

MSBML Newsletter



Meeting Highlights of the MS State Board of Medical Licensure



MSBML welcomed one new and two returning board members. Welcome Dr. Roderick Givens (left) and welcome back Dr. Ken Lippincott (center) and Dr. Michelle Owens (right). Their terms will end in 2026.

**May 20, 2021 –
Executive Committee
Meeting**

May 20, 2021 – Board Meeting

July 22, 2021 – Board Meeting

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Proceedings from recent meetings of the MS State Board of Medical Licensure

Board Policy on COVID-19 Misinformation

Section 73-43-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, established the Board of Medical Licensure to promulgate and publish rules and regulations necessary to support the functions and to enforce the provisions of law regulating the Mississippi Medical Practice Act. This authority has been a part of the organization since its inception. The Board's job is to protect the public. And the public's safety depends on factual and reliable medical information.

The Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure agrees with the following statement of the Board of Directors of the Federation of State Medical Boards:

"Physicians who generate and spread COVID-19 vaccine misinformation or disinformation are risking disciplinary action by state medical boards, including the suspension or revocation of their medical license. Due to their specialized knowledge and training, licensed physicians possess a high degree of public trust and therefore have a powerful platform in society, whether they recognize it or not. They also have an ethical and professional responsibility to practice medicine in the best interests of their patients and must share information that is factual, scientifically grounded and consensus-driven for the betterment of public health. Spreading inaccurate COVID-19 vaccine information contradicts that responsibility, threatens to further erode public trust in the medical profession and puts all patients at risk."

These principles are not limited to COVID-19 vaccine issues. Physicians have an ethical obligation to ensure that medical information they provide in a media environment is accurate, inclusive of known risks and benefits, commensurate with their medical expertise, and based on valid scientific evidence and insight gained from professional experience. Further, it is strongly recommended that in the use of social media, physicians should separate their personal and professional content online. Physicians must understand that actions online and content posted can affect their reputation, have consequences for their medical careers, and undermine public trust in the medical profession."

"The purpose of this policy is to remind our medical professionals of their ethical responsibilities and obligations; especially in the media and on social media platforms," said Dr. Kenneth Cleveland, Executive Director. "The American Board of Internal Medicine, the American Board of Family Medicine and the American Board of Pediatrics all have issued a joint statement on the dissemination of misinformation. The medical community is unified."

The Board is not attempting to stifle or suppress the free speech of anyone and especially that of its licensed medical professionals. The Board's expectation for licensees is that they will use their education, training, and experience to make the best decisions for the treatment of their patients.

Know Your Board Members

Dr. David McClendon is the owner and CEO of McClendon Medical Clinic in Ocean Springs where he practices outpatient internal medicine. Dr. McClendon offers his patients preventative and chronic care across their health spectrum, and he enjoys the flexibility of private, independent practice. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Mississippi College in 1998. He graduated from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in 2003 and served in Washington, D.C. as the health policy fellow for US Senator Thad Cochran.



Dr. David McClendon currently serves as Interim President of the MS State Board of Medical Licensure. He was appointed to the board in 2016, and his term expires in 2022.

"It is a special, important duty that comes upon you, after somehow distinguishing yourself as a mature, effective leader in your field. We serve because the practice of medicine in Mississippi must be performed at a basic quality level; and the enforcement of that quality must be overseen by a panel of mature physician colleagues of various specialties."

Dr. McClendon and his wife, Nicole, are the proud parents of four children. Dr. McClendon serves as an elder at First Presbyterian Church of Ocean Springs, and he enjoys golf, boating to Horn Island, and discovering a new coastal getaway with his wife.

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Staff Spotlight Frances Carrillo, Staff Officer

Frances is from Smyrna, TN, and attended Middle Tennessee University in Murfreesboro. While her official title is Staff Officer, she likes to introduce herself as assistant to the Executive Director. She has served MSBML for 26 years, working directly with the investigative division, the Deputy Director, and the Executive Director.

"Communicating with different people across government agencies, the private sector and the citizens of Mississippi is the best part of this job. This interaction is sometimes challenging but always gives me the experience in learning new perspectives especially in managing a negative situation into a positive one."

Frances understands the important role of the MS State Board of Medical Licensure, and she enjoys working together with her team to progress the agency's mission. Outside of her work with MSBML, she enjoys traveling, listening to a wide array of music, and attending art events and performances. Frances has a large family and enjoys connecting with them virtually or in-person when permitted.

FBI: Impostors posing as regulators threaten medical licensees nationwide with license suspension

The Federal Bureau of Investigation warned medical providers to be wary of a nationwide fraud scheme targeting doctors and pharmacists. Individuals posing as state or federal regulators have been extorting licensed medical professionals by falsely claiming that their license has been suspended or they are under investigation and must wire a significant amount of money to prevent loss of practice privileges. In two different cases, extortionists have demanded immediate payment of \$15,000 or \$50,000.

Below are tips from the FBI on how to avoid being victimized by imposters posing as regulators:

- Use official websites and official phone numbers to independently verify the authenticity of communications from alleged law enforcement or medical board officials.
- Independently contact those boards or law enforcement agencies to confirm the identity of the person(s) contacting the provider.
- Do not provide personal identifying information (Social Security Number, date of birth, or financial information) in response to suspicious emails, phone calls, or letters and do not provide professional information (medical license number, NPI number, or DEA license number).
- Be wary of any request for money or other forms of payment regarding supposed criminal investigations by alleged law enforcement agencies or regulatory entities.

Read more about this important warning [here](#).



Tentative Dates for Future Board Meetings:

November 17-18, 2021

January 19-20, 2022

March 16-17, 2022

Due to health and safety restrictions related to COVID-19, the public is not allowed to attend meetings in person. Vimeo links are provided prior to the meetings on the Board's website: www.msbml.ms.gov.