

ISSUE NUMBER THREE • SPRING 2019



BOARD BULLETIN

MINNESOTA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2019 Legislative Session has had many twists and turns including a Special Session ending on May 25. Special Session was necessary to consider and pass the State's biennial budget, including the BOSW budget for July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021, which was the focus of the session. Successes and highlights of this session included new and increased partnerships and collaboration with Legislators, Legislative Staff, and BOSW stakeholders.

This session was of particular importance to the BOSW because of the critical impact of the BOSW biennial budget proposal. The BOSW was delighted that Governor Walz included the BOSW budget in his "One Minnesota" budget proposal, including the fee change. The BOSW budget falls under the jurisdiction of the Omnibus Health and Human Services (HHS) Finance Division, was heard in the HHS Conference Committee, and finally passed in Special Session. We are hopeful Governor Walz will sign the budget bills.

While the BOSW understands that no one likes to see costs increase, the BOSW would not have proposed a fee change if the need were not critical. We appreciated receiving feedback from stakeholders and have made every effort to be transparent and responsive while ensuring a sound budget. The "NASW-MN Conversation with the BOSW" webinar in March was a great collaborative opportunity to inform stakeholders about the fee change.

This budget proposal, if ultimately enacted, will provide the BOSW the necessary resources to maintain **current core public safety services, ensure fiscal stability**, and create strategic investments to **improve our effectiveness and ensure efficient and accountable services** as we continue over 30 years of public service to all Minnesotans.

Another legislative initiative that was approved in the 2019 Regular Session and signed into law by Governor Walz on May 17, 2019, was an amendment to the BOSW Duty to Warn (DTW) reporting requirements for licensed social workers. This initiative was championed by the MN Coalition of Licensed Social Workers to create requirements and protections regarding DTW comparable with other Minnesota mental and behavioral health professions. While the BOSW was neutral on the proposed legislation, the BOSW collaborated with stakeholders on the proposal. To date, the social work requirement to comply with the DTW (148.975) only applied to "licensees." Under the new law, "licensees, social work students and interns" are required to comply with the DTW and are provided immunity if a duty to warn is made.

This session with its twist and turns has provided great opportunities for collaboration. I intend to continue to cultivate our important partnerships well into the future as we continue our important work and mission of *protecting the public through shared goals!*

Best regards,

Kate Zacher-Pate, LSW
Executive Director