

SENATE BILL NO. 2187
with Conference Committee Amendments
SENATE BILL NO. 2187

Introduced by

Senators Cleary, Hogan, K. Roers

Representatives Porter, D. Ruby, Weisz

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact chapter 43-47.1 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to adoption of the counseling compact; and to amend and reenact subsection 2 of
3 section 43-47-06 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to licensure of counselors.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 2 of section 43-47-06 of the North Dakota Century
6 Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

7 2. The board shall issue a license as a licensed professional counselor to each applicant
8 who files an application upon a form and in a manner the board prescribes,
9 accompanied by the required fee, and who furnishes evidence to the board that the
10 applicant:

11 a. Has a master's degree from an accredited school or college in counseling or
12 other program that meets the academic and training standards adopted by the
13 board;

14 b. Provided personal and professional recommendations that meet the
15 requirements adopted by the board and satisfied the board that the applicant will
16 adhere to the highest standards of the profession of counseling;

17 c. Has two years of supervised experience, at least fifty percent of which must have
18 been under a licensed professional counselor or licensed psychologist, or its
19 equivalent as determined by the board, and the additional supervised experience
20 may have been with other qualified professionals designated by the board which
21 are competent in the area of practice being supervised, if barriers due to
22 geographical location, disability, or other factors determined by the board to
23 create a hardship exist for the applicant. The qualified professional must be

- 1 registered or otherwise qualified as a clinical supervisor by the board that
2 licenses the other professional;
- 3 d. Provided a statement of professional intent to practice in this state describing the
4 applicant's proposed use of the license, the intended client population, and the
5 counseling procedures, as defined by the board, the applicant intends to use in
6 serving the client population; and
- 7 e. Has demonstrated knowledge in the field of counseling by successful completion
8 of an examination prescribed by the board.

9 **SECTION 2.** Chapter 43-47.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as
10 follows:

11 **43-47.1-01. Counseling compact.**

12 **ARTICLE I - PURPOSE**

- 13 1. The purpose of this compact is to facilitate interstate practice of licensed professional
14 counselors with the goal of improving public access to professional counseling
15 services.
- 16 2. The practice of professional counseling occurs in the state where the client is located
17 at the time of the counseling services. The compact preserves the regulatory authority
18 of states to protect public health and safety through the current system of state
19 licensure.
- 20 3. This compact is designed to:
- 21 a. Increase public access to professional counseling services by providing for the
22 mutual recognition of other member state licenses;
- 23 b. Enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;
- 24 c. Encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multistate practice for
25 licensed professional counselors;
- 26 d. Support spouses of relocating active duty military personnel;
- 27 e. Enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information
28 among member states;
- 29 f. Allow for the use of telehealth technology to facilitate increased access to
30 professional counseling services;

- 1 g. Support the uniformity of professional counseling licensure requirements
2 throughout the states to promote public safety and public health benefits;
3 h. Invest all member states with the authority to hold a licensed professional
4 counselor accountable for meeting all state practice laws in the state in which the
5 client is located at the time care is rendered through the mutual recognition of
6 member state licenses;
7 i. Eliminate the necessity for licenses in multiple states; and
8 j. Provide opportunities for interstate practice by licensed professional counselors
9 who meet uniform licensure requirements.

ARTICLE II - DEFINITIONS

11 As used in this chapter, and except as otherwise provided, the following definitions apply:

- 12 1. "Active duty military" means full-time duty status in the active uniformed service of the
13 United States of America, including members of the national guard and reserve on
14 active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. chapters 1209 and 1211.
15 2. "Adverse action" means any administrative, civil, equitable, or criminal action
16 permitted by a state's laws which is imposed by a licensing board or other authority
17 against a licensed professional counselor, including actions against an individual's
18 license or privilege to practice, such as revocation, suspension, probation, monitoring
19 of the licensee, limitation on the licensee's practice, or any other encumbrance on
20 licensure affecting a licensed professional counselor's authorization to practice,
21 including issuance of a cease and desist action.
22 3. "Alternative program" means a nondisciplinary monitoring or practice remediation
23 process approved by a professional counseling licensing board to address impaired
24 practitioners.
25 4. "Continuing competence and education" means a requirement, as a condition of
26 license renewal, to provide evidence of participation in, and completion of, educational
27 and professional activities relevant to practice or area of work.
28 5. "Counseling compact commission" or "commission" means the national administrative
29 body which membership consists of all states that have enacted the compact.
30 6. "Current significant investigative information" means:

