



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Board Members

Date: September 9, 2024

From: Steve Sodergren
Executive Officer

Subject: Workforce Development Committee Update

The Workforce Development Committee (Committee) held its most recent meeting on August 9, 2024. The purpose of the Committee is to conduct in-depth discussions about numerous topics related to the licensing process and workforce development.

During the last meeting the Committee members and stakeholders discussed the possibility of permitting applicants to take the clinical exam early, once 1,500 experience hours are gained. Staff identified the statutes and regulations that would need amendments and is in the process of drafting a proposal. The following proposed amendments will be drafted and presented to the Committee in October:

- Permitting the clinical exam to be taken once an applicant has completed 875 hours of supervised experience performing direct clinical counseling. This is a departure from the general 1,500 experience hour threshold previously discussed was changed based on feedback that supervised experience in direct clinical counseling, rather than all supervised experience, may best prepare an applicant for passing the clinical exam.
- Allowing an associate to choose when they take the California law and ethics exam but require that it be passed before a subsequent number or license is obtained.
- Implementing an age limit of 7 years on a passing score for the California Law and Ethics Exam.
- Extending the length of time a registration number is valid from 6 to 7 years.
- Extending the amount of time supervised experience hours are valid from 6 to 7 years.
- Upon application for licensure, requiring the applicant's experience hours, clinical exam score, and Law and Ethics Exam score to be no more than 7 years old.

- Continuing to prohibit associates with a subsequent associate number from working in a private practice generally. However, permit an associate with a subsequent registration number to request a one-time, two-year hardship extension.

The Committee also discussed possible amendments to the child abuse assessment and reporting coursework requirements for all Board regulated professions. Currently, a 7-hour course on this topic is required for all LMFT, LPCC, and LCSW applicants, and for LEPs upon first license renewal. There are varying requirements in terms of when the course is required to be taken among the professions. Staff recommended the LCSW law be amended to require this coursework prior to Associate registration rather than prior to licensure. Staff also recommended that LEP law be amended to require this coursework prior to licensure rather than prior to first license renewal.

Board staff shared with the Committee a summary of the concerns raised in the Board's Licensure Pathway Survey that was conducted in April 2024. While the survey was primarily focused on the three key areas (education, supervision, and examinations) many participants expressed concerns with the licensure application process. Staff also reported on current initiatives aimed at reducing barriers in the licensure pathway. The Committee requested that staff provide a list of additional efforts that could be implemented to further alleviate the barriers that were indicated in the survey.

The next Workforce Development Committee meeting will be held on October 11, 2024.