



GEORGIA COMPOSITE MEDICAL BOARD

LICENSE | REGULATE | EDUCATE

JULY UPDATES



We hope everyone is having a great summer! As always, we're working hard on our end to keep improving, and this month's newsletter has a lot to show for it.

We're covering a full slate of updates, from new fingerprint and FCVS requirements now in effect for first-time, full physician applicants, to what SB 395 means for the medical cannabis registry.

We're also breaking down what compact physicians can and can't do in Georgia, plus a refresher on telemedicine rules worth bookmarking.

On the people side, we're welcoming a new Board Chair and Vice Chair, thanking two outgoing leaders for their years of service, and spotlighting our team who keeps everything running day in and day out.

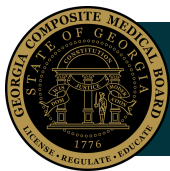
We even got out into the community this month, from a booth at the GAPA Conference to a presentation in front of the House Health Committee. And finally, a look ahead at the rules coming in FY27.

Read along, and if there's something specific you'd like to see in next month's issue, let us know!



<https://medicalboard.georgia.gov/>





WHAT'S NEW AT GCMB?

Fingerprints + FCVS

- First-time, full physician applicants who have never held a Georgia medical license before are now required to complete a fingerprint and criminal background check through both the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and the FBI, along with a Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS) report through the Federation of State Medical Boards. This applies to initial licensure only, not renewals.

Medical Cannabis Patient Registry (formerly Low THC Oil Patient Registry) | SB 395

- Effective July 1, 2026, physicians involved with patients on the Low THC Oil Patient Registry (now the Medical Cannabis Patient Registry) are now required to submit certain information directly to GCMB as part of the registry process. Full details are available on our Rules & Laws page.

Compact Physicians: What They Can and Can't Do

- Georgia participates in the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), which offers physicians an expedited path to a full Georgia license. One thing to know: under Georgia's nurse protocol rules, a physician's principal place of practice must be in Georgia or within 50 miles of where the protocol is used. This means a compact physician practicing entirely out of state cannot enter into an APRN protocol agreement in Georgia.

Telemedicine Refresher

- The standard of care for a telemedicine visit is the same as an in-person visit. Physicians must examine a patient in person, unless exceptions under rule 360-3-.07 are met, before an initial prescription for controlled substances. Practitioners providing telemedicine care must make diligent efforts to have the patient examined in person at least annually by a Georgia-licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner. An out-of-state physician treating Georgia patients generally must hold either a full Georgia medical license or a Georgia telemedicine license. If holding a telemedicine license, the physician is strictly held to telemedicine practice and not in person Georgia practice.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Can I enter into an APRN protocol agreement if I practice out of state?

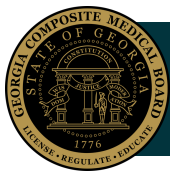
A: Only if your principal place of practice is in Georgia or within 50 miles of where the protocol will be used. If your practice is based entirely out of state, you won't meet this requirement, regardless of how you're licensed in Georgia.

Q: Do the new fingerprint and FCVS requirements apply to me if I'm renewing my license?

A: No. These requirements apply only to first-time, full physician applicants who have never held a Georgia medical license before.

Q: What counts as practicing outside my scope?

A: Scope of practice is defined by your license type/specialty and, for APRNs and PAs, by your specific protocol or supervision agreement. If you're ever unsure whether something falls within your scope, check your protocol agreement first, then reach out through NextRequest.



THE DOS + DON'TS OF LICENSING

DO:

- ✓ Review all application requirements before submitting
- ✓ Ensure all documents are complete and accurate
- ✓ Monitor your email and portal for updates or requests

DON'T:

- ✗ Submit incomplete applications
- ✗ Assume your application is under review without confirmation
- ✗ Wait until the last minute to renew or respond

HELPFUL REMINDERS

Peer Reviewers Needed

GCMB is looking for licensed professionals interested in becoming a Board peer reviewer. Peer reviewers play a key role in evaluating complaints and cases within their area of expertise. If you're interested in giving back to your profession this way, learn more and apply at medicalboard.georgia.gov.

Know Your Scope of Practice

Every license type comes with a defined scope of practice, and it's worth revisiting yours regularly, especially as rules and protocols change. Staying within your scope protects your patients, your license, and your peace of mind.

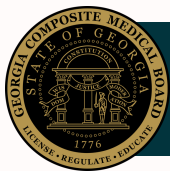
JULY EVENTS WE ATTENDED

GAPA Conference

GCMB was invited to have a booth at the GAPA Conference in Ponte Vedra, Florida from July 15th through 19th. It was a great chance to answer questions directly, meet new PAs and PA students, and build relationships across the state. The turnout and conversations made it a really successful event!

