



**BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES**  
1625 NORTH MARKET BLVD., SUITE S200, SACRAMENTO, CA 95834  
TELEPHONE: (916) 574-7830 TDD: (800) 326-2297  
WEBSITE ADDRESS: <http://www.bbs.ca.gov>



## **MFT REFERRAL SERVICES REGISTRATION PACKET**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) Referral Service with the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. This packet contains the MFT Referral Service Registration Application and MFT Referral Services Laws & Regulations. **For registration, please complete and return:**

- 1) the MFT Referral Service Registration Application form (no fee required),**
- 2) a copy of your service's advertising, and**
- 3) a copy of your service's standard form contract regulating your service's relationship with participating or member MFTs.**

Copies of your proposed advertising may be submitted in different formats, including printed material, audiotapes, and videotapes. You do not need to submit more than one copy of a single advertisement if it is printed or broadcast in more than one location.

Once the Board approves your application, you will be issued a registration number. You may begin operation as an MFT Referral Service **after** you are issued a registration number. This registration applies to referral services for only licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Your registration will be valid until suspended or revoked, or until you request that it be canceled.

It is important that you read the laws and regulations carefully, as it will be your responsibility as a registered referral service to meet all referral and advertising requirements. You are required to notify the Board within 30 days concerning any changes or modifications to your standard form contract with participating or member MFTs. Violation could result in adverse action on your registration.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Board, at (916) 574-7869.

<b>MFT REFERRAL SERVICE                  REGISTRATION APPLICATION</b> <i>(please type or print clearly in ink)</i>		For Office Use Only: File No. _____ Registration No.: _____
REFERRAL SERVICE NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY NO. / FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NO. (not required for corporations)	
ADDRESS (street address, city, state, zip)		
BUSINESS TYPE (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> corporation <input type="checkbox"/> partnership <input type="checkbox"/> individual	PHONE NUMBER (    )	
NAME, TITLE, AND LICENSE NUMBER (IF APPLICABLE) OF MFT REFERRAL SERVICE RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S) The responsible party includes any owner, co-owner, or member on the board of directors of the MFT Referral Service. If applicable, list the license type(s) and number(s) held by each individual, for licenses or registrations issued only by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Use additional paper as necessary. EXAMPLE: JOHN SMITH, CO-OWNER, MFT 11111 NAME _____ TITLE _____ BBS LICENSE NO. _____ NAME _____ TITLE _____ BBS LICENSE NO. _____ NAME _____ TITLE _____ BBS LICENSE NO. _____		
NAME AND TITLE OF CONTACT PERSON		
<i>I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.</i>		
_____ <i>Contact Person Signature</i>		_____ <i>Date</i>

Submit your completed, original application form to the Board of Behavioral Sciences, MFT Referral Services Program, 1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S200, Sacramento, CA 95834. (No fees are required for this registration.) Include:

- a copy of your service's advertising (printed material, audio tape, and/or video tape)
- a copy of your service's standard form contract regulating your service's relationship with participating or member MFTs

## **INFORMATION COLLECTION, ACCESS, AND DISCLOSURE**

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The information provided on this application is maintained by the Executive Officer of the Board of Behavioral Sciences, 1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S200, Sacramento, CA 95834, under the authority granted by the Business and Professions Code, Division 2, Chapter 1, Article 6, Section 650.4.

**IT IS MANDATORY THAT YOU PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED. OMISSION OF ANY ITEM OF INFORMATION WILL RESULT IN THE APPLICATION BEING REJECTED AS INCOMPLETE.**

Disclosure of your social security number (“SSN”) (or federal employer identification number (“FEIN”), if you are a partnership) is mandatory. Section 30 of the Business and Professions Code and Public Law 94-455 (42 USCA 405(c)(2)(c)) authorizes collection of your SSN. Your SSN or FEIN will be used exclusively for tax enforcement purposes, for purposes of compliance with any judgment or order for family support in accordance with Section 11350.6 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, or for verification of licensure or examination status by a licensing or examination entity which utilizes a national examination and where licensure is reciprocal with the requesting state. **If you fail to disclose your SSN or FEIN, your application for registration will not be processed AND** you will be reported to the Franchise Tax Board, which may assess a \$100 penalty against you.

Your completed application becomes the property of the Board of Behavioral Sciences and will be used by authorized personnel to determine your eligibility for registration as an MFT referral service. Information on your application may be transferred to other governmental or law enforcement agencies.

