



South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors &
Marriage and Family Therapists

P.O. Box 340, 1351 N. Harrison Ave., Pierre, SD 57501-0340

Ph: 605-224-1721

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**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS &
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
Friday, August 28, 2026 – 9:00 AM CDT**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88406326513?pwd=iHan9bJF2uc6XevrLmOJbjz64htloQ.1>

Meeting ID: 884 0632 6513

Passcode: 383781

Call: 719-359-4580

Proposed Meeting Agenda - PUBLIC

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Agenda
- 3) Open Forum: *5 minutes for the public to address the Board*
- 4) Approval of Board Minutes: April 17, 2026
- 5) Approval of Financial Statement: July 31, 2026
- 6) Executive Session (Pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(3) and (4)) for consultation with legal counsel for consideration of proposed contested cases or litigation and contract negotiations
- 7) Old Business
 - a. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Final Order in the Matter of the Application of Sam Gaster for Licensure as an LPC
 - b. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Final Order in the Matter of the Professional Counselor Licensing Status of Shane Larson
 - c. Counseling Compact Updates
 - a. Compact Implementation Timeline and Updates
 1. Background Check Requests
 2. Data Sharing Development Process
 - d. Approval of Counseling Compact Criminal History Review Process
 - e. AASCB Annual Meeting Report
 - f. Counseling Compact Annual Report
 - g. NBCC Annual Meeting Report
- 8) New Business
 - a. Hearing in the Matter of the Application of Emily Gunn for Licensure as an LPC
 - b. 2026 License Renewal Timeline

9) Other Business

- a. Office Update
 - a. Board Appointments/Renewals
 - b. Criminal Background Check Audits
- b. DSS Update

10) Announcements

- a. Next Scheduled Meeting – December 11, 2026 at 9:00 am CT via Zoom

11) Adjourn



South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors &
Marriage and Family Therapists

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South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors & Marriage and Family Therapists
Via Videoconference
April 17, 2026

President Amy Hartman called the meeting to order at 9:04 am central and determined a quorum.

Board Members Present via Videoconference: Erin Davis, Cynthia Goehring, Maureen Gustafson, Mary Guth, Amy Hartman, Stacy Solsaa, and Jeff Wangen.

Board Members Absent: None.

Others Present via Videoconference: Jennifer Stalley, Executive Secretary; Natalie Young, Administrative Assistant; Court Roper, Board Legal Counsel, Department of Social Services; Erin Handke, Assistant Attorney General; Tracy Mercer, Department of Social Services; Tiffany Butler, Conor P. Casey, Sam Gaster, Shane Larson, and Tegan Ronke.

Motion to approve the proposed agenda by Guth. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion carried.**

Hartman asked for comments from the public. No comments were offered.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 5, 2025 by Wangen. Seconded by Solsaa. **Motion carried.**

Motion to accept the financial report as of March 31, 2026 by Wangen. Seconded by Guth. **Motion carried.**

Motion for a continuance of the Hearing in the Matter of the Application of Emily Gunn for Licensure as an LPC by Guth. Seconded by Davis. **Motion carried.**

The Board conducted the hearing in the Matter of the Application of Sam Gaster for Licensure as an LPC.

Motion to sustain the application review determination that the plan of supervision application of Sam Gaster is deficient in meeting the educational requirements for plan of supervision by Wangen. Seconded by Solsaa. **Motion carried.**

The Board conducted the hearing in the Matter of the Professional Counselor Licensing Status of Shane Larson.

Motion to go into executive session for the purposes noticed at 11:53 am by Guth. Seconded by Goehring. **Motion carried.**

Hartman declared the Board out of executive session at 12:51 pm.

