



IDFPR

Illinois Department of
Financial and Professional Regulation

Reimagining Professional Licensing in Illinois

A Six-Month Review of the
Division of Professional
Regulation

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Dear DPR Team,

It is hard to believe, but April 16 marked **six months** since I started as your Acting Director. Time flies when you are having fun! During this time, I have had countless meetings with staff at every level of the Division. I believe that wisdom and great ideas exist at all levels of an organization, and you have demonstrated that. Through my meetings with you, I have gained a wealth of knowledge and heard exciting innovative ideas on how we can improve our services. I am inspired by your commitment to ensuring that the public receives quality services. I have witnessed the long hours and weekends that many of you work because you want to ensure licenses are issued and just as important, that discipline occurs when professionals pose a danger to the public.

Thank you for welcoming me and trusting me to help make your ideas a reality. I am forever grateful. Through our hard work, we have reimaged professional licensing in Illinois. Over the past six months, DPR has transformed how we review and process applications for licensure and also how we ensure professionals follow the laws and rules that govern their profession.

I recognize there is more work to be done, but I am so proud of what we have done thus far. I look forward to the next six months and what it holds for our division. Please continue to share your ideas and I promise to continue working to make those ideas a reality.

Yours Truly,

Camile Lindsay
Acting Director,
Division of Professional Regulation



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LICENSING IMPROVEMENTS

As the State of Illinois' head regulatory agency, a critical component of IDFPR's mission is ensuring that competent professionals are licensed to provide services to the public. Over the past six months, we've taken a number of comprehensive steps to streamline our processes and increase our efficiencies to make sure this mission is fulfilled.

SIGNED A VARIANCE THAT PREVENTS APPLICANTS FROM PAYING INCREASED FEES

or late fees that arose during the pendency of the applicant's application due to no fault of the applicant's.

PARTNERED WITH IDFPR'S ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

to create new PO Boxes to ensure applications are quickly directed to the appropriate locations.

RECREATED WHAT WAS PREVIOUSLY REFERRED TO AS THE "CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF CRIMINAL ACTS" (CCA) FORM

to the Personal History Questions (PHQ) form because applicants assumed the form was optional if they did not have criminal histories and thus were not completing it. Non-completion of the form resulted in applicants receiving deficiencies. We updated the language so that a larger percentage of applicants will complete it, thereby decreasing the need for deficiency notices to be generated.

STREAMLINED THE FEE AND LICENSE PROCESSING SYSTEM

so that applicants no longer have to wait for their payments to be fully processed before the licensing unit reviews and processes their applications, ultimately resulting in licenses being issued faster.

LICENSING IMPROVEMENTS

REVAMPED THE PAPER APPLICATIONS

for Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and Licensed Social Workers (LSW), which included major revisions to the work experience (VE-SW) and the instruction pages.

ADDED NURSING LICENSES

Full Practice Authority Advanced Practical Nurse (APN) and Full Practice Authority APN Controlled Substance to the online system.

BEGAN SENDING DEFICIENCY NOTICES VIA EMAIL

to online applicants after we learned the online system was not notifying applicants that their applications were deficient. This meant applications lingered for extended periods of time without any action.

CREATED A MANUAL BATCH RENEWAL PROCESS

in response to concerns about the PERC batch renewal process being retired several years ago.

PROVIDED TRAINING FOR CALL CENTER STAFF

so they are better prepared to respond to the public.

IMPLEMENTED CALL CENTER SURVEYS AT THE END OF CALLS

due to concerns about the quality of the call center telephone responses.

LICENSING IMPROVEMENTS

ADDED ADDITIONAL STAFF

to review applications for licensure (including a new Deputy Director of Licensing and Testing).

STARTED DEDICATING ONE DAY EACH WEEK

to reviewing applications that were deficient to determine if the responsive documentation was received.

WORKED WITH LEGISLATORS AND INDUSTRY EXPERTS

on countless pieces of legislation (including, but not limited to, healthcare legislation, cosmetology legislation, and military portability legislation).

PRIORITIZED BOARDS

and appointed or reappointed more than 60 board members.

