



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Workforce Development Committee Members **Date:** March 25, 2025

From: Rosanne Helms
Legislative Manager

Subject: Discussion of Potential Restructuring of the Pathway to LCSW, LMFT
and LPCC Licensure – Phase I

Background

At previous meetings, this Committee discussed several possible adjustments to restructure the licensing process to reduce barriers to licensure.

The licensing and examination statute is complex, and changes need to be carefully considered to avoid confusion and ensure a smooth implementation process. At the last meeting, staff recommended a phased approach where changes are completed in three phases. In the first phase, general changes to the licensing and exam process would be made. The second phase would be the transition to the AMFTRB national exam as the LMFT clinical exam. In the third and final phase, the Board would change the timing of its clinical examinations to allow them to be taken earlier. To summarize:

- **Phase I:** General Licensing Process Changes
- **Phase II:** Adoption of the AMFTRB National Exam as the LMFT Clinical Exam
- **Phase III:** Allow Clinical Exams to be Taken Earlier

The focus of today's discussion will be the Phase I changes, with a goal of having them approved by the Board to run as a legislative proposal in the next legislative cycle, which begins in January 2026.

Attachment B shows a visual summary and description each phase.

Attachment C summarizes the estimated timeline of each phase.

Attachment D summarizes what the licensure process would look like once all three phases are implemented.

Phase I: General Licensing Process Changes

The following changes (shown in **Attachment A**) are proposed as Phase I. Since the last Committee meeting, staff met with the Board's Legal Counsel, as well as its Licensing and Exam Unit managers to discuss the feasibility and implementation of the proposed changes. Based on this, changes to the text have been made. Changes to the text since the last Committee meeting are shown in green underline and strikeout.

The proposed amendments are as follows:

- a. **Timing of the California Law and Ethics Exam:** Allow associates to choose when they take the California law and ethics exam. Currently, associates must attempt the California law and ethics exam every year as a condition of their registration renewal, until the exam is passed. Additionally, this exam must be passed before a subsequent number (or licensure) is obtained. Under the proposal, associates would take the exam when they are ready. It would not be required to be attempted every year. (However, it still must be passed before a subsequent registration number is issued, and also before eligibility to take the clinical exam is granted.) Making this change would prevent delays with registration renewal if the associate forgot or was unable to take the exam that year. Given the relatively new requirement that associates must now complete 3 hours of continuing education covering California law and ethics each year (which became effective in 2023), staff believes public protection is maintained.
- b. **Age Limit for the California Law and Ethics Exam:** This proposal places an age limit of 7 years on a passing score for the California Law and Ethics Exam. Currently there is no age limit on the California law and ethics exam score the Board will accept, although current law specifies a 7-year age limit on the clinical exam passing score. Not having an age limit on this exam score will have public protection implications the longer the California law and ethics exam has been offered (it has been offered since 2016), as the Board currently must accept all scores regardless of age. Placing a limit on the age of the California law and ethics exam score has the following implications:
 - To obtain a subsequent registration number, the applicant must have a passing score on the California law and ethics exam dated no more than seven years prior to the Board's receipt of the application for the subsequent registration number. This would include second (or third, etc.) subsequent registration numbers, meaning the exam must be passed again for each subsequent registration if the score at the time of application is more than 7 years old.
 - In addition, when applying for initial license issuance, the California law and ethics exam score must be dated no more than seven years prior to the Board's receipt of that application.

c. Change in Registration Number Length and Time Supervised Experience

Hours Valid: This proposal extends the allowable length of time a registration number is valid from 6 years to 7 years. It also extends the amount of time supervised experience hours are valid from 6 years to 7 years.

Making this change allows applicants an additional year if they need to take a break while gaining experience hours due to life events or circumstances, which is a common issue brought up by those who experience hardship during the licensure process. It will also align the allowable age of experience hours with the allowable clinical and law and ethics exam score ages (both 7 years), providing a simpler process when the Board eventually transitions to allowing the clinical exam to be taken early (Under that eventual scenario, instead of “locking hours” upon clinical exam eligibility, all experience hours and exam scores would need to be no more than 7 years old when applying for initial license issuance.)

d. Add an Exception to the Prohibition on Working in a Private Practice with a Subsequent Registration Number:

The proposal makes a change to the “six-year rule” that prohibits an associate from working in a private practice with a subsequent registration number. Under the proposal, the law would continue to prohibit associates with a subsequent associate number from working in a private practice generally. However, it would permit an associate with a subsequent registration number to request a one-time, two-year hardship extension. With this extension, they may finish gaining their experience hours in one private practice setting, if the supervisor or employer and the associate submit a request to the board providing specified information.