Motion to find in Complaint 2025-03 and Complaint 2025-05 that Shane Larson violated the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics provisions A.4.a, C.1, I.1.a, and I.1.b and make Larson's licensure conditioned on him being supervised by a board approved supervisor for six months with one hour of supervision per week focused on ethical practice and his completion of 5 hours of continuing education related to each of the violated ACA provisions, for a total of twenty hours, in addition to the continuing education required for renewal of his license by Wangen. Seconded by Gustafson. **Motion carried.**

Motion to accept the proposed Settlement Agreement and enter a final order in Complaint 2025-11 by Goehring. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2025-21 and send the matter to the local state's attorney office by Solsaa. Seconded by Gustafson. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2025-25 by Goehring. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2025-26 and send the matter to the local state's attorney office by Wangen. Seconded by Guth. **Motion carried.**

Motion to authorize a settlement agreement offer or move the matter to a hearing in Complaint 2026-01 by Wangen. Seconded by Solsaa. **Motion carried.**

Motion to authorize a settlement agreement offer or move the matter to a hearing in Complaint 2026-02 by Gustafson. Seconded by Davis. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2026-03 by Goehring. Seconded by Guth. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2026-04 by Guth. Seconded by Gustafson. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2026-05 by Solsaa. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2026-06 by Davis. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion carried.**

Motion to dismiss Complaint 2026-09 by Gustafson. Seconded by Solsaa. **Motion carried.** Davis excused.

Motion to renew the contract for database software and maintenance services with Albertson Consulting in the amount of \$13,765.00 by Guth as proposed. Seconded by Wangen. **Motion Carried.**

Motion to offer a contract for services to complete an IT Interface with the national Counseling Compact with Albertson Consulting in the amount of \$14,000.00 by Wangen. Seconded by Solsaa. **Motion carried.**

Motion to renew the for the Board's administrative and executive services with Midwest Solutions with a 3% increase by Guth. Seconded by Gustafson. **Motion carried.**

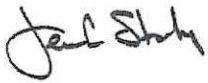
Motion to approve the purchase of a fireproof file cabinet for the Board office by Wangen. Seconded by Goehring. **Motion carried.**

The Board deferred the balance of the agenda to the next meeting.

The Board announced its next meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2026 at 9:00 am (central) via Zoom.

Motion to adjourn at 1:08 pm by Guth. Seconded by Davis. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Stalley, Executive Secretary

Remaining Authority by Object/Subobject

Expenditures current through 08/01/2026 11:19:24 AM

SOCIAL SERVICES -- Summary

FY 2027 Version -- AS -- Budgeted and Informational

FY Remaining: 91.5%

0891 Board of Counselor Examiners - Info							PCT
Subobject	Operating	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Commitments	Remaining	AVL	
EMPLOYEE SALARIES							
5101010 F-t Emp Sal & Wages	1,950	0	0	0	1,950	100.0	
5101030 Board & Comm Mbrs Fees	4,061	166	0	0	3,895	95.9	
Subtotal	6,011	166	0	0	5,845	97.2	
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS							
5102010 Oasi-employer's Share	849	13	0	0	836	98.5	
Subtotal	849	13	0	0	836	98.5	
51 Personal Services							
Subtotal	6,860	179	0	0	6,681	97.4	
TRAVEL							
5203030 Auto-priv (in-st.) H/rte	4,382	0	0	0	4,382	100.0	
5203100 Lodging/in-state	1,750	0	0	0	1,750	100.0	
5203130 Non-employ. Travel-in St.	1,100	0	0	0	1,100	100.0	
5203140 Meals/taxable/in-state	112	0	0	0	112	100.0	
5203150 Non-taxable Meals/in-st	450	0	0	0	450	100.0	
5203260 Air-comm-out-of-state	2,000	0	0	0	2,000	100.0	
5203280 Other-public-out-of-state	180	0	0	0	180	100.0	
5203300 Lodging/out-state	2,024	0	0	0	2,024	100.0	
5203320 Incidentals-out-of-state	75	0	0	0	75	100.0	
5203330 Non-employ Travel-out-st.	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	100.0	
5203350 Non-taxable Meals/out-st	700	0	0	0	700	100.0	
Subtotal	13,773	0	0	0	13,773	100.0	
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES							
5204020 Dues & Membership Fees	1,550	0	0	0	1,550	100.0	
5204050 Computer Consultant	12,265	0	0	0	12,265	100.0	
5204080 Legal Consultant	4,000	0	0	0	4,000	100.0	
5204090 Management Consultant	126,327	9,242	104,348	0	12,737	10.1	
5204131 Other Consulting	7,500	0	0	0	7,500	100.0	
5204160 Workshop Registration Fee	1,550	0	0	0	1,550	100.0	
5204200 Central Services	88	0	0	0	88	100.0	
5204201 Central Services	1,584	747	0	0	837	52.8	
5204204 Central Services	0	105	0	0	-105	0.0	
5204207 Central Services	521	0	0	0	521	100.0	
5204360 Advertising-newspaper	300	0	0	0	300	100.0	
5204460 Equipment Rental	750	0	0	0	750	100.0	

