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**ADVISORY BOARD ON SURGICAL ASSISTING**

**Minutes**

May 18, 2026

The Advisory Board on Radiological Technology met on Monday, May 18, 2026, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Training Room 2, Henrico, Virginia.

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jessica Wilhelm, SA, Chair  
Thomas Gochenour, CST, Vice-Chair

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Christine Holt  
Srikanth Mahavadi, DPM  
Deborah Redmond, SA

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**STAFF PRESENT:**

William L. Harp, MD - Executive Director  
Michael Sobowale, LLM - Deputy Executive Director for Allied Licensure  
Kathleen LaMotte - Board Administrator  
Matthew Novak - Agency Regulatory Coordinator  
Colanithia Morton-Opher - Deputy Executive Director for Medical Licensure and Administration  
Roslyn Nickens - Licensing Supervisor  
Joshlynn Jones - Licensing Specialist

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**GUESTS PRESENT:**

None

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**Call to Order**

Chair Jessica Wilhelm, SA called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

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## **Emergency Egress Procedures**

Kathleen LaMotte announced the emergency egress instructions.

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## **Roll Call**

Ms. LaMotte called the roll; a quorum was not established.

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## **Public Comment on Agenda Items (15 minutes)**

There was no comment.

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## **New Business**

### **Legislative and Regulatory Report – Matthew Novak**

Mr. Novak provided updates on several bills impacting the professions:

- **SB22/HB1147 - Implicit Bias Reduction Training**  
Licensees will be required to complete one or more hours of implicit bias education biennially. The Board needs to promulgate regulations and will initiate regulatory action in June. Final regulations may take several years. Ms. Wilhelm expressed support for including Surgical Assistants in this requirement.
  - **HB796 – Fee Adjustments & Recovery of Disciplinary Costs:**  
This bill allows the Board to implement fee increases more efficiently and recoup up to \$1,500 in disciplinary-related administrative costs for matters resolved through hearings or consent orders. The full Board is scheduled to review this matter in October.
  - **HB1223 – Suicide Assessment and Training (continued):**  
This bill was continued to the next session. It would require one-time suicide assessment training for most health professions and may return in future sessions.
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### **Recommendation of Draft Amendments for Licensure by Endorsement – Matthew Novak**

Draft regulatory amendments (pursuant to SB1438) were reviewed. Key points:

- Only eight U.S. jurisdictions regulate Surgical Assistants; of these, only five use credentialing similar to Virginia. Most applicants would still apply via initial licensure.
- Surgical Technologists are regulated in far more states, but many require only registration, not certification.
- Proposed change for ST endorsement: add “or registration” after “licensure,” acknowledging differing state systems.
- SA endorsement language remains unchanged.
- With no quorum, no motion could be taken; however, members present **voiced support** for forwarding endorsement recommendations to the full Board of Medicine.

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### **Consideration of a Six-Month Grace Period for New Surgical Technologist Graduates – Chair Jessica Wilhelm**

The Board discussed whether to recommend a temporary grace period for new graduates entering the field. A similar exemption exists for Surgical Assistants.

Dr. Harp spoke to how legislation was handled in the Executive Branch. He suggested that the state professional association secure a patron for such a bill. The rationale for a bill is sound, and there is a precedent with the Surgical Assistants.

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### **Licensure Report**

#### Surgical Assistants

- Licenses issued since January 1, 2026 - 40
- Total active licensees - 916 (including 258 out-of-state)
- Processing time - 19 days; clearance rate -91%

#### Surgical Technologists

- Total active certificates - 2,945 (including 1,207 out-of-state)
- Certificates issued since January 1, 2026: -165
- Processing time - 30 days; clearance rate - 79%

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### **Announcements**

Members were reminded to submit their travel expense reimbursement vouchers within 30 days.

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### **Next Scheduled Meeting**

Next meeting: Monday, October 5, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

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### **Adjournment**

Ms. Wilhelm adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

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William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director