The Board has discussed the prohibition on private practice with a subsequent registration numerous times, most recently in August 2022. It is often requested as a discussion topic because it can cause hardship to those individuals who, due to unforeseen circumstances, need a subsequent registration number to finish gaining their experience hours and who already have a job in a private practice. At the August 2022 meeting, the possibility of removing the prohibition on private practice with a subsequent registration number was discussed. However, due to concerns about potential exploitation of associates, there was not support from the Board or stakeholders for its removal. Today’s proposal offers a more limited approach that could apply for a limited time in instances of hardship.

e. Technical Clean-Up Changes: These changes entail making minor, technical clean-up changes, including the following:

- Deleting BPC §4980.398 (transition scenarios from the 2016 exam restructure) as that section is no longer needed.)
- Delete the exam rescoring fee in BPC §4984.7. Exams are now scored electronically, not manually, and therefore this subdivision is obsolete.

- Deleting the requirement that if an applicant is unable to pass the clinical exam within 7 years of their initial attempt, they must then go back and pass the California law and ethics exam again before continuing to attempt the clinical exam. Staff believes placing an age limit on the California law and ethics exam score renders this requirement obsolete.
- Amends BPC §§ 4980.397(c) and 4980.50(h) to clarify that the Board may accept a passing clinical exam score obtained early from another state. While the Board cannot grant clinical exam eligibility before all educational requirements, the California law and ethics exam, and all experience hours are completed, some other states allow applicants to take the clinical exam earlier (e.g., upon graduation). If an applicant subsequently applies to the Board with a passing clinical exam score from another state, the current statute is unclear about whether that score can be accepted. The proposed amendments will clarify that such a score is indeed acceptable.

Proposed Next Steps

Language still needs to be drafted to implement the above changes for the LCSW and LPCC practice acts. This language will be substantially similar for those license types, although there may be some adjustments needed based on variations in those practice acts.

The LEP licensure process is structured substantially differently than the process for LMFT, LCSW, and LPCC licensure. Therefore, most of the changes being discussed for the other 3 practice acts do not apply for LEP. The only one that does apply is that LEPs also have a requirement that experience hours are valid for six years. Staff recommends that the allowable age of experience hours for LEPs also be changed from six years to seven years.

Recommendation

Conduct an open discussion about the proposed language for Phase I shown in **Attachment A**. Direct staff to do the following:

- Make any discussed changes, and any nonsubstantive changes to the language shown in **Attachment A**.
- Draft the necessary corresponding amendments required to implement Phase I for the LCSW and LPCC practice acts.
- Change the allowable age of experience hours for the LEP practice act from six years to seven years.
- Bring the completed proposal to the Policy and Advocacy Committee for consideration.

Attachments

Attachment A: Proposed Licensure Pathway Restructuring Amendments for Phase I
(*LMFT Only*)

Attachment B: Overview of Proposed Restructuring of the Licensing Process –
Summary of Phases

Attachment C: Summary of Phases – Timeline

Attachment D: Summary of Changes – End Result

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ATTACHMENT A
Licensure Pathway Restructuring - Phase 1 - Proposed Amendments

Note: This is currently drafted for LMFT only. Once the specifics have been agreed upon, similar language will be drafted for the other license types.

LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS (LMFTs)

Business and Professions Code (BPC) §4980.397.

(a) A registrant or an applicant for licensure as a marriage and family therapist shall pass the following two examinations as prescribed by the board:

(1) A California law and ethics examination.

(2) A clinical examination.

(b) Upon issuance of an associate registration with the board, an associate marriage and family therapist shall, ~~within the first year of registration, take an examination on California law and ethics.~~ be eligible to take California law and ethics examination.

(c) ~~The board may grant a~~ registrant or an applicant for licensure ~~may take eligibility to take~~ the clinical examination only upon meeting all of the following requirements:

(1) Completion of all required supervised work experience.

