



Board of Behavioral Sciences



1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 574-7830  
www.bbs.ca.gov

Gavin Newsom, Governor  
State of California

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Department of Consumer Affairs

## Board of Behavioral Sciences Fee Increase Effective January 1, 2021

Pursuant to AB 3330 (Chapter 359, Statutes of 2020), the Board's fees for each of its license types will increase on January 1, 2021 as follows:

### Marriage and Family Therapists:

Fee Type	Current Fee	New Fee Effective 1/1/2021
Associate Registration	\$75	\$150
Associate Renewal	\$75	\$150
Application for Licensure	\$100	\$250
Law & Ethics Exam	\$100	\$150
Clinical Exam	\$100	\$250
Initial License Issuance	\$130	\$200
License Renewal	\$130	\$200

### Licensed Educational Psychologists:

Fee Type	Current Fee	New Fee Effective 1/1/2021
Application for Licensure	\$100	\$250
Written Exam	\$100	\$250
Initial License Issuance	\$80	\$200
License Renewal	\$80	\$200

Clinical Social Workers:

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>New Fee Effective 1/1/2021</b>
Associate Registration	\$75	\$150
Associate Renewal	\$75	\$150
Application for Licensure	\$100	\$250
Law & Ethics Exam	\$100	\$150
Clinical Exam [1]	n/a	n/a
Initial License Issuance	\$100	\$200
License Renewal	\$100	\$200

[1] This exam is administered by a national testing entity and is not changing at this time.

Professional Clinical Counselors:

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>New Fee Effective 1/1/2021</b>
Associate Registration	\$100	\$150
Associate Renewal	\$100	\$150
Application for Licensure	\$180	\$250
Law & Ethics Exam	\$100	\$150
Clinical Exam [1]	n/a	n/a
Initial License Issuance	\$200	\$200
License Renewal	\$175	\$200

[1] This exam is administered by a national testing entity and is not changing at this time.

In setting the new fee amounts, the Board ensured fees were equitable across license types. For example, all licensees will now pay the same license renewal fee amount, regardless of whether they are an LMFT, LCSW, LPCC, or LEP. Similarly, all applicants will pay the same amount for associate registration, regardless of the type of associate registration they are applying for.

The Board will update its forms to reflect the fee increase over the next few months. Please stay tuned to our website for further information.

## **Reason for the Fee Increases**

The Board has not increased its fees for marriage and family therapists, educational psychologists, or clinical social workers in over 20 years. (The professional clinical counselor license was established by the Legislature in 2009, and at that time its fees were established at somewhat higher rates).

In 2018, the Board contracted with CPS HR Consulting (CPS), an independent firm, to provide performance auditing and consulting services. CPS conducted a review of the Board's fee structure and staff workload to determine if fee levels were appropriate for the recovery of the actual cost of conducting its programs.

The report reviewed 25 main fees that represent approximately 90 percent of the Board's fee revenue: applications for registrations, licenses, examination and renewals. It found that during the previous four years, while revenues increased by almost 39 percent, expenditures increased by approximately 42 percent. This means that there is a structural imbalance; licensing fees are no longer sufficient to recover operating costs.

The imbalance is due to factors such as a steady increase in application volume and registrant/licensee population, as well as increasing costs over the years in areas such as staff salary, health insurance, Attorney General costs, and other overhead costs. Therefore, the Board must increase its licensing, registration, and examination fees in order to remain solvent.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why did the Board wait so long to increase fees? Why not increase fees a lesser amount every few years to keep pace with inflation over time?**

The Board's fees were keeping pace with costs quite well until approximately 2009 or 2010, when the Great Recession hit. The Board is a "special fund" state program, which means its fee revenue goes directly to supporting its operations (no other state funds from other areas are used). When the recession hit, the Board had a reserve fund, and the state borrowed money from the Board's reserve to fund the state's general fund (the general fund funds state programs which do not necessarily generate revenue on their own).

Between approximately 2012 and 2017, it became apparent that the Board was becoming structurally imbalanced with regards to its fee income versus operating costs. However, special fund programs are not permitted to pursue fee increases until their general fund loans have been repaid. The Board's general fund loan was not completely repaid until Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Therefore, the Board pursued the fee increase to correct the structural imbalance as soon as it was able to.

### **When do the new fees go into effect?**

The new fees are effective as of January 1, 2021. This means the following:

- The new renewal fees apply to licensees and registrants that renew online after January 1, 2021 or whose renewal application is postmarked on or after January 1, 2021.
- The new associate registration, application for licensure, exam, and initial license issuance fees apply to anyone whose application for these actions is postmarked on or after January 1, 2021.

### **Will the fee increase affect fees for the LPCC and LCSW Clinical Examinations?**

No. The LPCC and LCSW Clinical Examinations are administered by national testing entities (the National Board for Certified Counselors and the Association of Social Work Boards, respectively). Because these entities administer these exams (and not the Board, like the other exams), they set and collect their own exam fees independently.