



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Board Members **Date:** October 31, 2022
From: Steve Sodergren
Executive Officer
Subject: Acceptance of AMFTRB For California Licensure

The Board requested that DCA's Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) review the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards' (AMFTRB) Marital and Family Therapy National Examination (MFT National Examination). OPES performed this review to evaluate the suitability of the MFT National Examination for use in California licensure of marriage and family therapists.

The findings were discussed during the Board's November 3, 2022, closed session. Please see Attachment A-OPES AMFTRB review summary.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct an open discussion to determine if there is an interest in considering the AMFTRB National Examination for licensure in California.

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MEMORANDUM

DATE	August 1, 2022
TO	Steve Sodergren, Executive Officer California Board of Behavioral Sciences
FROM	 Heidi Lincer, Ph.D., Chief Office of Professional Examination Services
SUBJECT	Review of the Marital and Family Therapy National Examination

As mandated by Business and Professions (B&P) Code § 139, and Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Policy *OPES 18-02 Licensure Examination Validation*, all licensure examinations must demonstrate validity and meet accepted professional guidelines and technical standards. This mandate applies to both state-specific and national examinations. Failure to establish this validation evidence jeopardizes the fairness and legal defensibility of examination programs.

To comply with this mandate, the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board) requested that DCA's Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) review the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards' (AMFTRB) Marital and Family Therapy National Examination (MFT National Examination). OPES performed this review to evaluate the suitability of the MFT National Examination for use in California licensure of marriage and family therapists.

OPES performed a comprehensive evaluation of documents provided by AMFTRB to determine whether the following components met professional guidelines and technical standards: (a) occupational analysis, (b) examination development and scoring, (c) passing scores and passing rates, (d) test administration, and (e) test security procedures. Follow-up emails were also exchanged with AMFTRB representatives to clarify processes.

As documented in the enclosed report, OPES found that the procedures used to establish and support the validity and defensibility of the components listed above generally meet professional guidelines and technical standards outlined in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (2014 Standards)* and in B&P Code § 139.

The enclosed report outlines differences between the MFT National Examination and the California LMFT Written Clinical Examination. The differences mainly reflect variations in

measurement scope and administration. That is, national examinations test broad competencies related to practice, whereas state examinations test competencies specific to practice within California. OPES is available to discuss these differences during closed session at the Board meeting on August 11–12, 2022. OPES must adhere to the nondisclosure agreement with AMFTRB and cannot disclose details in open session.

OPES acknowledges the role of national examinations in regulatory licensing and recognizes the importance of portability in addressing the mental health needs of Californians. OPES works with DCA's boards to facilitate portability and remove barriers to practice wherever possible. OPES applauds the Board's efforts to be responsive to stakeholders and prevent barriers to licensure, while maintaining focus on validating examination programs and preserving consumer protection.

If you have questions about the information presented in this memo or in the enclosed report, please contact me.

Enclosure: Review of The Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards
Marital and Family Therapy National Examination

cc: Tracy Montez, Ph.D., Chief, Division of Programs and Policy Review