(2) Completion of all education requirements.

(3) Passage of the California law and ethics examination.

~~BPC §4980.398.~~

~~(a) Each applicant who had previously taken and passed the standard written examination but had not passed the clinical vignette examination shall also obtain a passing score on the clinical examination in order to be eligible for licensure.~~

~~(b) An applicant who had previously failed to obtain a passing score on the standard written examination shall obtain a passing score on the California law and ethics examination and the clinical examination.~~

~~(c) An applicant who had obtained eligibility for the standard written examination shall take the California law and ethics examination and the clinical examination.~~

~~(d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.~~

BPC §4980.399.

(a) ~~Except as provided in subdivision (a) of Section 4980.398, each~~ Each applicant and registrant shall obtain a passing score on a board-administered California law and ethics examination in order to qualify for licensure. A passing score on the California law and ethics examination shall be dated no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for initial license issuance.

~~(b) A registrant shall participate in a board-administered California law and ethics examination before their registration renewal.~~

(c) If an applicant fails the California law and ethics examination, they may retake the examination after any waiting period as specified in regulation, upon payment of the required fees, ~~without further application. and submission of a re-examination application.~~

(d) The board shall not issue a subsequent associate registration number unless the applicant has ~~passed a passing score on~~ the California law and ethics examination dated no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for the subsequent associate registration number.

(e) A registrant shall complete a minimum of three hours of continuing education on the subject of California law and ethics during each renewal period to be eligible to renew their registration, ~~regardless of whether they have passed the California law and ethics examination.~~ The coursework shall be obtained from a board-accepted provider of continuing education, as specified in Section 4980.54.

BPC §4980.40.

An applicant for licensure shall satisfy all of the following qualifications:

(a) Meet the educational requirements of Section 4980.36 or both Sections 4980.37 and 4980.41, as applicable.

(b) Be at least 18 years of age.

(c) Have at least two years of supervised experience as specified in this chapter and its corresponding regulations.

(d) Successfully pass a California law and ethics examination and a clinical examination. ~~An applicant who has successfully passed a previously administered written examination may be subsequently required to take and pass another written~~

examination. The passing score on each exam shall be dated no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for initial license issuance.

(e) Not be subject to denial of licensure under Section 480. The board shall not issue a registration or license to any person who has been convicted of a crime in this or another state or in a territory of the United States that involves sexual abuse of children or who is required to register pursuant to Section 290 of the Penal Code or the equivalent in another state or territory, in accordance with Section 480.

BPC §4980.41.

(a) An applicant for licensure whose education qualifies ~~him or her~~them under Section 4980.37 shall complete the following coursework or training in order to be eligible to sit for the ~~licensing examinations~~ clinical examination as specified in subdivision (d) of Section 4980.40:

(1) A two semester or three quarter unit course in California law and professional ethics for marriage and family therapists, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas of study:

(A) Contemporary professional ethics and statutory, regulatory, and decisional laws that delineate the profession's scope of practice.

(B) The therapeutic, clinical, and practical considerations involved in the legal and ethical practice of marriage and family therapy, including family law.

(C) The current legal patterns and trends in the mental health profession.

(D) The psychotherapist-patient privilege, confidentiality, the patient dangerous to self or others, and the treatment of minors with and without parental consent.

(E) A recognition and exploration of the relationship between a practitioner's sense of self and human values and ~~his or her~~their professional behavior and ethics.

This course may be considered as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirements contained in Section 4980.37.

(2) A minimum of seven contact hours of training or coursework in child abuse assessment and reporting as specified in Section 28 and any regulations promulgated thereunder.

(3) A minimum of 10 contact hours of training or coursework in human sexuality as specified in Section 25, and any regulations promulgated thereunder. When coursework

in a master's or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy this requirement, it shall be considered as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement contained in Section 4980.37.

(4) For persons who began graduate study on or after January 1, 1986, a master's or doctor's degree qualifying for licensure shall include specific instruction in alcoholism and other chemical substance dependency as specified by regulation. When coursework in a master's or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy this requirement, it shall be considered as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement contained in Section 4980.37. Coursework required under this paragraph may be satisfactory if taken either in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or in a separate course. The applicant may satisfy this requirement by successfully completing this coursework from a master's or doctoral degree program at an accredited or approved institution, as described in subdivision (b) of Section 4980.37, or from a board-accepted provider of continuing education, as described in Section 4980.54.

