



# Board of Licensed Social Workers (BLSW) Licensing Update

**House Interim Committee on  
Behavioral Health and Health Care**

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# Board of Licensed Social Workers (BLSW)

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## **Raymond Miller**

Executive Director

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# BLSW Mission

- The mission of the BLSW is to “**protect the citizens of Oregon through the licensing and regulation of social workers.**”



# Public protection takes two forms:

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- Establishes **standards of competency** and issues professional licenses to those who meet standards.
  - Education, experience and background
- Holds license holders **accountable**.
  - Application and renewal process, and public complaints

# BLSW Overview - Board

- Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate
  - 3 licensed clinical social workers holding a full, clinical license – LCSW
  - 1 social worker holding limited clinical or non-clinical license – either CSWA / RBSW / LMSW
  - 3 public members – not social workers or related to a social worker

## BOARD MEMBERS

- **Stephanie Manriquez**, Public Member, Board Chair
- **Amy Ashton-Williams**, LCSW, Vice Chair
- **Mollie Janssen**, LCSW, CPC Chair
- **John Fant**, Public Member
- **Paddy Farr**, LCSW Position
- **\*\*Vacant\*\***, CSWA, LMSW or RBSW Position
- **\*\*Vacant\*\***, Public Member

# BLSW Overview - Staff

- Board Staff – 9 Positions
  - 5 that work in Licensing
  - 3 in Compliance
  - 1 Director

## BOARD STAFF

- **Ray Miller**, Executive Director
- **Kim Coleman**, Licensing Manager
- **Wende Thatcher**, Licensing Compliance Specialist
- **Angela Goodpaster**, Licensing Assistant
- **Cassie Kanaeholo**, Licensing Assistant (part-time)
- **Noelle Johnson**, Office Specialist (full-time, limited duration)
- **Mindy Tucker**, Sr. Compliance Specialist, Investigations
- **Troy Clinton**, Investigator
- **Abe Dedek**, Investigator

# BLSW Overview – License Types

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## Four License Types – 9,083 regulated Social Workers

### ■ Clinical licenses (mandatory)

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) ~6,700
- Clinical Social Work Associate (CSWA) ~2,000

### ■ Non-clinical licenses (voluntary)

- Licensed Masters Social Worker (LMSW) ~350
- Registered Baccalaureate Social Worker (RBSW) ~30

# Budget Drivers

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- Fee-based, “Other Funded” agency, this means all the Boards functions are financed by licensee fees.
- Revenues driven by number of new and existing licensees.
- Costs continue to increase – personnel, legal, general government.



# Initial and Renewal License Fees

## – late fees

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- LCSW Initial License - \$460 for two years
  - Renewal \$286 for two years, \$200 late fee
- CSWA Initial License - \$260 for one year
  - Renewal \$66 for one year, \$50 late fee
- LMSW Initial License - \$200 for two years
  - Renewal \$220 for two years, \$50 late fee
- RBSW Initial License - \$150 for two years
  - Renewal \$110 for two years, \$50 late fee