- 1 a. Investigative information that a licensing board, after a preliminary inquiry that
2 includes notification and an opportunity for the licensed professional counselor to
3 respond, if required by state law, has reason to believe is not groundless and, if
4 proved true, would indicate more than a minor infraction; or
- 5 b. Investigative information that indicates the licensed professional counselor
6 represents an immediate threat to public health and safety regardless of whether
7 the licensed professional counselor has been notified and had an opportunity to
8 respond.
- 9 7. "Data system" means a repository of information about licensees, including continuing
10 education, examination, licensure, investigative, privilege to practice, and adverse
11 action information.
- 12 8. "Encumbered license" means a license in which an adverse action restricts the
13 practice of licensed professional counseling by the licensee and the adverse action
14 has been reported to the national practitioner data bank.
- 15 9. "Encumbrance" means a revocation or suspension of, or any limitation on, the full and
16 unrestricted practice of licensed professional counseling by a licensing board.
- 17 10. "Executive committee" means a group of directors elected or appointed to act on
18 behalf of, and within the powers granted to them by, the commission.
- 19 11. "Home state" means the member state that is the licensee's primary state of
20 residence.
- 21 12. "Impaired practitioner" means an individual who has a condition that may impair the
22 individual's ability to practice as a licensed professional counselor without some type
23 of intervention and may include alcohol and drug dependence, mental health
24 impairment, and neurological or physical impairments.
- 25 13. "Investigative information" means information, records, and documents received or
26 generated by a professional counseling licensing board pursuant to an investigation.
- 27 14. "Jurisprudence requirement", if required by a member state, means the assessment of
28 an individual's knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of professional
29 counseling in a state.

- 1 15. "Licensed professional counselor" means a counselor licensed by a member state,
2 regardless of the title used by that state, to independently assess, diagnose, and treat
3 behavioral health conditions.
- 4 16. "Licensee" means an individual who currently holds an authorization from the state to
5 practice as a licensed professional counselor.
- 6 17. "Licensing board" means the agency of a state, or equivalent, responsible for the
7 licensing and regulation of licensed professional counselors.
- 8 18. "Member state" means a state that has enacted the compact.
- 9 19. "Privilege to practice" means a legal authorization, which is equivalent to a license,
10 permitting the practice of professional counseling in a remote state.
- 11 20. "Professional counseling" means the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of
12 behavioral health conditions by a licensed professional counselor.
- 13 21. "Remote state" means a member state other than the home state, where a licensee is
14 exercising or seeking to exercise the privilege to practice.
- 15 22. "Rule" means a regulation promulgated by the commission which has the force of law.
- 16 23. "Single state license" means a licensed professional counselor license issued by a
17 member state which authorizes practice only within the issuing state and does not
18 include a privilege to practice in any other member state.
- 19 24. "State" means any state, commonwealth, district, or territory of the United States of
20 America which regulates the practice of professional counseling.
- 21 25. "Telehealth" means the application of telecommunication technology to deliver
22 professional counseling services remotely to assess, diagnose, and treat behavioral
23 health conditions.
- 24 26. "Unencumbered license" means a license that authorizes a licensed professional
25 counselor to engage in the full and unrestricted practice of professional counseling.

26 **ARTICLE III - STATE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT**

- 27 1. To participate in the compact, a state currently:
- 28 a. Shall license and regulate licensed professional counselors;
- 29 b. Shall require licensees to pass a nationally recognized exam approved by the
30 commission;

- 1 c. Shall require licensees to have a sixty semester-hour, or ninety quarter-hour,
2 master's degree in counseling or sixty semester-hours, or ninety quarter-hours, of
3 graduate course work, including the following topic areas:
4 (1) Professional counseling orientation and ethical practice;
5 (2) Social and cultural diversity;
6 (3) Human growth and development;
7 (4) Career development;
8 (5) Counseling and helping relationships;
9 (6) Group counseling and group work;
10 (7) Diagnosis and treatment; assessment and testing;
11 (8) Research and program evaluation; and
12 (9) Other areas as determined by the commission;
13 d. Shall require licensees to complete a supervised postgraduate professional
14 experience as defined by the commission; and
15 e. Must have a mechanism in place for receiving and investigating complaints about
16 licensees.
17 2. A member state shall:
18 a. Participate fully in the commission's data system, including using the
19 commission's unique identifier as defined in rules;
20 b. Notify the commission, in compliance with the terms of the compact and rules, of
21 any adverse action or the availability of investigative information regarding a
22 licensee;
23 c. Implement or use procedures for considering the criminal history records of
24 applicants for an initial privilege to practice. These procedures must include the
25 submission of fingerprints or other biometric-based information by applicants for
26 the purpose of obtaining an applicant's criminal history record information from
27 the federal bureau of investigation and the agency responsible for retaining that
28 state's criminal records;
29 (1) A member state shall implement fully a criminal background check
30 requirement, within a time frame established by rule, by receiving the results

1 of the federal bureau of investigation record search and shall use the results
2 in making licensure decisions.

3 (2) Communication between a member state, the commission, and among
4 member states regarding the verification of eligibility for licensure through
5 the compact may not include any information received from the federal
6 bureau of investigation relating to a federal criminal records check
7 performed by a member state under Public Law No. 92-544.

8 d. Comply with the rules of the commission;

9 e. Require an applicant to obtain or retain a license in the home state and meet the
10 home state's qualifications for licensure or renewal of licensure, as well as all
11 other applicable state laws;

12 f. Grant the privilege to practice to a licensee holding a valid unencumbered license
13 in another member state in accordance with the terms of the compact and rules;
14 and

15 g. Provide for the attendance of the state's commissioner at the counseling compact
16 commission meetings.

17 3. Member states may charge a fee for granting the privilege to practice.

18 4. Individuals not residing in a member state shall continue to be able to apply for a
19 member state's single state license as provided under the laws of each member state;
20 however, the single state license granted to these individuals may not be recognized
21 as granting a privilege to practice professional counseling in any other member state.

22 5. This compact does not affect the requirements established by a member state for the
23 issuance of a single state license.

