

# Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification & Licensure



## Newsletter



Summer 2007

A regulatory agency of the State of Tennessee

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227 French Landing, Suite 300, Heritage Place MetroCenter, Nashville, TN 37243 • <http://health.state.tn.us> (615) 532-5088 or 1-800-778-4123  
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Time (except State and Federal holidays) Fax: (615) 532-5369

In conjunction with the purpose and goals of the Department of Health, the Mission of the Bureau of Health Licensure and Regulation is to: Monitor, access and enforce health care laws and regulations; Protect, promote and enhance quality health care for all citizens; Continuously strive to meet the needs of our customers in a respectful and caring manner; Provide quality work-life necessary to attract and retain competent, caring employees; Empower our employees to become entrepreneurs in their jobs; Increase awareness and public confidence in our services; and, Utilize our resources efficiently and cost effectively.

### Susan R. Cooper, M.S.N., R.N. Commissioner Tennessee Department of Health

Susan R. Cooper, made Tennessee history on January 20, 2007 when she became the first nurse to serve as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Health.

Cooper later assumed leadership of Project Diabetes, a program the Governor created to address the threat of Type 2 diabetes facing young people in Tennessee. In addition, she helped facilitate the creation of the Governor's GetFitTN initiative. The statewide public awareness program is aimed at addressing the rising epidemic of Type 2 diabetes and risk factors that lead to diabetes, like obesity. The program involves educating adults and children how they can make modest lifestyle changes to delay or prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

Before joining state government, Cooper was a faculty member and Assistant Dean of Practice at Vanderbilt University's School of Nursing, overseeing the nurse-managed clinics and operations led by the School. She also served as co-director of the Health Systems Management program at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

Cooper has an extensive background in health policy, health care regulation, and evidence-based practice. She helped create the Center for Advanced Practice Nursing and Allied Health at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, covering the regulatory needs and credentialing for the hundreds of non-physician providers at Vanderbilt.

Cooper was born and raised in West Tennessee. Her father was an ophthalmologist and her mother was a nurse. One of the Commissioner's first jobs as a teenager was in her father's office in West Tennessee, checking in patients, and later performing routine vision checks.

The Commissioner currently resides in Franklin, Tennessee. She enjoys spending time with her three grown children and three grandchildren.

Commissioner Cooper is a master's prepared registered nurse. She earned both her bachelor and master of nursing degrees from Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

Cooper was raised in Tennessee, and considers it a great honor to have been asked by Governor Phil Bredesen to serve as Commissioner of Health. Her priorities are to protect, promote and improve the health of all Tennesseans. She considers this the most important work she will face in her career.

"Now is the time that I can perhaps influence the citizens of this state in a positive manner," said Cooper. "I hope to leave a footprint on the health status of this state."

Cooper first came to the state government in 2005, as a special policy and health advisor to the Governor. She was charged with developing Tennessee's Health Care Safety Net program for citizens facing disenrollment from TennCare.

## Cover Tennessee: Health Care for Tennessee's Uninsured

Governor Phil Bredesen's multi-pronged effort, **Cover Tennessee**, extends health insurance to uninsured individuals in Tennessee through three insurance programs and a pharmacy assistance program.

**CoverTN** is an affordable and portable health insurance initiative for working Tennesseans who are uninsured. Comprehensive coverage for children is provided through **CoverKids**, and chronically ill adults are eligible for **AccessTN**. **CoverRx** is a statewide pharmacy assistance program designed to assist those who have no pharmacy coverage, but have a critical need for medication.

**Cover Tennessee** provides health insurance coverage that is affordable to participants and affordable to the state.

More information on all **Cover Tennessee** programs is available at [www.CoverTN.gov](http://www.CoverTN.gov) or by calling 1-866-COVERTN.

### Overview of Programs

#### CoverTN

CoverTN is a partnership between the state, small businesses and self-employed individuals to provide coverage for the most needed medical services. CoverTN is a voluntary initiative for uninsured Tennesseans to obtain private insurance. The individual owns the plan, not the state or the company. To promote personal responsibility, premiums are based on weight, tobacco use and age – with an average monthly premium of \$50 for each payer.

