



Board of Behavioral Sciences

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Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California | Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency | Department of Consumer Affairs

MEMORANDUM

DATE	December 30, 2025
TO	California Board of Behavioral Sciences, Outreach and Education Committee
FROM	Christy Berger, Regulatory Manager
SUBJECT	Discussion and Possible Recommendation on Newsletter

The Board publishes a newsletter three times per year, aimed at students, applicants, registrants and licensees. The most recent newsletter is included in the attachment. The next newsletter is currently in production and expected to be published in late January of 2026.

Newsletter Content

The Board's newsletter contains articles on various subjects such as supervision, continuing education, applying for a registration or license, and informative articles for mental health professionals. In addition, each newsletter will generally include all of the following:

- Board Chair Report
- Get to Know BBS Staff Members
- Board Member Update
- Citations and Fines (for unlicensed practice only)
- Enforcement Actions (all, with links to Decisions)
- Upcoming Board and Committee Meeting Dates
- Events to Remember (for example, World Mental Health Day)
- Services Available via Breeze
- Important Reminders/Tips
- Law Updates
- Update from the California Healthcare Access and Information (HCAI)
- Pertinent Governor's News and Initiatives

Newsletter Readership

The following statistics indicate the number of link clicks for each newsletter over the past two years:

Version	Count
Fall 2025*	2307
Summer 2025	5022
Winter 2025	2654
Spring 2024	4565
Fall 2024	2596
Fall 2023	1334
Spring 2023	520
Winter 2022	231
Spring 2022	184

**Posted 11/17/2025*

Although the number of clicks appear to be decreasing, please keep in mind that the longer the newsletter is on the website, the more link clicks will add up.

Staff has attempted to increase readership by placing a newsletter “highlight” bar and link on the Board’s home page, and by sending out email subscriber’s list notices that highlight some of the newsletter’s content and includes a link to the full newsletter.

Staff is exploring options to improve the functionality of the subscriber’s list email, as our current system uses .html functionality and is therefore limited to text with no graphics.

Recommendation

Provide feedback on the current newsletter format and content and recommend ideas for future content and articles.

Attachment

Fall 2025 BBS Newsletter

CALIFORNIA BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER

VOL. 11 NO. 3



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BOARD CHAIR REPORT FALL 2025



Wendy Strack

What an incredible honor it has been to be selected by my fellow Board members to serve as Chair of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and genuinely excited about the meaningful work we'll accomplish together. My commitment is to serve with dedication, transparency, and an unwavering focus on providing consumer protection and supporting our vital behavioral health workforce.

I'm also thrilled to congratulate Nick Boyd, our Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor member, on his selection as Vice Chair. Nick's wisdom, experience, and collaborative spirit will be invaluable as we navigate the important initiatives ahead.

We're delighted to welcome two exceptional new public members to our Board family: Lorez Bailey and Rebecca Thiess. Their fresh perspectives and expertise will undoubtedly strengthen our collective efforts. At the same time, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Abigail Ortega, one of our Licensed Clinical Social Worker members, whose four years of dedicated service have left an indelible mark on our Board's work. Abigail, thank you for your unwavering commitment to excellence.

I'm energized by the exciting projects on our horizon, and I want to emphasize how much your voices and insights matter to our success.

LEGISLATIVE INNOVATION

The Board has directed staff to develop a comprehensive 2026 legislative proposal that will modernize licensure pathways for LMFTs, LPCCs, LCSWs, and LEPs. These thoughtful updates include giving associates greater flexibility in scheduling their California Law & Ethics Exam, extending both registration validity and the timeframe for supervised experience hours from six years to seven years, implementing a seven-year validity period for Law & Ethics Exam scores, and creating a limited exception for private practice work with subsequent registration numbers.

STRATEGIC VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We're making tremendous progress on our next Strategic Plan, which will guide our mission through 2030. We've completed a comprehensive environmental scan that captured valuable input from stakeholders, Board members, management, and staff. Our strategic planning sessions with Board leadership are well underway, and I'm excited for our full Board session this winter, where we'll shape a vision that truly reflects our shared commitment to excellence.

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THE BOARD'S MISSION IS TO PROTECT AND SERVE
CALIFORNIANS BY SETTING, COMMUNICATING, AND ENFORCING STANDARDS
FOR SAFE AND COMPETENT MENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE.



