



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 574-7830, (916) 574-8625 Fax
www.bbs.ca.gov

To: Committee Members **Date:** November 22, 2022

From: Rosanne Helms
Legislative Manager

Subject: **Discussion of the Practice of Life Coaching and the Development of a Consumer Outreach Document**

The Board's licensing laws require a valid and active license or registration in order to provide services within the scope of practice of the Board's practice acts, unless an individual is working in an exempt setting (defined as a school, college, university, governmental entity, or an institution that is both nonprofit and charitable).

However, the Board's practice acts do not discuss life coaching, and sometimes confusion arises regarding how life coaching (which is not regulated) differs from the Board's regulated professions. Although life coaches are not regulated by any governmental entity, they are prohibited from practicing in the scopes of practice of the professions regulated by the Board (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§[4980.02](#) for LMFTs, [4989.14](#) for LEPs, [4996.9](#) for LCSWs, and [4999.20](#) for LPCCs).

The Policy and Advocacy Committee discussed life coaching at a meeting in early 2022. It directed staff to collaborate with the Board's stakeholders to potentially identify subject matter experts to draft consumer outreach materials.

Stakeholder Discussion

The Board recently met with representatives from the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT), the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW-CA), and the California Association of School Psychologists (CASP) to discuss potentially creating an outreach document for the Board's website.

Staff suggested that one way to reduce confusion might be to produce a consumer-oriented document that would contain a description not just of the practice of life coaching, but of the various types of regulated and non-regulated mental health professionals consumers may encounter. Stakeholders provided input regarding which professions should be included. For the regulated professions, the document would also provide information about how to file a complaint with the appropriate regulating entity. If unregulated, the document would point out the lack of regulation.

Such a document might include a description of each of the following:

- LMFT/LEP/LCSW/LPCC
- AMFT/ASW/APCC
- Social work intern
- MFT/PCC trainee
- Psychologist/(and pre-licensed levels)
- Psychiatrist /(and pre-licensed levels)
- Bachelors and Masters of Social Work
- Pupil Personnel Services Credential
- Life coach
- Pastoral counselor
- Peer counselor
- Alcohol and drug counselor

If the Committee chooses to proceed with this document, it could be drafted by a subject matter expert with expertise in the area. Once a draft is complete, staff would bring it back to the Committee for discussion and fine-tuning.

Recommendation

Discuss the proposed content of outreach document. Direct staff to work with subject matter expert(s) to develop a draft of the document, and bring the document back to the Licensing Committee for review and further discussion.