



November 17, 2025

Board of Psychology
1625 North Market Blvd, Suite N-215
Sacramento, CA 95834

Board of Behavioral Sciences
1625 North Market Blvd, #S200
Sacramento, CA 95834

RE: Opposition to Proposed Maternal Mental Health Continuing Education Requirement

Dear Members of the Board of Psychology and the Board of Behavioral Sciences:

The California Psychological Association (CPA) and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) respectfully submit this joint letter in response to the coalition letter dated November 6, 2025, which urges the Boards to create a new mandatory continuing education (CE) requirement in maternal mental health in furtherance of AB 2581 (Maienschein, Statutes of 2024).

Our associations share the coalition's commitment to improving access to and understanding of maternal mental health care. Many of our members provide critical mental health services to new parents and families and pursue specialized training in this area. It is crucial that those providers obtain the education and experience needed to ethically work with this population. However, we oppose the proposal to mandate a specific CE course topic. California's current continuing education frameworks already ensure that licensees receive training in core areas essential to competently practice while maintaining flexibility for individual professional growth and expertise development.

For psychologists, state law requires 36 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) for each biennial license renewal. These hours must include at least 4 hours of law and ethics and 4 hours of coursework in diversity and social justice. Psychologists must also complete 6 hours in suicide risk assessment and intervention pursuant to AB 89 (Levine, Statutes of 2017). Beyond these requirements, psychologists have discretion to select CPD activities most relevant to their practice and the populations they serve.

For marriage and family therapists, licensees are required to complete 36 hours of continuing education every two years, which must include 6 hours of law and ethics. The Board of Behavioral Sciences has also incorporated one-time in specific areas such as suicide risk assessment and intervention, telehealth, and HIV/AIDs as established by statute. Outside these topics, MFTs maintain discretion to select courses based on their clinical focus and areas of competence.¹

Not every psychologist or therapist treats populations affected by maternal mental health conditions. Mandating CEs on a specific condition or population risks creating a series of narrow requirements that collectively reduce flexibility, decrease competency within specific specialty, and increase administrative burden. Continuing education should remain broad and adaptive, allowing licensees to focus on the skills and knowledge most relevant to their practice. Mental health professionals are ethically required to work within their expertise and scope of practice to ensure client safety and that clients receive competent care. When a client's needs fall beyond their expertise, they have an ethical duty to refer them to a more appropriate provider.

Over the last two decades, a new CE mandate has been proposed to the BOP and/or BBS on an almost yearly basis. Provider groups, like CAMFT and CPA, generally oppose these types of mandates for the reasons stated above. We therefore respectfully urge both Boards to decline to adopt a new CE requirement in maternal mental health. We support efforts to encourage training and awareness in this area through voluntary offerings and outreach rather than through new mandates.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate the Boards' continued partnership in promoting competence, professionalism, and access to quality mental health care across California. If you have any questions, please contact Tyler Rinde (trinde@cpapsych.org) and Cathy Atkins (catkins@camft.org).

Sincerely,



Tyler Rinde
Director of Government Affairs
California Psychological Association



Cathy Atkins, Esq.
Deputy Executive Director
California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists

¹ Currently the BBS is reviewing and assessing mandatory educational requirements, including continuing education.