Blue Ribbon Event

On Tuesday, July 21st, Jason presented to the House Health Committee, sharing an overview of the Board, our recent accomplishments, and where we need continued support. The committee was engaged and responsive, and it was encouraging to see lawmakers recognize the work GCMB is doing and want to help us do even more.



QUICK FY27 RULES PREVIEW

Several bills passed this legislative session that will shape new Board rules heading into FY27. Here's what to watch for:

Medical Cannabis: Rules will be updated to reflect the shift from "low THC oil" to "medical cannabis," including the new possession limits and expanded qualifying conditions.

Psychedelic-Assisted Treatment: GCMB will be establishing licensing and safety standards for psychedelic-assisted treatment clinics, including provider qualifications and prescribing protocols.

Radiologist Assistants: A new licensing framework is coming for radiologist assistants, including an advisory committee, continuing education standards, and a defined scope of practice under physician supervision.

Internationally Trained Physicians: A provisional license pathway is being created for internationally trained physicians, particularly to help address provider shortages in rural and underserved parts of the state. However, funding was not secured, so this program will be on hold until further notice.

We'll share more detail on each of these as rulemaking progresses. Stay tuned to future newsletters and our Rules & Laws page for updates.

For the latest updates from the 2026 legislative session, please visit:

<https://medicalboard.georgia.gov/board/rules-laws>.

TO VIEW BOARD ORDERS, VISIT:

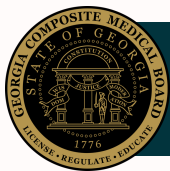
<https://medicalboard.georgia.gov/about-us/about-georgia-composite-medical-board/list-monthly-public-board-orders>

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING

Thursday | August 6th, 2026

To view the Full Board and Committee Meetings agenda, please visit our website at medicalboard.georgia.gov, "About The Board," and click on "Upcoming Events."





BOARD MEMBER CHANGES

We're excited to welcome **Dr. George Harrison, MD**, as our new Board Chair, effective at our August 2026 meeting. We're also welcoming **Dr. Judy Gardner, PharmD**, as our new Vice Chair, effective July 2026.

Dr. Austin Flint, MD, is retiring from the Board. Thank you so much for your years of service, Dr. Flint! You have contributed so much over the years, and we are so grateful.

We also want to thank **Dr. Kathryn K. Cheek, MD**, who most recently served as our Board Chair, for her outstanding leadership and years of dedicated service to GCMB.

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Kathryn K. Cheek, MD

Dr. Kathryn K. Cheek is a board-certified pediatrician with nearly four decades of dedicated service to children and families in Georgia. A graduate of the Medical College of Georgia, Dr. Cheek completed her pediatric residency at Emory University Affiliated Hospitals, where she also served as Chief Resident. She has held leadership positions in pediatric healthcare at both state and national levels, shaping policies that continue to benefit children today.

For 37 years, Dr. Cheek was a partner at Rivertown Pediatrics in Columbus, GA, while simultaneously serving as pediatric faculty for The Medical Center's Family Practice Residency Program. She has held academic appointments with Augusta University's Medical College of Georgia and Mercer University School of Medicine.



Dr. Cheek's contributions extend far beyond clinical care. She has chaired the Georgia Department of Public Health Board, led the Pediatric Healthcare Improvement Coalition of Georgia, and she most recently served as Chair of the Georgia Composite Medical Board. A Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, she has been an active voice on pediatric healthcare innovation and technology, serving on the executive committee for the Academy's Council on Clinical Information Technology.

Her achievements have been recognized with numerous honors, including the Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society, the Big Voice for Children Award, and the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Georgia Chapter of the AAP. In 2014, she was honored by the Paul Amos family's lead gift establishing a new pediatric emergency department at Columbus Regional Health System.

Though retired from clinical practice, Dr. Cheek continues to shape the future of medicine through teaching, consulting, and advocacy for the health and well-being of Georgia's citizens.

Thank you, Dr. Cheek!