24 6. A license issued to a licensed professional counselor by a home state to a resident in
25 that state must be recognized by each member state as authorizing a licensed
26 professional counselor to practice professional counseling, under a privilege to
27 practice, in each member state.

28 **ARTICLE IV - PRIVILEGE TO PRACTICE**

29 1. To exercise the privilege to practice under the terms and provisions of the compact,
30 the licensee:

31 a. Shall hold a license in the home state;

- 1 b. Must have a valid United States social security number or national practitioner
- 2 identifier;
- 3 c. Must be eligible for a privilege to practice in any member state in accordance with
- 4 subsections 4, 7, and 8;
- 5 d. May not have not had any encumbrance or restriction against any license or
- 6 privilege to practice within the previous two years;
- 7 e. Shall notify the commission that the licensee is seeking the privilege to practice
- 8 within a remote state;
- 9 f. Shall pay any applicable fees, including any state fee, for the privilege to practice;
- 10 g. Shall meet any continuing competence and education requirements established
- 11 by the home state;
- 12 h. Shall meet any jurisprudence requirements established by the remote state in
- 13 which the licensee is seeking a privilege to practice; and
- 14 i. Shall report to the commission any adverse action, encumbrance, or restriction
- 15 on license taken by any nonmember state within thirty days from the date the
- 16 action is taken.
- 17 2. The privilege to practice is valid until the expiration date of the home state license. The
- 18 licensee shall comply with the requirements of subsection 1 to maintain the privilege to
- 19 practice in the remote state.
- 20 3. A licensee providing professional counseling in a remote state under the privilege to
- 21 practice shall adhere to the laws and regulations of the remote state.
- 22 4. A licensee providing professional counseling services in a remote state is subject to
- 23 that state's regulatory authority. In accordance with due process and that state's laws,
- 24 a remote state may remove a licensee's privilege to practice in the remote state for a
- 25 specific period of time, impose fines, and take any other necessary actions to protect
- 26 the health and safety of its citizens. The licensee may be ineligible for a privilege to
- 27 practice in any member state until the specific time for removal has passed and all
- 28 fines are paid.
- 29 5. If a home state license is encumbered, the licensee shall lose the privilege to practice
- 30 in any remote state until the following occur:
- 31 a. The home state license is no longer encumbered; and

- 1 b. The licensee has not had any encumbrance or restriction against any license or
2 privilege to practice within the previous two years.
- 3 6. Once an encumbered license in the home state is restored to good standing, the
4 licensee shall meet the requirements of subsection 1 to obtain a privilege to practice in
5 any remote state.
- 6 7. If a licensee's privilege to practice in any remote state is removed, the individual may
7 lose the privilege to practice in all other remote states until the following occur:
- 8 a. The specific period of time for which the privilege to practice was removed has
9 ended;
- 10 b. All fines have been paid; and
- 11 c. The licensee has not had any encumbrance or restriction against any license or
12 privilege to practice within the previous two years.
- 13 8. Once the requirements of subsection 7 have been met, the licensee shall meet the
14 requirements in subsection 1 to obtain a privilege to practice in a remote state.

15 **ARTICLE V - OBTAINING A NEW HOME STATE LICENSE**

16 **BASED ON A PRIVILEGE TO PRACTICE**

- 17 1. A licensed professional counselor may hold a home state license, which allows for a
18 privilege to practice in other member states, in only one member state at a time.
- 19 2. If a licensed professional counselor changes primary state of residence by moving
20 between two member states:
- 21 a. The licensed professional counselor shall file an application for obtaining a new
22 home state license based on a privilege to practice, pay all applicable fees, and
23 notify the current and new home state in accordance with applicable rules
24 adopted by the commission.
- 25 b. Upon receipt of an application for obtaining a new home state license by virtue of
26 a privilege to practice, the new home state shall verify that the licensed
27 professional counselor meets the pertinent criteria outlined in article IV via the
28 data system, without need for primary source verification except for:
- 29 (1) A federal bureau of investigation fingerprint-based criminal background
30 check if not previously performed or updated pursuant to applicable rules
31 adopted by the commission in accordance with Public Law No. 92-544;

- 1 (2) A criminal background check as required by the new home state; and
2 (3) Completion of any requisite jurisprudence requirements of the new home
3 state.
- 4 c. The former home state shall convert the former home state license into a
5 privilege to practice once the new home state has activated the new home state
6 license in accordance with applicable rules adopted by the commission.
- 7 d. Notwithstanding any other provision of this compact, if the licensed professional
8 counselor cannot meet the criteria in article IV, the new home state may apply its
9 requirements for issuing a new single state license.
- 10 e. The licensed professional counselor shall pay all applicable fees to the new
11 home state to be issued a new home state license.
- 12 3. If a licensed professional counselor changes primary state of residence by moving
13 from a member state to a nonmember state, or from a nonmember state to a member
14 state, the state criteria must apply for issuance of a single state license in the new
15 state.
- 16 4. This compact may not interfere with a licensee's ability to hold a single state license in
17 multiple states; however, for the purposes of this compact, a licensee must have only
18 one home state license.
- 19 5. This compact may not affect the requirements established by a member state for the
20 issuance of a single state license.