You have the right to review the records maintained on you by the board unless the records are identified as confidential information pursuant to the Public Records Act or are exempted by Section 1798.40 of the Civil Code. You may gain access to the information by contacting the board at the above address.

# MFT REFERRAL SERVICES LAWS & REGULATIONS

## CALIFORNIA BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

### MFT REFERRAL SERVICES & ADVERTISING LAW

#### BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE

#### MFCC REFERRAL SERVICES AND ADVERTISING

**650.4.** (a) Notwithstanding Section 650, or subdivision (o) of Section 4982, or any other provision of law, it shall not be unlawful for a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 4980) or any other person, to participate in or operate a group advertising and referral service for marriage, family, and child counselors if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The patient referrals by the service are the result of patient-initiated responses to service advertising.

(2) The service advertises, if at all, in conformity with Section 651 and subdivision (p) of Section 4982.

(3) The service does not employ a solicitor to solicit prospective patients or clients.

(4) The service does not impose a fee on the member marriage, family, and child counselors that is dependent upon the number of referrals or amount of professional fees paid by the patient to the marriage, family, and child counselor.

(5) Participating marriage, family, and child counselors charge no more than their usual and customary fees to any patient referred.

(6) The service registers with the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners, providing its name, street address, and telephone number.

(7) The service files with the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners a copy of the standard form contract that regulates its relationship with member marriage, family, and child counselors, which contract shall be confidential and not open to public inspection.

(8) If more than 50 percent of its referrals are made to one individual, association, partnership, corporation, or group of three or more marriage, family, and child counselors, the service discloses that fact in all public communications, including, but not limited to, communications by means of television, radio, motion picture, newspaper, book, list, or directory of healing arts practitioners.

(9) (1) When member marriage, family, and child counselors pay any fee to the service, any advertisement by the service shall clearly and conspicuously disclose that fact by including a statement as follows: "Paid for by participating marriage, family, and child counselors." In print advertisements, the required statement shall be in at least 9-point type. In radio advertisements, the required statement shall be articulated so as to be clearly audible and understandable by the radio audience. In television advertisements, the required statement shall be either clearly audible and understandable to the television audience, or displayed in a written form that remains clearly visible to the television audience for at least five seconds.

(2) The Board of Behavioral Science Examiners may suspend or revoke the registration of any service that fails to comply with paragraph (1). No service may reregister with the board if it has a registration that is currently under suspension for a violation of paragraph (1), nor may a service reregister with the board for a period of one year after it has had a registration revoked by the board for a violation of paragraph (1).

(b) The Board of Behavioral Science Examiners may adopt regulations necessary to enforce and administer this section.

(c) The Board of Behavioral Science Examiners or 10 individual licensed marriage, family, and child counselors may petition the superior court of any county for the issuance of an injunction restraining any conduct that constitutes a violation of this section.

(d) It is unlawful and shall constitute a misdemeanor for a person to operate a group advertising and referral service for marriage, family, and child counselors without providing its name, address, and telephone number to the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners.

(e) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this section not to otherwise affect the prohibitions of Section 650. The Legislature intends to allow the pooling of resources by marriage, family, and child counselors for the purpose of advertising.

(f) This section shall not be construed in any manner that would authorize a referral service to engage in the practice of marriage, family, and child counseling.

# MFT REFERRAL SERVICES REGULATIONS

## CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

### PERMIT PROCESSING TIMES

**1805.1.** "Permit" as defined by the Permit Reform Act of 1981 means any license, certificate, registration, permit or any other form of authorization required by a state agency to engage in a particular activity or act. Processing times for the board's various programs are set forth below. The actual processing times reflect the period from the date the board receives an application to the date a license or registration is issued, and apply to those persons who take and pass the first actual available examination.