(5) For persons who began graduate study during the period commencing on January 1, 1995, and ending on December 31, 2003, a master's or doctor's degree qualifying for licensure shall include coursework in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention. For persons who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2004, a master's or doctor's degree qualifying for licensure shall include a minimum of 15 contact hours of coursework in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies, including knowledge of community resources, cultural factors, and same gender abuse dynamics. Coursework required under this paragraph may be satisfactory if taken either in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or in a separate course. The applicant may satisfy this requirement by successfully completing this coursework from a master's or doctoral degree program at an accredited or approved institution, as described in subdivision (b) of Section 4980.37, or from a board-accepted provider of continuing education, as described in Section 4980.54.

(6) For persons who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2001, an applicant shall complete a minimum of a two semester or three quarter unit survey course in psychological testing. When coursework in a master's or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy this requirement, it may be considered as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement of Section 4980.37.

(7) For persons who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2001, an applicant shall complete a minimum of a two semester or three quarter unit survey course in psychopharmacology. When coursework in a master's or doctor's degree program is acquired to satisfy this requirement, it may be considered as part of the 48 semester or 72 quarter unit requirement of Section 4980.37.

(b) The requirements added by paragraphs (6) and (7) of subdivision (a) are intended to improve the educational qualifications for licensure in order to better prepare future licentiates for practice and are not intended in any way to expand or restrict the scope of practice for licensed marriage and family therapists.

BPC §4980.43.

(a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), all applicants shall have an active associate registration with the board in order to gain postdegree hours of supervised experience.

(b) (1) Postdegree hours of experience gained before the issuance of an associate registration shall be credited toward licensure if all of the following apply:

(A) The registration applicant applies for the associate registration and the board receives the application within 90 days of the granting of the qualifying master's degree or doctoral degree.

(B) For applicants completing graduate study on or after January 1, 2020, the experience is obtained at a workplace that, prior to the registration applicant gaining supervised experience hours, requires completed Live Scan fingerprinting. The applicant shall provide the board with a copy of that completed State of California "Request for Live Scan Service" form with the application for licensure.

(C) The board subsequently grants the associate registration.

(2) The applicant shall not be employed or volunteer in a private practice or a professional corporation until the applicant has been issued an associate registration by the board.

(c) Supervised experience that is obtained for purposes of qualifying for licensure shall be related to the practice of marriage and family therapy and comply with the following:

(1) A minimum of 3,000 hours completed during a period of at least 104 weeks.

(2) A maximum of 40 hours in any seven consecutive days.

(3) A minimum of 1,700 hours obtained after the qualifying master's or doctoral degree was awarded.

(4) A maximum of 1,300 hours obtained prior to the award date of the qualifying master's or doctoral degree.

(5) A maximum of 750 hours of counseling and direct supervisor contact prior to the award date of the qualifying master's or doctoral degree.

(6) Hours of experience shall not be gained prior to completing either 12 semester units or 18 quarter units of graduate instruction.

(7) Hours of experience shall not have been gained more than sixseven years prior to the date the application for licensure was received by the board, except that up to 500 hours of clinical experience gained in the supervised practicum required by subdivision (c) of Section 4980.37 and subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 4980.36 shall be exempt from this sixseven-year requirement.

(8) A minimum of 1,750 hours of direct clinical counseling with individuals, groups, couples, or families, that includes not less than 500 total hours of experience in diagnosing and treating couples, families, and children.

(9) A maximum of 1,200 hours gained under the supervision of a licensed educational psychologist providing educationally related mental health services that are consistent with the scope of practice of an educational psychologist, as specified in Section 4989.14.

(10) A maximum of 1,250 hours of nonclinical practice, consisting of direct supervisor contact, administering and evaluating psychological tests, writing clinical reports, writing progress or process notes, client-centered advocacy, and workshops, seminars, training sessions, or conferences directly related to marriage and family therapy that have been approved by the applicant's supervisor.

(11) It is anticipated and encouraged that hours of experience will include working with elders and dependent adults who have physical or mental limitations that restrict their ability to carry out normal activities or protect their rights.