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STRENGTHENING EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

At our July 2025 Workforce Development Committee meeting, we reviewed insightful survey results from students, associates, and educators regarding LMFT and LPCC education and practicum requirements. This essential work ensures our pathways remain not only equitable and consistent but also firmly grounded in consumer protection.

MY VISION MOVING FORWARD

As your Chair, I'm committed to fostering a Board culture that is genuinely accessible, innovatively forward-thinking, and deeply collaborative. I warmly invite each of you to join our Board and Committee meetings—most of which you can attend from the comfort of your own space. Your perspectives, questions, and expertise are not just welcomed; they're essential to our success.

Together, we have the opportunity to strengthen licensure pathways and ensure that every Californian has access to the exceptional mental health services they deserve. I'm honored to serve alongside such dedicated professionals and look forward to the meaningful impact we'll make together.

With gratitude and excitement,

Wendy Strack

Chair, California Board of Behavioral Sciences

SUPERVISION VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING NOW PERMANENTLY ALLOWED

Originally set to expire on January 1, 2026, the provision allowing supervision via videoconferencing in all settings has now been made permanent with the signing of **Senate Bill 775**. This means supervisors and supervisees may continue to conduct supervision sessions remotely via videoconferencing. The bill also removes the previous provision that in the past had limited videoconferencing to exempt settings, thereby authorizing remote supervision in all settings. This change promotes continued flexibility and enhances access to supervision, particularly in remote or underserved areas.

Important Reminder: If supervision is conducted via videoconferencing, the law requires that within 60 days of commencing supervision, the supervisor must meet with the supervisee to assess whether two-way, real-time videoconferencing is an appropriate method for the supervisee.

This assessment must include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- The abilities of the supervisee;
- The preferences of both the supervisee and supervisor;
- The privacy of the locations of the supervisee and supervisor while supervision is conducted.

The supervisor must document the results of their assessment. If their assessment finds that supervision via two-way, real-time videoconferencing is not appropriate with that supervisee, then supervision must be conducted in person.

NEW: BBS EMAIL SUBSCRIBER LIST FOR SUPERVISORS

The Board of Behavioral Sciences is excited to announce a new Listserv/Email Subscriber list for supervisors! By joining, supervisors will receive updates, resources, and important information on all things related to supervision. Stay connected and informed. Subscribe today at <https://www.bbs.ca.gov/webapplications/apps/subscribe/index.html>.



THE POWER OF GUIDING GROWTH: THE BENEFITS OF SUPERVISING PRE-LICENSED CLINICAL THERAPISTS

In the ever-evolving field of mental health, the role of a clinical supervisor is both a privilege and a profound responsibility. Supervising pre-licensed therapists not only offers a unique opportunity to shape the future of the profession but also enriches your own practice in meaningful ways, leading to growth as a mental health professional.

1. INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Supervisors are the stewards of the next generation of clinicians. Your influence extends far beyond the supervision room—it ripples outward through the work of every therapist you help train. Through supervision, counselors refine their professional identity, explore specializations, and identify their strengths and areas they wish to develop. Supervision creates a dynamic space for continuous learning and growth, serving as a vital link between academic knowledge and the realities of clinical practice. By offering guidance, support, and mentorship, you can help ensure that clients receive competent, ethical, and compassionate care.

2. DEEPENING YOUR CLINICAL INSIGHT

Teaching others sharpens your own skills. Supervisors often report that the process of articulating clinical reasoning, exploring ethical dilemmas, and reviewing case conceptualizations enhances their own understanding and practice. Supervision invites reflection, encourages curiosity, and keeps you engaged with emerging theories and best practices.

3. STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Supervision is a dynamic leadership role. It requires clear communication, emotional intelligence, and the ability to provide constructive feedback. These are transferable skills that enhance your effectiveness in any professional setting.

4. FOSTERING PROFESSIONAL LEGACY AND FULFILLMENT

There is deep satisfaction in watching a supervisee grow in confidence and competence. Many supervisors describe the experience as one of the most rewarding aspects of their careers. You become a role model and part of someone's professional story. Validation from a supervisor boosts a therapist's self-assurance and helps them develop confidence in their abilities. Supervision also provides a safe, supportive space for therapists to process difficult cases and their own emotional reactions, which helps build resilience and prevents burnout.

5. CONTRIBUTING TO EQUITY AND ACCESS IN THE FIELD

Supervisors help therapists develop greater self-awareness by encouraging them to reflect on personal biases, values, and their impact on therapeutic work. Supervision provides opportunities to discuss cultural factors, helping therapists be more attuned to diverse client backgrounds. Your support can be especially impactful for those navigating systemic barriers in the profession, helping to create a more equitable future for clients and clinicians alike.