21 **ARTICLE VI - ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL OR THEIR SPOUSES**

22 Active duty military personnel, or their spouse, shall designate a home state where the
23 individual has a current license in good standing. The individual may retain the home state
24 designation during the period the service member is on active duty. Subsequent to designating
25 a home state, the individual shall change only the individual's home state through application for
26 licensure in the new state, or through the process outlined in article V.

27 **ARTICLE VII - COMPACT PRIVILEGE TO PRACTICE TELEHEALTH**

- 28 1. Member states shall recognize the right of a licensed professional counselor, licensed
29 by a home state in accordance with article III and under rules promulgated by the
30 commission, to practice professional counseling in any member state via telehealth

1 under a privilege to practice as provided in the compact and rules promulgated by the
2 commission.

3 2. A licensee providing professional counseling services in a remote state under the
4 privilege to practice shall adhere to the laws and regulations of the remote state.

ARTICLE VIII - ADVERSE ACTIONS

6 1. In addition to the other powers conferred by state law, a remote state must have the
7 authority, in accordance with existing state due process law, to:

8 a. Take adverse action against a licensed professional counselor's privilege to
9 practice within that member state; and

10 b. Issue subpoenas for both hearings and investigations that require the attendance
11 and testimony of witnesses as well as the production of evidence. Subpoenas
12 issued by a licensing board in a member state for the attendance and testimony
13 of witnesses or the production of evidence from another member state must be
14 enforced in the latter state by any court of competent jurisdiction, according to the
15 practice and procedure of that court applicable to subpoenas issued in
16 proceedings pending before the court. The issuing authority shall pay any witness
17 fees, travel expenses, mileage, and other fees required by the service statutes of
18 the state in which the witnesses or evidence are located.

19 2. Only the home state has the power to take adverse action against a licensed
20 professional counselor's license issued by the home state.

21 3. For purposes of taking adverse action, the home state shall give the same priority and
22 effect to reported conduct received from a member state as the home state would if
23 the conduct had occurred within the home state. In so doing, the home state shall
24 apply its state laws to determine appropriate action.

25 4. The home state shall complete any pending investigations of a licensed professional
26 counselor who changes primary state of residence during the course of the
27 investigations. The home state also has the authority to take appropriate action and
28 promptly shall report the conclusions of the investigations to the administrator of the
29 data system. The administrator of the coordinated licensure information system
30 promptly shall notify the new home state of any adverse actions.

- 1 5. A member state, if otherwise permitted by state law, may recover from the affected
2 licensed professional counselor the costs of investigations and dispositions of cases
3 resulting from any adverse action taken against that licensed professional counselor.
- 4 6. A member state may take adverse action based on the factual findings of the remote
5 state, provided that the member state follows its procedures for taking the adverse
6 action.
- 7 7. Joint investigations:
- 8 a. In addition to the authority granted to a member state by its respective
9 professional counseling practice act or other applicable state law, any member
10 state may participate with other member states in joint investigations of
11 licensees.
- 12 b. Member states shall share any investigative, litigation, or compliance materials in
13 furtherance of any joint or individual investigation initiated under the compact.
- 14 8. If adverse action is taken by the home state against the license of a licensed
15 professional counselor, the licensed professional counselor's privilege to practice in all
16 other member states must be deactivated until all encumbrances have been removed
17 from the state license. All home state disciplinary orders that impose adverse action
18 against the license of a licensed professional counselor must include a statement that
19 the licensed professional counselor's privilege to practice is deactivated in all member
20 states during the pendency of the order.
- 21 9. If a member state takes adverse action, the member state promptly shall notify the
22 administrator of the data system. The administrator of the data system promptly shall
23 notify the home state of any adverse actions by remote states.
- 24 10. This compact does not override a member state's decision that participation in an
25 alternative program may be used in lieu of adverse action.

26 **ARTICLE IX - ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNSELING COMPACT COMMISSION**

- 27 1. The compact member states hereby create and establish a joint public agency known
28 as the counseling compact commission.
- 29 a. The commission is an instrumentality of the compact states.
- 30 b. Venue is proper and judicial proceedings by or against the commission must be
31 brought solely and exclusively in a court of competent jurisdiction where the

- 1 principal office of the commission is located. The commission may waive venue
2 and jurisdictional defenses to the extent the commission adopts or consents to
3 participate in alternative dispute resolution proceedings.
- 4 c. This compact may not be construed to be a waiver of sovereign immunity.
- 5 2. Membership, voting, and meetings.
- 6 a. Each member state must have and be limited to one delegate selected by that
7 member state's licensing board.
- 8 b. The delegate must be either:
- 9 (1) A current member of the licensing board at the time of appointment, who is
10 a licensed professional counselor or public member; or
- 11 (2) An administrator of the licensing board.
- 12 c. Any delegate may be removed or suspended from office as provided by the law
13 of the state from which the delegate is appointed.
- 14 d. The member state licensing board shall fill any vacancy occurring on the
15 commission within sixty days.
- 16 e. Each delegate is entitled to one vote with regard to the promulgation of rules and
17 creation of bylaws and otherwise must have an opportunity to participate in the
18 business and affairs of the commission.
- 19 f. A delegate shall vote in person or by such other means as provided in the
20 bylaws. The bylaws may provide for delegates' participation in meetings by
21 telephone or other means of communication.
- 22 g. The commission shall meet at least once during each calendar year. Additional
23 meetings must be held as set forth in the bylaws.
- 24 h. The commission shall establish by rule a term of office for delegates and may by
25 rule establish term limits.
- 26 3. The commission has the following powers and duties to:
- 27 a. Establish the fiscal year of the commission;
- 28 b. Establish bylaws;
- 29 c. Maintain its financial records in accordance with the bylaws;
- 30 d. Meet and take such actions as are consistent with the provisions of this compact
31 and the bylaws;