This subdivision shall only apply to hours gained on and after January 1, 2010.

~~(d) An individual who submits an application for licensure between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2020, may alternatively qualify under the experience requirements of this section that were in place on January 1, 2015.~~

BPC §4980.50.

(a) Every applicant who meets the educational and experience requirements and applies for a license as a marriage and family therapist shall be examined by the board. The examinations shall be as set forth in subdivision (d) of Section 4980.40. The

examinations shall be given at least twice a year at a time and place and under supervision as the board may determine. The board shall examine the candidate with regard to the candidate's knowledge and professional skills and judgment in the utilization of appropriate techniques and methods.

(b) The board shall not deny any applicant who has submitted a complete application for examination, admission to the licensure examinations required by this section if the applicant meets the educational and experience requirements of this chapter, and has not committed any acts or engaged in any conduct that would constitute grounds to deny licensure.

(c) The board shall not deny any applicant, whose application for licensure is complete, admission to the clinical examination, nor shall the board postpone or delay any applicant's clinical examination, solely upon the receipt by the board of a complaint alleging acts or conduct that would constitute grounds to deny licensure.

(d) If an applicant for examination who has passed the California law and ethics examination is the subject of a complaint or is under board investigation for acts or conduct that, if proven to be true, would constitute grounds for the board to deny licensure, the board shall permit the applicant to take the clinical examination for licensure, but may notify the applicant that licensure will not be granted pending completion of the investigation.

(e) Notwithstanding Section 135, the board may deny any applicant who has previously failed either the California law and ethics examination or the clinical examination permission to retake either examination pending completion of the investigation of any complaints against the applicant. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the board from denying an applicant admission to any examination or refusing to issue a license to any applicant when an accusation or statement of issues has been filed against the applicant pursuant to Sections 11503 and 11504 of the Government Code, respectively, or the applicant has been denied in accordance with subdivision (b) of Section 485.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the board may destroy all examination materials two years following the date of an examination.

~~(g) An applicant for licensure shall not be eligible to participate in the clinical examination if the applicant fails to obtain a passing score on the clinical examination within seven years from their initial attempt, unless the applicant takes and obtains a passing score on the current version of the California law and ethics examination.~~

~~(h) A [Notwithstanding section 4980.397\(c\)](#), a passing score on the clinical examination shall be accepted by the board for a period of seven years from the date the examination was taken. passing score on the clinical examination shall be dated no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for initial license issuance.~~

(i) An applicant for licensure who has qualified pursuant to this chapter shall be issued a license as a marriage and family therapist in the form that the board deems appropriate.

BPC §4984.01.

(a) The associate marriage and family therapist registration shall expire one year from the last day of the month in which it was issued.

(b) To renew the registration subject to the additional limitations imposed by subdivision (d), the registrant shall, on or before the expiration date of the registration, complete all of the following actions:

(1) Apply for renewal on a form prescribed by the board.

(2) Pay a renewal fee prescribed by the board.

~~(3) Participate in the California law and ethics examination pursuant to Section 4980.399 each year until successful completion of this examination.~~

~~(43)~~ Notify the board whether they have been convicted, as defined in Section 490, of a misdemeanor or felony, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against them by a regulatory or licensing board in this or any other state subsequent to the last renewal of the registration.

~~(54)~~ Certify under penalty of perjury their compliance with the continuing education requirements set forth in Section 4980.54.

(c) An expired registration may be renewed by completing all of the actions described in paragraphs (1) to ~~(54)~~, inclusive, of subdivision (b).

(d) The registration may be renewed a maximum of ~~five~~six times. No registration shall be renewed or reinstated beyond ~~six~~seven years from the last day of the month during which it was issued, regardless of whether it has been revoked. When no further renewals are possible, an applicant may apply for and obtain a subsequent associate registration number if the applicant meets the educational requirements for a subsequent associate registration number and has ~~passed a passing score on the~~ California law and ethics examination dated no more than seven years prior to the board's receipt of the application for the subsequent associate registration number. An applicant who is issued a subsequent associate registration number pursuant to this subdivision shall not be employed or volunteer in a private practice.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivision (d), an applicant applying for or who currently holds a subsequent associate registration number may request that the Board grant them a one-time, two-year hardship extension to allow them to be employed or volunteer at one private practice or professional corporation work setting with their subsequent associate

registration number. An associate shall not be issued more than one extension, and the extension is only valid for the one private practice or professional corporation work setting for which it is requested. The request shall be received by the Board at least 30 days prior to the date the extension is needed and shall be on an application jointly signed and dated by the associate, the supervisor, and if the supervisor is not employed by the supervisee's employer or is a volunteer, a representative of the employer. The Board shall grant the extension provided that the application is signed and that the information required is provided. The application must contain all of the following:

