



Tennessee Board of Communication Disorders and Sciences Meeting

Friday, August 29, 2025

MINUTES

The Board meeting of the Tennessee Communication Disorders and Sciences was called to order at - 10:00a.m. in the Iris Room, Ground Floor, Metro Center Complex, 665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37243 by Dr. Matthew Ward, Board Chair on Friday, August 29, 2025.

Board members present: Skye Jones, Audiologist, Board Secretary
 Matthew Ward, Board Chair
 Alicia Barker, Audiologist
 Kenneth Fletcher, MD
 Courtney Painter, Speech Pathologist

Board member(s) absent: Richard Morton, Citizen Member

Staff present: Candyce Wilson, Unit 1 Board Director
 Michael Varnell, JD, General Counsel
 Mario Douglas, Board Administrator

Dr. Matthew Ward called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. A roll call was conducted, and a quorum was confirmed.

CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

David Puckett: The applicant appeared before the Board in Executive Session. Following discussion, Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve a conditional Speech Language Pathology License for Mr. Puckett, pending completion of a TN Professional Assistance Program (TnPAP) evaluation and maintaining advocacy for any monitoring agreement recommended by TnPAP. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

RULEMAKING HEARING

Mr. Micheal Varnell allowed Board members to review the Economic Impact Statement and Regulatory Flexibility Analysis. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve the economic impact statement and regulatory flexibility analysis. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Mr. Varnell then called the rulemaking hearing to order and served as moderator. A roll call was conducted. The purpose of the hearing was to solicit comments regarding proposed amendments to Chapter 1370-01, Rules for Speech Pathology and Audiology. Mr. Varnell presented the proposed rule amendments. No public comment was received. Per Ms. Candyce Wilson, notice of the hearing was sent to all licensees of the Board of Communication Disorders and Sciences and to TAASLP. Amendments/changes were made to the following rules:

1370-01-.01, 1370-01-.02, 1370-01-.03, 1370-01-.04, 1370-01-.05, 1370-01-.15, 1370-01-.18, 1370-01-.19, and 1370-01-. 21. No additional comments were made by the Board. Ms. Alicia Barker motioned to approve the rule changes/amendments. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, A roll call vote was conducted by Ms. Wilson, and the motion carried unanimously.

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH LEGISLATIVE OFFICE 2025 UPDATE

This agenda item was deferred to the next scheduled Board meeting on October 31, 2025.

TAASLP UPDATE AND FEEDBACK ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

Representatives from the Tennessee Association of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (TAASLP) appeared virtually to provide updates and feedback regarding two key issues: (1) Clinical Fellowship licensees not being recognized as qualified providers by private payers, and (2) concerns related to the 48-hour evaluation requirement outlined in Senate Bill 1073 (SB1073).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The board reviewed the May 16, 2025, board meeting minutes. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve the minutes. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion, and it carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS

Olivia Gallimore: The applicant appeared before the Board to provide an explanation regarding the indication on her criminal background check. The Board reviewed all submitted materials. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve the application for licensure. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, and the motion carried

Patrick Cloward: Mr. Cloward failed to appear before the Board. Ms. Alicia Barker motioned to table/defer the matter until the next scheduled Board meeting on October 31, 2025, with the understanding that the file will be closed if the applicant fails to appear at that time. Ms. Skye Jones seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

Ms. Candyce Wilson presented the current complaints report for the Board. Year-to-date, there have been 11 new complaints: 8 related to *unprofessional conduct* and 3 for *lapsed licenses*.

A total of 10 complaints have been closed: 4 closed, 2 resulted in *letters of warning*, 1 resulted in a *letter of concern*, and 2 were closed due to *insufficient evidence*. There are no current open complaints. The Board had no questions.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REPORT