CoverTN is affordable. The program features no deductibles and pricing is simple and straight-forward: \$20 co-payment for a doctor's office visit and \$10 for most prescription drugs. There is also coverage for hospitalization and other medical needs.

Enrollment is a two-step process. Once a business is confirmed as eligible, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, the program's insurer, sends out enrollment materials, and individuals have 90 days to make a decision.

#### CoverKids

CoverKids offers comprehensive health insurance coverage to uninsured children 18 years-old and younger, and maternity coverage for pregnant women with household incomes below 250 percent of the federal poverty level. Families above the income limit, who wish to purchase coverage for their child, can "buy in" to the program by paying monthly premiums. The coverage is similar to the benefits offered to dependents of state employees. BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee administers the program.

#### AccessTN

AccessTN provides comprehensive health insurance options to uninsurable Tennesseans. AccessTN, a high-risk pool, was created for persons with one of 55 specified medical conditions, or those who are unable to get insurance in the commercial market because of their health status. BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee administers the program.

#### CoverRx

CoverRx is a statewide pharmacy assistance program designed to assist those who have no pharmacy coverage, but have a critical need for medication. CoverRx is not health insurance. It provides up to five prescriptions per month. (Insulin and diabetic supplies will not count against the monthly limit.) Express Scripts administers the program.

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[www.covertn.gov](http://www.covertn.gov)  
1-866-COVERTN

### Moved Recently?

**Do not forget to notify the Board's administrative office when you have an address or telephone number change, within 30 days of the change.**



## Disciplinary Actions 2005 thru 2007

### **William Brent, Jr., CMSW – License No. 5947**

Fraud, deception, misrepresentation in practice: fraudulent, misleading or deceptive advertising; unprofessional or unethical conduct; and engaging in practice under a false or assumed name. License placed on probation for two (2) years. Must work under direct supervision and submit quarterly employer reports. Must complete 12 hours of continuing education in ethics, documentation and record keeping. Assessed \$1000.00 in civil penalties and court cost. Date of action: August 29, 2005

### **Michael Cockrum, CMSW – License No. 3693**

Unprofessional, dishonorable and/or unethical conduct, habitual intoxication, personal misuse of a drug and/or other substances which may adversely affect ability to practice. License placed on probation for three years. Must enter into and maintain a three year contract with the Tennessee Professional Assistance Program. Date of action: February 4, 2005.

### **Joan Sarabi, CMSW – License No. 3810**

#### **LCSW – License No. 3557**

Willful violation of rules and regulations; fraud, deception, misrepresentation in practice or dishonest or illegal practice; gross malpractice or a pattern of continued or repeated malpractice, negligence or incompetence; unprofessional, dishonorable, or unethical conduct; conviction of a felony; violation of code of ethics. Licensed revoked; assessed civil penalties in the amount of \$15,000.00; assessed case cost. Date of action: September 12, 2005.

### **Sabrina B. Lepkofker, LCSW – License No. 4028**

Fraud, deception, misrepresentation, dishonest, or illegal practices in or connected with the practice of social work; and unprofessional or unethical conduct, or engaging in practices in connection with the practice of social work that are in violation of the standards of professional conduct. License reprimanded with terms. Assessed \$5,000 in civil penalties and case cost. Date of action: February 16, 2007.

## Mandatory Release of Client Records

Upon request from a client or the client's authorized representative, certificate holders and licensees shall provide a complete copy of the client's record or summary or such records which were maintained by the L.C.S.W./C.M.S.W.

It shall be the certificate holders and licensees option as to whether copies of the records or a summary will be given to the client.

Requests for records shall be honored in a timely manner. The individual requesting the records shall be responsible for the payment of a reasonable fee for copying and mailing of the records.

## Rule Amendments

**Rule amendment 1365-1-.22** allows any social worker licensed in this or any other state who has not be disciplined by any licensure Board to receive a Tennessee "Special Volunteer License" to practice without pay and solely within a "Free Health Clinic" upon submitting the special volunteer license application, with any required documentation, to the Board's administrative office.

