

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING
FOR THE CORRECTIONS OFFICER RETIREMENT PLAN LOCAL BOARD
FOR THE JUDICIARY**

A Public Meeting of the Corrections Officer Retirement Plan Local Board for the Judiciary was convened Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., via Zoom, Arizona State Courts Building, 1501 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

Board Members Present by Conference/Video Call: Kevin Kluge (Chair); Jason Hathcock; Jennifer Fish; Brandon Shimizu; Scott Mabery

Board Members Absent: None

Also Present by Conference/Video Call: Kayla Adkins, Board Secretary; Alexi Papalossi, Recorder; Yvonne Wong, AOC HR Officer; Nicholas Cornelius, Board Attorney; Maria Land, Disability Applicant #25-01

Call to Order:

Approval of Minutes:

November 4, 2025 – Public Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2025 – Public Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Scott Mabery moved to approve the public meeting minutes of the November 4, 2025, and November 18, 2025, meetings. The motion was seconded by Jennifer Fish and passed unanimously. The minutes stand approved. **CORP 2025-49**

Acknowledgment of CORP Physical Exam Final Letter:

Name	County	Letter Issue Date
James Thomas	Apache	10/9/2025

The Chair noted for the record that the CORP physical examination report for James Thomas was not received within 60 days of receiving their membership application and that a final letter requesting the examination report was sent via certified mail.

Approval of Membership:

The Board voted on the approval of the following requests for membership:

Name	County	Effective Enrollment Date	Tier
James Thomas	Apache	9/29/2025	3
Sabrina Bonilla	Cochise	10/19/2025	3

Idallis Riggs	Coconino	10/19/2025	3
Alexis Allison	La Paz	10/26/2025	3
Albert Ceja-Rojas	Maricopa	10/19/2025	3
Jennifer Tietje	Maricopa	10/19/2025	3
Kassandra Snow	Maricopa	10/19/2025	3
Simon-Peter St. Emmanuel	Maricopa	10/19/2025	3
Lloyd Pellom	Maricopa	10/26/2025	3
Christian Martinez	Maricopa	10/26/2025	3
Dallis Binder	Maricopa	11/2/2025	3
Christina Carter	Maricopa	11/2/2025	3
Jessica Murray	Maricopa	11/16/2025	3
Jeanette Rodriguez	Maricopa	11/16/2025	3
Ashley Parras	Maricopa	11/16/2025	3
Deshae Fangmeyer	Mohave	11/16/2025	3
Sabrina Juarez	Mohave	10/26/2025	3
Michael Selby	Mohave	10/24/2025	3
John Romero Jr.	Pima	10/19/2025	3
Dayanara Hernandez	Pima	10/26/2025	3
Todd Mulnix	Pima	10/26/2025	3
Andrew Saucedo	Pima	10/2/2025	3
Ashley McCure	Pima	11/9/2025	3
Devin Aragon	Pima	11/9/2025	3
Luz Linares	Pima	11/9/2025	3
Robert Rice	Pima	11/9/2025	3
Paul Zepeda	Pima	11/9/2025	3
Matthew Gutierrez	Pinal	10/19/2025	3
Brook Brunderidge	Yavapai	10/12/2025	3
Mariah Parker	Yuma	10/19/2025	3
Soraya Rodriguez	Yuma	10/26/2025	3
Christopher Winn	Yuma	11/2/2025	3
Evan FaiQ	Yuma	11/9/2025	3
Matthew Pendleton	Yuma	11/16/2025	3

MOTION: Jennifer Fish moved to approve the 34 applicants listed on the agenda for this meeting for membership in CORP pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-893.D. and to note for the record that the physical examinations for Idallis Riggs, Albert Ceja-Rojas, Jennifer Tietje, Kassandra Snow, Simon-Peter St. Emmanuel, Christian Martinez, Jessica Murray, John Romero Jr., Todd Mulnix, Andrew Saucedo, Robert Rice, Paul Zepeda, Matthew Gutierrez, and Brooke Brunderidge identified a physical or mental condition or injury that existed or occurred before their dates of membership in the plan. The motion was seconded by Brandon Shimizu and passed unanimously. **CORP 2025-50**

Physical Exam Final Letter Audit:

In November, Board staff completed an audit of members who received a 60-day final letter for their pre-membership physical exam at the Board's request. The audit results were available for the Board's review.

