



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

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

A recorded webcast of this meeting is available at: [Apr. 4, 2025 Workforce Development Committee](#)

DATE April 4, 2025

TIME 1:00 p.m.

LOCATIONS

Primary Location Department of Consumer Affairs
1625 North Market Blvd., #S-102
Sacramento, CA 95834

Alternative Platform WebEx Video/Phone Conference

ATTENDEES

Members Present at Remote Locations

Wendy Strack, Chair, Public Member
Justin Huft, LMFT Member
Eleanor Uribe, LCSW Member
Dr. Annette Walker, Public Member

Staff Present at Primary Location

Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer
Marlon McManus, Assistant Executive Officer
Rosanne Helms, Legislative Manager
Christina Kitamura, Administrative Analyst
Syreeta Risso, Special Projects and Research Analyst
Kristy Schieldge, Legal Counsel

Other Attendees Public participation via WebEx video conference/phone conference
and in-person at Department of Consumer Affairs

1. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum

Wendy Strack, Chair of the Workforce Development Committee (Committee), called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was established.

2. Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves during role call; staff and public attendees introduced themselves.

3. Consent Calendar: Discussion and Possible Approval of January 30, 2025 Workforce Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion: Approve the January 30, 2025 Workforce Development Committee meeting minutes.

M/S: Walker/Uribe/

Public Comment: None

Vote: 4 yea, 0 nay. Motion carried.

Member	Vote
Justin Huft	Yes
Wendy Strack	Yes
Eleanor Uribe	Yes
Dr. Annette Walker	Yes

4. Discussion and Possible Recommendations Regarding Restructuring the Pathway to Licensure for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§4980.397, 4980.398, 4980.399, 4980.40, 4980.41, 4980.43, 4980.50, 4984.01, 4984.7, 4984.72; and California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 16, §§1829.1, 1829.2, and 1829.3)

During the last committee meeting, staff recommended a three-phased approach to implement changes:

- Phase I: General Licensing Process Changes
- Phase II: Adoption of the AMFTRB National Exam as the LMFT Clinical Exam
- Phase III: Allow Clinical Exams to be Taken Earlier

Staff focused the discussion on Phase 1. Staff provided the following attachments in the meeting materials:

- Attachment A License Pathway Restructure proposed language
- Attachment B shows a visual summary and description of each phase.
- Attachment C summarizes the estimated timeline of each phase.
- Attachment D illustrates the licensure process once all three phases are implemented.

Phase I: General Licensing Process Changes

Changes to the text shown in Attachment A were made after staff met with the Board's legal counsel and the Board's Licensing and Exam Unit managers to discuss the feasibility and implementation of the proposed changes.

The proposed amendments are as follows:

- a. Timing of the California Law and Ethics Exam: Allow associates to choose when they take the California law and ethics exam. It would not be required to be attempted every year. However, it must be passed before a subsequent registration number is issued and before eligibility to take the clinical exam is granted.
- b. Age Limit for the California Law and Ethics Exam: Places an age limit of 7 years on a passing score for the California Law and Ethics Exam.
- c. Change in Registration Number Length and Time Supervised Experience Hours Valid: Extends the allowable length of time a registration number is valid from 6 years to 7 years. It also extends the amount of time supervised experience hours are valid from 6 years to 7 years.
- d. Add an Exception to the Prohibition on Working in a Private Practice with a Subsequent Registration Number: Under the proposal, the law would continue to prohibit associates with a subsequent associate number from working in a private practice generally. However, it would permit an associate with a subsequent registration number to request a one-time, two-year hardship extension.
- e. Technical Clean-Up Changes:
 - Deleting BPC §4980.398 (transition scenarios from the 2016 exam restructure) as that section is no longer needed.)
 - Delete the exam rescoring fee in BPC §4984.7. Exams are now scored electronically, not manually, and therefore this subdivision is obsolete.
 - Deleting the requirement that if an applicant is unable to pass the clinical exam within 7 years of their initial attempt, they must pass the California law and ethics exam again before continuing to attempt the clinical exam.

Staff believes placing an age limit on the California law and ethics exam score renders this requirement obsolete.

- Amends BPC §§ 4980.397(c) and 4980.50(h) to clarify that the Board may accept a passing clinical exam score obtained early from another state.

Proposed Next Steps

Language still needs to be drafted to implement the proposed changes for the LCSW and LPCC practice acts.

The LEP licensure process is structured substantially differently than the process for LMFT, LCSW, and LPCC licensure. Therefore, most of the changes being discussed for the other 3 practice acts do not apply for LEP. The only change that applies to LEPs is the allowable age of experience hours. Staff recommends that the allowable age of experience hours for LEPs also be changed from six years to seven years.

Legal counsel made the following recommendations. (These recommendations were made after the release of the committee meeting materials).

1. *Referred to Attachment A, BPC section 4980.399(a): A passing score on the California law and ethics exam shall be passed no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for initial license issuance.*

Variations of this language occur in several places throughout the proposed text.

2. *Referred to Attachment A, BPC section 4984.01(e): Recommended the following language:*
 - *"The Board shall grant the extension provided that good cause is demonstrated..."*
 - *Define "good cause"*
 - *Adding language for circumstances beyond the control of the applicant.*

Discussion

Huft: Revisited concerns regarding the priority of Phase III and moving up to a higher priority, before Phase II. Asked if staff has reconsidered this suggestion made at the previous committee meeting.