**Rule amendment 1365-1-.03(2)(a)(b)** allows persons who have a valid, unsuspended and unrevoked, license or certificate issued by the Board to use the title and/or acronym "Licensed Clinical Social Worker" and/or "Certified Master Social Worker" as defined in T.C.A. §§63-23-103 and 102. Violation of this rule or T.C.A. §§63-23-106 and/or 111, regarding use of titles, shall constitute unethical conduct and subject the licensee or certificate holder to disciplinary action.

**Rule amendment 1365-1-.19(9)** allowed the Board to adopt **Rule 1200-10-1-.13** of the Division of Health Related Boards and as it may from time to time be amended, as its rule governing the screening panel process.

You may download a copy of the rules at <http://Tennessee.gov/health>, click "licensing" at the top of the page, click "Health Professional Boards", cursor down to "Boards, Councils, Committees and Registry", click "Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure" and "Rules and Regulations." Other pertinent information can be downloaded at the Board's site such as applications and forms, Board member list, Board meeting schedule, policy statements, Board meeting minutes and information on filing complaints.

## 2007 Board Meeting Schedule

August 2-3, 2007 9:00 a.m.  
Poplar Room

November 1-2, 2007 9:00 a.m.  
Iris Room

## 2008 Board Meeting Schedule

February 7-8, 2008 9:00 a.m.  
Poplar Room

May 1-2, 2008 9:00 a.m.  
Poplar Room

August 7-8, 2008 9:00 a.m.  
Iris Room

November 6-7, 2008 9:00 a.m.  
Iris Room

All board meetings will be held at 227 French Landing, Suite 150, Heritage Place, MetroCenter, Nashville TN, unless otherwise noted.

## Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure

The Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure was created in 1984 by an act of the State Legislature. This Board is charged with the responsibilities of governing the practice of clinical social work, safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of Tennesseans by requiring that all who practice social work within this state be qualified. The Board interprets the laws, rules, and regulations to determine the appropriate standards of practice in an effort to ensure the highest degree of professional conduct. The Board is authorized to issue licenses and certificates to qualified candidates who have completed appropriate education and successfully completed required examinations. The Board is also responsible for the investigation of alleged violations of the Practice Act and rules, and is responsible for the discipline of licensees who are found guilty of such violations.

The administrative staff of the Division of Health Related Boards supports the Board by issuing licenses to those qualified candidates who have graduated from approved schools and who have completed appropriate post-graduate work. Social workers may be licensed or certified by either examination or endorsement from other states. Renewal notices are mailed from the Board's administrative office forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration of the license to the most current address on record. Licenses can be renewed on-line one-hundred-twenty (120) days prior to expiration at [www.tennessee.gov/health](http://www.tennessee.gov/health). Click the "Licensing Renewal" link where you can renew your license and update your professional license information. *Licensees are responsible for renewing their licenses on time and keeping the Board apprised of current information. It is a violation of the law and of the Board's rules to practice on an expired license.*

All members of the Board are appointed by the Governor and serve five (5) year terms. The seven (7) member Board consists of three (3) independent practitioners, one (1) consumer who is not directly or indirectly engaged in the social worker profession and three (3) certified master social workers. The Board meets as needed throughout the year. A quorum of four (4) members is required to conduct business. The meetings are open to the public.

**To contact this board call  
(615) 532-5088 local or (800) 778-4123 nationwide  
or write to:**

**Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure  
227 French Landing, Suite 300  
Heritage Place – MetroCenter  
Nashville, TN 37243**

## Policy Statement Licensees Working on an Expired License

The Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure realizes that an individual may unintentionally allow his/her license to expire. However, statute prohibits an individual from working as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker or Certified Master Social Worker unless he/she has an active license. Acknowledgement is given to the fact that this problem exists, however the Board does not overlook an individual working on an expired license. With this in mind, the Board has adopted the following procedures for reinstatement of an expired license:

1. Upon recognition that his/her license has expired, the individual must stop practicing immediately and contact the Board's administrative office and request a reinstatement application.

