

INDIANA STATE PSYCHOLOGY BOARD
January 9, 2026
Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Dr. Hale called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. in Conference Center Room 2, Indiana Government Center South, 302 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana and declared a quorum in accordance with Indiana Code § 25-33-1-3(g).

Board Members Present:

Gregory Hale, Ph.D., Chair
Jere Leib, Ph.D., Member
Amber Finley, JD, Consumer Member

Board Members Not Present:

Stephen G. Ross, Psy.D., Vice Chair and Board Liaison
Vacant

State Officials Present:

Jill Haddad, Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
Cindy Vaught, Board Director, Professional Licensing Agency
Dana Brooks, Assistant Board Director, Professional Licensing Agency
Erin Sutton, Litigation Specialist, Professional Licensing Agency

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as amended.

Leib/Finley
Motion carried 3/0/0

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes of October 31, 2025, as amended.

Leib/Finley
Motion carried 3/0/0

IV. REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ryan Eldridge, Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, presented the Attorney General report. He reported that they currently have 23 open investigated files since the beginning of the year with an average age of 9.87 months. There are currently 3 cases where litigation was opened, and none have been closed since we are at the beginning of a new year.

Mr. Eldridge stated that the Attorney General's Office is trying to keep their investigative files between 9 to 10 months. He indicated that they have been reaching out to the Board liaison if there is a practice related issue; however, if the matter is more legally clear like a criminal conviction, then the liaison is not consulted.

V. ADMINSTRATIVE HEARINGS

A. **Marta Maria Tobenas, Ph.D., HSPP**

Cause No. 202510-PSY-0003

Re: Administrative Complaint

Parties Present:

Respondent present with counsel Rebecca Loeffler

Ryan Eldridge, Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

Lindy Mayer, Court Reporter, Accurate Court Reporting

Participating Board Members:

Gregory Hale, Ph.D., Hearing Officer

Jere Leib, Ph.D.

Amber Finley, JD, Consumer Member

Case Summary: On or about October 7, 2025, an Administrative Complaint was filed against Dr. Tobenas with allegations of unlicensed practice and false or misleading advertisement. On or about January 8, 2026, a Settlement Agreement was reached with the following terms:

- Letter of Reprimand
- Fine of \$500
- Fee of \$5.00 to be paid into the Health Records and Personal Identifying Information Protection Trust Fund.
- Within 30 days of the Final Order, Dr. Tobenas shall inform MPA of the Final Action, and obtain confirmation regarding whether any audit or repayment has been made on any claims involving Dr. Tobenas. Dr. Tobenas shall submit notification to the Board of this contact and information received from MPA. If repayment and/or audit has not been performed by MPA, Dr. Tobenas shall cooperate with them regarding appropriate notifications to insurance and provide an updated notification to the Board. If MPA fails or refuses to cooperate or communicate with Dr. Tobenas, she shall submit notification to the Board regarding her attempts to reach out to them.
- Dr. Tobenas understands that any further violation of the statute and rules regarding the practice of Psychology in Indiana, or of her Final Order, may result in further sanctions.

Mr. Eldridge provided an overview to the Board of the facts of Dr. Tobenas using the HSPP credential before it was granted to her. Ms. Loeffler stated that there was no concern regarding the standards of care Dr. Tobenas provided her clients, and she did apply and obtain the HSPP credential as soon as she was aware of the issue. She stated that Dr. Tobenas' previous employment failed to give proper guidance, and her current employer provides better mentorship and support.

The Board inquired how Dr. Tobenas will notify them regarding the reimbursement. Mr. Eldridge stated that she can upload, email, or post-mail communication to the Board. If she does not provide the documentation or communication, then she could be in violation of her Order, and the Board can file a complaint of non-compliance.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to approve the Proposed Settlement Agreement in the matter of Dr. Tobenas.

Finley/Leib
Motion carried 3/0/0

B. Alice Schermerhorn, Ph.D.
Cause No. 202509-PSY-0002
Re: Petition for Review of Denial

Parties Present:
Respondent present
Lindy Mayer, Court Reporter, Accurate Court Reporting

Participating Board Members:
Gregory Hale, Ph.D., Hearing Officer
Jere Leib, Ph.D.
Amber Finley, JD, Consumer Member

Case Summary: On or about July 11, 2024, Dr. Schermerhorn's application for psychology was denied as she did not meet the requirements as outlined in IC 25-33-1-5.1 and 868 IAC 1.1-4-1(11). On or about September 3, 2025, Dr. Schermerhorn appealed the Board's decision, and a hearing was set for October 31, 2025. During the October hearing Dr. Schermerhorn provided additional information regarding her residency and training. The Board had additional concerns regarding her pre-doctoral and clinical training during school. The Board granted Dr. Schermerhorn a continuance to allow her to present additional evidence to show she meets the requirements.

