
THE EXAMINER

The Newsletter of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors

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LPC Board Announces Revised Newsletter Format and Distribution

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors recently approved changes to the format and method of distribution of *The Examiner*. These changes are in keeping with the board's ongoing efforts to control costs, while maintaining a high level of customer service. The new format is effective as of this issue. *The Examiner* will be issued once annually in September and will be distributed via insertion with the annual license renewal notices that are mailed by birth month to professional counselors. A new issue will be prepared each September, after the completion of the one-year cycle during which all LPCs will have received the newsletter with the annual license renewal notice. *The Examiner* will also be inserted in all routine office mailings, including correspondence, application packets, complaint packets, new regular licenses, and new temporary licenses. Additionally, each issue will be posted on the board's web site in PDF format and as a downloadable Word document.

The content of *The Examiner* will include general interest information. In-depth information and articles regarding the board's rules, practice issues, and other necessary communications will be posted to the board's web site as the information is developed. The board urges all professional counselors to bookmark and frequently review its web site for current information of interest to all licensees. Please review the next article for details on the newly redesigned web site. The board welcomes your comments and suggestions concerning these changes.

Web Site Has New Look and Content

www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/plc/lpc.htm

The board's staff, in cooperation with technical staff of the Texas Department of Health, recently completed a revised design and format for the board's web site. All existing content was reviewed and revised for clarity and accuracy. Additional information was added to the site based on comments from licensees and stakeholders, as well as staff recommendations. One of the most exciting new features is the *Resources for LPCs Page*, which includes links to many Texas laws and statutes related to the practice of professional counselors. Other existing or planned improvements include options to view or print the LPC law and rules in sections or in their entirety, expanded links related to counseling, additional board meeting information, and additional application and examination information for prospective LPCs. The board staff is always interested in hearing your suggestions for improvements to the web site, so be sure to send an e-mail with your feedback. We hope you visit the site soon and find it to be a useful resource.

LPC Board Conducts Comprehensive Rule Review

Every four years, Texas law (Government Code, Chapter 2001.039) requires each state agency to review each of its rules and consider whether the rule should be readopted, readopted with amendments, or repealed. This review must include an assessment of whether the reasons for initially adopting each rule continue to exist. The board's rule review must be completed by August 31, 2003. The Rules Committee of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors and the board's staff began the arduous task of reviewing rules during committee meetings in the spring and summer of 2002. Committee recommendations will be presented to the board for initial action at the December 2002 meeting and for final action at the Spring 2003 meeting. Current information concerning the steps in the rule review process will be posted to the board's web site beginning in December 2002.

How to Locate, Search, View, and Print any Texas Law or State Agency Rule

The advent of the Internet has significantly improved access to state laws and agency rules. A wealth of up-to-date information has been placed on the State of Texas web site, including the ability to locate, search, view, and obtain printed copies of all Texas laws and state agency rules.

1. Go to www.state.tx.us
2. Select the link entitled "Government" on the left side of the page.
3. Select the link entitled "Law, Codes, and Statutes"

For state laws, select the link entitled "Texas Statutes"

- Use the site's "Search" feature to search the statutes for keywords or phrases. Once you locate a page with your keyword, use your web browser's "Find" feature to quickly locate the keyword on the page.
- Scroll through the Table of Contents to view specific laws. Texas laws are organized into "codes", which are broad categories of law relating to a particular topic. For example, laws establishing the regulation of health, allied health, and mental health professionals, including professional counselors, are found in the Occupations Code.
- Use your web browser's "Print" feature to print information.

For state agency rules, follow steps 1-3 above and then select the link entitled "Texas Administrative Code"

- Use the site's "Search" feature to search the statutes for keywords or phrases. Once you locate a page with your keyword, use your web browser's "Find" feature to quickly locate the keyword on the page.
- To view or print agency rules, select the link on the right side of the page entitled "TAC Viewer"
- Scroll through the Table of Contents to view agency rules and follow links as you go. Texas agency rules are organized into "titles", which are broad categories of agency rules relating to a particular topic. For example, rules of regulatory boards of allied and mental health professionals, including professional counselors, are found in Title 22, Examining Boards.
- After you have selected the appropriate title, scroll through the secondary Table of Contents to select the state agency you are seeking. After making the appropriate agency selection, select the chapter number assigned to the agency for a Table of Contents of the agency's rules. Rules are organized into subchapters and sections, each with clickable links.
- Use your web browser's "Print" feature to print information.

How to Renew an LPC License

Your annual license renewal notice is mailed to the address on file approximately six weeks prior to the date of license expiration. Upon receipt, complete the license renewal coupon and continuing education information on the reverse of the coupon. Remit to the P. O. Box address listed on the coupon with the appropriate license renewal fee. Allow approximately three weeks after the date you mail your fee for processing of your new renewal card. Unsigned checks, mail sent to an incorrect address, and failure to complete the continuing education statement are common examples of factors that may significantly delay license renewal processing. For more information regarding license renewal, refer to Subchapter I of the board's rules or contact a license renewal specialist at the board office.

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