6. MEETING YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Supervisor training hours can count toward continuing education (CE) requirements, and the Board is currently pursuing regulations that would allow 18 hours of actual supervision hours to count toward CE requirements. In many settings, supervisors are also compensated for their time. Whether you're in private practice, a community agency, or an academic setting, supervision is a valuable component of your professional role.

BECOMING A SUPERVISOR: A CALL TO ACTION

If you're a licensed clinician with a passion for teaching, learning, and supporting others, consider becoming a clinical supervisor. It's a powerful act of service, leadership, and legacy. Your guidance can make a lasting difference, not just in the lives of your supervisees but in the lives of every client they serve.

For more information on how to become a supervisor and the required qualifications, visit http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/supervisor_qualifications.pdf



TOP TIPS FOR A SMOOTH ASSOCIATE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. **Submit Application to BBS Within 90 Days of Graduation**
 - This allows you to count post-degree hours earned before your associate number is issued.
 - See the 90-Day Rule FAQ for more information (recently updated): www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/90day_rule.pdf.
2. **Keep Your Completed Workplace Live Scan Form**
 - This is different from the Live Scan for your associate application. It must be the signed and processed Live Scan form from your employer.
 - Refer to the 90-Day Rule FAQ (mentioned above) for details.
3. **Use a Valid, Long-Term Email Address**
 - Choose an email you will have access to after graduation to ensure you will receive notices about your application status.
 - This email address will be used for BBS communications throughout your exam and licensure process.
 - Update your email address via the [Change of Address](#) form in BreZE.
4. **Submit a Complete Application Packet**
 - Fill out all sections carefully, following all instructions provided.
 - Missing details (even something small like a missing signature or address) can delay processing.
 - Ensure that your check is filled out and signed correctly.
 - Keep a copy for your own records.
5. **Mail with Tracking & Delivery Confirmation**
 - BBS cannot confirm receipt of applications or payments due to application volume.
 - Use postal tracking to confirm delivery.
6. **Don't Be Too Early Requesting Transcripts/Degree Program Certifications**
 - Request transcripts and degree program certifications no earlier than two weeks prior to submitting your application.
 - Requesting these documents too early may cause delays.
7. **Be Aware of Processing Times**
 - Applications are processed in the order they are received.
 - Standard processing is 30 business days but may be longer during graduation seasons.
 - Follow BBS on social media for weekly updates.
8. **Use FAQs and Other Publications**
 - Check the Applicant page for your license type for FAQs and other publications: www.bbs.ca.gov/applicants/.
 - These publications will answer many of your questions and provide you with a foundation for a smooth application and licensure process.
 - Consulting these publications when you have a question helps reduce the volume of inquiries to BBS. While we are happy to answer questions and provide assistance, we encourage applicants to review available resources first, as this allows our evaluators to focus more efficiently on processing applications.

BECOME AN EXPERT CONSULTANT FOR THE BOARD'S ENFORCEMENT UNIT

GIVE BACK TO YOUR PROFESSION AND HELP PROTECT CALIFORNIA CONSUMERS

The Board is recruiting expert consultants for its Enforcement Unit. In addition to receiving compensation, licensees can earn up to six hours of continuing education credit upon completion of certain activities, which can be used to satisfy the Law and Ethics portion of a licensee's CE requirement. Experts are compensated depending on the services rendered.

The Board is seeking to increase its expert pool to include experts from different specialty areas, practice settings, geographic locations, ethnic backgrounds, and genders. A more diverse pool of experts ensures equitable enforcement proceedings.

ENFORCEMENT EXPERT CONSULTANT PROGRAM

The Expert Consultant Program is the backbone of the Board's Enforcement Unit, and its effectiveness is vital for fulfilling the Board's legislative mandate to protect California consumers from unprofessional, incompetent, and otherwise dangerous practitioners. An expert consultant is a licensee possessing technical and professional knowledge gained through advanced education and extensive work experience to form a definitive opinion regarding the standard of care for the profession.

Board experts provide consultation to staff, review case materials, prepare written opinions, and—when necessary—testify at administrative hearings as an expert witness. Psychologists licensed by the Board of Psychology may perform psychological evaluations of the mental health of a licensee or an applicant for licensure.

QUALIFICATIONS

The primary requirement for participating is that you possess a current California license in good standing as a LMFT, LCSW, LPCC, LEP, or psychologist.

