

Guam Board of Allied Health Examiners
Regular Board Meeting
Friday, September 5, 2025 at 12:00 PM
194 Hernan Cortez Ave. Terlaje Professional Building Ste 213
Hagatna, Guam 96910-5052
Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81390351167?pwd=tt2gtLWMbV4ANSUf2ANZlZPhRjbpgX.1>
Meeting ID: 813 9035 1167
Passcode: 931109

MINUTES

Item	Discussion	Responsible Party	Reporting Timeframe	Status
I	Call to Order	Chair	1201	Call to Order
	Proof of Publication	Chair	1203	Confirmed
	Roll Call GBAHE Members <u>Present:</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vince Pereda, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Vice-Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosalind S. Taitingfong, Occupational Therapist, Treasurer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gregory J. Cruz, Respiratory Therapist <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Dennis Triolo, Audiology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catherine San Nicolas, Clinical Dietitian <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Velma R. Harper, Veterinarian <u>Virtually Present:</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Mamie Balajadia, Clinical Psychology, Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nadine Cepeda, LPC, LMHC, LMFT, Secretary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Richard Chong, ACOM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Gregory Miller, Chiropractic Other Attendees <u>Present at HPLO:</u> Baltazar Hattori III, DPHSS/HPLO Kaysie Lee, DPHSS/HPLO Don RJ Sulat, DPHSS/HPLO Jolene Toves, Guam Daily Post April Millss, Public Member Uriah Aguon, Guam PDN Hiroshi Ishli-Adajar, Public Member Chisa Tillman, Office of the Attorney General	Chair	1202	Quorum Established
II	Adoption of Agenda	GBAHE	1204	Unanimously Adopted Agenda
III	Approval of Minutes	GBAHE	1204	Unanimously Approved as Amended
IV	Treasurer's Report	R. Taitingfong	1206	Noted
V	Administrator's Report		1220	
	A. Bills Lapsed into Law i. Public Law 38-42 (Bill No. 56-38)			Noted

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	Transfers oversight of Podiatrists to the Guam Board of Medical Examiners			
	<p>ii. Public Law 38-43 (Bill No. 123-38) Transfers oversight of Physician Assistants to the Guam Board of Medical Examiners B. Hattori reported that Bill 56-38 and Bill 123-38, have both lapsed into law and are now effective as of August 18, 2025. As a result, administrative efforts by the HPLO team are underway to transition all relevant data, applications, and fee schedules from the Allied Health Board to the Medical Board. This legislative change means the Allied Health Board is losing two members—Mr. R. Tajalle and Dr. Kim—who will now represent their respective professions under the Medical Board. In light of these changes, clarification was provided that the quorum requirement for the Allied Health Board will adjust to reflect the current number of filled seats, now reduced to eight, making a quorum five members. Additionally, it was noted that the board is still awaiting confirmation for two new appointments—a physical therapist and a speech-language pathologist—with HPLO committed to following up with the governor’s office to address these vacancies.</p>			Ongoing, Follow up with Governor’s Office
	<p>iii. Public Law 38-49 (Bill No. 100-38) Bill 100-38, which has lapsed into law, introduces a new continuing education requirement for several health professions regulated by the HPLO. The law, introduced by Senator Perez, mandates that licensees complete continuing education credits in early childhood development and literacy. Although the law is now in effect, it remains broad and lacks specifics regarding the number of required credit hours or how these credits must be obtained. The primary responsibility for implementation will fall under the Division of Children’s Wellness (DCW) within DPHSS, which plans to work with the UOG and GCC to offer standardized training.</p> <p>The HPLO is currently in the early stages of developing a structured plan in coordination with DCW to clarify how the requirement will be applied and to ensure consistency across all affected boards, including those for physicians, nurses, dentists, and pharmacists. It was noted that the training would likely be similar in format to the ethics courses already required for board members and is expected to be made available virtually for accessibility.</p> <p>Concerns were raised by Dr. Miller regarding flexibility and accessibility, particularly for licensees with demanding schedules or who frequently travel. Suggestions were made to allow alternative sources for fulfilling the requirement beyond government-provided courses. The board emphasized the importance of minimizing barriers to compliance and expressed a preference for a manageable approach—potentially requiring as little as one CE hour initially, pending further board discussion.</p> <p>Professionals directly affected under the Allied Health Board include audiologists, clinical psychologists, licensed professional counselors, licensed mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, speech-language pathologists, respiratory therapists, dietitians, and</p>	B. Hattori		Noted