- 1 e. Promulgate rules that are binding to the extent and in the manner provided for in
2 the compact;
- 3 f. Bring and prosecute legal proceedings or actions in the name of the commission,
4 provided that the standing of any state licensing board to sue or be sued under
5 applicable law must not be affected;
- 6 g. Purchase and maintain insurance and bonds;
- 7 h. Borrow, accept, or contract for services of personnel, including employees of a
8 member state;
- 9 i. Hire employees, elect or appoint officers, fix compensation, define duties, grant
10 the individuals appropriate authority to carry out the purposes of the compact,
11 and establish the commission's personnel policies and programs relating to
12 conflicts of interest, qualifications of personnel, and other related personnel
13 matters;
- 14 j. Accept any and all appropriate donations and grants of money, equipment,
15 supplies, materials, and services, and to receive, utilize, and dispose of the
16 same; provided that at all times the commission shall avoid any appearance of
17 impropriety or conflict of interest, or both;
- 18 k. Lease, purchase, accept appropriate gifts or donations of, or otherwise to own,
19 hold, improve, or use, any property, real, personal, or mixed; provided that at all
20 times the commission shall avoid any appearance of impropriety;
- 21 l. Sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, abandon, or otherwise dispose
22 of any property, real, personal, or mixed;
- 23 m. Establish a budget and make expenditures;
- 24 n. Borrow money;
- 25 o. Appoint committees, including standing committees composed of members, state
26 regulators, state legislators or their representatives, and consumer
27 representatives, and such other interested persons as may be designated in this
28 compact and the bylaws;
- 29 p. Provide and receive information from, and cooperate with, law enforcement
30 agencies;
- 31 q. Establish and elect an executive committee; and

- 1 r. Perform such other functions as may be necessary or appropriate to achieve the
2 purposes of this compact consistent with the state regulation of professional
3 counseling licensure and practice.
- 4 4. The executive committee.
- 5 a. The executive committee has the power to act on behalf of the commission
6 according to the terms of this compact.
- 7 b. The executive committee is composed of up to eleven members, including:
8 (1) Seven voting members who are elected by the commission from the current
9 membership of the commission; and
10 (2) Up to four ex-officio, nonvoting members from four recognized national
11 professional counselor organizations.
- 12 c. The ex-officio members will be selected by their respective organizations.
- 13 d. The commission may remove any member of the executive committee as
14 provided in bylaws.
- 15 e. The executive committee shall meet at least annually.
- 16 f. The executive committee has the following duties and responsibilities to:
17 (1) Recommend to the entire commission changes to the rules or bylaws,
18 changes to this compact legislation, fees paid by compact member states
19 such as annual dues, and any commission compact fee charged to
20 licensees for the privilege to practice;
21 (2) Ensure compact administration services are appropriately provided,
22 contractual or otherwise;
23 (3) Prepare and recommend the budget;
24 (4) Maintain financial records on behalf of the commission;
25 (5) Monitor compact compliance of member states and provide compliance
26 reports to the commission;
27 (6) Establish additional committees as necessary; and
28 (7) Execute other duties as provided in rules or bylaws.
- 29 5. Meetings of the commission.

- 1 a. All meetings must be open to the public, and public notice of meetings must be
2 given in the same manner as required under the rulemaking provisions in
3 article XI.
- 4 b. The commission or the executive committee or other committees of the
5 commission may convene in a closed, nonpublic meeting if the commission or
6 executive committee or other committees of the commission must discuss:
- 7 (1) Noncompliance of a member state with its obligations under the compact;
8 (2) The employment, compensation, discipline or other matters, practices or
9 procedures related to specific employees, or other matters related to the
10 commission's internal personnel practices and procedures;
11 (3) Current, threatened, or reasonably anticipated litigation;
12 (4) Negotiation of contracts for the purchase, lease, or sale of goods, services,
13 or real estate;
14 (5) Accusing any person of a crime or formally censuring any person;
15 (6) Disclosure of trade secrets or commercial or financial information that is
16 privileged or confidential;
17 (7) Disclosure of information of a personal nature where disclosure would
18 constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
19 (8) Disclosure of investigative records compiled for law enforcement purposes;
20 (9) Disclosure of information related to any investigative reports prepared by or
21 on behalf of or for use of the commission or other committee charged with
22 responsibility of investigation or determination of compliance issues
23 pursuant to the compact; or
24 (10) Matters specifically exempted from disclosure by federal or member state
25 statute.
- 26 c. If a meeting, or portion of a meeting, is closed pursuant to this subsection, the
27 commission's legal counsel or designee shall certify that the meeting may be
28 closed and shall reference each relevant exempting provision.
- 29 d. The commission shall keep minutes that fully and clearly describe all matters
30 discussed in a meeting and shall provide a full and accurate summary of actions
31 taken, and the reasons therefore, including a description of the views expressed.

