



# North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors

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November 14, 2013

Joint Legislative Commission  
on Governmental Operations

Re: Consultation Request Regarding Fees and Charges

Dear Commission Members:

Pursuant to North Carolina G.S. 12-3.1 the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors (NCBLPC) is requesting a consultation regarding the rules adopted by the board increasing the fees charged by the NCBLPC under its revised rules published November 15, 2013.

Attached please find the report detailing the proposed increase in fees as required.

Please contact the Board Administrator, Beth Holder, at the phone number above or at [bholder@caphill.com](mailto:bholder@caphill.com). We look forward to working with the Commission and staff during the consultation process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Denauvo M Robinson".

Dr. Denauvo Robinson, LPC  
Board Chairman

Report on Proposed Increase in Fees  
Submitted to the North Carolina Joint Commission  
on Governmental Operations

Submitted by  
North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional  
Counselors

November 15, 2013

The North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors (NCBLPC) has submitted proposed rules revisions published November 15, 2013. Included in the proposed rules revisions are increases in certain fees collected by the Board. This report is provided to the Commission as support for the request for consultation regarding fees and charges pursuant to G.S. 12-3.1.

### **Section 1 – Current Fees**

The amount of the current fees charged by the NCBLPC are:

Application Fee -	\$ 100
Renewal Fee -	\$ 100
Late Fee -	\$ 25
Returned Check Fee -	\$ 25

### **Section 2 – Proposed Fees**

The amount of the proposed increased fees charged by the NCBLPC are:

Application Fee -	\$ 200
Renewal Fee -	\$ 200
Late Fee -	\$ 75
Returned Check Fee -	\$ 35

### **Section 3 – Statutory Authority**

The statutory authority for the fees is G.S. 90-334(f).

### **Section 4 – Need for the Increase in the Fees**

The NCBLPC has maintained the current fee structure for approximately twenty years. During that time the number of licensees has increased from 200 in the first five years of licensure to approximately 6,400 today. As the number of licensees has increased the costs associated with protecting the public, serving the licensees and running the board's operations in an effective manner have also increased. For several years the NCBLPC was able to place funds in reserve for future expenditure. Over the course of the last three fiscal years the NCBLPC's net assets as reported in its annual financial statements have decreased by a total of \$182,078.

As the number of licensees continues to increase there will naturally be an increase in the number of complaints against licensees. In order to protect the public and the profession, the NCBLPC will need to devote more resources to investigations. Currently the NCBLPC contracts with a third party investigative service on an as needed basis. It is likely in the future the need for these services will be greater which would result in increased expense to the NCBLPC.

As the NCBLPC looks toward the future it is anticipating that there will be increases in other expenses that also coincide with an increase in the number of licensees. Included among these costs are postage, supplies, information technology, and other administrative expenses.

The NCBLPC is preparing a long term strategy around investments in information technology. One of the main undertakings the NCBLPC is considering is automating the application and renewal process via the website. This automation will make it easier for potential licensees to apply for licensure as well as provide current licensees the opportunity to renew online in a convenient process. Additionally, the public would be able to search for information on current licensees as any publicly available information could be viewed in a more efficient manner via search functions included in the new website.

In order to achieve the goals listed above the current website and database system will be rebuilt from the ground up in order to obtain all of the functionality desired. The NCBLPC estimates the design and construction of the new website and database will result in significant costs and may take up to two years. Additionally, after implementation there will be annual costs for maintenance and website and database improvements.

Currently the NCBLPC processes approximately 15,000 pieces of mail each year. By implementing an online application and renewal process the NCBLPC can eliminate a large amount of paper that is processed each year. The current files take up a large amount of office space and results in additional costs. To that end another project the NCBLPC would like to undertake is the scanning and electronic storage of paper files. The initial plan would be to convert the most recent two year's files to a searchable electronic format.

The NCBLPC is eager to begin these projects in the near future as it will take several years to implement all of the desired changes. In the future additional projects will be considered that may require significant resources. By enacting the increase in fees now the NCBLPC will position itself financially to meet the needs of the licensees and the public by implementing changes in order to better serve all of its constituents.