LMFTs, LCSWs, LPCCs, and LEPs must be practicing a minimum of 20 hours per week, including a minimum of 10 hours of face-to-face counseling per week (face-to-face includes videoconferencing).

Psychologists interested in becoming an expert consultant must have an active practice, defined as at least 80 hours per month in direct patient care, clinical activity, psychometric testing, and/or teaching.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in serving as an expert consultant, email the Enforcement Unit at BBS.ConsumerComplaint@dca.ca.gov and indicate "EXPERT CONSULTANT RECRUITMENT" in the subject line.



UPDATE FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND INFORMATION (HCAI)

BH-CONNECT WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

HCAI is working closely with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and other partners to support workforce training, recruitment, and retention of behavioral health care practitioners who serve those in Medi-Cal safety net settings. HCAI's goal is to expand the number of qualified licensed and non-licensed practitioners serving those who are living with or at risk for behavioral health conditions. Read more on the [HCAI BH-CONNECT](#) page. HCAI launched two programs in July: Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Student Loan Repayment Program and Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Residency Training Program. The remaining three programs will launch in 2026.

MEDI-CAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM (MBH-SLRP)

The MBH-SLRP, offering \$240,000 in loan repayment to reduce the burden of educational debt for behavioral health professionals, had a very successful launch, with more than 5,000 applications submitted! The first application cycle closed on August 15, 2025. For more information, visit the [MBH-SLRP website](#).

MEDI-CAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMUNITY-BASED PROVIDER TRAINING PROGRAM (MBH-CBPTP)

The MBH-CBPTP is designed to build up the workforce of Alcohol or Other Drug (AOD) Counselors, Peer Support Specialists, and Community Health Workers by funding training and education to create a healthcare workforce pipeline and address community-based workforce shortages throughout the state. The MBH-CBPTP launches in early 2026. For more information, visit the [MBH-CBPTP website](#).

HCAI 2026-2030 WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING (WET) PLAN

The WET Plan, currently being developed by HCAI's Health Workforce Council, identifies behavioral health workforce needs across California and guides the strategic use of funds from the Behavioral Health Services Act to support workforce development initiatives. HCAI is working in close collaboration with the [California Behavioral Health Planning Council](#) throughout this process. The Council will review and approve the final 2026-2030 Five-Year WET Plan, scheduled for publication in Spring 2026.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ACADEMY (YMHA)

The Board joins HCAI in congratulating the team behind the Youth Mental Health Academy (YMHA) on the recent graduation of 640 interns—a significant milestone in expanding and diversifying California's future mental health workforce. Funded by HCAI in partnership with the Child Mind Institute, YMHA is a 14-month program that prepares high school students, particularly those from structurally marginalized communities, for careers in mental health. Through hands-on learning, mentorship, workshops, and paid internships, students explore mental health science, practice, and communications while gaining academic support and career guidance. With stipends, project-based learning, and real-world job experience, YMHA equips youth with the skills, networks, and confidence to become the next generation of diverse mental health leaders. To learn more or get involved, visit the Youth Mental Health Academy - Child Mind Institute at www.childmind.org/youth-mental-health-academy/#get-involved.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Subscribe to HCAI's mailing list to receive announcements from HCAI about workforce and related initiatives: www.hcai.ca.gov/mailling-list/.

Find out if you are eligible to apply for a Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) Loan Repayment, Scholarship, Grant, or Small and Rural Hospital Project Reimbursement at www.hcai.ca.gov/workforce/financial-assistance/eligibility/.

Visit HCAI's website at www.hcai.ca.gov.



GET TO KNOW BBS STAFF MEMBERS



PORTIA HILLMAN

Tell us a little bit about yourself and your career journey so far.

I'm originally from Port Arthur, Texas, about 90 miles from Houston, Texas. I lived in Oakland for 16 years. Then I moved to Sacramento in 1994, where I purchased my first home. I worked for Bank of America for 30 years

as a Wire Transfer Investigator. Then I was promoted into a management position as Assistant Vice President for Wire Transfer Investigations until my retirement in 2009. In 2014, I came to the Board of Behavioral Sciences as an Office Assistant. In my free time, I love doing community outreach for my church. I volunteer twice a month in our Grocery Giveaway Ministry, providing groceries to the neighborhood community. I'm a die-hard Dallas Cowboys fan, Oakland (Las Vegas) A's fan, and fan of every sports team in Texas.

How did you become a part of BBS?