STARTED THE FIRST CRIMINAL JUSTICE RE-ENTRY GROUP

to discuss licensing barriers that people with criminal backgrounds experience.

MET WITH THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

to discuss licensing options for incarcerated individuals.

LICENSING IMPROVEMENTS

RESPONDED TO INDUSTRY CONCERNS

by starting a restoration/reinstatement pilot for select professions to obtain their Restoration/Reinstatement applications and their respective fees on IDFPR's website. This is so they no longer need to contact the Division to request restoration/reinstatement applications before applying.

ALONG WITH THE LEGISLATIVE TEAM,

met with countless industries, including:

- American Massage Therapy Association
- American Nurses Association-Illinois
- American Society of Landscape Architects
- Electrology Association of Illinois
- Holistic Birth Collective & Black Midwifery Collective
- Illinois Academy of Audiology
- Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- Illinois Academy of Physician Assistants
- Illinois Association of Behavioral Health
- Illinois Association of Prescribing Psychologists
- Illinois Athletic Trainers Association
- Illinois Chiropractic Society
- Illinois Counseling Association
- Illinois Court Reporters Association
- Illinois Occupational Therapy Association
- Illinois Optometric Association
- Illinois Podiatric Medical Association
- Illinois Professional Land Surveyors Association
- Illinois Psychiatric Society
- Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing
- Illinois Society of Acupuncturists
- Illinois Society of Genetic Professionals
- Illinois Society of Professional Engineers
- Illinois Speech Language Hearing Association
- Illinois State Dental Society
- Illinois State Medical Society
- National Association of Social Workers (*with Rep. Lindsey LaPointe and Sen. Karina Villa*)
- National Commission for the Certification of Surgical Assistants
- Roofing Contractors

ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

The chief component of IDFPR's mission is to protect the residents of Illinois. While we partially accomplish this through the licensing of professionals, we also do so by making sure licensees who violate the laws and rules of their profession are held accountable.

IMPLEMENTED A NEW SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PROTOCOL

that ensures sexual misconduct cases receive special attention and that the prosecutions and investigations units work together and provide verbal progress reports about the cases to the Chiefs of the units.

CONTACTED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

to request meetings to explain how we can partner together to ensure licensees are no longer a threat to the public.

CREATED A COMPLAINT INTAKE UNIT MAILBOX

specifically for law enforcement agencies to provide notice when a licensee is criminally charged.

REVAMPED AN OVERLY PUNITIVE INTENT TO DENY PROCESS

so that over 90% of the people who would have previously received intent to deny letters no longer receive them. As a result, individuals are more likely to respond to our correspondence, complete the licensing process, and avoid having a license denial placed on their professional records.

CHANGED THE SUMMARY SUSPENSION PROCESS

so that rulings can be made based on the documents thereby saving time and money by avoiding duplicative hearings.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN THE WORKS

While IDFPR has taken steps to streamline and improve our licensing and enforcement processes, the Division of Professional Regulation is committed to ensuring all necessary steps are taken to ensure Illinois sets the gold standard nationally for professional licensing. Additional projects in the pipeline and they include:

REVIEWING OUR FORMS AND APPLICATIONS

to ensure they are accurate and not redundant (including letting applicants use their Individual Taxpayer Identification Number if they do not have a Social Security Number).

STARTING A TESTING PILOT

with three nursing schools in April.

PILOTING A PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS PEOPLE

who apply via paper application to pay their fees online.

ADDING FOUR ADDITIONAL LICENSE TYPES

to our current online licensing system.

IMPLEMENTING A NEW LICENSING SYSTEM

that electronically provides for the issuance of licenses and the processing of new application and renewal fees.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN THE WORKS

CONDUCTING OUR FIRST

in-person supervisor training specifically for DPR supervisors this summer.

LICENSING INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

before they are released from prison. We want to ensure that people are released with licenses because we know gainful employment is essential for re-entry.

CREATING A PROCESS FOR COMPLAINANTS

to provide documents and photographs right after filing complaints. This will assist investigations staff in the collection of evidence.



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