Discussion:

The Board Secretary stated that Board Staff had identified the number of final letters requesting the physical exam from members across all 15 counties based on membership data from 2021 to 2025. The Chair noted that each county has approximately 14-15 members receiving these letters. The Chair asked if Board staff could provide the total number of members approved during each year. The Board Secretary clarified that the Board Staff did not have that information available and told the Board that data will be available for review at the January 2026 meeting. Board Staff mentioned that the monthly average membership approval rate was approximately 30 members. Using this information, the Chair concluded that fewer than 1% of members were not providing a pre-membership physical exam.

The Chair asked the Board Secretary whether any additional action was needed to minimize the number of members who did not provide the pre-membership physical exam. The Board Secretary explained that, under statute, the Staff notifies the member via certified mail of their rights regarding the pre-membership physical and how it pertains to a disability application.

Review of Pre-Membership Physical Exam Statutes, Rules, and Procedures

During the November 4, 2025, CORP Local Board meeting, the Board Chair requested that the Board review the Statutes and Board Rules and Procedures regarding the pre-membership physical exams. A copy of the following documents were provided to the Board for review.

- A.R.S. § 38-884
- A.R.S. § 38-893
- A.R.S. § 41-1822
- CORP Board Rules and Procedures

Discussion:

The Chair asked the Secretary to provide a visual of the Board Rules and Procedures and inquired if an item could be added in Section D between #3 and #4, stating that members who did not submit their pre-membership physical exam would forfeit their right to any disability claims, using the following verbiage from #5, "in the event that the employee refuses to complete a new physical exam, that employee will be subject to terms of A.R.S. § 388-884(B), which provides that the employee is deemed to be have waived the right for disability under Article 6, Title 38." The Chair felt this would provide clarity within the rules and procedures.

The Chair asked the Secretary if anything else needed to be amended, and the Secretary requested clarification. The Secretary inquired whether it was the Board's intention not to receive any

physical exams from the members after the first 90 days from the hire date. The Chair asked whether the statutes were clear on the Board's processes and powers. The Secretary stated that she had provided the relevant statutes to the Board and that the Board would need to make the determination, potentially seeking advice from the Board Attorney.

The Chair inquired about adding another section to include the process if the physical exam was received after the initial 90 days of employment. The Secretary added that there was an inquiry about an appeal of a pre-existing condition filed outside the required timeline that may be on the January 2026 meeting agenda.

Mr. Hathcock asked whether the statute required notification of a pre-existing condition. The Secretary confirmed, explaining that the Staff prepares and sends a certified letter informing the member of the pre-existing condition, their right to appeal, and the deadline for receiving the information. The Secretary clarified that although the deadline was included in the letter, there was nothing in the statutes that required the enforcement of the deadline.

Mr. Hathcock stated that he believed the Board should accept any physical exams, even after the initial 90 days of employment, and that the Board would consider that information if a disability claim was filed. The Chair agreed, stating that an amendment could be made to include the member's ability to respond to a pre-existing condition, even after the 90-day period.

Mr. Mabery asked for clarification on the word "refused" used in the letter and on the difference between a member refusing to provide the information and miscommunication with the employer. The Chair felt that clarity on both processes should be updated.