<i>PROGRAM</i>	Maximum time for notifying that application is complete or deficient	Maximum time after receipt of a complete application to issue or deny license or registration	ACTUAL PROCESSING TIMES BASED ON PRIOR TWO YEARS		
			<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
MFCC Referral Service Registration	30 days	30 days	n/a	n/a	n/a
All Renewals	30 days	60 days	28	42	56

### USE OF LICENSE NUMBER IN DIRECTORIES AND ADVERTISEMENTS

**1811.** All persons, corporations, or referral services regulated by the board who advertise their services shall include their license or registration number in the advertisement unless such advertisement contains the following specific information:

- (a) The full name of the licensee, registered corporation, or registered referral service as filed with the board and
- (b) A designation of the type of license or registration held as follows:
  - (1) Licensed Marriage, Family, and Child Counselor.
  - (2) Licensed Educational Psychologist.
  - (3) Licensed Clinical Social Worker.
  - (4) Registered Professional Corporation.
  - (5) Registered MFCC Referral Service.
- (c) An unlicensed Marriage, Family, and Child Counselor Registered Intern may advertise if such advertisement complies with Section 4980.44(d) of the Code making disclosures required by that section.

### DEFINITIONS

**1889.** An "MFCC referral service" means a group advertising and referral service for marriage, family, and child counselors as provided for in Section 650.4 of the Code.

### REGISTRATION

- 1889.1.** (a) The board shall issue a registration for an MFCC referral service to an applicant who submits:
- (1) a completed MFCC Referral Service Registration Application (form no. 37A-309, new 8/97), hereby incorporated by reference;
  - (2) a copy of the service's standard form contract regulating its relationship with member marriage, family, and child counselors, demonstrating compliance with Section 650.4 of the Code and this article; and
  - (3) a copy of the service's advertising, demonstrating compliance with Section 650.4 of the Code and this

article.

(b) An MFCC referral service registration issued under this section shall remain valid until suspended or revoked, or until the MFCC referral service notifies the board in writing that the service has discontinued referrals to any marriage, family, and child counselors and no longer desires registration, provided there are no pending disciplinary actions on the MFCC referral service's registration.

(c) It is unlawful for any MFCC referral service to make referrals to participating or member marriage, family, and child counselors unless at the time of so doing such service holds a registration that is valid and in good standing.

(d) An MFCC referral service registration is non-transferable.

(e) An MFCC referral service shall notify the board within thirty (30) days concerning any changes or modifications to the service's standard form contract regulating its relationship with member marriage, family, and child counselors, providing a copy of the new contract to the board.

## **REVOCAION OR DENIAL OF REGISTRATION**

**1889.2.** (a) The board may revoke its registration of an MFCC referral service or deny an MFCC referral service application for good cause. For the purposes of this subsection, "responsible party" includes any owner, co-owner, or member on the board of directors of an MFCC referral service. Good cause includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) the responsible party of an MFCC referral service is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor offense substantially related to the activities of an MFCC referral service;

(2) the responsible party of an MFCC referral service, who is a licensee of the board, fails to comply with any provisions of Chapters 13 and 14 of the Business and Professions Code or Title 16, Division 18 of the California Code of Regulations;

(3) an MFCC referral service fails to comply with any provisions of Sections 650, 650.4, or 651 of the Code or these regulations; or

(4) an MFCC referral service makes a material misrepresentation of fact in information submitted to the board.

(b) After a thorough case review, should the board decide to revoke or deny its registration of an MFCC referral service, it shall give the MFCC referral service written notice setting forth its reasons for revocation or denial. The MFCC referral service may appeal the revocation or denial in writing, within fifteen (15) days after service of the revocation or denial notice, and request a hearing with the board's designee. The revocation is stayed at this point.

Should the board's designee decide to uphold the revocation or denial, the MFCC referral service may appeal the decision of the board's designee in writing, within fifteen (15) days after service of the decision of the board's designee, and request a hearing with a referral services appeals committee appointed by the board chairperson. The hearing will take place at the next regularly scheduled board meeting, provided the appeal is received before the meeting is noticed to the public. It is at the discretion of the board's designee whether to stay the revocation further.

The referral services appeals committee shall contain three board members, one of whom shall be a public member, and two of whom shall be members representing two of the three license types regulated by the board. The decision of the referral services appeals committee is final.

## **ADVERTISING AND REFERRAL GUIDELINES**

**1889.3.** (a) An MFCC referral service shall advertise and make referrals in accordance with Sections 650.4 and 651 of the Code and Section 1811 of these regulations.

(b) An MFCC referral service shall only make referrals to marriage, family, and child counselors with current, valid licenses. Referrals made to marriage, family, and child counselors on probation shall be made in accordance with the terms of probation set by the board.