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		<p>nutritionists. Notably, acupuncturists are not included under the current scope of the bill. The requirement will be added as a new section to the respective practice acts of each affected profession, aligning with DPHSS regulations.</p> <p>The board agreed to form a work group to collaborate with HPLO on implementing the new mandate, including determining the number of hours required and identifying approved training sources. Dr. Balajadia mentioned the timeline for enforcement, particularly whether the requirement would apply to the upcoming renewal cycle in December 2026 or 2027. Since the law does not specify an implementation deadline, the board plans to engage affected members and licensees to gather feedback and clarify timelines moving forward.</p>			
VI	GBAHE Complaints	A. GBAHE-CO-22-03 MFT Received 02/21/22 Complaint 2203 MFT is being referred to the Assistant Attorney General assigned to the board for further review. While no updates have been received at this time, Dr. Balajadia has agreed to follow the direction of B. Sablan on the matter, as legal counsel's guidance is being sought before proceeding further.	Dr. Balajadia	1221	Ongoing, Awaiting Leal Guidance
		B. GBAHE-CO-23-02 Veterinarian Received 12/28/23 Complaints 2302 and 2303 involved the procurement of an off-island consultant to assist with the investigation. However, no results from the consultant's report have been received at this time. Dr. Balajadia noted that the process required adherence to government procurement procedures, which introduced additional complexities and administrative burdens.	GBAHE		Ongoing, Awaiting Off-Island Consultant
		C. GBAHE-CO-23-03 Veterinarian Received 12/28/23	GBAHE		Ongoing, No Update
		D. GBAHE-CO-24-03 SLP Received 08/06/24 N. Cepeda, along with B. Sablan, has been working on a case that is long overdue and has developed preliminary recommendations, including potential sanctions. However, before presenting these recommendations to the board for a vote, she intends to consult both with B. Sablan and legal counsel from the Attorney General's office to ensure that the proposed actions fall within the board's legal authority. Further guidance is expected to be sought prior to the next hearing.	N. Cepeda		Ongoing, Further Guidance Needed
		E. GBAHE-CO-25-03 Acupuncture Received 03/28/25 Dr. Balajadia discussed the complaint involving the use of the title "doctor" by an individual with a doctorate in acupuncture and a master's degree. She explained that the HPLO administrator had consulted with the Assistant Attorney General, who advised that under current law, anyone holding a doctoral degree may legally use the title "doctor," regardless of the specific field. This issue had been the subject of an extended discussion in previous meetings concerning accreditation and the educational hours required to obtain a doctorate. Dr. Chong expressed concerns that a proper doctorate should involve completion of specific coursework and credit hours, emphasizing that holding a certification alone does not justify the use of the title. He indicated plans to conduct further research and provide additional input to the board. Dr. Balajadia suggested that Dr. Chong document these concerns to potentially	Dr. Balajadia		Ongoing, Pending Legal Guidance

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	<p>support legislative changes, as the current law permits the use of the title upon earning a doctorate. B. Hattori noted that Attorney Chisa Tillman, who had been working on the case, was present and available to provide legal advice. Dr. Balajadia welcomed her involvement and requested a written legal opinion to assist in addressing the issue. The board agreed to await the legal opinion from C. Tillman before proceeding, while acknowledging that, as it stands, the individual in question is legally entitled to use the title "doctor."</p> <p>Dr. Miller emphasized the importance of distinguishing between traditional PhD degrees and the increasing number of professional doctorate degrees in healthcare, such as the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, and Audiology. He cautioned the board against narrowly defining what constitutes a doctorate, as doing so could unintentionally exclude legitimate professional degrees that do not follow the same academic pathway as a PhD. Attorney Chisa Tillman acknowledged this concern, assuring the board that she would take such nuances into full consideration while preparing her legal opinion.</p> <p>Following this, Dr. Chong provided additional research findings, noting that legitimate Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine programs, such as those offered by Five Branches University, typically require around 1,280 instructional hours over a two-year period. In contrast, the institution attended by the individual in question—identified as GIC—offers a master's degree program with only 3,579 total hours and does not appear to include a distinct doctoral curriculum. Dr. Chong expressed concern that awarding the title "doctor" based solely on certification or insufficient academic preparation undermines the credibility of licensure and professional standards. He reiterated the need for caution and emphasized that only those who have undergone proper training and completed accredited doctoral coursework should be recognized as such.</p> <p>Dr. Balajadia acknowledged the points raised and reiterated the board's intention to work closely with the Assistant Attorney General to receive formal legal guidance before taking further action.</p>			
	<p>F. GBAHE-CO-25-04 CP Received 03/31/25</p> <p>R. Taitingfong reported to the board that the investigation into Complaint 2504 had been completed following interviews with both the complainant and the licensee. While the complaint raised numerous allegations, none of the issues cited were found to constitute violations of any applicable laws. Therefore, the recommendation was made to close the complaint with no disciplinary action.</p> <p>Although details of the complaint could not be disclosed due to confidentiality protocols, it was explained that the complaint involved claims of Open Government Law violations, abuse of power, harassment, and alleged misinterpretations of licensing regulations. The complainant, who was attempting to obtain licensure as an intern in multiple categories—specifically as an</p>	R. Taitingfong		Unanimously Dismissed