1 All documents considered in connection with an action must be identified in the
2 minutes. All minutes and documents of a closed meeting must remain under seal,
3 subject to release by a majority vote of the commission or order of a court of
4 competent jurisdiction.

5 6. Financing of the commission.

- 6 a. The commission shall pay, or provide for the payment of, the reasonable
7 expenses of its establishment, organization, and ongoing activities.
- 8 b. The commission may accept any and all appropriate revenue sources, donations,
9 and grants of money, equipment, supplies, materials, and services.
- 10 c. The commission may levy and collect an annual assessment from each member
11 state or impose fees on other parties to cover the cost of the operations and
12 activities of the commission and its staff, which must be in a total amount
13 sufficient to cover its annual budget as approved each year for which revenue is
14 not provided by other sources. The aggregate annual assessment amount must
15 be allocated based upon a formula to be determined by the commission, which
16 shall promulgate a rule binding upon all member states.
- 17 d. The commission may not incur obligations of any kind before securing the funds
18 adequate to meet the obligations, nor may the commission pledge the credit of
19 any of the member states, except by and with the authority of the member state.
- 20 e. The commission shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements.
21 The receipts and disbursements of the commission must be subject to the audit
22 and accounting procedures established under its bylaws; however, all receipts
23 and disbursements of funds handled by the commission shall be audited yearly
24 by a certified or licensed public accountant, and the report of the audit must be
25 included in and become part of the annual report of the commission.

26 7. Qualified immunity, defense, and indemnification.

- 27 a. The members, officers, executive director, employees, and representatives of the
28 commission are immune from suit and liability, either personally or in their official
29 capacity, for any claim for damage to or loss of property or personal injury or
30 other civil liability caused by or arising out of any actual or alleged act, error, or
31 omission that occurred, or that the person against which the claim is made had a

1 reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of commission
2 employment, duties, or responsibilities, provided that nothing in this subdivision
3 may be construed to protect any such person from suit or liability, or both, for any
4 damage, loss, injury, or liability caused by the intentional, willful, or wanton
5 misconduct of that person.

6 b. The commission shall defend any member, officer, executive director, employee,
7 or representative of the commission in any civil action seeking to impose liability
8 arising out of any actual or alleged act, error, or omission that occurred within the
9 scope of commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, or that the person
10 against which the claim is made had a reasonable basis for believing occurred
11 within the scope of commission employment, duties, or responsibilities; provided
12 that nothing herein may be construed to prohibit that person from retaining that
13 person's own counsel; and provided further, that the actual or alleged act, error,
14 or omission did not result from that person's intentional, willful, or wanton
15 misconduct.

16 c. The commission shall indemnify and hold harmless any member, officer,
17 executive director, employee, or representative of the commission for the amount
18 of any settlement or judgment obtained against that person arising out of any
19 actual or alleged act, error, or omission that occurred within the scope of
20 commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, or that such person had a
21 reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of commission
22 employment, duties, or responsibilities, provided that the actual or alleged act,
23 error, or omission did not result from the intentional, willful, or wanton misconduct
24 of that person.

ARTICLE X - DATA SYSTEM

25
26 1. The commission shall provide for the development, maintenance, operation, and
27 utilization of a coordinated database and reporting system containing licensure,
28 adverse action, and investigative information on all licensed individuals in member
29 states.

- 1 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of state law to the contrary, a member state shall
2 submit a uniform data set to the data system on all individuals to whom this compact is
3 applicable as required by the rules of the commission, including:
 - 4 a. Identifying information;
 - 5 b. Licensure data;
 - 6 c. Adverse actions against a license or privilege to practice;
 - 7 d. Nonconfidential information related to alternative program participation;
 - 8 e. Any denial of application for licensure, and the reason for such denial;
 - 9 f. Current significant investigative information; and
 - 10 g. Other information that may facilitate the administration of this compact, as
11 determined by the rules of the commission.
- 12 3. Investigative information pertaining to a licensee in any member state will only be
13 available to other member states.
- 14 4. The commission promptly shall notify all member states of any adverse action taken
15 against a licensee or an individual applying for a license. Adverse action information
16 pertaining to a licensee in any member state will be available to any other member
17 state.
- 18 5. Member states contributing information to the data system may designate information
19 that may not be shared with the public without the express permission of the
20 contributing state.
- 21 6. Any information submitted to the data system which is subsequently required to be
22 expunged by the laws of the member state contributing the information must be
23 removed from the data system.

ARTICLE XI - RULEMAKING

- 25 1. The commission shall promulgate reasonable rules to effectively and efficiently
26 achieve the purpose of the compact. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the
27 commission exercises its rulemaking authority in a manner beyond the scope of the
28 purposes of the compact, or the powers granted under this compact, then such an
29 action by the commission is invalid and has no force or effect.

