

**Implementation of Title Change (“Intern” to “Associate”)
Marriage and Family Therapist Interns and Professional Clinical Counselor Interns
Effective January 1, 2018**

Effective January 1, 2018, the titles for marriage and family therapist interns and professional clinical counselor interns will change, as follows:

- Marriage and family therapist registrants must use the title “Associate Marriage and Family Therapist” or “Registered Associate Marriage and Family Therapist.”
- Professional clinical counselor registrants must use the title “Associate Professional Clinical Counselor” or “Registered Associate Professional Clinical Counselor.”

The Board is also in the process of proposing corresponding changes to its advertising regulations, which would permit certain specified abbreviations to be used in a registrant’s advertising. These regulations are currently moving through the approval process. Once they are approved, the Board will post further notification and instructions on its web site.

Statement on Acceptable Abbreviations Due to the “Associate” Title Change for Marriage and Family Therapist and Professional Clinical Counselor Registrants

The Board is in the process of proposing changes to its advertising guidelines, in order to make them consistent with the new “Associate” title for marriage and family therapist and professional clinical counselor registrants, which became law on January 1, 2018.

Although the proposed advertising guidelines regulations are not approved yet, the Board recommends utilizing the titles it is proposing in your advertisements. They are as follows:

For Marriage and Family Therapist Registrants:

- Registered Associate Marriage and Family Therapist
- Registered Associate MFT
- AMFT (may only be used if the term “registered associate marriage and family therapist” also appears in the advertisement.)

For Professional Clinical Counselor Registrants:

- Registered Associate Professional Clinical Counselor
- Registered Associate PCC
- APCC (may only be used if the term “registered associate professional clinical counselor” also appears in the advertisement.)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board) Changing the “Intern” Titles for MFT and PCC Registrants?

Stakeholders and registrants voiced concerns that the “intern” title for MFT and PCC registrants may not be an accurate representation of their post-master’s degree status. After discussing the issue, the Board decided that the “intern” title may be more socially understood as referring to someone who is in school, causing consumers to discount the credibility of MFT and PCC interns based on their title. In addition, the Board found evidence that some other states and professions are moving away from the use of the “intern” title for post-graduates. Therefore, it sponsored legislation to make this change (SB 1478, Chapter 489, Statutes of 2016).

Use of the “associate” title also brings MFT and PCC registrants in line with social work registrants, who already use the “associate” title.

2. Why isn’t this Change Effective Right Away?

Delaying the effective date of the change allows registrants who are planning business card orders, or purchasing advertising, time to become aware of the change and act accordingly. It also allows the Board time to conduct outreach.

3. Can I use the “Associate” Title Prior to January 1, 2018?

No. Until January 1, 2018, MFT and PCC registrants are to use the “intern” title.

4. May I use the Title “Marriage and Family Therapist Associate,” “MFTA,” or “Professional Clinical Counselor Associate,” or “PCCA” Instead?

No. The law does not recognize these titles. Acceptable titles are specified above.

5. Are the Titles for MFT Trainees and PCC Trainees Changing as Well?

No. The titles for trainees are not changing at this time.

6. I am an Associate Clinical Social Worker. Do These Changes Affect Me?

Social work registrants are keeping the “associate” title and are not affected.