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		<p>LMHC, and LMFT—asserted that inconsistent interpretations of licensing laws hindered her progress and that a change had been made regarding who could supervise and sign off on her hours. However, the board clarified that the change in supervision requirements had already been implemented, with current regulations requiring five years of experience for master's-level supervisors and three years for those with a doctorate, such as psychiatrists or psychologists. Ultimately, it was emphasized that the complaint did not pertain to the licensee's professional practice and instead involved broader concerns about board governance, which falls under the jurisdiction of the governor rather than the board itself. For this reason, no disciplinary action was warranted.</p> <p>Dr. Miller questioned whether it was appropriate for the board, as the primary body receiving these complaints, to be excluded from understanding their essence, even with identifying details withheld. In response, C. Tillman explained that Guam statutes do not specifically address who within the board should be privy to complaint contents, especially those concerning administrative matters rather than direct threats to public safety or patient care. C. Tillman clarified that internal standing operating procedures, rather than statutory directives, currently govern the complaint process and that if the board feels limited by those procedures, they could consider addressing it internally.</p> <p>Following this clarification, the board returned to the matter of Complaint 2504, and based on the investigation findings, which concluded that the complaint did not violate any provision of the Allied Health Practice Act and warranted no disciplinary action, the board proceeded with a motion to close the case.</p> <p><i>Motion to Close; N. Cepeda; 2nd: Dr. Triolo.</i></p>			
		<p>G. GBAHE-CO-25-08 Veterinarian Received 04/28/25 Due to Dr. Harper's absence, the board agreed to defer the matter to the next scheduled meeting,</p>	V. Harper		Ongoing, No Update
		<p>H. GBAHE-CO-25-09 LPC Received 04/29/25 Dr. Balajadia indicated that a response from the LPC licensee has not yet been received. As a result, the case would be deferred to the next meeting, pending a response on the proper order.</p>	Dr. Balajadia		Ongoing, Pending Response on Order
VII	OLD Business	<p>A. Updates to Qualification Requirements for Dietitians and Nutritionists (10 GCA CH12, Article 21): Dr. Balajadia noted that C. San Nicolas had previously raised concerns about aligning local standards with updated national requirements, which now mandate a master's degree. C. San Nicolas confirmed that she had drafted and submitted a letter addressing this issue to B. Sablan, who then forwarded it to Senator Lujan's office. However, during a follow-up with the senator's staff, it was found that the letter had not yet been reviewed by the Senator. C. San Nicolas expressed hope that the matter would be accomplished before the next scheduled meeting.</p>	C. San Nicolas	1237	Noted
VIII	NEW Buisness	<p>A. Initial/New Applications</p>		1240	
		<p>i. Wramp, Lori Ann (LMHC Intern) (N. Cepeda) <i>Motion to Approve; N. Cepeda; 2nd: V. Pereda.</i></p>	GBAHE		

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		ii. Watson, Toni (LPC) (N. Cepeda) <i>Motion to Approve; N. Cepeda; 2nd: V. Pereda.</i>	GBAHE		Unanimously Approved
IX	Next Board Meeting	Announcements – Next Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting: Friday, October 10, 2025 at 12:00 PM.	GBAHE	1244	Set Date
X	Adjournment	<i>Motion to Adjourn: N. Cepeda; 2nd: R.. Taitingfong.</i>	GBAHE	1245	Adjourned

Minutes Drafted by: FLAME TREE Freedom Center, Inc.

Date Submitted: 09/24/2025

Submitted by the GBAHE Secretary:

Date:

Approved by the GBAHE with or without changes:

Marina Cepeda

Date: 10/10/2025

Certified by or Attested by the Chairperson:

Marina Cepeda

Date: 10/10/2025