



Board of Behavioral Sciences
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Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors “Couples and Families” Requirements and Application Process

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Many of your questions may be answered by referring to the [Request for Confirmation of Qualifications to Assess and Treat Couples and Families](#). The following FAQs are provided in addition to the information contained in the request form packet.

GENERAL FAQs

- 1. Am I required to take the six (6) semester units (or 9 quarter units) of coursework in marriage and family therapy (MFT) before earning the 500 hours of experience? Which types of courses qualify?**

While it is advisable to have completed the six (6) semester units of MFT coursework before earning the 500 hours, it is not required. Qualifying courses must be at the graduate level and must be specifically focused on the theory and application of marriage and family therapy. For more information, see [LPCC Treatment of Couples and Families Qualifying Coursework](#).

- 2. What requirements must the 500 hours of supervised experience with couples, families, and/or children meet in order to qualify?**

The supervised experience must simply be gained working directly with couples, families and/or children, under a qualified supervisor as described in question 10. You must be an Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC) or a licensed LPCC while gaining the experience. The law does not specify how much weekly supervision you are required to have.

However, if you are an APCC and would like these hours to count toward the 3,000 hours of experience required for licensure, ALL additional requirements specified in law for licensure pertaining to [supervisor requirements](#) and [supervision requirements](#) must be met. If you do not need the 500 hours to count toward licensure, it is recommended that, at minimum, you set up regular, periodic supervision sessions.

3. *What documentation must I provide to the Board to verify my experience?*

The Board will accept hours of experience verified by a qualified supervisor. See the [Request for Confirmation of Qualifications to Assess and Treat Couples and Families](#) for details. If you are unable to obtain verification from your supervisor, you may have your hours of experience and supervisor's information verified by your employer. If this information is not available, the Board may consider other documentation that it deems equivalent, on a case-by-case basis.

FAQS FOR LPCCS APPLYING FOR CONFIRMATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

4. *How long will my application take for processing?*

Processing time will vary depending on the volume of applications received. Apply early.

5. *Will I receive a certificate from the Board once my qualifications have been approved?*

No - certificates are not available. Instead, you will receive a letter from the Board.

6. *What are the requirements for six (6) hours of continuing education (CE)? Do I need to show proof of completion?*

The law requires completion of six (6) hours of CE specific to marriage and family therapy, completed in each two-year license renewal cycle. You are not required to show proof of completion of CE in order to obtain the confirmation letter from the Board. However, you may be asked for documentation should you be selected for a random CE audit.

7. *Am I required to obtain written confirmation of my qualifications from the Board in order to assess or treat a child?*

No. However, supervised experience working directly with a child may be counted toward the experience required for assessment and treatment of couples or families.

8. *I am licensed in another state as an LPCC and was allowed to assess and treat couples or families as part of the scope of practice in that state. What qualifications do I need to meet?*

You will have a streamlined process for obtaining the letter of confirmation from the Board. See the [Request for Confirmation of Qualifications to Assess and Treat Couples and Families](#) for more information.

FAQS FOR APCCs AND STUDENT TRAINEES

9. Can an APCC apply to receive confirmation of qualifications to assess and treat couples or families from the Board? AND

10. Who can supervise my experience with couples, families or children?

The Board cannot accept applications from APCCs. This is because APCCs are only permitted to assess and treat couples or families while gaining supervised experience under the direct supervision of one of the following types of licensees:

- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCCs)*
- Licensed Educational Psychologist (LEP)**
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFTs)
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSWs)***
- Licensed Clinical Psychologist***
- Licensed Physician certified in Psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology***

In addition, your supervisor must meet all of the following qualifications:

- Holds a current and active California license that is not under suspension or probation.
- Has been licensed in California or any other state for at least two (2) years out of the last five (5) years prior to the commencement of supervision.

Has practiced psychotherapy during at least two (2) years out of the last five (5) years prior to the commencement of supervision (or, if an LEP, has provided psychological counseling pursuant to Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 4989.14) OR

- Has provided direct supervision to APCCs, MFT Trainees, Associate Marriage and Family Therapists, or Associate Clinical Social Workers who perform psychotherapy during at least two (2) years out of the last five (5) years prior to the commencement of supervision. Supervision of psychotherapy performed by a student (social work intern or a professional clinical counselor trainee) shall be accepted if the supervision performed is substantially equivalent to the supervision required for registrants.
- Has completed a minimum of six (6) hours of supervision training or coursework within 60 days of commencement of supervision and in every two-year renewal period thereafter (Psychologists and Psychiatrists are exempt from this training requirement).

*If the supervisor is an LPCC: The LPCC must have already met the qualifications to assess and treat couples and families and have obtained written confirmation from the Board of meeting the qualifications. LPCC supervisors must provide the supervisee with a copy of his or her “confirmation of qualifications to assess and treat couples and families” from the Board.

**If the supervisor is an LEP: The LEP may only supervise the provision of educationally related mental health services consistent with the LEP scope of practice described in BPC section 4989.14, which may include children or families.

***If the supervisor is an LCSW, Clinical Psychologist or Psychiatrist: The licensee must have sufficient education and experience in treating couples and families to competently practice couples and family therapy in California.

11. I'm an APCC and gained experience with couples, families or children prior to January 1, 2017, supervised by an LPCC. My supervisor met the qualifications to assess and treat couples or families at that time, but did not yet have a confirmation of qualifications from the Board. Will these hours count?

Since confirmation from the Board was not available prior to January 1, 2017, those hours will count provided they meet all requirements in place at the time the experience was gained. Additionally, your supervisor must have provided you with a copy of his or her "confirmation of qualifications" letter before any additional supervision was conducted on or after January 1, 2017.

12. I'm a PCC student trainee. How do these requirements apply to me?

A Professional Clinical Counselor Student/Trainee is permitted to treat couples or families as part of their supervised practicum experience, but may not count that experience toward the 500 hours required to assess and treat couples or families. There are no specific requirements for the supervisor above and beyond the normal requirements for licensure.

FAQS FOR LPCCS SUPERVISING "COUPLES AND FAMILIES" EXPERIENCE OR INDIVIDUALS PURSUING LMFT LICENSURE

13. I would like to supervise an APCC who will be gaining experience with couples, families or children. What is required of me?

See question 10 above for the list of supervisor qualifications. Important Note: If the APCC you are supervising would like the 500 hours to count toward the 3,000 hours of experience required for licensure, all requirements specified in law pertaining to [supervisor qualifications and supervision requirements](#) must be met.

14. I had provided supervision to APCCs gaining experience with couples, families or children prior to January 1, 2017. Will the hours gained by my supervisees count since I did not have confirmation of my qualifications from the Board at that time?

Since the confirmation from the Board was not available at that time, if you met the qualifications to assess and treat couples or families, those hours will count provided they meet all requirements in place at the time the experience was gained.

15. I would like to supervise an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) or MFT Trainee. What is required of me?

You must meet all [requirements for supervisors of AMFTs and MFT trainees](#) which includes meeting the qualifications to assess and treat couples or families. You must provide a copy of your "confirmation of qualifications" letter from the Board to these supervisees prior to commencing supervision.