- (a) The name of the employer where the associate will be gaining hours;
- (b) An attestation that the work setting is a private practice or a professional corporation;
- (c) The name, license type, and license number of the current supervisor;
- (d) The reason why the applicant was unable to complete the licensure process within seven years, which may include, but is not limited to extended medical leave, family caregiving responsibilities, or difficulties finding employment; and
- (e) A description of the plan for the associate to gain the needed hours toward licensure during the two-year extension period.

BPC §4984.7.

(a) The board shall assess the following fees relating to the licensure of marriage and family therapists:

(1) The application fee for an associate registration shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(2) The annual renewal fee for an associate registration shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(3) The fee for the application for licensure shall be two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of five hundred dollars (\$500).

(4) (A) (i) The fee for the clinical examination shall be two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of five hundred dollars (\$500).

(ii) The fee for the California law and ethics examination shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(B) An applicant who fails to appear for an examination, after having been scheduled to take the examination, shall forfeit the examination fee.

(C) The amount of the examination fees shall be based on the actual cost to the board of developing, purchasing, and grading each examination and the actual cost to the board of administering each examination. The examination fees shall be adjusted periodically by regulation to reflect the actual costs incurred by the board.

~~(5) The fee for rescoring an examination shall be twenty dollars (\$20).~~

~~(65)~~ The fee for the issuance of an initial license shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of four hundred dollars (\$400).

~~(76)~~ The fee for the two-year license renewal shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of four hundred dollars (\$400).

~~(87)~~ The renewal delinquency fee shall be one-half of the fee for license renewal. A person who permits their license to expire is subject to the delinquency fee.

~~(98)~~ The fee for issuance of a replacement registration, license, or certificate shall be twenty dollars (\$20).

~~(409)~~ The fee for issuance of a certificate or letter of good standing shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25).

~~(1110)~~ The fee for issuance of a retired license shall be forty dollars (\$40).

~~(b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2021.~~

BPC §4984.72.

~~(a) Effective January 1, 2016, an~~An applicant who fails the clinical examination may, within one year from the notification date of that failure, retake the examination as regularly scheduled without further application upon payment of the fee for the examination. Thereafter, the applicant shall not be eligible for further examination until

~~he or she file~~they file a new application, meets all requirements in effect on the date of application, and pays all required fees.

~~(b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.~~

16 CCR § 1829.1. Required Examinations.

(a) The written examinations shall test for minimum acceptable competency to practice marriage and family therapy without causing harm to the public health, safety or welfare, and shall consist of the following:

(1) A California law and ethics examination designed to assess the applicant's knowledge of and ability to apply legal and ethical standards relating to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

(2) A clinical examination designed to assess an applicant's knowledge of psychotherapeutic principles and methods in treatment and their application, and the ability to make judgments about appropriate techniques, methods and objectives as applicable to the marriage and family therapist scope of practice.

(b) The clinical examination as described in subsection (a)(2) shall be a board administered examination.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 4980.40 and 4980.60, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 4980.397, ~~4980.398~~, 4980.399 and 4980.50, Business and Professions Code.

16 CCR § 1829.2. Eligibility for Law and Ethics Examination.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, eligibility to take the California law and ethics examination requires an applicant to, at minimum, meet one of the following:

(a) The applicant holds a current, delinquent or cancelled associate registration, submits a request and pays the fee to take the examination.

~~(1) When a registrant who holds a current or delinquent registration takes the examination and does not pass during his or her one-year renewal cycle, the registrant shall complete a 12-hour course on California law and ethics as specified in section 4980.399(e) of the Code, in order to be eligible to take the examination during the next renewal cycle.~~

(b) The applicant currently has an approved application for licensure and pays the fee to take the examination.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 4980.60 and 4990.20(a), Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 4980.397, ~~4980.398~~, 4980.399, 4980.50 and 4984.01, Business and Professions Code.