Dr. Schermerhorn provided Exhibit 1-5 for the Board to review. The Board accepted her Exhibits. She stated that the reference statutes only apply to the HSPP application, and that she is applying only for the psychology license. She stated that she is not going to pursue the HSPP, and that she did not see anything in the statutes that require her to have a clinical psychology degree. She stated that she completed additional supervised training in Vermont after her Ph.D., and that she is requesting approval to take the EPPP examination. The Board noted that she does meet the residency requirements; and she will not qualify for the HSPP if she applies for that credential. She indicated she understood.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to grant her appeal and reverse the denial regarding not meeting the residency requirements in the matter of Dr. Schermerhorn.

Hale/Leib
Motion carried 3-0-0

A motion was made and seconded to reverse the denial of the application and approve her to take the EPPP examination.

Hale/Finley
Motion carried 3-0-0

VI. PERSONAL APPEARANCES

A. Probation

No probation appearances.

B. Application

1. Amber Beal (Ph.D.)

Dr. Beal notified the Board via email requesting to reschedule her appearance. The Board rescheduled Dr. Beal for the March 20, 2026, meeting.

2. Kenneth Fils (Ph.D.)

Dr. Fils appeared as requested to discuss his license equivalency, and the previous Board action. He is currently licensed in the state of Illinois and graduated from the United States International University. He provided a statement and supporting documentation for the Board to review. He stated that he wants to obtain an Indiana license to assist with a group practice in the Northwest area of the State. He indicated that the Board action against his license occurred when he was recently graduated and setting up his initial practice. He has resolved all requirements with the Illinois Board and has not had any negative action against his license since.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to approve Dr. Fils' application for licensure.

Hale/Finley
Motion carried 3-0-0

3. Veronica King (Ph.D.)

Dr. King appeared as requested to discuss her application for psychology. She currently holds a license in the state of New York and indicated in her application that her program was not APA approved at the time of graduation. Dr. King discussed her education indicating that she completed an APA approved doctoral internship. She provided an overview of her pre-doctoral training in a correctional facility, and that she completed a post-doctoral program. She stated that her intention is to set up her own telehealth practice. She stated that she will not qualify for PsyPact.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to approve Dr. Kings application for licensure.

Finley/Leib
Motion carried 3-0-0

4. Malik Muhammad (Ph.D.)

Dr. Muhammad did not appear as requested. The Board will reschedule his appearance for March 20, 2026.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Proposed Rule: 868 IAC 1.1-12-1.5 Fees – Late Fee

Ms. Vaught provided an overview of the late fee rule for license renewals and asked if the Board would like to adopt the rule. She stated that this fee rule is being proposed for all professions under Professional Licensing Agency.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to approve the rule to move forward with a hearing.

Hale/Leib
Motion carried 3-0-0

VIII. APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

A. Limited Scope Temporary Psychology Permit

There were no limited scope permits for review.

B. Psychology by Examination/Reciprocity

There were no examination/reciprocity applications for review.

C. HSPP Endorsement

1. Dorienna Alfred, Ph.D., License No. 20044011A

Dr. Alfred's application for HSPP was submitted for review. She indicated that she could not locate her supervisors to complete the Indiana State forms due to how long ago it was and provided a copy of her Missouri application for the Board to review. She currently holds a license in the state of Ohio with no discipline.

Board Action: A motion was made and seconded to approve Dr. Alfred's HSPP application.

Hale/Leib
Motion carried 3-0-0

2. Patrick Murphy, Ph.D., License No. 20043993A

Dr. Murphy's application for HSPP was submitted for review. It was noted that he primarily provided practicum hours (Form B) but is short of the required 900 client contact hours. He submitted a request for the Board to consider supplementing the extra doctoral internship hours he completed to meet the post-doctoral hours requirements. The Board reviewed the statute and rules and indicated that the HSPP has two different hour requirements, one for the internship, and one for the post-doctoral training. They noted that they cannot grant his request to use the doctoral internship hours to supplement the post-doctoral training hours.

The application was tabled in the matter of Dr. Murphy.

3. Continuing Education

There were no Continuing Education applications for review.

IX. INDIANA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION REPORT

Dick Rhoad presented the report from the Indiana Psychological Association.

He stated Purdue University has received a request from PCSAS (Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System) to have them as an approved accredited body if a program is not APA approved. He stated that they have a clinical science training model, and they currently accredit 49 university programs. He stated that their goal is to train students to become clinical psychological students, and they wish to be included as part of an approved accredited body that Indiana could accept, if a program is not APA approved. The Board noted that they cannot weigh into that decision as it would have to be a legislative change.

Mr. Rhoad stated that the APA is moving in the direction of Master credentialing with their Model Licensure Act (MLA). They have created their guidelines and are seeking public and state comments. Their public comment period for their proposal will be March 3rd, and the ASPPB may provide an alternative draft.

He stated that he is currently following the legislative session, and there are no proposed laws that impact psychology directly; however, there are a few proposals that will impact indirectly. There are bills that address changes to Medicaid coverage, ABA therapy changes, the use of AI in clinical practice, and similar nature.

The IPA will be presenting their Spring Ethics Event on March 27th, and the fall conference dates are not yet decided.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, and having completed its duties, the meeting of the Indiana State Psychology Board adjourned at 10:50 a.m.