

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST REGISTRATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**August 22, 2012  
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
Environmental Health Division, Executive Conference Room  
5050 Commerce Drive  
Baldwin Park, CA

Members Present:

Ms. Terri Williams, Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS), California Conference of Directors of Environment Health (CCDEH) Chair  
Mr. Dean D. Peterson, PE, REHS, California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)  
Mr. Todd Frantz, REHS, Secretary, Private Sector Representative  
Ms. Sara Crossman, REHS, Public Sector Member at Large  
Ms. Catherine Caldwell, MS, Senate Rules Committee Appointee  
Dr. Lal Mian, Ph.D., REHS, University Representative  
Dr. Antonio Machado, Ph.D., REHS, University Representative

**QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program Staff Present:

Ms. Veronica Malloy, REHS, Program Administrator  
Ms. Deann Kanenaga, Continuing Education Coordinator

Members Absent

Dr. Dean Kelaita, M.D., Health Officer, Calaveras County, California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO)  
Ms. LeAnh Irish, REHS, California Environmental Health Association (CEHA) Representative  
Mr. Kelvin Yamada, Chief, Environmental Management Branch, Executive Officer

**Election of 2011-2012 Officers**

Dr. Dean Kelaita will serve out his second term on January 1, 2013. Ms. Terri Williams will request a nominee from the CCLHO as a replacement.

Ms. Catherine Caldwell will serve out her first term on January 1, 2013. Mr. Peterson nominated Ms. Caldwell to serve a second term, Ms. Williams seconded, Ms. Caldwell accepted pending the Senate Rules Committee nomination and approval. The vote was unanimous.

**Approval of the Minutes from the April 2, 2012 Meeting**

Ms. Williams opened the meeting at 10:30 am and asked for comments and corrections to the meeting minutes from April 2, 2012. None were received.

Mr. Peterson moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Machado seconded, all were in favor. The April 2, 2012 minutes were approved.

**CDPH Environmental Management Branch Update**

Kelvin Yamada, Executive Officer

As Mr. Yamada was absent from the meeting, he submits the following update as a post-meeting inclusion into the minutes.

Mark Jeude, REHS has been appointed the Section Chief of the Environmental Health Services Section over the REHS program. Mark has spent the last 13 years performing Environmental Health Sanitary Surveys for the Institutions Program in the Division's Environmental Management Branch. Mark also has experience with CDPH working in the Pre-harvest Shellfish program and Contracted County Environmental Health Services program. Mark worked in Santa Clara County's Environmental Health program for nearly 3 years prior to his CDPH experience. Mark has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo and is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist.

The recently adopted Title 24 public swimming pool regulations will become effective on September 1, 2012.

### **Update Continuing Education and Accreditation Agencies**

Deann Kanenaga, Continuing Education Coordinator

Ms. Kanenaga explained that this is the second cycle for the REHS program to receive proof of continuing education as part of the REHS biennial renewals. During the first cycle, the REHS program conducted 123 audits (this is approximately 10% of the incoming Continuing Education Verification forms). From those audits, registrants seemed confused when trying to identify the Recognized Provider (RP) and the Accreditation Agency (AA). The program received a request to allow more room for the registrant to indicate the title of the course. The 2012 form was redesigned to allow for additional space. Ms. Kanenaga tries to contact each registrant if they are confused about how to identify the name of the AA or RP from the certificates of completion. Ms. Williams suggested that each training coordinator check the form carefully before submittal to catch some of these errors. The 2012 renewals were sent out in July to allow the program to receive payments earlier and provide the registrants early notice of the continuing education requirements. Ms. Malloy reported a significant drop in the number of REHSs during the last cycle most likely due to the newly established continuing education requirement and retirement. However, there were a few retired registrants interested in changing their status back to ACTIVE. The program requires a list of 24 contact hours and the remainder of the active fee (\$150) to be submitted prior to being hired back as an active REHS. The program may grant exemptions from the continuing education requirement if the request is submitted in writing but it applies only to active military personnel or REHSs who are on disability or have long term illness.