16 CCR § 1829.3. Time Frames -- Law and Ethics Examination.

(a) An applicant for licensure shall take the California law and ethics examination during the following time frames in accordance with section 1806:

(1) Within one year from the date the applicant was notified of initial eligibility to take the examination.

(2) Within one year from the date the applicant was notified of failing the examination.

~~(b) Registrants shall take the California law and ethics examination during the following time frames:~~

~~(1) A registrant whose associate registration is issued on or after January 1, 2016 shall take the examination prior to the registration's first expiration date, and shall continue to take the examination a minimum of once during each renewal cycle until passed.~~

~~(2) A registrant whose associate registration was issued prior to January 1, 2016, shall take the examination a minimum of once during each renewal cycle until passed.~~

~~(3) Should a registrant fail to take the examination as specified in (1) or (2) above, he or she will not be permitted to renew his or her registration until the examination has been taken, except during the grace period specified in section 4980.399(c) of the Code.~~

(4) Registrants Applicants for licensure who are eligible to retake the California law and ethics examination may do so after the required waiting period upon submission of the following:

(A) A a request to take the examination including the required fee.

~~(B) If required, proof of completion of the 12-hour California law and ethics course as described in section 4980.399(e) of the Code.~~

(eb) A registrant who has an approved application for licensure shall be subject to subdivisions (a) and (b).

Note: Authority cited: Sections 4980.60 and 4990.20(a), Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 4980.397, ~~4980.398~~, 4980.399, 4980.50 and 4984.01, Business and Professions Code.

ATTACHMENT B

Overview of Proposed Restructuring of the Licensing Process

Summary of Phases

PHASE I

- Adjust timing of CA Law & Ethics Exam
- Set age limit for CA Law & Ethics Exam
- Change registration number length and time supervised experience hours valid (from 6 to 7 years)
- Add exception to prohibition on working in a private practice with a subsequent registration number
- Technical clean-up changes

(Outside variables: Subject to legislative process)

Estimated Timeframe:

Run legislation: January 2026

Estimated effective: Jan. 1, 2027

PHASE II

- Adoption of AMFTRB National Exam as the LMFT Clinical Exam

(Outside variables: Staff to negotiate with AMFTRB on implementation; subject to legislative and regulation process)

Estimated Timeframe:

Run legislation: January 2025

Legislation effective: Jan. 1, 2026

Run regulations: October 2025

Est, regulations effective: Jan. 1, 2027

PHASE III

- Early Eligibility for National Clinical Exams (at 850 clinical counseling experience hours)

Outside variables:

-Must negotiate with each national exam entity and obtain approval.

-Change to abandonment criteria, which will necessitate a grandparenting process for existing exam eligible applicants.

-Subject to legislative process.

Estimated Timeframe:

Run legislation: January 2027

Estimated effective: Jan. 1, 2028

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Attachment C
Overview of Proposed Restructuring of the Licensing Process
Summary of Phases - Timeline

	2025 Jan-Mar	2025 Apr-June	2025 July-Sept	2025 Oct-Dec	2026 Jan-Mar	2026 Apr-June	2026 July-Sept	2026 Oct-Dec	2027 Jan-Mar	2027 Apr-June	2027 July-Sept	2027 Oct-Dec	2028 Jan-Mar	
PHASE I					LEGISLATION				EFFECTIVE					
PHASE II	LEGISLATION				Leg. Effective		REGULATION				EFFECTIVE			
PHASE III									LEGISLATION				EFFECTIVE	

Phase 1: Adjust timing of CA Law & Ethics Exam
Set age limit for CA Law & Ethics Exam
Change registration number length and time supervised experience hours are valid
Add exception to prohibition on working in private practice with a subsequent registration number
Technical Cleanup

Phase 2: Adoption of the AMFTRB National Exam as the LMFT Clinical Exam

Phase 3: Early eligibility for National Clinical Exams (at 850 clinical counseling experience hours)

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ATTACHMENT D
Overview of Proposed Revisions to the Licensing Process – End Result
Phases I, II and III