The Chair asked the Secretary to prepare proposed language for the amendment to present to the Board during the January and/or February 2026 meetings, considering the differences in refusal and miscommunication with the employer. The Secretary reiterated that the purpose of the 60-day notice is to inform the member that their deadline to complete the physical exam is approaching, and that notifying via certified mail is to ensure receipt. The Secretary also told the Board that it would be possible for them to inform the member that they have a certain number of days to notify the Board of their intention to complete the physical exam or not.

Ms. Fish added that there were reports of difficulties obtaining the physical exam from the facilitating doctor and that those issues should also be included in the amendment.

Future Agenda Items:

- Review of the New Retiree Return to Work Form

Board Attorney joined via Zoom at 10:19 a.m.

Accidental Disability Application Case #25-01 – Maria Land (Taken out of Order)

The Board received the revised Application #25-01 for Accidental Disability benefits from Maria Land on November 17, 2025, with an effective date of March 12, 2025.

- The applicant was a Maricopa County Adult Probation Officer with 8.419 years of credited service. The applicant's last day of employment with Maricopa County was on September 16, 2024.
- The applicant identified the disabling condition as chronic PTSD.
- The applicant was notified via certified letter that the Board would consider her application at this meeting and of her right to attend.
- The applicant initialed the Waiver of Confidentiality provision, to allow discussion of the medical condition in an open public meeting.
- A copy of the IME report conducted on November 14, 2025, by Dr. Oppenheim, M.D., is provided for the Board to review.
- The criteria for Accidental Disability benefits per A.R.S. §38-886 are:
 - "Accidental disability" means a physical or mental condition that the local board finds totally and permanently prevents an employee from performing a reasonable range of duties within the employee's department and was incurred in the performance of the employee's duties.
- A copy of A.R.S. §38-886 governing Local Board consideration of applications for Accidental Disability is included for reference purposes.

IME Report:

Dr. Oppenheim performed an Independent Medical Examination of the applicant on November 14, 2025. A copy of Dr. Oppenheim's IME report was provided to the Board. See page 4 of the report for Dr. Oppenheim's discussion of findings and her responses to the Board's questions.

The Local Board will need to determine eligibility based on the Independent Medical Evaluation. Any motion to approve or disapprove the application should include a reference to the Independent Medical Evaluation upon which the determination is based. The Board can consider any medical evidence that the applicant may want to provide; however, the statutes are clear that a determination of disability shall be based on the IME. Material conflicts in medical evidence must be resolved by the findings of the Board. Disability determinations by the State Comp Fund or other workers' compensation bodies are not binding on the Local Board.

Discussion:

The Chair informed the Board of its right to enter executive session if legal counsel was needed.

The Chair acknowledged that the Board had received an amended independent medical exam, which included a review of medical history. The Board Attorney asked if the amended IME documents had been provided to Ms. Land, and the Secretary replied that they had not. The

Secretary also clarified that the procedure used in previous cases was followed, where the information was shared with the member after the Board's review, as advised by the Board Attorney. The Board Attorney suggested an update to his previous advice, proposing that the information be given to the member at the same time as it is provided to the Board, but not before, allowing the member to review it. The Chair agreed.

The Chair summarized that the IME doctor received and reviewed the updated medical history. The doctor concluded in both the original and amended reports that the identified condition of chronic PTSD was not a disabling condition.

The Chair asked the Board members if they had any questions.

Mr. Hathcock requested that the report be read for the record. "Supplemental records consist primarily of outpatient psychotherapy notes dated March through September 2024, along with several symptom screening measures completed during the same period. These materials reflect that Ms. Land discussed a range of emotional stressors and therapy, including a workplace incident, as well as multiple personal, familial, and historical stressors. The counseling notes focus on process and grief, family conflict, relational issues, prior difficult life events, parenting, stress, and medical concerns. The workplace incident is mentioned but appears within a broader therapeutic context involving many non-work-related factors.