# OTHER RELATED LAWS

## BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE

### CONSIDERATION FOR REFERRAL OF PATIENTS, CLIENTS, OR CUSTOMERS; VIOLATIONS; PENALTY

**650.** Except as provided in Chapter 2.3 (commencing with Section 1400) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, the offer, delivery, receipt, or acceptance by any person licensed under this division of any rebate, refund, commission, preference, patronage dividend, discount, or other consideration, whether in the form of money or otherwise, as compensation or inducement for referring patients, clients, or customers to any person, irrespective of any membership, proprietary interest or coownership in or with any person to whom these patients, clients or customers are referred is unlawful.

The payment or receipt of consideration for services other than the referral of patients which is based on a percentage of gross revenue or similar type of contractual arrangement shall not be unlawful if the consideration is commensurate with the value of the services furnished or with the fair rental value of any premises or equipment leased or provided by the recipient to the payor.

Except as provided in Chapter 2.3 (commencing with Section 1400) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code and in Sections 654.1 and 654.2, it shall not be unlawful for any person licensed under this division to refer a person to any laboratory, pharmacy, clinic (including entities exempt from licensure pursuant to Section 1206 of the Health and Safety Code), or health care facility solely because the licensee has a proprietary interest or coownership in the laboratory, pharmacy, clinic, or health care facility; provided, however, that the licensee's return on investment for that proprietary interest or coownership shall be based upon the amount of the capital investment or proportional ownership of the licensee which ownership interest is not based on the number or value of any patients referred. Any referral excepted under this section shall be unlawful if the prosecutor proves that there was no valid medical need for the referral.

"Health care facility" means a general acute care hospital, acute psychiatric hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, and any other health facility licensed by the State Department of Health Services under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 1250) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code.

A violation of this section is a public offense and is punishable upon a first conviction by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by imprisonment in the state prison, or by a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or by both such imprisonment and fine. A second or subsequent conviction is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison.

### PUBLIC COMMUNICATION CONTAINING FALSE, FRAUDULENT, MISLEADING, OR DECEPTIVE STATEMENT OR CLAIM; PROHIBITION; DEFINITIONS; ADVERTISEMENTS

**651.** (a) It is unlawful for any person licensed under this division or under any initiative act referred to in this division to disseminate or cause to be disseminated, any form of public communication containing a false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive statement or claim, for the purpose of or likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the rendering of professional services or furnishing of products in connection with the professional practice or business for which he or she is licensed. A "public communication" as used in this section includes, but is not limited to, communication by means of television, radio, motion picture, newspaper, book, or list or directory of healing arts practitioners.

(b) A false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive statement or claim includes a statement or claim which does any of the following:

- (1) Contains a misrepresentation of fact.
- (2) Is likely to mislead or deceive because of a failure to disclose material facts.
- (3) Is intended or is likely to create false or unjustified expectations of favorable results.
- (4) Relates to fees, other than a standard consultation fee or a range of fees for specific types of services, without fully and specifically disclosing all variables and other material factors.
- (5) Contains other representations or implications that in reasonable probability will cause an ordinarily prudent person to misunderstand or be deceived.

(c) Any price advertisement shall be exact, without the use of such phrases as "as low as," "and up," "lowest prices" or words or phrases of similar import. Any advertisement which refers to services, or costs for services, and which uses words of comparison must be based on verifiable data substantiating the comparison. Any person so advertising shall be prepared to provide information sufficient to establish the accuracy of that comparison. Price advertising shall not be fraudulent, deceitful, or misleading, including statements or advertisements of bait, discount, premiums, gifts, or any statements of a similar nature. In connection with price advertising, the price for each product or service shall be clearly identifiable. The price advertised for products shall include charges for any related professional services, including dispensing and fitting services, unless the advertisement specifically and clearly indicates otherwise.

(d) Any person so licensed shall not compensate or give anything of value to a representative of the press, radio, television, or other communication medium in anticipation of, or in return for, professional publicity unless the fact of compensation is made known in that publicity.

(e) Any person so licensed may not use any professional card, professional announcement card, office sign, letterhead, telephone directory listing, medical list, medical directory listing, or a similar professional notice or device if it includes a statement or claim that is false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive within the meaning of subdivision (b).

(f) Any person so licensed who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor. A bona fide mistake of fact shall be a defense to this subdivision but only to this subdivision.

(g) Any violation of any provision of this section by a person so licensed shall constitute good cause for revocation or suspension of his or her license or other disciplinary action.