After retiring from Bank of America, I found myself bored at home from 2009 to 2013. I used to visit the Sacramento Career Center and browse for jobs. One day, I came across a flyer from AARP that advertised jobs for seniors over 55. I looked into it and found out what was expected to be hired. I worked under the AARP umbrella for about one year before being hired by the Board in 2014.

What is your position at BBS, and what does a day at the office look like for you?

Approximately 90 percent of my day is spent processing incoming mail, attaching checks to applications for our cashiering unit, and distributing it to the appropriate inboxes for licensing analysts, licensing evaluators, the enforcement unit, and management staff including the Executive Officer and Assistant Executive Officer. I also manage incoming emails from the DCA Consumer Information Center, which handles all incoming complaints and inquiries related to BBS. Additionally, I provide assistance and backup for our front counter window, helping individuals who may be submitting new applications or bringing additional documents in response to a deficiency letter they received.

What are the most interesting aspects of the work that you do for BBS?

I enjoy engaging directly with customers, whether through email, mail, or in person, because it gives me the chance to make a positive impact. From resolving concerns to helping with applications or receipts to answering general questions—the combination of different tasks keeps the workday interesting and fast-paced, making each day feel different.

What is one thing that you wish more people knew about BBS

There are dedicated staff who work very hard cashiering, analyzing, and evaluating applications in a timely manner and helping applicants and candidates learn about the process once they have graduated with their degree and how long the processing timeline typically takes.

Who or what inspires you?

There are many people in this world who inspire me, but if I had to choose, it would be my late mother and father and late grandparents. They were incredible people who overcame numerous challenges to make sure their children were ready for society and the challenges that would come before them in adulthood. I am also inspired by the dedication people show in helping others, especially in times of crisis. Whether it's through charity, community building, or small personal acts of kindness, it's uplifting to see people putting others' needs before their own.

What is a fun fact about you that few people know?

I met the R&B group Isley Brothers backstage at one of their concerts. I also tried out for the women's basketball team in college.



BOARD MEMBER UPDATE

The Board Welcomes Two New Public Members:



Lorez Bailey is an accomplished media professional and community advocate, most recently serving as Publisher of the North Bay Business Journal. Known as “The Connector,” she excels in building professional networks and fostering collaboration. She was honored as “Woman of the Year” by U.S.

Congressman Mike Thompson for her impactful work with Sonoma County students. Lorez holds degrees from Sacramento State University and Sonoma State University. She has led significant workforce development initiatives and has served in leadership roles at Chop's Teen Club and Social Advocates for Youth. She is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and serves on several advisory boards in her community.



Rebecca Thiess has over 18 years of policy experience, including 10 years at the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), where she currently works in the fiscal portfolio on issues related to the federal–state fiscal relationship. Prior to joining Pew, Rebecca worked primarily on federal budget and tax policy issues, including work as a policy

analyst at the Economic Policy Institute. Additionally, she has worked on advocacy and coalition building for consumer and housing issues at Americans for Financial Reform. Rebecca holds a bachelor's degree from Occidental College in California and a master's degree in public policy from Duke University in North Carolina.

Goodbye to a Departing Member

The Board would like to thank Abigail Ortega for her four years of service on the Board. The perspective and insights she shared as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker member were greatly valued and appreciated.



IMPORTANT ADVISORY REGARDING RENEWAL APPLICATIONS

The Board's Criminal Conviction Unit advises licensees and registrants to carefully review the renewal application questions prior to submission. Special attention should be paid to the question regarding any conviction or disciplinary action incurred since the previous renewal period. Failure to disclose such information may result in disciplinary action, and affirmative answers will prompt an investigation. It is imperative that this question be answered with complete honesty and accuracy.

PART 2: WORDS THAT HEALED: HOW THERAPISTS HELP DISMANTLE SHAME

In our last newsletter, we shared a social media post by Kaileen McMickle, LPC (Wisconsin), who specializes in working with women who carry shame. In her post, she asked, “Share something your therapist said or did that made your shame melt away”—and the thousands of responses were powerful.

Below is the next set of responses that we promised to publish, which we hope you will enjoy. As therapists, it's easy to underestimate the lasting impact of a single moment of attunement, validation, or gentle honesty. These comments are a reminder of how meaningful your work can be and how small acts of empathy often become life-changing experiences for your clients. Some of these may not resonate at all, but we hope that there is a phrase or two that appeals to you. Watch our forthcoming newsletters for more!