Remaining Authority by Object/Subobject

Expenditures current through 08/01/2026 11:19:24 AM

SOCIAL SERVICES -- Summary

FY 2027 Version -- AS -- Budgeted and Informational

FY Remaining: 91.5%

0891 Board of Counselor Examiners - Info							PCT
Subobject	Operating	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Commitments	Remaining		AVL
5204510 Rents-other	3,300	0	0	0	3,300		100.0
5204530 Telecommunications Svcs	1,100	0	0	0	1,100		100.0
5204590 Ins Premiums & Surety Bds	2,270	0	0	0	2,270		100.0
5204740 Bank Fees And Charges	0	18	0	0	-18		0.0
Subtotal	163,105	10,112	104,348	0	48,645		29.8
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS							
5205028 Office Supplies	400	0	0	0	400		100.0
5205328 Printing-commercial	1,350	0	0	0	1,350		100.0
5205350 Postage	2,000	174	0	0	1,826		91.3
5205390 Food Stuffs	150	0	0	0	150		100.0
Subtotal	3,900	174	0	0	3,726		95.5
52 Operating							
Subtotal	180,778	10,286	104,348	0	66,144		36.6
Total	187,638	10,465	104,348	0	72,825		38.8

THE SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS AND MARRIAGE & FAMILY
THERAPISTS

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION OF SAM GASTER FOR LICENSURE AS A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR	STATE’S PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
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Sam Gaster submitted an application to the South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter “the Board”) for an LPC license. His application was deemed deficient, and Gaster requested a hearing before the Board.

On April 17, 2026, said hearing was held and conducted via ZOOM teleconferencing platform. Gaster was present and the interests of the State of South Dakota was represented by Assistant Attorney General, Erin E. Handke. A quorum of the Board was present, and the Board’s General Counsel, Court Roper served as Hearing Officer.

Based on the evidence presented, the Board makes the following:

1. Gaster graduated with a Masters of Arts in Psychology with specialization in clinical psychology from the University of South Dakota.
2. Gaster did not attend a Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CAREP) accredited program.
3. Because he did not attend a CACREP accredited program, Gaster must show his program met the requirements in SDCL 36-32-64(1).

4. Gaster submitted his application for a plan of supervision for an LPC.
5. Gaster was notified that his education was deficient, and he needed to complete a practicum and internship.
6. Gaster submitted additional information to the Board for consideration.
7. Gaster was notified that he still needed to complete the requirements for an internship before he could be issued a plan of supervision.
8. Gaster presented several documents, including his resume, transcripts, excerpts from USD Clinical Psychology Program Graduate Student Handbook, National Counselor Examination scores, Record of Clinical Training Experiences, Crosswalk of Clinical Training Requirements and Applicant Experience, and letters from professors and clinical directors.
9. Gaster's submissions did not show that he met the requirements to fulfill the requirements for an internship for an LPC.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the provisions of SDCL 36-32.
2. SDCL 36-32-64 has the requirements all applicants must meet to obtain a plan of supervision for an LPC.
3. Gaster's coursework and application does not meet the requirements set forth in SDCL 36-32-64, ARSD 20:68:01:09, ARSD 20:68:03:02, ARSD 20:68:03:05.
4. In order for Gaster to meet the requirements for a plan of supervision for an LPC. He needs to complete an internship- including an on-the-job

experience in professional counseling under the tutelage of an on-site supervisor who is a licensed professional counselor or certified or licensed mental health therapist, provided the supervised internship may be no less than 600 hours of which 240 must be in direct services. A qualified internship must be completed as part of a course of study and evidenced by a recorded grade on a transcript from a qualifying university or college.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2026.

BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

Amy Hartman, President

ATTEST:

Jennifer Stalley, Executive Secretary

STATE'S PROPOSED ORDER

The Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage & Family
Therapists, having entered its Findings of Fact and Conclusions of law, is
hereby

ORDERED the Board shall affirm the finding that Gaster's application is
deficient in terms of missing an internship as required by SDCL 36-32-64,
ARSD 20:68:01:09, ARSD 20:68:03:02, ARSD 20:68:03:05.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

Amy Hartman, President

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that on the 8th of May, 2026, a true and correct copy of the foregoing State's Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and State's Proposed Order was served upon the following via email upon the following:

Sam Gaster
samsgaster@gmail.com

/s/ Erin E. Handke
Erin E. Handke
Assistant Attorney General
1302 E. Highway 14, Suite 1
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
Telephone: (605) 773-3215
Email: erin.handke@state.sd.us

THE SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS AND MARRIAGE & FAMILY
THERAPISTS

IN THE MATTER OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR LICENSING STATUS OF SHANE LARSON (LPC-MH 2210)	BECMFT No. 2025-03 & BECMFT No. 2025-05 SHANE LARSON'S PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
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Two complaints were drafted by the board, with the South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (the Board) against Shane Larson, LPC-MH 2210, alleging Larson conduct constituted a violation of SDCL 36-32-83(10), SDCL 36-32-84, ARSD 20:73:07:01, as well as American Counseling Association (ACA) ethical code, specifically: A.1a, A.4.a, A.5.c, A.6.e, C.1, C.6.a, E.1.b, I.1.a, and I.1.b. The complaint was duly investigated by the Board, and it was determined that the nature of the complaint warranted the holding of an adversarial administrative hearing pursuant to the authority and jurisdiction granted to the Board by SDCL Chapter 36-32, and the applicable rules of the State of South Dakota.

On April 17, 2026, said hearing was held and conducted via ZOOM teleconference platform. Larson appeared at the hearing, along with his attorney, Conor Casey. The interests of the State of South Dakota at the hearing were represented by Assistant Attorney General Erin E. Handke. A quorum of the Board was present, and the Board's General Counsel, Court Roper served as Hearing Officer.

Based upon the evidence presented, the Board makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Larson currently holds an LPC-MH license issued by the Board. Larson is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board.
2. Larson reported to the Board he had been arrested. The charges were dropped, but because the charges stemmed from allegations of inappropriate conduct with a client or former client, the Board requested additional information.
3. Larson provided a written account of the allegations. He also provided details of a former client, E.M. including that Larson provided sex offender treatment to E.M.
4. Larson did not have a proper signed release from E.M. authorizing him to release any privileged information regarding E.M.
5. Larson also admitted to writing E.M. a letter and including his phone number.
6. Larson said he wrote E.M. the letter after seeing E.M. drive by his home.
7. Larson was worried about his children's safety based on the fact that E.M. had been convicted for possession of child pornography.
8. When asked why he chose to write a letter to E.M. instead of calling the police, Larson said he was worried because he knew E.M. had been involved in an armed standoff where he brandished an AK47 type rifle.
9. Tiffany Buttler, LPC, investigated the complaint.

10. Based on Butler's professional opinion, Larson's conduct and rational did not comply with the ACA ethical code.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the provisions of SDCL ch. 36-32.
2. The Board has authority to investigate complaints of violations of SDCL 36-32-83(10), SDCL 36-32-84, ARSD 20:73:07:01 and various sections of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, including: A.1a, A.4.a, A.5.c, A.6.e, C.1, C.6.a, E.1.b, I.1.a, and I.1.b.
3. The Board concludes based on the evidence introduced, and the testimony of Tiffany Butler and Shane Larson, that Laron's conduct that is the subject of this complaint did violate SDCL 36-32-83(5) & (10), SDCL 36-32-84, ARSD 20:73:07:01 and various sections of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, including: A.4.a., C.1, I.1.a, and I.1.b.
4. The Board has jurisdiction to take action on Laron's LPC-MH license.
5. Any Finding of Fact of Conclusion of law that has been improperly designated is hereby redesignated and incorporated into the appropriate section.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2026.

BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

Amy Hartman, President

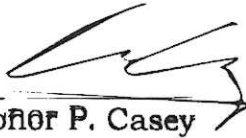
ATTEST:

Jennifer Stalley, Executive Secretary

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that on the 21st of May, 2026, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law was served upon the following via email upon Erin Handke at erin.handke@state.sd.us.

BEARDSLEY, JENSEN & LEE, Prof. L.L.C.

By: 

Connor P. Casey

4200 Beach Drive, Suite 3

P.O. Box 9579

Rapid City, SD 57709

Telephone: 605) 721-2800

Email: ccasey@blackhillslaw.com

Attorney for Shane Larson

THE SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS AND MARRIAGE & FAMILY
THERAPISTS

IN THE MATTER OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR LICENSING STATUS OF SHANE LARSON (LPC-MH 2210)	BECMFT No. 2025-03 & BECMFT No. 2025-05 STATE'S PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
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Two complaints [drafted by the board](#), were filed with the South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (the Board) against Shane Larson, LPC-MH 2210, alleging Larson conduct constituted a violation of SDCL 36-32-83(10), SDCL 36-32-84, ARSD 20:73:07:01, as well as American Counseling Association (ACA) ethical code, specifically: A.1a, A.4.a, A.5.c, A.6.e, C.1, C.6.a, E.1.b, I.1.a, and I.1.b. The complaint was duly investigated by the Board, and it was determined that the nature of the complaint warranted the holding of an adversarial administrative hearing pursuant to the authority and jurisdiction granted to the Board by SDCL Chapter 36-32, and the applicable rules of the State of South Dakota.

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Based upon the evidence presented, the Board makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

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2. Larson reported to the Board he had been arrested. The charges were dropped, but because the charges stemmed from allegations of inappropriate conduct with a client or former client, the Board requested additional information.
3. Larson provided a written account of the allegations. He also provided details of a former client, E.M. including that Larson provided sex offender treatment to E.M.
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7. Larson was worried about his children's safety based on the fact that E.M. had been convicted for possession of child pornography.
8. When asked why he chose to write a letter to E.M. instead of calling the police, Larson said he was worried because he knew E.M. had been involved in an armed standoff where he brandished an AK47 type rifle.
9. Tiffany Buttler, LPC, investigated the complaint.

Deleted: of

Deleted: sexual assault

Deleted: had an AK47

10. Based on Butler's professional opinion, Larson's conduct and rational did not comply with the ACA ethical code.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the provisions of SDCL ch. 36-32.
2. The Board has authority to investigate complaints of violations of SDCL 36-32-83(10), SDCL 36-32-84, ARSD 20:73:07:01 and various sections of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, including: A.1.a, A.4.a, A.5.c, A.6.e, C.1, C.6.a, E.1.b, I.1.a, and I.1.b.
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4. The Board has jurisdiction to take action on Laron's LPC-MH license.
5. Any Finding of Fact of Conclusion of law that has been improperly designated is hereby redesignated and incorporated into the appropriate section.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2026.

BY THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

Amy Hartman, President

ATTEST:

Jennifer Stalley, Executive Secretary

STATE'S PROPOSED
ORDER

The Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage & family
Therapists, having entered its Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is
hereby

ORDERED Larson must be supervised by a supervisor approved by the
Board for a period of six months. Larson will be ineligible to practice
counseling until he has such supervision. It is further

ORDERED Larson must complete 20 hours of continuing education
regarding ethics. It is further

ORDERED if Larson's LPC-MH license will be classified as conditional
until he meets the above requirements.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR COUNSELORS
AND MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPISTS

Amy Hartman, President

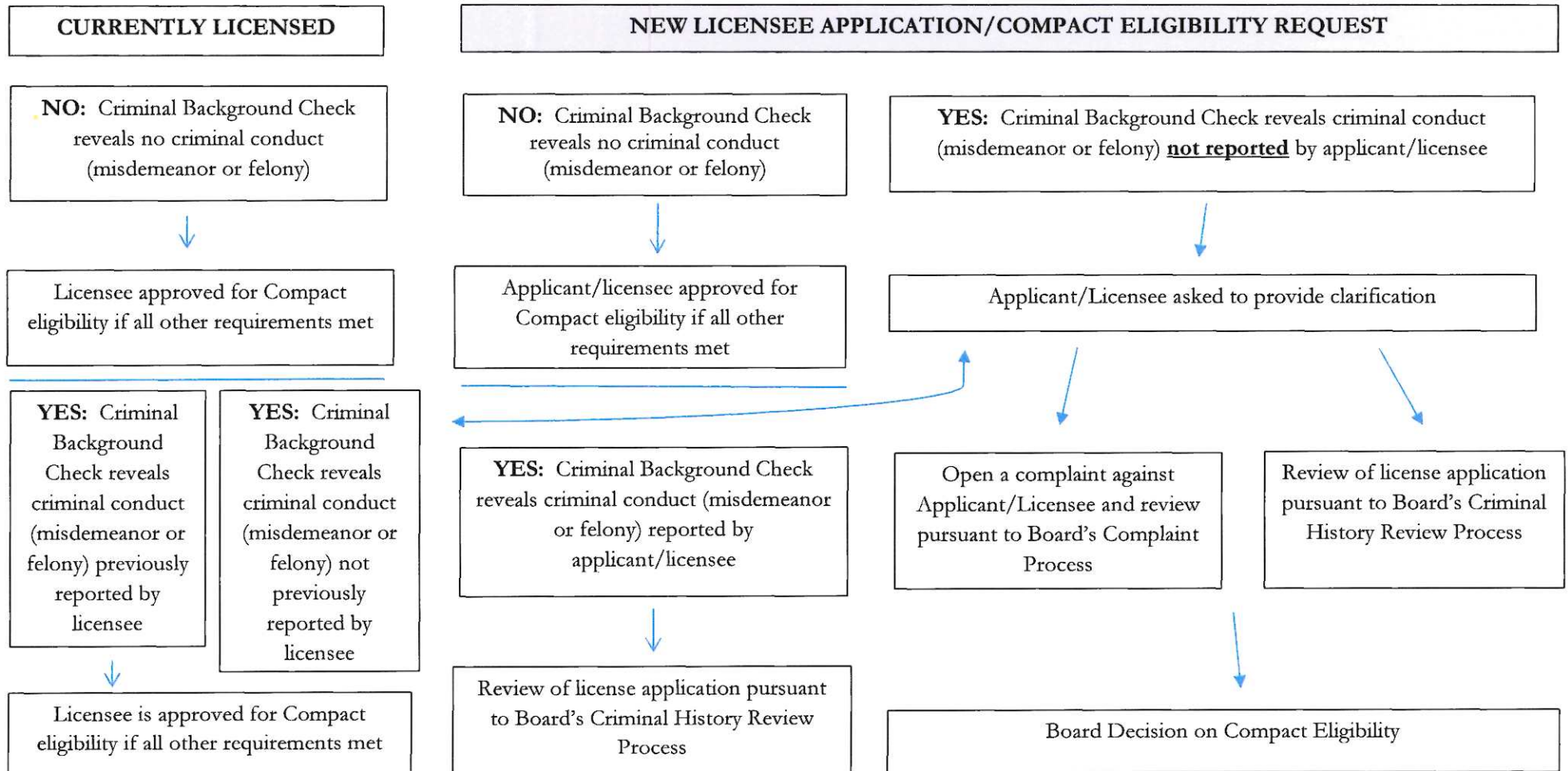
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that on the 8th of May, 2026, a true and correct copy of the foregoing State's Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and State's Proposed Order was served upon the following via email upon Conor Casey at ccasey@blackhillslaw.com.