(h) Advertising by any person so licensed may include the following:

(1) A statement of the name of the practitioner.

(2) A statement of addresses and telephone numbers of the offices maintained by the practitioner.

(3) A statement of office hours regularly maintained by the practitioner.

(4) A statement of languages, other than English, fluently spoken by the practitioner or a person in the practitioner's office.

(5) (A) A statement that the practitioner is certified by a private or public board or agency or a statement that the practitioner limits his or her practice to specific fields. For the purposes of this section, the statement of a practitioner licensed under Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1600) who limits his or her practice to a specific field or fields, shall only include a statement that he or she is certified or is eligible for certification by a private or public board or parent association recognized by that practitioner's licensing board. A statement of certification by a practitioner licensed under Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 3000) shall only include a statement that he or she is certified or eligible for certification by a private or public board or parent association recognized by that practitioner's licensing board.

(6) A statement that the practitioner provides services under a specified private or public insurance plan or health care plan.

(7) A statement of names of schools and postgraduate clinical training programs from which the practitioner has graduated, together with the degrees received.

(8) A statement of publications authored by the practitioner.

(9) A statement of teaching positions currently or formerly held by the practitioner, together with pertinent dates.

(10) A statement of his or her affiliations with hospitals or clinics.

(11) A statement of the charges or fees for services or commodities offered by the practitioner.

(12) A statement that the practitioner regularly accepts installment payments of fees.

(13) Otherwise lawful images of a practitioner, his or her physical facilities, or of a commodity to be advertised.

(14) A statement of the manufacturer, designer, style, make, trade name, brand name, color, size, or type of commodities advertised.

(16) A statement, or statements, providing public health information encouraging preventative or corrective care.

(17) Any other item of factual information that is not false, fraudulent, misleading, or likely to deceive.

(i) Each of the healing arts boards and examining committees within Division 2 shall adopt appropriate regulations to enforce this section in accordance with Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

Each of the healing arts boards and committees and examining committees within Division 2 shall, by regulation, define those efficacious services to be advertised by business or professions under their jurisdiction for the purpose of determining whether advertisements are false or misleading. Until a definition for that service has been issued, no advertisement for that service shall be disseminated. However, if a definition of a service has not been issued by a board or committee within 120 days of receipt of a request from a licensee, all those holding the license may advertise the service. Those boards and committees shall adopt or modify regulations defining which services may be advertised, the manner in which defined services may be advertised, and restricting advertising which would promote the inappropriate or excessive use of health services or commodities. A board or committee shall not, by regulation, unreasonably prevent truthful, nondeceptive price or otherwise lawful forms of advertising of services or commodities, by either outright prohibition or imposition of onerous disclosure requirements. However, any member of a board or committee acting in good faith in the adoption or enforcement of any regulation shall be deemed to be acting as an agent of the state.

(j) The Attorney General shall commence legal proceedings in the appropriate forum to enjoin advertisements disseminated or about to be disseminated in violation of this section and seek other appropriate relief to enforce this section. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the costs of enforcing this section to the respective licensing boards or committees may be awarded against any licensee found to be in violation of any provision of this section. This shall not diminish the power of district attorneys, county counsels, or city attorneys pursuant to existing law to seek appropriate relief.

### **UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT (MFTs)**

**4982.** The board may refuse to issue any registration or license, or may suspend or revoke the license or registration of any registrant or licensee if the applicant, licensee, or registrant has been guilty of unprofessional conduct. Unprofessional conduct shall include, but not be limited to:

(n) Prior to the commencement of treatment, failing to disclose to the client or prospective client the fee to be charged for the professional services, or the basis upon which that fee will be computed.

(o) Paying, accepting, or soliciting any consideration, compensation, or remuneration, whether monetary or otherwise, for the referral of professional clients. All consideration, compensation, or remuneration shall be in relation to professional counseling services actually provided by the licensee. Nothing in this subdivision shall prevent collaboration among two or more licensees in a case or cases. However, no fee shall be charged for that collaboration, except when disclosure of the fee has been made in compliance with subdivision (n).

(p) Advertising in a manner which is false, misleading, or deceptive.

These sections of the *Business and Professions Code* and *California Code of Regulations* are printed in part. You are encouraged to obtain a complete set of the laws and regulations pertaining to MFTs and MFT Referral Services.