



You must have a current and active California license or registration to provide marriage and family therapy, educational psychology, clinical social work, and professional clinical counseling services to clients located in California.

WHEN INITIATING TELEHEALTH SERVICES WITH A CLIENT IN CALIFORNIA, YOU MUST:

- Obtain and document verbal or written consent from the patient for the use of telehealth as an acceptable mode of delivering services.
- Inform the client of the potential risks and limitations of receiving treatment via telehealth.
- Provide the client with your license or registration number and type of license or registration.
- Document your efforts to ascertain the contact information of relevant resources, including emergency services, in the patient’s geographic area.

DURING ANY ADDITIONAL SESSION WITH A CLIENT IN CALIFORNIA, YOU MUST:

- Verbally obtain and document the client’s full name and address of present location at the beginning of each telehealth session.
- Assess whether the client and the session are appropriate for telehealth, including, but not limited to, consideration of the client’s psychosocial situation.
- Comply with all applicable federal and state privacy, confidentiality, and security laws and regulations governing use and disclosure of a client’s medical or protected health information, including HIPAA and the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act.

TELEHEALTH FAQs

Q: What is telehealth?

A: California law defines telehealth as a mode of delivering health care services and public health via information and communication technologies to facilitate the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of a patient’s health care while the patient is at the originating site and health care provider is at the distant site. (See [California Business and Professions Code § 2290.5](#))

Q: Can a licensee of the Board of Behavioral Sciences provide telehealth services to a client located in another state?

A: It depends. Per [California Code of Regulations § 1815.5\(e\)](#), a licensee or registrant of this state may provide telehealth services to a client located in another jurisdiction only if the California licensee or registrant meets the requirements to lawfully provide services in that jurisdiction, and delivery of services via telehealth is allowed by that jurisdiction. It is the licensee’s or registrant’s responsibility to check with the other jurisdiction to determine if they would be allowed to provide telehealth services in that state.

Q: Can a California licensee, while out-of-state, provide telehealth services to a client located in California?

A: Yes. Assuming the case is appropriate for telehealth, the licensee can provide telehealth services if their California license is current and active, and the licensee follows the regulations outlined in [California Code of Regulations, Title 16, § 1815.5](#).

In addition, a California Associate whose registration number is current and active can continue to practice with clients located in California while the associate is out-of-state if their supervisor permits it.



ARE YOU GOING TO PROVIDE TELEHEALTH SERVICES IN CALIFORNIA?

Q: I am licensed in another state but do not hold a license in California. I will be traveling to or relocating to California. Can I continue providing services to clients who are located in the state where I am licensed?

A: Under California law, you may continue to provide services to clients located in your state of licensure, provided that such practice is permitted by the licensing agency in that state. You are responsible for verifying this with that state's licensing authority.

However, in order to provide services to clients located in California, you must obtain a California license or practice under supervision with a California-issued Associate registration until you obtain California licensure.

Q: Are out-of-state licensed clinicians allowed to provide telehealth services to pre-existing clients who are moving to or visiting California?

A: California regulations require an individual to have a current and active California license or registration to provide marriage and family therapy, educational psychology, clinical social work, or professional clinical counseling services to clients located in California.

However, California law provides for a one-time per calendar year 30-day temporary practice allowance, which allows qualifying marriage and family therapists, professional clinical counselors, and clinical social workers who are licensed in other states or jurisdictions of the U.S. to provide therapy services to an existing client while the client is travelling in California. More information about the temporary practice allowance and how to qualify can be found here: www.bbs.ca.gov/licensees/temporary_practice_allowance_faqs.pdf

Q: Are students pursuing licensure (MFT Trainees, PCC Trainees or Social Work Interns) permitted to provide services via telehealth?

A: Students are permitted to provide mental health services via telehealth as long as they are under the supervision of their school and supervisor and are following applicable statutes and regulations pertaining to telehealth. Although students are not directly under the Board's purview, it is recommended that students also follow the Board's specific regulatory requirements pertaining to provision of telehealth.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL:

[American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Online Therapy Guidelines](#)

[American Counseling Association Code of Ethics \(2014\): Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media](#)

[Association of Social Work Boards Technology and Social Work Regulations Resources](#)

[California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists Code of Ethics](#)

[National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#)

[Telehealth: Virtual Service Delivery Updated Recommendations \(National Association of School Psychologists\)](#)

[Telehealth Resources for Health Care Providers \(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services\)](#)

[Telehealth Best Practice Guides for Providers \(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services\)](#)

[Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology \(American Psychological Association\)](#)

[National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers](#)

[HIPAA For Professionals \(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services\)](#)

