARGAS' SELF-REPORT OF BACB ACTION AND INITIAL APPLICATION DISCLOSURE –**

Dr. Raetz summarized the matter, noting that Ms. Vargas received her license in January 2024 and in early March self-reported to the Board a recent notice of violation from the BACB that had been adjudicated with non-disciplinary action. Dr. Raetz commented this raises questions, particularly regarding supervision practices.

**MOTION:** Dr. Byra moved to meet in Executive Session to receive legal advice. Dr. Davey seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

The Committee met in Executive Session from 9:34 a.m. to 9:39 a.m.

Upon resuming the meeting in public session, Ms. Vargas and her attorney, Lauren Weinsweig, were present for the review. The committee questioned Ms. Vargas about her supervision role between October 2023 and January 2024. She stated that while her job title was "supervising BCBA," she did not supervise any RBTs before becoming licensed in January 2024. She explained her duties involved suggesting program modifications under the supervision of a licensed behavior analyst. She confirmed she participated in weekly case consultations and overlaps with her supervisor, working under her extended authority.

The committee also inquired about the BACB's adjudication requirements, including participating in a mentorship arrangement of two hours per month for six months, the completion of an original permanent product, and repeating the eight-hour supervision training. Ms. Vargas confirmed she has secured a mentor and will begin very soon. She explained she is searching for the courses to complete by the BACB's April 19, 2025 deadline. She noted the permanent product has no specific deadline but she intends to complete it with her mentor.

Additional clarification from the Committee was sought regarding Ms. Vargas's with Centria as a "supervising BCBA." Ms. Vargas reiterated that this was her title, but her role involved suggesting program changes under supervision, not independently acting as a BCBA or supervising RBTs. She confirmed having a supervision contract and tracking her supervision hours, which met the minimum 5% requirement; the tracker included descriptions of the supervision meetings.

**MOTION:** Dr. Raetz moved to meet in Executive Session to receive legal advice. Dr. Stenhoff seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

The Committee met in Executive Session from 9:50 a.m. to 9:56 a.m.

The committee deliberated whether to open a complaint to further investigate Ms. Vargas' supervision practices. The members acknowledged both the BACB's finding of a violation, and the need for more information.

**MOTION:** Dr. Stenhoff moved to recommend to the Board that a complaint be opened against Rachel Vargas to investigate the supervision she provided to the RBT named in the BACB report. Dr. Raetz seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** The Committee advised Ms. Vargas to supply timely updates relative to her compliance with the corrective action imposed by the BACB.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

## **7. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD PERTAINING TO APPROVAL OF BEHAVIOR ANALYST APPLICANTS**

### **A. Behavior Analyst Applications for Licensure**

Dr. Byra issued some general reminders to applicants to continually update their contact information with the Board, and recommended applicants use a personal email address as using a work email address could result in lack of access to the licensing portal, and may result in a violation for failure to maintain current contact information with the Board. She also stated that applicants are prohibited from allowing another person to complete and submit an application on their behalf as only the applicant can attest to the accuracy of that information.

Dr. Stenhoff disclosed for the record that the applicants listed at 6. and at 13. are his former students, but he is able to review and vote on their applications objectively. Dr. Davey disclosed for the record that the applicants listed at 8, 9, 16, 18, 24, 26 indicated on their application they are currently, or were previously, employed or received supervision at an organization where he is employed. He stated that, given his position and responsibilities, he does not know any of these individuals personally, nor was he involved in any of their clinical duties or practice and therefore is able to review and vote on their applications objectively.

#### **1. Matthew Hughes, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

#### **2. Alexandria Ririe, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

#### **3. Brandy Mamo, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

#### **4. Jessica Simpson, M.S.W.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

#### **5. Paula Maganong, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

#### **6. Larsen Angus, M.S.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**7. Bonnie Fortier, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**8. Emily Gunderson, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**9. Kelsey Kuniej, M.S.W.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**10. Abby Palmer, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**11. Simon Aspinall, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**12. Jazmine West, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**13. Elise Evans, M.S.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**14. Marissa Beck, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that not only was a former supervisor, David Kelton, not licensed in Arizona for most of the supervision period, Mr. Kelton's former supervisor, Melissa Sacchetta, was also unlicensed. The Committee directed Board staff to issue a FAIR to obtain additional information and clarification relative to this information to include evidence of having completed 1,500 hours of supervised experience that meets the requirements of Board statutes and rules.

**15. Olivia Myers, M.A.\***

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**16. Nicole Sorenson, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**17. Sara Scott, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**18. Allie Merrill, M.A.\***

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules with the exception of the fact that former supervisor Lauren Blair was not licensed in Arizona for a portion of the supervision period (August 7, 2023 to October 6, 2023). Additionally, Ms. Blair indicated on the supervised experience verification form she submitted that she is either a relative, subordinate, or employee of the applicant. The Committee directed Board staff to issue a FAIR to obtain additional information and clarification to include evidence of having completed 1,500 hours of supervised experience that meets the requirements of Board statutes and rules.

**19. Esmeralda Galvan, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**20. Jeana Simmons, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**21. Alicia Olivas, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**22. Yi-Hsuan Peng, M.Ed.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules, with the exception of the fact the applicant provided no employment history after June of 2022. The Committee directed Board staff to issue a FAIR to obtain additional information and clarification relative to the applicant's work history from June 2022 to the present.

