



Board of Behavioral Sciences
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Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors “Couples and Families” Requirements and Application Process - Effective January 1, 2017

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Many of your questions may be answered by referring to the *Request for Confirmation of Qualifications to Assess and Treat Couples and Families* forms and instructions, available on the Board's [website](#). The following FAQs are provided in addition to that information.

GENERAL FAQs

- 1. Am I required to take the six (6) semester units (or 9 quarter units) of coursework in marriage and family therapy (MFT) before earning the 500 hours of experience? Which types of courses qualify?***

While it is advisable to have completed the six (6) semester units of MFT coursework before earning the 500 hours, it is not required. Qualifying courses must be at the graduate level and must be specifically focused on the theory and application of marriage and family therapy.

- 2. What requirements must the 500 hours of supervised experience with couples, families, and/or children meet in order to qualify?***

The supervised experience must simply be gained working directly with couples, families and/or children, under a qualified supervisor as described in question 12. You must be an Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC) or a licensed LPCC while gaining the experience. The law does not specify how much weekly supervision is required.

However, if you are an APCC and would like these hours to count toward the 3,000 hours of experience required for licensure, ALL additional requirements specified in law for licensure pertaining to supervisor requirements and supervision requirements must be met. If you do not need the 500 hours to count toward licensure, it is recommended that, at minimum, you set up regular, periodic supervision sessions.

3. *What documentation must I provide to the Board to verify my experience?*

The Board will accept hours of experience verified by a qualified supervisor. See the application packet for details. If the supervisor is no longer available, you may have your hours of experience and supervisor's information verified by your employer. If this information is not available, the Board may consider other documentation that it deems equivalent, on a case-by-case basis.

**FAQS FOR LPCCS APPLYING FOR CONFIRMATION
OF QUALIFICATIONS**

4. *How long will my application take for processing?*

Processing time will vary depending on the volume of applications received. Apply early.

5. *Will I receive a certificate from the Board once my qualifications have been approved?*

No - certificates are not available. Instead, you will receive a letter from the Board.

6. *What are the requirements for six (6) hours of continuing education (CE)? Do I need to show proof of completion?*

The law requires completion of six (6) hours of CE specific to marriage and family therapy, completed in each two-year license renewal cycle. You are not required to show proof of completion of CE in order to obtain the confirmation letter from the Board. However, you may be asked for documentation should you be selected for a random CE audit.

7. *Am I required to obtain written confirmation of my qualifications from the Board in order to assess or treat a child?*

No. However, supervised experience working directly with a child may be counted toward the supervised experience requirement for treatment of couples or families.

8. *I am licensed in another state as an LPCC and was allowed to assess and treat couples or families as part of the scope of practice in that state. What qualifications do I need to meet?*

You will have a streamlined process for obtaining the letter of confirmation from the Board. See the application packet for more information.

FAQS FOR ASSOCIATES AND STUDENT TRAINEES

9. *Can an Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC) apply to receive confirmation of qualifications to assess/treat couples and families from the Board?*

No. The Board will not accept applications from APCCs. This is because APCCs are only permitted to assess and treat couples and families while gaining supervised experience under the direct supervision of a licensee who meets the following qualifications:

- Holds a current and valid license as one of the following in California, and has been practicing under this license for at least two (2) years:
 - LMFT
 - LPCC who has already met the qualifications to assess and treat couples and families and, after January 1, 2017, has obtained written confirmation from the Board of meeting the qualifications to treat couples and families.
 - LCSW, Clinical Psychologist or Physician certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, who has sufficient education and experience in treating couples and families to competently practice couples and family therapy in California.
- In addition, supervisors must:
 - Hold a license which is not under suspension or probation
 - Have received professional training in supervision
 - Not have provided therapeutic services to the supervisee

10. *I am an APCC and have already been receiving supervised experience with couples, families or children. I am supervised by an LPCC who has told me they meet the requirements. Will those hours count since my supervisor did not have a confirmation of qualifications from the Board at that time?*

Since the confirmation from the Board was not previously available, those hours will count provided they meet all requirements in place at the time the experience was gained. Additionally, your supervisor must provide you with a copy of his or her “confirmation of qualifications” letter before any additional supervision is conducted on or after January 1, 2017.

11. *I’m a PCC student trainee. How do these requirements apply to me?*

A Professional Clinical Counselor Student/Trainee is permitted to treat couples and families as part of their supervised practicum experience, but may not count that experience toward the 500 hours required to treat couples and families. There are no specific requirements for the supervisor above and beyond the normal requirements for licensure.

FAQS FOR LPCCS WHO ARE PROVIDING SUPERVISION OF “COUPLES AND FAMILIES” EXPERIENCE

12. *I would like to supervise an Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC) who will be gaining the 500 hours of experience with couples, families or children. What is required of me?*

In addition to having already met the qualifications to assess and treat couples and families, supervisors of the 500 hours of experience must meet all of the following:

- Licensed in California and practicing for at least two (2) years
- License is current and valid and not under suspension or probation
- Received professional training in supervision
- May not have provided therapeutic services to the supervisee
- Effective January 1, 2017, you must provide a copy of your “confirmation of qualifications” letter from the Board to each of these supervisees.

Important Note: If the APCC you are supervising would like the 500 hours to count toward the 3,000 hours of experience required for licensure, ALL additional requirements specified in law for licensure pertaining to supervisor qualifications and supervision requirements must be met.

13.

I had already met the qualifications to assess and treat couples and families, and have been providing supervision to individuals who are gaining the 500 hours of experience with couples, families or children. Will those hours count since I did not have the confirmation of my qualifications from the Board at that time?

Since the confirmation from the Board was not previously available, those hours will count provided they meet all requirements in place at the time the experience was gained.

14.

I would like to supervise an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) or MFT trainee. What is required of me?

You must meet all requirements for supervisors of AMFTs or MFT trainees which includes meeting the qualifications to assess and treat couples and families. Effective January 1, 2017, you must provide a copy of your “confirmation of qualifications” letter from the Board to any of these supervisees.