# Customer Service 2022 - 2023

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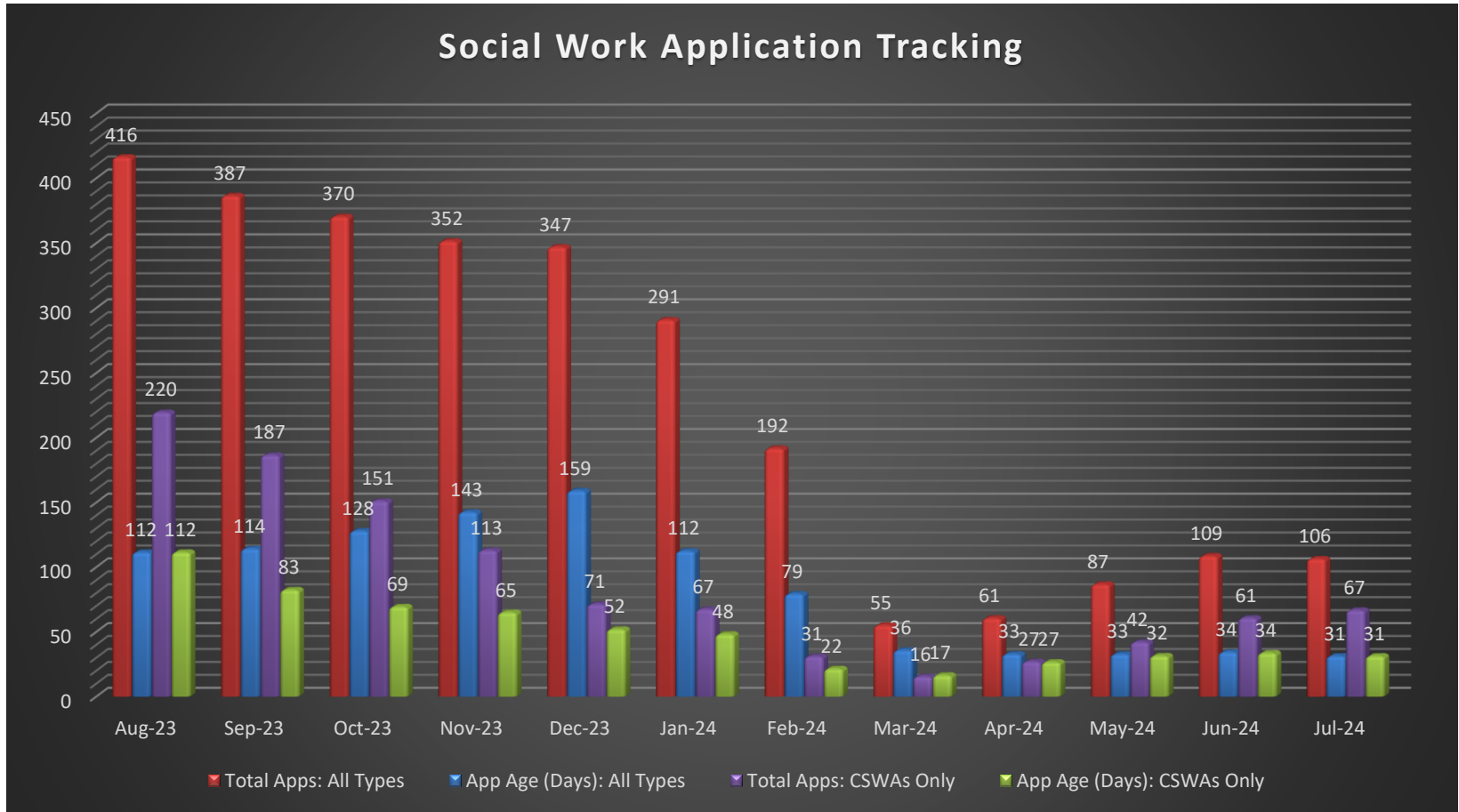
- Application processing times were 2 months on average with some applications waiting 6 months.
- 44% of phone calls were answered. 72 hour response time to voicemails or no response.
- 64% email response times. 3+ business day email response times.

# Customer Service – What we did

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- All applications and renewals processed using an online Licensing System
- Processing time for all application types is now 30 calendar days
- 80% of all renewals are instantaneous. 20% are audited with immediate notification
- 80% of all phone calls are answered immediately. Most voicemails are returned within 24 hours
- Most emails are answered within 24 – 48 hours, depending on the complication of the request

# Customer Service - Progress



# Customer Service – How we did it

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- Hired 1 additional staff
- Authorized overtime
- Prioritized CSWA applications
- Fast tracked certain applications
- Triaged all applications – no updates
- Assigned metrics to each body of work
- TEAMWORK – those closest to the work lead the improvements

# BLSW Challenges and Opportunities

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- BLSW has requested 1 additional FTE to meet current Licensee demands.
- BLSW is currently in need of a Licensing System upgrade to meet current and future Licensee demands.

# BLSW Licensing Details

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- BLSW has a CSWA temporary license process. This process is outdated and the problem it was designed to solve has been corrected. BLSW currently processes regular CSWA applications in the same time as the temporary license: 30 days.
- Most out of state licensees are processed within 30 days with very few exceptions. Out of state licensee requirements are almost identical to in state requirements. BLSW treats substantially equivalent out of state experience the same as in state experience.
- BLSW Suspended 0 licenses last year and revoked 1

# Compacts / Reciprocity

- All Compacts are different. No one size fits all.
- Proposed Licensure Compact from short session had some implementation challenges:
  - Constitutional conflicts regarding liability and delegation of authority
  - Statutory conflicts regarding background checks and maintaining the protection of gender affirming and reproductive health care shield laws
  - No funding component – Would require increase in fees. Could bankrupt Board.
- And Public protection concerns:
  - Would reduce BLSW Competency Standards resulting in concerns over quality of care and more complaints.
  - Multistate licensee may be sanctioned for violating Oregon law, but continue to practice freely in their home state with no ability to enforce those sanctions.
- BLSW is investigating reciprocity with neighboring states.



# Questions

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