- 1 2. The commission shall exercise its rulemaking powers pursuant to the criteria set forth
2 in this article and the rules adopted under this article. Rules and amendments become
3 binding as of the date specified in each rule or amendment.
- 4 3. If a majority of the legislatures of the member states rejects a rule, by enactment of a
5 statute or resolution in the same manner used to adopt the compact within four years
6 of the date of adoption of the rule, the rule has no further force and effect in any
7 member state.
- 8 4. Rules or amendments to the rules must be adopted at a regular or special meeting of
9 the commission.
- 10 5. Before promulgation and adoption of a final rule or rules by the commission, and at
11 least thirty days in advance of the meeting at which the rule will be considered and
12 voted upon, the commission shall file a notice of proposed rulemaking:
 - 13 a. On the website of the commission or other publicly accessible platform; and
 - 14 b. On the website of each member state's professional counseling licensing board,
15 other publicly accessible platform, or the publication in which each state would
16 otherwise publish proposed rules.
- 17 6. The notice of proposed rulemaking must include:
 - 18 a. The proposed time, date, and location of the meeting at which the rule will be
19 considered and voted upon;
 - 20 b. The text of the proposed rule or amendment and the reason for the proposed
21 rule;
 - 22 c. A request for comments on the proposed rule from any interested person; and
 - 23 d. The manner in which interested persons may submit notice to the commission of
24 their intention to attend the public hearing and any written comments.
- 25 7. Before adoption of a proposed rule, the commission shall allow persons to submit
26 written data, facts, opinions, and arguments, which must be made available to the
27 public.
- 28 8. The commission shall grant an opportunity for a public hearing before the commission
29 adopts a rule or amendment if a hearing is requested by:
 - 30 a. At least twenty-five persons;
 - 31 b. A state or federal governmental subdivision or agency; or

- 1 c. An association having at least twenty-five members.
- 2 9. If a hearing is held on the proposed rule or amendment, the commission shall publish
3 the place, time, and date of the scheduled public hearing. If the hearing is held via
4 electronic means, the commission shall publish the mechanism for access to the
5 electronic hearing.
- 6 a. All persons wishing to be heard at the hearing shall notify the executive director
7 of the commission or other designated member in writing of their desire to appear
8 and testify at the hearing not less than five business days before the scheduled
9 date of the hearing.
- 10 b. Hearings must be conducted in a manner providing each person that wishes to
11 comment a fair and reasonable opportunity to comment orally or in writing.
- 12 c. All hearings will be recorded. A copy of the recording will be made available on
13 request.
- 14 d. This article may not be construed as requiring a separate hearing on each rule.
15 Rules may be grouped for the convenience of the commission at hearings
16 required by this article.
- 17 10. Following the scheduled hearing date, or by the close of business on the scheduled
18 hearing date if the hearing was not held, the commission shall consider all written and
19 oral comments received.
- 20 11. If no written notice of intent to attend the public hearing by interested parties is
21 received, the commission may proceed with promulgation of the proposed rule without
22 a public hearing.
- 23 12. By majority vote of all members, the commission shall take final action on the
24 proposed rule and shall determine the effective date of the rule, if any, based on the
25 rulemaking record and the full text of the rule.
- 26 13. Upon determination that an emergency exists, the commission may consider and
27 adopt an emergency rule without prior notice, opportunity for comment, or hearing,
28 provided that the usual rulemaking procedures provided in the compact and in this
29 article must be retroactively applied to the rule as soon as reasonably possible, in no
30 event later than ninety days after the effective date of the rule. For the purposes of this
31 subsection, an emergency rule is one that must be adopted immediately to:

- 1 a. Meet an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare;
- 2 b. Prevent a loss of commission or member state funds;
- 3 c. Meet a deadline for the promulgation of an administrative rule that is established
- 4 by federal law or rule; or
- 5 d. Protect public health and safety.
- 6 14. The commission or an authorized committee of the commission may direct revisions to
- 7 a previously adopted rule or amendment for purposes of correcting typographical
- 8 errors, errors in format, errors in consistency, or grammatical errors. Public notice of
- 9 any revisions must be posted on the website of the commission. The revision is
- 10 subject to challenge by any person for a period of thirty days after posting. The
- 11 revision may be challenged only on grounds that the revision results in a material
- 12 change to a rule. A challenge must be made in writing and delivered to the chair of the
- 13 commission before the end of the notice period. If no challenge is made, the revision
- 14 will take effect without further action. If the revision is challenged, the revision may not
- 15 take effect without the approval of the commission.

ARTICLE XII - OVERSIGHT, DISPUTE RESOLUTION, AND ENFORCEMENT

- 17 1. Oversight.
- 18 a. The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government in each
- 19 member state shall enforce this compact and take all actions necessary and
- 20 appropriate to effectuate the compact's purposes and intent. The provisions of
- 21 this compact and the rules promulgated under this compact have standing as
- 22 statutory law.
- 23 b. All courts shall take judicial notice of the compact and the rules in any judicial or
- 24 administrative proceeding in a member state pertaining to the subject matter of
- 25 this compact which may affect the powers, responsibilities, or actions of the
- 26 commission.
- 27 c. The commission must be entitled to receive service of process in the proceeding
- 28 and must have standing to intervene in the proceeding for all purposes. Failure to
- 29 provide service of process to the commission renders a judgment or order void
- 30 as to the commission, this compact, or promulgated rules.