Standardized measures completed in March 2024 showed mild to moderate symptom levels overall. Her PCL-5 score was 9, which is below the cut-off typically associated with PTSD. Her GAD-7 score was 1, reflecting minimal anxiety, and her PHQ-9 score was 11, reflecting moderate depressive symptoms. The ACE score of 5 suggests early-life adversity. There is no documentation of psychiatric hospitalization, medication trials, or acute psychiatric deterioration in the supplemental materials.

The additional records also include reference to past traumatic experiences and losses pre-dating her CORP membership, which were not described during the IME. These entries provide a broader context for emotional history and suggest that her symptoms may be influenced by multiple life factors rather than a single event.

After reviewing the supplemental materials, my clinical impressions and disability related opinions remain unchanged. The additional documentation does not demonstrate A psychiatric condition that is severe, permanent, or functionally disabling. The symptom measures and therapy entries indicate mild to moderate distress and reflect stability and improvement over time. Ms. Land has not undergone comprehensive trauma-focused psychotherapy with an independently licensed mental health professional or any psychiatric medication trials. Because there are still reasonable opportunities for treatment-related improvement, her condition cannot be considered total and permanent.

Based on the review of the supplemental information. None of my original responses on the Corp Accidental Disability Questionnaire requires revision. There is no evidence of a pre-CORP disabling psychiatric condition and no conflicting medical evidence under the Corp, PSPRS standards. The new records do not alter the conclusions of the July 18th, 2025, IME."

Mr. Hathcock continued to state that the Board must make its decision based on the IME report, and based on the IME report, Mr. Hathcock would decide against approving the disability application.

The Chair asked Ms. Land if she would like to make a statement Ms. Land acknowledged her past trauma and stated that it resurfaced during the disabling incident. Ms. Land asked why her application would be denied when she continued to experience fear and anxiety, leading to her removal from her position. Ms. Land also expressed disagreement with the IME doctor's conclusion, and she explained that the suppressed memories from her past trauma would have remained suppressed if the disabling incident had not occurred.

Ms. Land asked about her options as she felt uneasy about the Board basing its decision on the IME report. The Chair informed Ms. Land that, by law, the Board had to base its decision on the IME report. Ms. Land continued to explain that the IME report is based on information provided by her previous counselor, whom she did not think was knowledgeable about her case. Ms. Land continued to explain that she ceased her treatment with her previous provider, because she felt that the doctor was not focusing on the incident. The Chair confirmed with Ms. Land that the doctor she was referring to was her counselor, not the IME doctor.

The Chair asked the Board Attorney if he had any information to share. The Board Attorney stated for the record that there were findings in the original report suggesting that Ms. Land's symptoms are consistent with PTSD, which impacts day-to-day function, but there were no formal psychiatric records. The Board attorney continued that the IME doctor, who was board-certified as a psychiatrist, noted that Ms. Land's termination was based solely on physical health conditions, not the PTSD. The IME doctor stated that, under Ms. Land's current condition, she could not perform a reasonable range of duties within her job classification but does not believe Ms. Land is totally and permanently unable to perform a range of duties. Clarifying that the IME doctor appeared to have reason to believe that Ms. Land's condition could improve with evidence-based treatment for PTSD, including cognitive behavioral therapy, structured trauma therapies, and possibly medication to deal with the core symptoms, which may place Ms. Land in a position where she is not totally and permanently disabled.

Ms. Land asked about the difference between total and permanent disability and accidental disability. Mr. Hathcock explained that they are the same and that a criterion of accidental disability is that the disabling condition is total and permanent.

The Board Attorney reiterated that in the original application, the majority of disabling conditions listed were physical but the Board had found them to be pre-existing, shifting focus to the PTSD condition.

Ms. Land asked the Board how long a member must seek treatment, to which the Chair replied that it wasn't a question the Board could answer.

Mr. Mabery asked Ms. Land if she had been advised to complete comprehensive trauma-focused therapy or seek medication. Ms. Land explained that she was in treatment with her initial therapist before changing doctors. Mr. Mabery asked if Ms. Land was willing to continue treatment, and she responded that she was under the impression she was. Stating that she didn't like her initial therapist and started seeing a second one. Mr. Mabery then confirmed with Ms. Land that her therapist was an intern.