**23. Chloe Meyers, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**24. Robyn Prestin, M.S.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**25. Chelsey Scally, M.A.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**26. Talia DeBrigida, M.S.**

The Committee proceeded with a substantive review of the application. Upon review, the Committee noted that the materials submitted were complete and fulfilled the requirements of statutes and rules. The Committee determined the application can be forwarded to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

**MOTION:** Dr. Davey moved to forward the following applications forward to the Board with the recommendation to approve as discussed during the substantive review: Matthew Hughes, M.A.; Alexandra Ririe, M.A.; Brandy Mamo, M.A.; Jessica Simpson, M.S.W.; Paula Maganong, M.A.; Larsen Angus, M.S.; Bonnie Fortier, M.A.; Emily Gunderson, M.A.; Kelsey Kuniej, M.S.W.; Abby Palmer, M.A.; Simon Aspinall, M.A.; Elise Evans, M.S.; Olivia Myers, M.A.\*; Nicole Sorenson, M.A.; Sara Scott, M.A.; Esmeralda Galvan, M.A.; Jeana Simmons, M.A.; Alicia Olivas, M.A.; Chloe Meyers, M.A.; Robyn Prestin, M.S.; Chelsey Scally, M.A.; Talia DeBrigida, M.S. The motion included the provision that FAIRs be issued to Marissa Beck, M.A.; Allie Merrill, M.A.\*; and Yi-Hsuan Peng, M.Ed. as discussed during the substantive review. Dr. Stenhoff seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

**B. Behavior Analyst Applications for Licensure by Universal Recognition**

**1. NA**

**C. Requesting Approval for Telehealth Registration (A.R.S. § 36-3606)**

**1. Raegan Gould, BCBA**

Dr. Stenhoff led the substantive review of the telehealth registration application submitted by Ms. Gould. In doing so he identified several issues with the application, including that it lacked any indication the applicant holds professional licensure in any other U.S. jurisdiction as required by the telehealth registration authorizing statute. He notes the application file reflects email correspondence in which Ms. Gould confirmed she is not licensed in any other state. Dr. Stenhoff noted the inconsistencies regarding Ms. Gould's residency given there are different addresses provided in the application materials, and the email address provided in the application appears to belong to someone else, raising concerns about Ms. Gould's direct involvement in the application process.

Ms. Gould was present and acknowledged the issues, stating she mistakenly provided incorrect information because she didn't realize the application required her personal information. She also admitted she is not licensed in any other state. She stated she was working with a company called Ideal Services, who gave her the incorrect information to supply in her application. She denied having provided any services into Arizona.

The committee discussed whether to allow Ms. Gould to withdraw her application, or to recommend a denial to the Board. Board staff explained that its policy allows for certain withdrawal requests to be considered and granted by the Executive Director, but concerns about the application's deficiencies, the address discrepancies, and what appears to be the use of a third-party email led staff to recommend Committee review.

The Committee discussion clarified that the telehealth registration authorization is for provision of direct client services only, and does not permit supervision of individuals seeking licensure, nor does it authorize for RBT supervision of service provision. The committee expressed concerns about the misrepresentation of licensure, and lack of compliance with Arizona's statutes.

**MOTION:** Dr. Stenhoff moved to forward a recommendation to the Board to deny the application. Dr. Davey seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved 4-0.

**\*First Formal Additional Information Request**

**\*\* Second Formal Additional Information Request**

## **8. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RECENT UPDATES FROM THE BEHAVIOR ANALYST CERTIFICATION BOARD (BACB)**

Ma. Paakkonen reported that the BACB has not recently issued any regulator-specific information, but since the Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA) meeting included discussions relevant to regulation, Drs. Raetz and Davey, were asked to share their insights having attended this meeting. The discussion focused on the BACB's recent decision to eliminate the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) continuing education requirement; members expressed concern with respect to public protection, noting that DEI education is essential for ethical and effective practice across diverse populations. The consensus reflected removing these requirements contradicts the field's commitment to culturally responsive services. Dr. Davey reported that the BACB's decision was partly motivated by a perceived threat to certification and to licensure, particularly following events in the State of Texas where there is a risk of DEI continuing education requirements undermining certification and licensure. Ms. Paakkonen advised the Committee that she will research and monitor any proposed legislation in Arizona that addresses DEI training that may impact the Committee and the Board's mandates.

Dr. Raetz reported the regulator's luncheon hosted by the BACB at the APBA meeting included an announcement that the BACB will be hosting webinars for regulators to connect and share information. Dr. Davey shared some trends in licensure across jurisdictions shared by the BACB, including the varying structures of behavior analyst boards and the growing number of states with reciprocity provisions for out-of-state licenses. Arizona's mature regulatory experience was acknowledged, and the Committee members and staff expressed their willingness to share their expertise with other regulators.

## **9. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING FY2025 EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION & PROPOSED LEGISLATION INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO: HB2027, HB2061, HB2173, HB2276, HB2351, HB2451, HB2632, SB1037 AND SB1235**

Ms. Paakkonen advised the Committee that she is tracking approximately 25 bills but already about half appear unlikely to pass. She commented that while only a small fraction of the bills being tracked are likely to be enacted, it is crucial to continue monitoring them. She noted that HB2173 which prohibits licensing authorities from including questions on applications about an applicant's mental health diagnosis and treatment history has been transmitted to the Governor who has a limited time to sign, veto, or take no action. She explained that, if enacted, this will compel the need to review and likely edit application questions to ensure compliance.

## **10. DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING SUGGESTED REVISIONS TO THE SUPERVISED WORK EXPERIENCE OR INDEPENDENT FIELDWORK VERIFICATION FORM**

This item was not addressed and will be placed on a future meeting agenda.

## **11. NEW AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Drs. Byra and Stenhoff agreed to work with Ms. Paakkonen to create a supplemental supervised experience verification form for additional supervision hours to be submitted in response to a FAIR. This will come back to the Committee on a future meeting agenda.

## **12. ADJOURN**

Dr. Byra announced the adjournment of the meeting at 12:01 p.m.