1. It's perfectly acceptable to be angry and feel disappointed that the adults in your life didn't love/protect you as you deserved. Be angry. Say it aloud.
2. It sounds like it's important to your parents to be perceived as supportive, but they're not actively supporting you.
3. You are weighed down with a backpack full of rocks, and each rock carries a different trauma. When we examine each rock and can leave it behind, the backpack will get lighter, in the hopes that one day you will leave the backpack with me.
4. It's probably for the best you will never love someone as much as you love her because you loved her to your own destruction.
5. You don't need to fold your clothes after you do the laundry, you can just put them in the baskets. (It's changed my life.)
6. Just because your father likes going on a rollercoaster of emotions doesn't mean you have to ride with him. You can step back and keep your emotions safe while he spirals.
7. You feel like you need to earn love because you grew up having to.
8. What if it all worked out? (It never occurred that the best-case scenario existed. Those six words changed my life.)
9. You can love your narcissist parent from afar. You have no obligation to allow any more injury.
10. Forgiveness doesn't mean you are condoning or excusing the behavior, it means you are freeing yourself of the negative emotions connected to the behavior so you can be free from them.

STAY INFORMED ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH BBS!

Are you an applicant, registrant, licensee or consumer who would like increased access to BBS activities and updates? Join our email subscriber's list! You can also follow the Board on Facebook and X. Scan, click on a graphic or go to www.bbs.ca.gov to connect!



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GOVERNOR NEWSOM SIGNS AB 727 TO MAKE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES MORE ACCESSIBLE TO LGBTQ+ YOUTH



On October 10, 2025, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that he signed AB 727 into law. The bill requires student ID cards in California's public middle schools, high schools, and colleges to include the phone number for The Trevor Project, a leading crisis and suicide prevention hotline for LGBTQ+ youth.

The bill, introduced by Assemblymember Mark González (D-Los Angeles), comes as the Trump administration **removes LGBTQ+ suicide prevention programs and funding**. AB 727 builds on California's 2018 suicide prevention ID card law by adding a targeted, affirming resource for LGBTQ+ students—many of whom face elevated risk for mental health challenges due to verbal, physical, and online harassment.

According to the Trevor Project, **35% of LGBTQ+ youth in California seriously considered suicide** in the past year, and half who wanted mental health care did not receive it. AB 727 ensures these students don't just have support in theory—they have it in hand, every day.

THE TREVOR PROJECT

The Trevor Project is the leading suicide prevention and crisis intervention nonprofit organization for LGBTQ+ youth. Their hotline provides 24/7 confidential and secure services by trained counselors to youth who seek mental health support through chat, text, or call—making it a reliable resource for all. The Trevor Project is also an avenue for advocacy, education, peer support, and research for the LGBTQ+ community. Their services reach all parts of the nation and contribute to the larger fight for more inclusive communities.

In July, California **announced a new partnership with the Trevor Project** to provide the state's **988 Lifeline** counselors with enhanced competency training from experts, ensuring better attunement to the needs of LGBTQ+ youth, on top of the specific training they already receive.

BREAKING THE STIGMA

Mental health services are crucial to ensure that LGBTQ+ young people feel supported and seen by those around them. LGBTQ+ youth often experience **higher rates of suicide, anxiety, and depression** because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society, demonstrating the need for services that provide mental health support. In 2024, **56% of LGBTQ+ young people in California experienced discrimination** based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Mental health care is critical for overall wellbeing, especially for youth. LGBTQ+ young people in schools should be equipped with the resources necessary to thrive, and providing the Trevor Project hotline is a positive step in this direction.

CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

AB 727 aligns with California's broader work and commitment to preventive mental health care under the **Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative**, an effort to build a more coordinated, equitable mental health system for youth statewide.

In California, there are 11 centers that have trained crisis counselors to respond to 988 Lifeline calls/chats/texts from help seekers needing support during behavioral health crises. Additionally, California offers digital mental health support for youth, young adults, and families via CalHOPE for non-crisis moments. The **CalHOPE warm line** connects callers to peer counselors who listen with compassion, provide non-judgmental support, and guide callers to additional mental health resources.

Through CalHOPE, the state has partnered with **BrightLife Kids** and **Soluna** to provide free support to children, youth, and families who seek to address concerns before they become crises. These resources are available regardless of insurance, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. All care providers on these platforms undergo specific training to work with LGBTQ+ youth and their families.

For the full text of AB 727, visit <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>.