GCMB LICENSING STATISTICS

71,597

Total Licensees

+ 12,534

FY24→FY26 Growth (+20.9%)

~25,951

APRN Protocol Agreements

Physicians (incl. Compact): 54,022

Physician Assistants: 8,422

Respiratory Care Professionals: 6,365

Cosmetic Laser Practitioners: 2,136

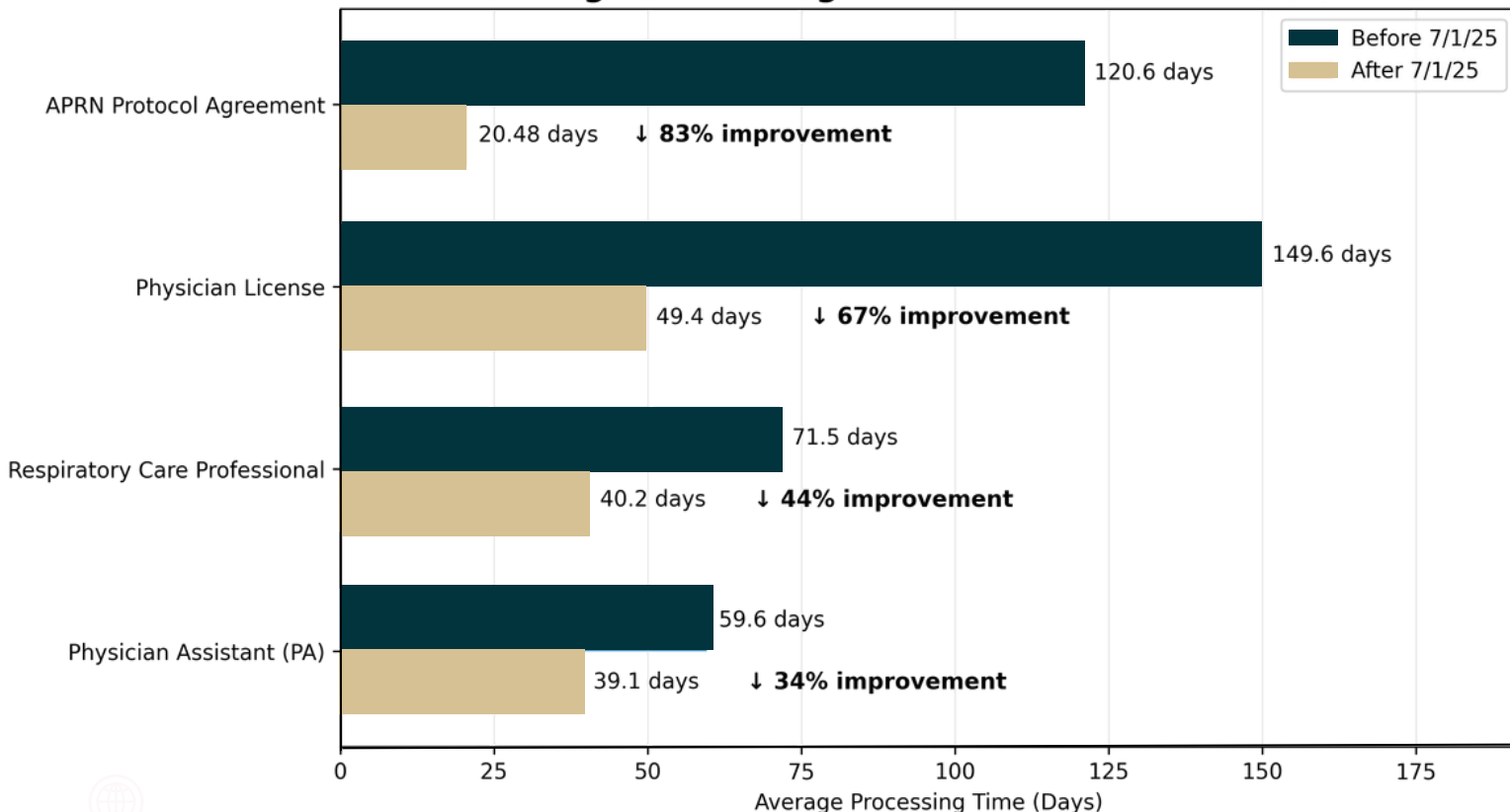
Pain Management Clinics: 261

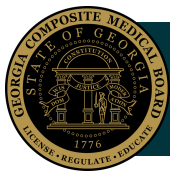
Genetic Counselors: 588

Acupuncturists: 335

AVERAGE LICENSING PROCESSING TIMES

Average Processing Time Before and After 7/1/25





STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Savannah Glass, Compliance Specialist



As the youngest member of the Compliance team, Savannah has made a name for herself.

Her teammates describe her as a team player with a sharp eye for detail and strong organizational skills, always eager to help and always keeping an open mind. She approaches each day with spontaneity, a willingness to learn, and a positive attitude that's contagious. Whether she's sharing a funny story or bringing her charm and energy into the office, she makes everyone smile.

Her kindness, authenticity, and dedication make her a valued teammate, and the whole Compliance team feels lucky to have her.

Savannah is awesome. Thank you, Savannah!

STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Sophie Haire, Compliance Specialist

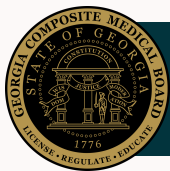


Ask anyone on the Compliance team about Sophie and you'll hear the same thing: she's a real go-getter and a great co-worker.

Her teammates describe her as reliable, hardworking, and always willing to help, whether that means answering a question or jumping in wherever she's needed. She approaches every task with a positive attitude and a genuine willingness to support the people around her.

Ambitious and passionate, Sophie brings dedication to her work that shows up every single day. Her positivity and follow-through make a difference on the team, and she is such a joy to work with.

GCMB is lucky to have her. Thank you, Sophie!



How to Submit Your Licensure Application

- Log in or register in our licensing portal – gateway.medicalboard.georgia.gov
- Start your application and select the correct license type
- Pay the application fee to begin processing
- Upload all required documents completely and accurately
- Allow up to 30 days for initial review

Once your application is under review:

- Check your email and portal regularly – you will receive automatic updates via the email address you listed on your application.
- Respond promptly to any requests for additional information

The faster you respond, the faster we can move your application forward.

If you have questions, please submit a request through NextRequest for assistance.

What Puts Your License at Risk:

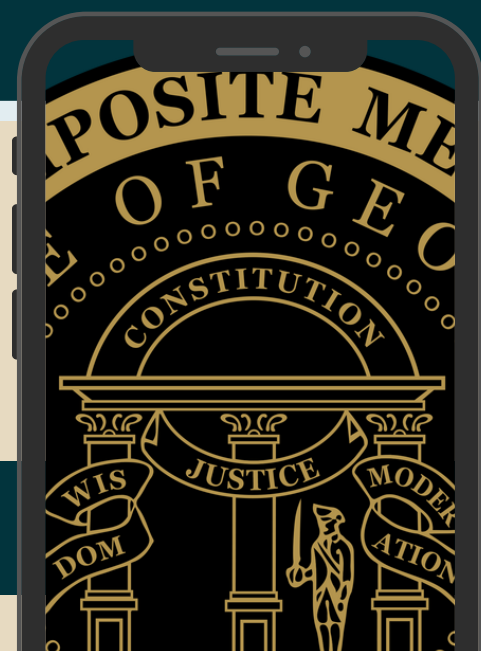
- Practicing outside your scope (ex: APRNs practicing without a valid delegating physician or protocol agreement)
- Failing to maintain required agreements, documentation, or supervision
- Prescribing medications inappropriately or outside accepted standards of care
- Allowing your license to lapse by missing renewal deadlines
- Engaging in unprofessional or unethical conduct, including boundary violations or inappropriate relationships with patients
- Ignoring Board communications or requests for information
- Submitting false, misleading, or incomplete information
- Violating Board rules, regulations, or state law

ONLY IN YOUR INBOX ONCE A MONTH!

We will release an update like this every month!
Save our contact to make sure we aren't marked as Spam.



<https://medicalboard.georgia.gov/>





How to Contact Us/ Submit a Request

For the fastest support, submit your question through NextRequest:

1. Visit: gcmb.nextrequest.com/requests/new
2. Select your Licensing Tech
3. Add your help request details and submit

This ensures your request is routed to the right team and responded to as quickly as possible.

REQUEST A PUBLIC RECORD

You **must** create an account & sign in to upload files.
Pick the right department, enter contact info (*If filing for someone else, list whoever GCMB should contact*), & submit one subject per request unless relevant.
Need help? See the step-by-step guide & review our tips on the right 🍌

Request description *

B I U ☰ ☷

Enter your request - please include all information that could help fulfill this request.

This field is required.

Upload and attach files (optional)

Choose file(s)

We Want to Partner with You!

We're expanding our outreach across Georgia with a focus on education and clear, guided licensure support.

We offer:

- Webinars and Q&A sessions
- In-person or virtual presentations
- Step-by-step licensure walkthroughs

We're also rolling out new resources, including training videos, a refreshed website, and monthly newsletters.

To partner with us, contact Perri.Rabbitt@gcmb.ga.gov.

New message

To

Subject

Send

LICENSURE PORTAL

To access or register in our licensure portal, please visit:
gateway.medicalboard.georgia.gov/

GIVE US FEEDBACK

If you have constructive feedback for our team, please submit it here:
<http://forms.office.com/g/FHKhxsmxY3>

FIND US ON SOCIALS

We post all our updates on our social media. You can follow us here:
[@TheGeorgiaCompositeMedical Board](https://www.facebook.com/TheGeorgiaCompositeMedicalBoard)



<https://medicalboard.georgia.gov/>