2. The individual must complete the reinstatement in its entirety along with a detailed work history from the date the license expired. The application must be signed and notarized and returned to the board's administrative office along with proof of documentation of continuing education requirements taken within the previous twelve (12) months, as well as all applicable fees.

3. Once the completed reinstatement application and all required documentation is received, the board administrator may immediately reinstate the license **only** if the license has been in an expired status for a period of three (3) months or less.

4. If the reinstatement application received indicates in the work history that the individual has worked more than three (3) months on an expired license, the licensee will be assessed a penalty in the amount of \$100 for each month worked in excess of the three (3) months from the expiration date of the license.

**This Policy Statement was adopted by the Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure on May 5, 2003.**





## Retirement and Reactivation of Certificate and License

A person who is not practicing, holds a current certificate or license and does not intend to practice in Tennessee, and who therefore, does not intend to use the title "Certified Master Social Worker" or "Licensed Clinical Social Worker" may apply to convert an active certificate and license to retired status and will not be required to pay the renewal fee.

- (a) Obtain from, complete, and submit to the Board's administrative office an affidavit of retirement form.
- (b) Submit any documentation which may be required by the form to the Board's administrative office.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR REINSTATEMENT:** The renewal, retirement, and reinstatement of a license is governed by the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure (Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-23-101 et seq.) and rules (Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1365-1).

**Reinstatement of an expired license (Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1365-1-.09(2), 1365-1-.12(7)(c):**

- (a) Payment of all past due renewal and state regulatory fees.
- (b) Payment of the renewal late fee.
- (c) Submission of continuing education documentation equal to the hours required had the license remained in an active status. The continuing education must have been begun and successfully completed within twelve (12) months immediately preceding the date of reinstatement.

**Reinstatement of a retired license (Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1365-1-.11(3), 1365-1-.12(7)(a):**

- (a) Payment of the current licensure renewal fee and state regulatory fee.
- (b) If the license was in retirement and reinstatement is requested prior to the expiration of one (1) year from the date of retirement, payment of the late renewal fee plus past due certification/licensure renewal fees.
- (c) Submission of continuing education documentation for a calendar year.

An applicant whose license has been retired for more than one year must submit fifteen (15) hours of continuing education which must have been begun and successfully completed within twelve (12) months immediately preceding the date of requested reinstatement.

Note: Certification and/or licensure reactivation applications shall be treated as new certification and or licensure applications and review and decisions shall be governed by **Rule 1365-1.07**.



## Basic Requirements for Continuing Education

Each social worker registered with the Board (C.M.S.W. and L.C.S.W.) is required to complete fifteen (15) clock hours of continuing education during each calendar year.

- (a) Ten (10) hours of the fifteen (15) clock hour requirements shall regard social work.
- (b) Three (3) hours of the fifteen (15) clock hour requirement shall regard professional ethics.
- (c) Two (2) hours of the fifteen (15) clock hour requirement may regard social work or professional ethics.
- (d) For a Certified Master Social Worker applications, successful completion of the educational requirements, pursuant to **Rule 1365-1-.04(1)(a)** shall be considered sufficient preparatory education to be substituted for the required hours of continuing education for the remainder of the calendar year in which the education requirements were completed.
- (e) Those persons who hold an active CMSW and LCSW authorization to practice must separately satisfy the continuing education requirements for each certificate or license they wish to renew with no duplication between the two.



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Tennessee Board of Social Worker  
Certification and Licensure  
227 French Landing, Suite 300  
Heritage Place MetroCenter  
Nashville, TN 37243



Renew faster by renewing online at <http://health.state.tn.us>

Report all address changes in writing within 30 days of the address change.

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**Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification and Licensure  
Board Members as of June 20, 2007**

Sheryl A. DeMott, CMSW  
Nashville

Beverly Esposito, LCSW  
Memphis  
Secretary

Vickie Fleming, CMSW  
Brentwood  
Chair

Teresa C. Housteau, LCSW  
Knoxville

Frances C. Mazzaferro, CMSW  
Antioch

Vacant  
Consumer

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**Board Staff**

Barbara Maxwell  
Administrative Director

James Hill  
Board Administrator

Michael Anderson  
Licensing Technician



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