GOVERNOR NEWSOM LAUNCHES NEW STATEWIDE SERVICE EFFORT TO SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING OF YOUNG MEN

Continuing the effort of his **statewide Executive Order** to address disconnection in young men and boys, Governor Gavin Newsom announced a new initiative on September 16, 2025, that encourages and helps men to step up and serve their communities through the **California Service Corps and other partner organizations**. Prompted by rising suicide rates, declining career options, and disconnection among young men and boys, these efforts aim to address this generation's mental health crisis while creating pathways for purpose, leadership, and belonging.



In partnership with Director of the Governor's Office of Service and Community Engagement (GO-Serve) Josh Fryday, the state is collaborating with leaders already doing the work, including Improve Your Tomorrow, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Mentor California, the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles, the Giants Community Fund, and the American Institute for Boys and Men.

California Men's Service Challenge participants will engage young men directly, helping them build connections to education, careers, and community. The effort will advance Governor Newsom's broader commitment to creating more pathways for youth success. By combining service with mentorship and skill development, the initiative will provide a sustainable model to ensure young men feel valued, supported, and equipped to thrive.

The California Men's Service Challenge builds on the work of California Service Corps, the largest service force in the nation, which empowers Californians to tackle the state's toughest challenges while building skills for the future. Together with local partners, schools, and community organizations, this new effort will ensure more young men see themselves as leaders with the power to create lasting change.

THE CRISIS OF LONELINESS

Young men are more disconnected from school, work, and relationships than ever before, with nearly one in four men under 30 years old reporting that they have no close friends. This is a five-fold increase since 1990, with higher rates of disconnection for young Black men. A lack of social connection is associated with increased risk of poor health, including mental health disorders, poverty, and even premature death.

This disconnection has pulled men out of the workplace. Labor force participation among men without a college degree is currently at historic lows, with about one in nine men aged 25-54 neither working nor looking for work. The unemployment rate for men in California is also higher than the rate for women, and college enrollment and completion rates for men have dropped significantly over the past decade.

Join the California Men's Service Challenge at www.californiavolunteers.ca.gov/mens-service-challenge/.



ONLINE IS EASIER AND FASTER!

A Variety of Online Services Available Via BreEZe

For faster service, manage your registration and license online! BreEZe provides services for applicants, registrants, and licensees that can save you weeks of processing time compared to paper applications. BreEZe allows payment via major credit card through a secure environment. Services available include the ability to:

- Subscribe to license notifications
- Apply for an associate registration (coming soon!)
- Request a name change
- Submit an address change (takes effect instantly)
- Add or change an email address
- Verify a license and obtain proof of renewal status
- Obtain a certification of licensure
- Renew a license or registration instantly (up to 90 days in advance)
- Submit an application to change from “inactive” to “active” status
- Request a replacement registration or license (allow two weeks for delivery)
- Apply for initial Law and Ethics Exam
- Apply for initial license issuance

Consumer complaints can also be filed on BreEZe. Visit www.BreEZe.ca.gov.

HELPFUL TIPS AND TUTORIAL VIDEOS

If you are new to the Board’s online services or just need some assistance, helpful tips are available online:

BreEZe Helpful Hints BreEZe Help Tutorial Videos

Video topics include:

- How to register for BreEZe
- What to do if you forgot your password or user ID
- How to submit a renewal
- How to update your information
- How to make a payment
- How to search for a license
- How to subscribe to license notifications

If you need additional assistance using BreEZe, technical support can be reached at (855) 227-9633.



ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

Citation and Fine—An administrative action used for minor violations. Citations and fines are public information but are not considered disciplinary action.

CITATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS–UNLICENSED PRACTICE April 1, 2025 – July 31, 2025		
Name	License Number	Fine Amount
Kymerli Ann Boynton	UNLICENSED	\$5,000
Paul Gregory Guss	UNLICENSED	\$5,000



FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS APRIL 1, 2025 – JULY 31, 2025

Select the individual's name for a link to more information.

