

*Answers to  
Most Frequently Asked Questions  
Relating to  
Professional Clinical Counselor Interns*



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### *Vision*

*Strong minds, lives, families, and communities.*

### *Mission*

*Protect Californians by promoting consumer awareness, advocating for improved mental health services, and setting, communicating, and enforcing standards.*

The information provided in this publication is supplemental and intended to serve as a quick answer guide for common questions for California registered PCC Interns. The *Statutes and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Professional Clinical Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, Educational Psychology, and Clinical Social Work* contains the official legal code sections and language. The BBS encourages you to thoroughly read the *Statutes and Regulations* and refer to it in cases that require official legal authority or language. If you have out-of-state experience, you may also refer to the Board’s Web site at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) for information on the LPCC out-of-state experience requirements.

**1. What is the breakdown for the required hours of experience for Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) licensure?**

The Board requires 3,000 hours of post degree supervised professional experience over a period of at least two years (104 weeks) to qualify for LPCC licensure. Of the 104 supervised weeks required, 52 weeks must be weeks in which the applicant received at least one hour of one-on-one, individual, face-to-face supervision. A supervised week is any week in which an Intern meets with an individual supervisor for one hour or a group supervisor for two hours. The required 3,000 hours of supervised experience must conform to the following breakdown:

**Counseling Hours**

- Individual and Group Psychotherapy (Min 1,750 hrs)
- Group Therapy or Counseling (Max 500 hrs)
- Telehealth Counseling (Max 250 hrs) (*see question 11*)
- Clinical Experience in a Hospital or Community Mental Health Setting (Min 150 hours)

A “community mental health setting” is a clinical setting that meets all of the following requirements: (1) lawfully and regularly provides mental health counseling or psychotherapy; (2) clients routinely receive psychopharmacological interventions in conjunction with psychotherapy, counseling, or other psycho-social interventions; (3) clients receive coordinated care that includes the collaboration of mental health providers; and, (4) is not a private practice owned by a BBS-licensed professional, a licensed physician or surgeon, a professional corporation of any of these licensed professions, or a corporation of unlicensed individuals.

**Other Non-Counseling Hours (Max 1,250 hrs total)**

- Administering and Evaluating Psychological Tests, Writing Clinical Reports, Writing Progress or Process Notes (Max 250 hrs)
- Workshops, Seminars, Training Sessions or Conferences (Max 250 hrs)
- Client Centered Advocacy
- Direct Supervisor Contact (Both individual and group)

The maximum amount of work experience that an Intern may count in a given week is 40 hours.

*Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4999.46; CCR Section 1820*

<p><b>2. What is the 6-year rule?</b></p>	<p>The Board cannot accept hours of experience older than six years from the time a person applies for LPCC examination eligibility.</p> <p>For example, Applicant A sends in an application for LPCC examination eligibility and the Board receives this application on March 24, 2011. The Board will only accept hours earned after March 24, 2005.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>
<p><b>3. Can I count hours after I graduate but before I receive an Intern registration number?</b></p>	<p>Applicants for Intern registration <u>may</u> count hours obtained post degree but before issuance of an Intern registration number ONLY if the applicant applies for Intern registration within 90 days of the qualifying degree conferral date. The Board grants no exceptions.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>
<p><b>4. Who can supervise PCC Interns?</b></p>	<p>Only licensed mental health professionals can supervise Interns. Licensed mental health professionals include licensed professional clinical counselors, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed psychologists, and licensed physicians and surgeons certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.</p> <p>Additionally, the supervisor must maintain a current valid California license. The supervisor must have held that license for at least two (2) years and practiced psychotherapy or directly supervised trainees, interns, or associate clinical social workers that perform psychotherapy as part of their clinical practice for at least two years within the last five-year period immediately preceding supervision.</p> <p>The Board requires supervisors of Interns to complete a minimum of six (6) hours of supervision training or coursework within two years immediately preceding supervision (or within 60 days of commencement of supervision) and every renewal period thereafter. Psychologists and physicians certified in psychiatry are exempt from supervision training.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.12; CCR Section 1821</i></p>

<p><b>5. How do I determine the amount of supervision I need each week?</b></p> <p><i>NOTE: One “unit” of supervision equals one hour of individual supervision or two hours of group supervision.</i></p>	<p>One “unit” of supervision must be received during each week in each setting in which experience is gained;</p> <p>AND</p> <p>One additional “unit” of supervision must be received during any week in which more than 10 hours of face-to-face psychotherapy is provided to clients in <u>each</u> work setting.</p> <p>EXAMPLE #1: An intern works one job and provides 25 hours of psychotherapy in the same week. This intern must have two (2) “units” of supervision during that week.</p> <p>EXAMPLE #2: An intern works two jobs, provides 12 hours of psychotherapy at Job #1 and nine (9) hours at Job #2 in the same week. This intern is required a total of three (3) “units” of supervision during that week - two (2) units for the first job and one (1) unit for the second job.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>
<p><b>6. What is the maximum number of hours of supervision I can count in a week?</b></p>	<p>No more than five hours of supervision, whether individual or group, shall be credited as work experience during a single week.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1820</i></p>
<p><b>7. Does my supervisor need to be on-site?</b></p>	<p>Only in a private practice setting does a supervisor need to be employed by, and practice at, the same site as the applicant’s employer.</p> <p>In a setting that is not a private practice, the supervisor may be employed by the registrant’s employer on either a paid or voluntary basis. An off-site supervisor must sign a letter of agreement with the agency employing the applicant.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1820</i></p>
<p><b>8. Can I receive supervision via videoconferencing?</b></p>	<p>A PCC Intern working for a governmental entity; school, college, or university; or an institution that is both nonprofit and charitable may obtain supervision via live two-way videoconferencing. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the client confidentiality is preserved.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>

<p><b>9. How many people can participate in a session of group supervision?</b></p>	<p>Group supervision sessions shall include no more than eight (8) persons receiving supervision.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46; CCR Section 1820</i></p>
<p><b>10. Can group supervision be broken into one-hour increments?</b></p>	<p>Group supervision can be broken into one-hour increments, as long as both increments (full two hours) are provided in the same week as the experience being claimed.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>
<p><b>11. What is the definition of telehealth counseling?</b></p>	<p>Telehealth refers to the mode of delivering health care services and public health via information and communication technologies to facilitate the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of a patient's health care while the patient is at the originating site and the health care provider is at a distant site. Telehealth facilitates patient self-management and caregiver support for patients and includes synchronous interactions and asynchronous store and forward transfers.</p> <p>The interaction must take place in real time.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 2290.5</i></p>
<p><b>12. Do I need to send in originals of my W-2s or most recent pay stub with my application for examination eligibility?</b></p>	<p>Photocopies of W-2s are acceptable. These are to be sent with the LPCC examination eligibility application. For the current tax year, applicants are to include a photocopy of their most recent pay stub. W-2s are required for all prior tax years from which the applicant claims experience.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.47</i></p>
<p><b>13. Can I be paid on a 1099 basis as an Intern?</b></p>	<p>No. All Interns must be paid on W-2s from the employer or be a volunteer.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.47</i></p>
<p><b>14. Can I work in a private practice setting with my second Intern registration number?</b></p>	<p>No. If an individual applies for and receives a second PCC Intern registration, he or she cannot work in a private practice setting with that second intern registration number</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.45</i></p>

<p><b>15. When do I need to send in supervisory forms?</b></p>	<p>All supervisory forms (Responsibility Statements, Supervisory Plans, and Experience Verification forms) are to be submitted with the application for LPCC examination eligibility.</p> <p>Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience forms only need to be sent if the Board specifically requests them.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1820; 1821</i></p>
<p><b>16. Do I need to resubmit fingerprints with my LPCC examination eligibility application?</b></p>	<p>If you have a current PCC Intern registration number at the time the Board receives your application for LPCC examination eligibility, you will not need to redo your fingerprints for the Board.</p> <p>If you do not have an open file with the Board, fingerprints will be necessary.</p>
<p><b>17. Do I need to maintain a current Intern registration number to participate in the examination?</b></p>	<p>The Board does not require an examination candidate to maintain a current registration number in order to take the licensing examination. However, in order to counsel clients, an individual must be working in an exempt setting as defined under B&amp;P Code Section 4999.22 or be a registered intern with the Board.</p>
<p><b>18. Must I continue to have supervision while in the exam process?</b></p>	<p>All applicants and registrants, except those working in an exempt setting, must receive supervision from an acceptable licensed mental health professional. Once issued a license, an individual no longer needs to be under supervision.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.46</i></p>

<p><b>19. What happens once I submit my “Examination Eligibility” application?</b></p>	<p>The Board will evaluate your application and notify you either that:</p> <p>(1) You have a deficiency in your application: Applicants will have one year from the date of initial deficiency notice to clear up any deficiencies. If the applicant does not remediate deficiencies within this one year period, the application is considered abandoned (see question #20 below).</p> <p>(2) You have been found eligible to take the examinations: Once you are eligible, you will be provided with information about how to register for the exams.</p> <p><u>If you fail an examination:</u></p> <p>a) California L&amp;E Exam: You will be given instructions on applying to retake the exam.</p> <p>b) NCMHCE: You may download the re-exam application from NBCC’s Web site.</p> <p>You will have one year from the date you failed the exam to retake it. You can retake the exam once every 90 days. If you do not retake the exam within that one year period, your application is considered abandoned (see question #20 below).</p> <p><u>Once you pass all required examinations:</u> The Board will send you a letter along with a “Request for Initial License Issuance” form, which you must submit with the required fee. Your license will be issued shortly thereafter.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1806</i></p>
<p><b>20. How do I avoid having my application abandoned by the Board?</b></p>	<p>Regulations require an application to be deemed abandoned when an applicant:</p> <p>a. Does not clear up application deficiencies within one year from the date of the applicant’s initial deficiency notice; OR</p> <p>b. Does not take an examination within one year of being notified of initial eligibility to take the exam; OR</p> <p>c. Does not retake an examination within one year from the date an applicant was notified of failing an exam.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1806(b),(c)&amp;(e)</i></p>

<b>21. What happens if my application for Examination Eligibility is abandoned?</b>	<p>“Abandonment” means that a file is closed and should the applicant wish to continue pursuing licensure, he or she must submit a new application and fee, and meet all current requirements in effect at the time the new application is submitted. This includes hours of experience meeting the 6-year rule (see question #2 for more information).</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: CCR Section 1806</i></p>
<b>22. Once I pass my exams, can I start practicing independently?</b>	<p>No. A successful examinee still must submit an LPCC Initial License application form and fee before the Board will issue a professional clinical counselor license. Independent practice cannot begin until the Board issues a license.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&amp;P Code Section 4999.12</i></p>