/s/ Erin E. Handke
Erin E. Handke
Assistant Attorney General
1302 E. Highway 14, Suite 1
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
Telephone: (605) 773-3215
Email: erin.handke@state.sd.us

Internal Rule of Procedure
South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage & Family Therapy

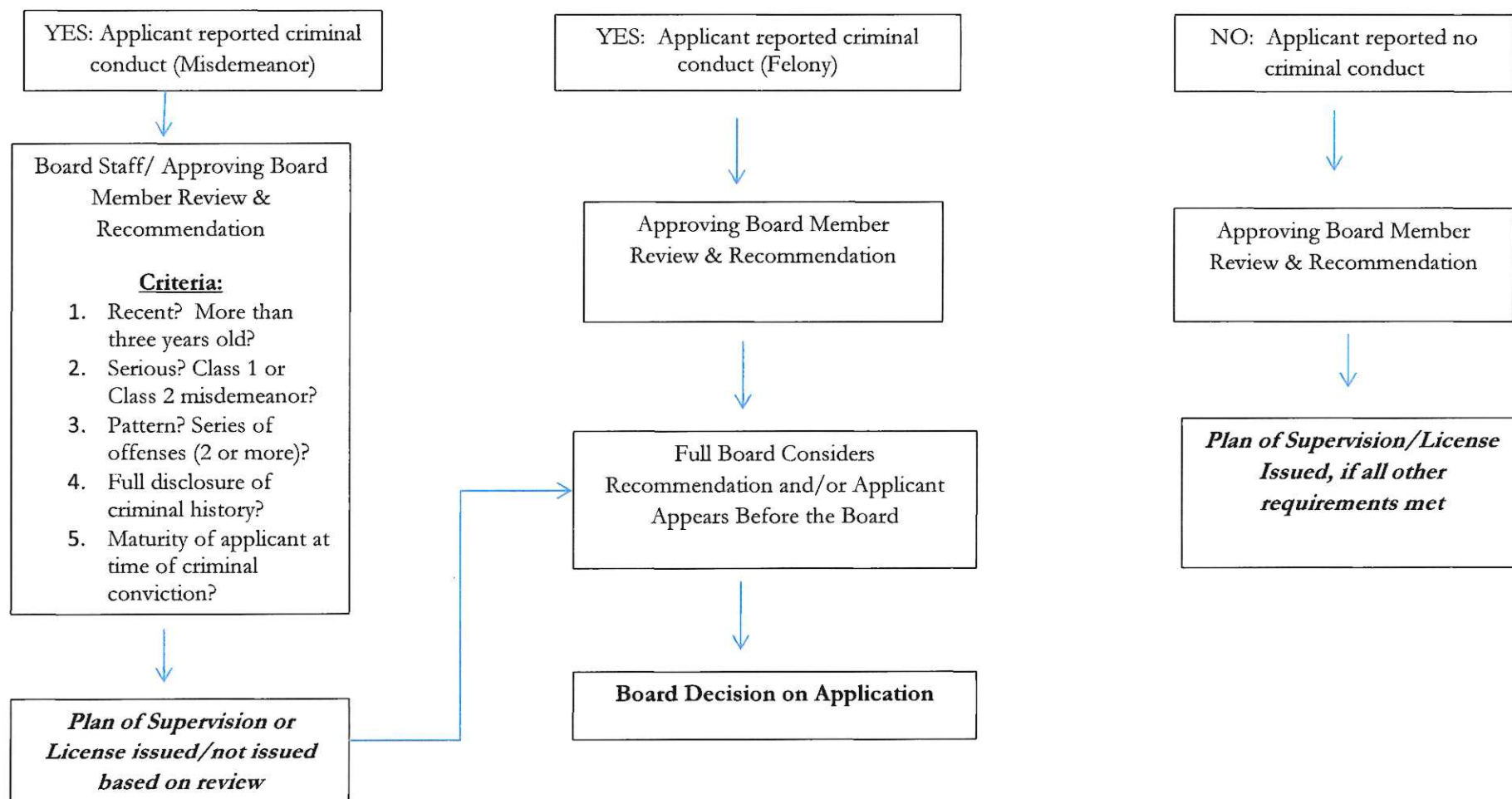
Compact Eligibility - Criminal History Review Process



DISCLAIMER: This procedure is only to be considered an internal operating procedure of the Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage & Family Therapists. This procedure does not create any rights or remedies in any party or individual, and it is intended as guidelines only. The use is exclusively within the discretion of the Board and its staff. This procedure may be applied, altered or modified at any time, either formally or informally as the Board or its staff deems necessary to process an application.

Internal Rule of Procedure
South Dakota Board of Examiners for Counselors and Marriage & Family Therapy

Completed Application - Criminal History Review Process



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