The Board Attorney clarified that the IME is not part of the treatment process but is solely used for the Board to make a determination. The Board Attorney explained that the IME does not imply that Ms. Land is not suffering from PTSD, but rather that the condition might not be considered Total and Permanent. Subsequently, the Board Attorney informed Ms. Land of her right to appeal the Board's decision.

Ms. Fish asked Ms. Land to confirm that she visited two different providers because the medical records were from Dr. Abra Ahmad. Ms. Land explained that she saw a doctor before seeing Abra Ahmad and then stated that she felt the information from her first doctor was not considered in the IME. Ms. Land noted that she provided the medical records for review. She also mentioned that she attended treatment at Rise in 2022 but left due to the environment.

The Chair and Board Attorney informed Ms. Land that she could submit additional medical documents and appeal the Board's decision. The Board Attorney then told Ms. Land that she could consult legal counsel to assist with the next step, to which Ms. Land replied that she had tried unsuccessfully.

Ms. Land asked if the witness statements would be considered supporting documents. The Chair told Ms. Land that the IME doctor would make that determination, not the Board. Ms. Land then asked if she was allowed to seek her own psychological exam, or if it had to be a doctor provided through the Board. The Chair told Ms. Land that she could complete a private exam and added that the Board cannot base a decision on a report from a doctor she had employed.

Ms. Land expressed her concern because the Board makes decisions based on a report hired by the Board. The Chair clarified that the Board does not know the doctor or have any contact with the doctor. The Chair also explained that the Board is contracted with an agency that assigns providers to the members independently.

Ms. Fish asked the Board Attorney if there was specific criteria for requesting a different IME doctor. The Board Attorney informed Ms. Land that the Board has the right to reconcile conflicts in the evidence and explained that he didn't see any conflicts present in this case to warrant another IME.

Mr. Mabery stated that there is no dispute about Ms. Land's PTSD diagnosis, but the potential for improvement makes it too early to consider it a permanent or total disability. He also explained that for him to support another IME, evidence would need to be provided.

Mr. Hathcock expressed concern about the appearance of doctor shopping, the Board attempting to find a doctor with different results, leading PSPRS to appeal the Board's decision. Mr. Hathcock reiterated that, after reviewing the report and considering the relevant statutes, the Board would need to deny the application.

Ms. Land explained her confusion and the decision, stating that she will dispute the Board's determination and asked for direction with the appeal process.

Ms. Land asked the Board if there were issues with the information regarding her reinstated employment. The Chair answered no.

MOTION: Jason Hathcock moved to deny the application for Accidental Disability Retirement benefits from Applicant #25-01, Maria Land, based on the findings of the Independent Medical Evaluation conducted by Dr. Oppenheim for the Local Board, as set forth in the report dated November 14, 2025, and the Form C5-LB-A dated August 25, 2025. The motion was seconded by Scott Mabery and passed unanimously. CORP 2025-51

The Chair advised Ms. Land of her right to appeal the Board's decision by providing additional documentation to support the claim and explained that the final step after that would be to sue the Board.

The Chair asked the Secretary to provide Ms. Land with the amended IME information, the Board rules and procedures, and the timelines for the appeal process. Ms. Land requested all documents related to her case. The Chair asked Ms. Land to clarify if she meant the IME reports. Ms. Land responded that she is requesting everything. The Chair stated that Ms. Land has all her personal documentation and that the Board only needs to provide the IME reports. The Secretary explained that Ms. Land has all documents regarding the case because they are her medical records as well as the application forms Ms. Land completed and returned to the Board. The Secretary further clarified that only the IME results from the most recent addendum should be sent.

Call to the Public:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Transcribed December 4, 2025