Mr. Mario Douglas, Board Administrator, presented the statistical licensing report as of August 28, 2025. The Board currently has 597 actively licensed Audiologists, 4,166 Speech Pathologists, and 193 Speech-Language Pathology Assistants. Audiologists: 22 newly licensed, 5 expired, 64 renewed (52 online), and 5 newly registered Audiology Clinical Externs. Speech-Language Pathologists: 135 newly licensed, 9 retired, 20 expired, 555 renewed (487 online), and 18 reinstated; 146 newly registered Clinical Fellows. Speech-Language Pathology Assistants: 21 newly registered, 1 expired, 1 retired, and 14 renewed (11 online). Upcoming Board meetings are scheduled for October 31, 2025; February 24, 2026; May 15, 2026; August 25, 2026; and November 4, 2026. The Board had no questions.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Mr. Michael Varnell reviewed the conflict-of-interest Policy.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

Mr. Varnell provided an update on the following rules:

- Hearing Instrument Rule Repeal – Rule 1370-02-.03
Mr. Micheal Varnell reported that the repeal of Rule 1370-02-.03 became effective on August 21, 2025.
- Communication Disorders and Sciences Rule Project #23-0757
Mr. Varnell provided an update regarding Rule Project #23-0757, which proposes amendments allowing Speech-Language Pathologists and Clinical Fellows additional time to complete their clinical fellowship, a requirement for full licensure.
A Rulemaking Hearing for this project was held during the January 31, 2025, Board meeting. The rule has been approved by the Attorney General’s Office and is currently pending publication with the Secretary of State. The Government Operations Committee of the General Assembly reviewed the rule on June 18, 2025, and stayed the effective date for 90 days, extending implementation until October 18, 2025.
- Communication Disorders and Sciences Rule Project #24-0356
Mr. Varnell also discussed Rule Project #24-0356, concerning retrospective rule changes previously approved by the Board at its May 2024 meeting. A Rulemaking Hearing regarding this project was held earlier in this meeting.

There is currently one (1) licensee being monitored for discipline. One (1) Speech Pathologist licensee currently revoked/surrendered.

Mr. Micheal Varnell provided an update regarding legislation passed under Public Chapter 127 (Disciplinary Panels). This legislation authorizes all health-related boards to divide into panels of three (3) members to conduct disciplinary hearings, including Contested Case and Summary Suspension proceedings. Dr. Matthew Ward motioned to approve the use of Public Chapter 127 (Disciplinary Panels)

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Board held no discussion on this agenda item

CONDUCT NEW BUSINESS

Ratification of New Licensees

The Board reviewed the list of newly licensed and reinstated Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists since the last Board meeting. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to ratify all names on the ratification list. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

The Board also reviewed the list of newly licensed Hearing Instrument Specialists since the last Board meeting. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to ratify all names on the ratification list. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Correspondence

Addressed during TAASLP update and feedback on Legislative Matters.

ASLP Compact Update

Ms. Alicia Barker indicated that a new ASLP-IC Delegate should be considered. Ms. Candyce Wilson clarified that the delegate must be a current Board member, noting that while she currently serves as the alternate delegate, she cannot serve as the Compact Commissioner because she is not a Board member. Ms. Skye Jones motioned for Ms. Courtney Painter to serve as the Speech-Language Pathology Compact Delegate for Tennessee. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Ms. Wilson further reported that Compact Connect for Tennessee is still in development, with a tentative go-live date in the fall.

Discuss and act, if needed regarding rulemaking, hearings, rule amendments and policies

Ms. Candyce Wilson indicated that the current Continuing Education Policy should be updated to align with the current rule, which states: All Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists must complete twenty (20) hours of continuing education during the two calendar years (January 1 – December 31) that precede the licensure renewal year.” The existing policy currently reads: “The Tennessee Board of Communication Disorders and Sciences requires all Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists to successfully complete a minimum of ten (10) hours of continuing education during each calendar year (January 1 – December 31).” Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve the proposed policy change to align with the rule. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Discuss legislation and consider any action, as needed

The Board held no discussion on this agenda item

Discuss and consider approval for attendance to upcoming conference(s), as needed

The Board held no discussion on this agenda item

Disciplinary Order(s)

Ms. Candyce Wilson, Unit 1 Board Director, presented the Agreed Citation for Jennifer McVey, SLP License #2175. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to ratify the Agreed Citation for Jennifer Mevey. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board held no discussion on this agenda item

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Skye Jones motioned to adjourn. Ms. Courtney Painter seconded the motion, and it carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 CT.