Helms responded. There are several reasons for this, and it is not related to workload. There are a lot of nuances in changing the timing of the clinical exam, which takes more time to do. There are a lot of people already in the process, and this would require changing how the hours are locked-in; the Board must be very careful about that so that candidates and applicants are not disenfranchised

and to ensure that there are no unintended consequences. It is a big structural change that should not be rushed. Staff is prepared to move forward with this portion of the proposal right now, and staff needs to mindfully work on Phase III. Staff is also ready to work through the early transition to the MFT national exam. There are some changes that need to go with that, which are not necessarily compatible with doing both at the same time. For a number of reasons, it is not a good idea to implement those changes at the same time.

Sodergren: Echoed Helms' comments, stating that staff does not want to change things so quickly that candidates and applicants will get lost in the pathway, which will cause more issues with it than the benefits that are desired.

Walker: Asked staff to break down Phase III and integrate some of Phase III now, if possible. Also asked for an explanation from legal counsel regarding their recommendations that were presented but not provided in the meeting materials.

Schildge: Explained that the recommendations were for clarity and to clarify and define "good cause," because the way it was drafted seemed too open ended, leading to everyone qualifying for a hardship waiver.

Uribe: Agreed with the language clarification provided by legal.

Public Comments

Shanti Ezrine, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT): CAMFT is in support of the proposed changes to the licensing process and the breakdown of the three phases to ensure a smooth implementation process. CAMFT has no concerns with the proposed language on Attachment A. Also noted appreciation for continuing to prioritize the adoption of the AMFTRB national exam without delaying Phase II on the conversation regarding the timing of Phase II and III. Encouraged staff to continue working through Phase III.

Dr. Ben Caldwell: Agreed with comments from CAMFT. Also shared Huft's concerns to move all three phases forward as quickly as possible. Offered any assistance to the Board in advancing these proposals as quickly as possible.

Strack: Stated that although these phases appear to be moving independently, there are steps in the processes that are happening concurrently.

Motion: Direct staff to do the following:

- Make any discussed changes, and any non-substantive changes to the language shown in Attachment A.
- Draft the necessary corresponding amendments required to implement Phase I for the LCSW and LPCC practice acts.

- Change the allowable age of experience hours for the LEP practice act from six years to seven years.
- Bring the completed proposal to the Policy and Advocacy Committee for consideration.

M/S: Walker/Huft

Public Comment: None

Vote: 4 yea, 0 nay. Motion carried.

Member	Vote
Justin Huft	Yes
Wendy Strack	Yes
Eleanor Uribe	Yes
Dr. Annette Walker	Yes

5. **Discussion and Possible Recommendations Regarding Education Survey for Educators and Associates**

To assist the Workforce Development Committee in its review of LMFT and LPCC education requirements, staff proposes conducting a survey to gather input from educators, students, and registrants. The purpose of the survey is to identify any concerns or issues with current education standards or licensure education programs to provide feedback to the Committee that will enhance and further the discussion around the Board's education requirements.

Staff proposes two separate, anonymous surveys: one for educators (provided as Attachment A) and one for students and registrants (provided as Attachment B).

Upon the Committee's approval, staff will finalize the surveys and distribute them in May 2025. A report summarizing the survey findings will be presented at the Committee's July 31st meeting.

Discussion

Huft: Made the following recommendations: 1) Changing all relevant questions to Likert scale questions. 2) Question 8, for educators, change it to a sliding scale. 3) Question 22, shift away from binary-type question and change to Likert scale. Ask the degree, frequency or severity to which there are challenges. 4) Ask to what extent are students prepared to serve the following diverse populations. 5) Ask about racial, ethnic minorities. Ask about LGBTQ clients, rural communities, and ask those same things for licensees and students. 6) For educators, ask to what extent does your program face challenges in maintaining qualified faculty or supervisors, and ask what those challenges are.

Uribe: Suggested requesting further feedback for many of the questions asked of the educators. Suggested an option for survey takers to contact the Board to provide more input and/or to ask questions.

Huft: Suggested the Board offer incentives for completing these surveys for their ideas and time spent on completing the surveys.

Public Comments

Shanti Ezrine, CAMFT: CAMFT is supportive of the holistic review of education requirements to make sure that content is current, appropriate and ensures an equitable pathway for licensure to all applicants while maintaining consumer protection. When the surveys are ready for distribution, CAMFT is happy to share the surveys with its members.

Dr. Ben Caldwell: Expressed appreciation for the content of the surveys in asking the survey takers what they would want to add as well as what they would want to remove. Question #6, Attachment B, could be adjusted to a Likard scale question. Attachment A for educators, question regarding reducing or removing requirements be placed closer to the question regarding adding requirements.

Staff will make discussed changes to the survey and distribute it.

6. Update Regarding the Workforce Development Action Plan

At its previous meeting, the Committee was presented an update and discussed the proposed short-term and long-term goals for workforce development. It was suggested that the staff present a detailed plan that identifies possible deliverable dates on the long term and short-term goals, which was provided as Attachment A.

7. Suggestions for Future Agenda items

Elyse Springer, California Chapter of Postpartum Support International (PSI): Requested that this Committee consider AB 2581 and to give PSI time to share information on this matter.

8. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

None

9. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 2:11 p.m.