Order Waiving Face-to-Face Training and Supervision Requirements

Please note that this waiver was previously set to expire on August 31, 2021. It has now been extended through October 31, 2021.

Pursuant to the Governor’s Executive Order N-39-20, during the current State of Emergency, the Director of the California Department of Consumer Affairs (Director) may waive any statutory or regulatory requirements with respect to a professional license issued pursuant to Division 2 of the Business and Professions Code (BPC). This includes professional licenses issued by the Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board).

The Director has granted the Board’s request to waive the following:

- The component of BPC sections 4980.43.2(d), 4996.23.1(f), and 4999.46.2(d) that only permits Associate Marriage and Family Therapists (AMFTs), Associate Clinical Social Workers (ASWs), and Associate Professional Clinical Counselors (APCCs) to obtain their required weekly direct supervisor contact via videoconferencing if they are working in an exempt setting. (An exempt setting is defined as a government entity, a school, college or university, or an institution that is both nonprofit and charitable.)

- BPC sections 4980.36(d)(1)(B)(ii) and (d)(1)(B)(vi)(II) for MFT trainees, and 4999.33(c)(3)(K) for PCC trainees, that specifically requires provision of “face-to-face” mental health services in order to complete required practicum hours.

A link to the text of the waiver can be found [here](#).

What does this mean?

For Associates:
The waiver means that, regardless of the type of setting that they are working in (including private practices), associates are not required by law to meet with their supervisor in-person during this state of emergency. Instead, they may gain their required weekly direct supervisor contact via two-way, real-time videoconferencing.
For Trainees:
Under this waiver, MFT and PCC trainees are not required to gain their practicum hours in person, but instead may do so via telehealth. Although the law already implies in-person or videoconferencing is permitted for practicum hours (during normal times, “face-to-face” may be in person or via videoconference), the Board sought this waiver as a clarifying measure, and all forms of telehealth are permitted while the waiver is in effect. In addition, the Board will be seeking legislation to clarify this law permanently within the next year.

**Does the supervision waiver apply to trainees also?**

Current law does not specifically address supervision of trainees via videoconferencing. Therefore, the Board is interpreting the law to also allow supervision via videoconferencing for trainees. Under this interpretation, this waiver applies to trainees as well.

It remains the responsibility of the supervisor and the school to determine if supervision via videoconferencing is appropriate for a particular trainee given individual circumstances.

**How long is the waiver effective for?**

This waiver was previously effective until August 31, 2021. However, it has now been extended to be effective through October 31, 2021.

**May I supervise (or receive supervision) via telephone?**

Supervision via telephone is not permitted because it does not have a video component. Supervision must be via two-way, real-time videoconferencing.