Ms. Kanenaga continues to receive only a few new applications from agencies or organizations interested in becoming accredited by CDPH. The program currently has 47 approved agencies, many are local health departments who offer courses and training to their own employees. Ms. Williams mentioned that Los Angeles County provides courses for their employees and may offer them to others outside county employment, but it often becomes challenging to keep track of outside individuals. Many AAs use databases or spreadsheets to track continuing education for their employees. Ms. Crossman added that Riverside county will offer continuing education if space is available. Ms. Kanenaga explained a particular challenge in considering the Hazwopper refresher course for continuing education credit. If the content of the course does not change, it can only count once in a two-year cycle. The continuing education program is also conducting its first set of accreditation agency audits.

Ms. Kanenaga explained there may be a delay in processing renewal payments if the county is paying the fees for a group of REHSs. All coursework and audits must be complete for the full group before the funds and renewals are processed for each individual. Mr. Peterson will mention this to all directors at the CCDEH meeting in September.

### **University Accreditation Evaluation Status**

The university self surveys for Loma Linda University and California State University, Northridge were submitted to the REHS Program in February 2012.

Dr. Machado, Mr. Frantz and Ms. Malloy will be visiting Loma Linda University on August 23, 2012 to tour the campus, meet with faculty and talk with a group of students. A report will be submitted to the full committee during the April 2013 meeting.

The site visit for California State University, Northridge will be scheduled in the near future.

***ACTION ITEM: The University Evaluation Reports will be submitted to the full committee at the April 2013 meeting. The committee will decide to approve the accreditation for another three years.***

### **Educational and Professional Standards Subcommittee Report**

Dr. Machado, the subcommittee chair, reported the following unanimous recommendations from the May 9, 2012 meeting held by conference call to discuss a number of courses submitted by Chico State University and one course by the University of California, Davis Extension.

Chico State: CIVL 175 added to the approved curriculum as a science elective

BIOL 334 added to the approved curriculum as a science elective

POLSCI 460A may substitute as the Public Health Administration course

Dr. Machado made the motion to approve the recommendations from the subcommittee, Dr. Mian seconded, and all were in favor.

UC Davis Extension Online Course– Introduction to Public Health: All members of the subcommittee agreed this course does not contain the elements of a public health or environmental health administration course for Option III, IV and V. However, Dr. Machado believes this course could substitute for HS 132 at California State University, Northridge and would be appropriate for continuing education credits for the REHS.

Dr. Machado made the motion to deny the UC Davis Introduction to Public Health as a substitute for the public health/environmental health administration course and approve the recommendation for the substitution for HS 132 and continuing education credit, Mr. Peterson seconded, and all were in favor.

### **Registration Process Subcommittee Report**

Mr. Peterson, the subcommittee chair, reported the activities and recommendations developed from the two meetings held by conference call on June 11 and August 10, 2012.

The subcommittee was tasked by the full committee to review and decide on the language for the REHS Renewal Application. The members of the subcommittee unanimously decided to update the language on the 2012 Biennial Renewal forms to reflect the same language as the new application and include the question regarding past convictions as they relate to the duties of an environmental health specialist.

The subcommittee is reviewing the four categories of unethical actions outlined in Section 106715(a) and working to develop a code of ethics to define the term “unethical practice”. Mr. Peterson introduced a draft version of the Code of Ethics to the full committee for comment and discussion. All members agreed the code of ethics is a very good start but wonder if its introduction and approval needs a legislative action, how it will be distributed and to identify the appropriate group to promulgate it. Mr. Peterson asked that each committee member review the draft version and submit comments back to him by Friday, August 29. Ms. Williams will introduce the draft version to the members of CCDEH during their September Conference. This item is an ongoing discussion to be continued at the full committee meeting in April 2013.

The subcommittee is reviewing the disciplinary ranges in Section 106715(b)(6)(D) to determine the appropriate course of action the committee may take when a new applicant or renewing registrant discloses past convictions or has been found to have done any of the four

actions noted in Section 106715(a). This item is an ongoing discussion at the subcommittee level and will be continued at the next subcommittee meeting to be scheduled at a later date.

The subcommittee is developing a protocol guidance document for committee members to use during the informal disciplinary hearings which are scheduled by CDPH to determine if a complaint or accusation made against a REHS is a violation of the statute. Ms. Malloy is working to develop a draft version to present to the subcommittee for discussion at the next meeting to be scheduled at a later date.

The subcommittee heard a preliminary review of an application from Dr. Joseph Wakoli Wekesa during the August 10, 2012 meeting and is making a recommendation to the full committee to use an alternative review process to evaluate his educational background for trainee certification.

Dr. Wekesa applied to the REHS program twice before and as an international student, the program required his official foreign transcripts be evaluated by one of the approved international transcript services. After many attempts to obtain his transcripts from Nairobi, he is unable to receive them and is asking the committee to approve his application based on the evaluation completed by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) along with the official transcripts from the University of California, Davis. Dr. Wekesa has provided the program with unofficial course listings from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Dr. Machado made the motion to use an alternative review process for Dr. Wekesa's application using the documentation currently on file with the program, Dr. Mian seconded, Ms. Williams added the committee's action on this topic sets a precedent and will review an application if they think it might not fit into the previously approved process, all were in favor.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1. Mr. Peterson will distribute a draft version of the Code of Ethics to each member for comment. Ms. Williams will introduce the draft version to CCDEH Conference. The final version will be reviewed by the EHSRC committee during the April 2013 meeting and will decide the mode of distribution.**
- 2. Ms. Malloy will distribute a draft version of the REHS Hearing Protocol Guidance to committee members at the April 2013 meeting.**

#### **Discussion Items**

The REHS program received a challenge to a CDPH trainee evaluation letter and a CPS HR Consulting transcript review. Ms. Dottie Torres applied to the REHS program and was awarded a trainee certification letter indicating she needs to complete Organic Chemistry Laboratory or Physics Lecture and Laboratory. Ms. Torres submitted a syllabus for Physics 100 completed at Mount San Jacinto College (PHY 100) and a syllabus for Organic Chemistry Lecture already completed to fulfill the Organic Chem/Physics requirement. She is requesting a full committee review that would reverse the decision made by CPS HR Consulting regarding the Physics class and if they would combine the PHY100 (if approved) with the Organic Chemistry Lecture already completed to fulfill the Organic Chem/Physics requirement.

Dr. Machado explained this particular request is against the specific legislative review of coursework. Ms. Williams explained the committee has no authority to combine courses to meet any one of the educational objectives. Ms. Malloy explained that CPS HR Consulting will often combine two courses from the same discipline to fulfill the requirement but never would they approve the combination of two sections from different courses.

Mr. Peterson made the motion to support the CPS HR Consulting decision; Ms. Williams seconded, all were in favor.

#### **Evaluating Foreign Transcripts – Education based on the 10 + 2 system**

Ms. Malloy reviews and evaluates all REHS applications received from international students who attend college outside the United States. She explains many applications and

foreign transcript evaluations come from students who graduate from schools in India, Pakistan and the United Kingdom where they often take courses in biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics before entering into university. The official transcripts will often confirm completion of Grades 9 and 10, the Second Year Pre-University Examination or the Advanced level at 6<sup>th</sup> Form College and further describe these courses as equivalent to units of high school work. Ms. Malloy explains that we may not have enough information to determine if these are college level courses and does not give college credit for completion. She would like the committee to determine if they would meet the statutory requirements of the REHS core courses. The committee decided to uphold the decision written on the official foreign accreditation letter and require these courses to be completed at the college or university level, but the program should make an effort to find out if they are equivalent.

Ms. Williams described a project currently underway initiated by a group of Directors of Environmental Health that would result in the design and publishing of a postage stamp dedicated to the environmental health field. She is currently the spokesperson for this particular group and admits it might be quite a lengthy process but is looking forward to final approval.

**The next meeting will be held during the 2013 CEHA Annual Education Symposium on April 1, 2013**

#### **ADJOURN**

Mr. Frantz moved. Ms. Caldwell seconded. No one opposed. Adjourned at 1:35 pm