

# ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES



### Date & Time:

January 9, 2026 | 9 am

### Meeting Called to Order by:

Dr. Cara Jones, President

### Board Members in Attendance

Cara Jones, DDS (President)  
Jeffrey Wisener, DDS (Vice-President)  
Allen Williams, DDS (Secretary-Treasurer)  
Robert Carlisle, DDS

David Keith Jones, DDS  
Brandon Kitchens, DDS  
Marcia Cook (Public member)

### Board Staff in Attendance

Meredith Rogers (Executive Director), Corneshia Harrison (Administrative Analyst), and William Puddephatt (Attorney)

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 14, 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

### Fictitious Name Requests

The following names were reviewed by the Board:

REQUESTED FICTITIOUS NAME(S)	DENTIST	BOARD DECISION
<i>Hamilton West Dental</i>	Dr. Lewis Cox	Approved
<i>Emergency Dental Group of Fort Smith</i>	Dr. Steven Stringfellow	Approved
<i>Same Day Dental</i>	Dr. Richard Keech	Approved
<i>Valley Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery</i>	Dr. Thomas Inman	Approved



## Complaint Committee Report

Corneshia Harrison reported on the Complaint Committee meeting held on January 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Committee members present were Drs. Cara Jones, Jeffrey Wisener, Allen Williams, and Mrs. Marcia Cook. The minutes from the November 2025 Complaint Committee meeting were reviewed and approved. Eight complaints were reviewed. After discussion, motions were made, seconded, and passed to dismiss seven complaints, as no apparent violations of the Dental Practice Act were found. One complaint was tabled for further investigation. The next Complaint Committee meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2026.

## Board Office Update

The following was reported by Meredith Rogers:

- As of the date of this meeting, 89% of dentists and 85% of dental hygienists have renewed their licenses for the 2026–2027 renewal period, with the grace period to renew ending on January 31, 2026.
- The statement of financial interest form is due February 2, 2026.

Ms. Rogers also requested clarification and guidance from the board concerning the implementation of the dental assistant course approval process that was previously voted on. After some discussion, a motion was made, seconded and passed to begin the approval process on October 1, 2026.

## Other Business

Billy Tarpley of the Arkansas State Dental Association sought guidance on providing communication services for a hearing-impaired patient, and options were discussed including using an iPad for sign language interpretation, arranging an in-person appointment, or exploring virtual ALS services. Mr. Puddephatt, representing the Attorney General's Office, agreed to investigate the legal requirements and provide an answer by the next meeting, as the patient's appointment is on Tuesday. Dr. Cara Jones suggested that the oral surgeon could reschedule the appointment until the necessary communication services are arranged.



Mr. Tarpley also provided an update on Act 1025, which was signed by Governor Sanders on last April, but has faced challenges with the Department of Human Service's decision not to proceed with rulemaking. CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) raised concerns about the special needs demographic being separate from the general population, though they have no issue with the general Medicaid fee reimbursement increases. Judd Burns (Arkansas State Dental Association) noted that DHS is attempting to work through the sticking points, but Mr. Tarpley expressed concern that DHS may simply block the entire initiative. The group discussed the need to move forward with the standard Medicaid aspects while addressing the special needs component, emphasizing the importance of improving patient access to dental care.

Pursuant to Act 1211 of 1995, Ms. Rogers requested a motion to authorize that Board members receive a stipend of \$100 plus expenses; a motion was made, seconded and passed to authorize.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2026 at 9 am.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Rogers".

Meredith Rogers, Executive Director