- 1 2. If the commission determines a member state has defaulted in the performance of its
2 obligations or responsibilities under this compact or the promulgated rules, the
3 commission shall:
- 4 a. Provide written notice to the defaulting state and other member states of the
5 nature of the default, the proposed means of curing the default or any other
6 action to be taken by the commission, or any combination of these requirements;
7 and
- 8 b. Provide remedial training and specific technical assistance regarding the default.
- 9 3. If a state in default fails to cure the default, the defaulting state may be terminated
10 from the compact upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the member states, and all
11 rights, privileges, and benefits conferred by this compact may be terminated on the
12 effective date of termination. A cure of the default does not relieve the offending state
13 of obligations or liabilities incurred during the period of default.
- 14 4. Termination of membership in the compact must be imposed only after all other means
15 of securing compliance have been exhausted. Notice of intent to suspend or terminate
16 must be given by the commission to the governor, the majority and minority leaders of
17 the defaulting state's legislature, and each of the member states.
- 18 5. A state that has been terminated is responsible for all assessments, obligations, and
19 liabilities incurred through the effective date of termination, including obligations that
20 extend beyond the effective date of termination.
- 21 6. The commission may not pay any costs related to a state that is found to be in default
22 or that has been terminated from the compact, unless agreed upon in writing between
23 the commission and the defaulting state.
- 24 7. The defaulting state may appeal the action of the commission by petitioning the United
25 States district court for the District of Columbia or the federal district where the
26 commission has its principal offices. The prevailing member must be awarded all costs
27 of the litigation, including reasonable attorney's fees.
- 28 8. Dispute resolution.
- 29 a. Upon request by a member state, the commission shall attempt to resolve
30 disputes related to the compact which arise among member states and between
31 member and nonmember states.

1 b. The commission shall promulgate a rule providing for both mediation and binding
2 dispute resolution for disputes as appropriate.

3 9. Enforcement.

4 a. The commission, in the reasonable exercise of its discretion, shall enforce the
5 provisions and rules of this compact.

6 b. By majority vote, the commission may initiate legal action in the United States
7 district court for the District of Columbia or the federal district where the
8 commission has its principal offices against a member state in default to enforce
9 compliance with the provisions of the compact and its promulgated rules and
10 bylaws. The relief sought may include both injunctive relief and damages. In the
11 event judicial enforcement is necessary, the prevailing member must be awarded
12 all costs of the litigation, including reasonable attorney's fees.

13 c. The remedies provided under the compact are not the exclusive remedies of the
14 commission. The commission may pursue any other remedies available under
15 federal or state law.

16 **ARTICLE XIII - DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNSELING COMPACT**

17 **COMMISSION AND ASSOCIATED RULES, WITHDRAWAL, AND AMENDMENT**

18 1. The compact becomes effective on the date on which the compact statute is enacted
19 into law in the tenth member state. The provisions, which become effective at that
20 time, are limited to the powers granted to the commission relating to assembly and the
21 promulgation of rules. Thereafter, the commission shall meet and exercise rulemaking
22 powers necessary to implement and administer the compact.

23 2. Any state that joins the compact subsequent to the commission's initial adoption of the
24 rules must be subject to the rules existing on the date on which the compact becomes
25 law in that state. Any rule previously adopted by the commission has the full force and
26 effect of law on the day the compact becomes law in that state.

27 3. Any member state may withdraw from this compact by enacting a statute repealing the
28 compact.

29 a. A member state's withdrawal may not take effect until six months after enactment
30 of the repealing statute.

1 b. Withdrawal does not affect the continuing requirement of the withdrawing state's
2 professional counseling licensing board to comply with the investigative and
3 adverse action reporting requirements of this compact before the effective date of
4 withdrawal.

5 4. This compact may not be construed to invalidate or prevent any professional
6 counseling licensure agreement or other cooperative arrangement between a member
7 state and a nonmember state which does not conflict with the provisions of this
8 compact.

9 5. This compact may be amended by the member states. An amendment to this compact
10 may not become effective and binding upon any member state until the amendment is
11 enacted into the laws of all member states.

12 **ARTICLE XIV - CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY**

13 This compact must be liberally construed so as to effectuate the purposes of the compact.
14 The provisions of this compact must be severable and if any phrase, clause, sentence, or
15 provision of this compact is declared to be contrary to the constitution of any member state or of
16 the United States of America or the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or
17 circumstance is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this compact and the applicability of
18 the compact to any government, agency, person, or circumstance may not be affected thereby.
19 If this compact is held contrary to the constitution of any member state, the compact must
20 remain in full force and effect as to the remaining member states and as to the member state
21 affected as to all severable matters.

22 **ARTICLE XV - BINDING EFFECT OF COMPACT AND OTHER LAWS**

23 1. A licensee providing professional counseling services in a remote state under the
24 privilege to practice shall adhere to the laws and regulations, including scope of
25 practice, of the remote state.

26 2. Nothing herein prevents the enforcement of any other law of a member state that is
27 not inconsistent with the compact.

28 3. Any laws in a member state in conflict with the compact are superseded to the extent
29 of the conflict.

30 4. Any lawful actions of the commission, including all rules and bylaws properly
31 promulgated by the commission, are binding upon the member states.

- 1 5. All permissible agreements between the commission and the member states are
- 2 binding in accordance with the terms of the agreements.
- 3 6. In the event any provision of the compact exceeds the constitutional limits imposed on
- 4 the legislature of any member state, the provision must be ineffective to the extent of
- 5 the conflict with the constitutional provision in question in that member state.