Kimberly Adams

LMFT 106892

Calabasas

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Tina Aghai

AMFT 155159

Encino

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of one (1) year with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Jesse Springer-Merritt Allen

LMFT 123916

Redlands

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Greg Andrew Baquix

AMFT 155160

Los Angeles

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Antoinette Bell

LMFT 118569

Los Angeles

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: License surrendered.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Geisha Aimee Camacho

ASW 98197

Anaheim

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Kimberlie Ellen Cole-Zakarian

LMFT 49438

Artesia

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Action: License revoked.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Jordan Loria Derbis

AMFT 137327

Upland

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Sheena Kaur Dhillon-Dhindsa

AMFT 155170

Hayward

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

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FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS APRIL 1, 2025 – JULY 31, 2025

Rebecca Ann Dodge

LEP 2520

Copperopolis

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ORDER
TO COMPEL MENTAL AND/OR
PHYSICAL EXAM**

Action: License revoked.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Lillian Taylor Hansen

AMFT 138471

Montara

**FAILED TO COMPLY WITH
PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS**

Action: Probation extended by twelve (12) months.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Peggy Sue Holcomb

LEP 2586

Folsom

**DISCIPLINE BY ANOTHER
STATE/AGENCY**

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Megan Crystal Jesus

LMFT 98691

Auburn

**FAILED TO COMPLY WITH
PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS**

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: June 26, 2025

Stefan Jude Keyser

LMFT 93671

Berkeley

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of four (4) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Breana Lynn Kirschner

AMFT 156606

McKinleyville

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Jennifer Marie Langon

LMFT 155893

Santa Cruz

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of five (5) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: June 26, 2025

Haley Ona Ledbetter

LCSW 89020

Santa Rosa

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of five (5) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Marissa Danea Long

ASW 113389

Roseville

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Ray Reza Mansuri

LMFT 86310

Irvine

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: License revoked.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Ira Arthell Neighbors

LCSW 12020

San Bernardino

**FAILED TO COMPLY WITH
PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS**

Action: License revoked.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Cassandra Ruth Pacheco

LCSW 80478

Ceres

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Caroline Maria Yan-Yan Paris

ASW 93693

Torrance

**CRIMINAL CHARGES/
CONVICTIONS**

Action: Registration revoked.

Effective: May 15, 2025

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS APRIL 1, 2025 – JULY 31, 2025**Tiffany Leigh Petrzelka**

AMFT 147380

Chula Vista

FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS

Action: Probation extended by one (1) year.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Gregory Allen Pospisil

LMFT 51293

Palm Springs

FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS

Action: Probation extended by one (1) year, with additional terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Adrienne Nicole Quiles

ASW 96079

Glendora

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Melinda Ann Sherman

ASW 102143

Camarillo

FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS

Action: Registration surrendered.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Armando Soto, Jr.

LCSW 87970

Los Angeles

FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS

Action: License revoked.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Barbara Marie Thomas

LMFT 45794

San Clemente

DISCIPLINE BY ANOTHER STATE/AGENCY

Action: License surrendered.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Ana I. Torres Blandon

AMFT 126056

Glendale

FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROBATION TERMS/CONDITIONS

Action: Registration revoked.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Robert Tristan

LMFT 110607

Chino Hills

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of five (5) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Mary Rachel Waalk

AMFT 156605

Joshua Tree

DISCIPLINE BY ANOTHER STATE/AGENCY

Action: Registration revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of two (2) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Talia Mays Wagner

LMFT 46414

Los Angeles

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: License revoked.

Effective: July 24, 2025

Sara Jolayne Weber

LMFT 121580

Oceanside

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: License revoked, revocation stayed, and placed on probation for a period of three (3) years with terms and conditions.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Katy Renae Williams

ASW 100659

Coarsegold

CRIMINAL CHARGES/ CONVICTIONS

Action: Registration revoked.

Effective: May 15, 2025

Michael M. Zaky

AMFT 126403

Porter Ranch

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Action: Registration surrendered.

Effective: July 24, 2025



Board of Behavioral Sciences

CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 574-7830



UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Board Meetings

November 20-21, 2025
February 19-20, 2026
May 7-8, 2026
August 13-14, 2026
November 19-20, 2026

Policy and Advocacy Committee

January 15, 2026
April 17, 2026
June 16, 2026
September 17, 2026

Workforce Development Committee

January 15, 2026
April 17, 2026
June 16, 2026
September 17, 2026

Outreach and Education Committee

January 8, 2026
April 16, 2026
June 23, 2026
September 8, 2026

EVENTS TO REMEMBER

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
OCTOBER

National Bullying Prevention Month
OCTOBER

Mental Illness Awareness Week
OCTOBER 5-11

World Mental Health Day
OCTOBER 10

National School Counseling Week
FEBRUARY 2-6, 2026

Please visit the Board's [Board and Committee Meetings webpage](#) or sign up for the [email subscriber's list](#) for updates.

CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES