SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

Policy:	99-04
Subject:	Waiver/Registration in Lieu of License
Authority:	Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 5751.2, as Amended by Chapter 279, Section 3, Statutes of 2020
Original Policy Date:	April 20, 1999
Amended:	October 25, 2001, February 15, 2005, November 13, 2013, December 19, 2022 Attachment A, B, C: revised November 2013, Attachment D: added September 2009; revised June 2013, October 7, 2020, September 17, 2024
Supersedes:	91-11, 94-07, 96-02
Attachments:	Attachment A: Request for Waiver of Licensure Attachment B: Notice of Professional Responsibility to Maintain Current Clinical License Attachment C: Procedures for Verification of Licenses and Registrations Attachment D: CA HHSA Mental Health Professional Licensing Waiver Request

1.0 BACKGROUND

California Mental Health Laws and Regulations (referenced above) provide that "no person shall be employed in local mental health programs … to provide services for which such a license is required unless the person possesses a currently valid license."

California law further provides a mechanism for graduates of schools of social work and psychology to obtain the necessary clinical hours to qualify for their applications for licensure. That process involves registration with the Board of Behavioral Science (BBS) for Clinical Social Work and Marriage/Family Therapist (MFT) candidates, and application for a waiver in lieu of license, submitted to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) by the county, for Psychologist candidates.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is

2.1   to assure that unlicensed staff working in clinical positions understand their personal and professional responsibilities to meet registration/waiver requirements; and

2.2   to describe the limitations of this process and the consequences of non-compliance.

3.0 POLICY

3.1   No person shall be offered employment as a Psychiatric Social Worker I or MFT I or accepted as a post-graduate volunteer intern unless that person can produce documentation of current registration with the BBS.

3.2   No person shall be offered employment as a psychology intern or accepted as a post-graduate volunteer intern unless that person applies through Behavioral Health Quality Management (QM) for a DHCS Waiver in Lieu of License.

3.3   Candidates for LCSW and MFT licensure must send documentation of annual renewals of their BBS intern registration to Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) administration.

3.4   Registration/Waivers in Lieu of License are good for the following periods:

- LCSW/MFT Candidates: The waiver/registration time period is a maximum of six years from the date of approval of the initial registration application with BBS. There are no exceptions to the six year limit.

- Psychology Candidates: The waiver/registration time period is a maximum of six years from the date of approval of the initial registration application with the Board of Psychology. There are no exceptions to the six year limit

- Associate Professional Clinical Counselor Candidates: The waiver/registration time period is a maximum of six years for the date of approval of the initial registration application with the BBS. There are no exceptions to the six year limit

3.5   While the licensing boards may allow a candidate for licensure to start a second registration process, San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services will not recognize this second period if the six year maximum has been reached.

3.6   Staff who do not become licensed within the registration/waiver period may not continue to provide clinical services that are restricted to licensed personnel. In this case, the County shall take steps up to and including proposing dismissal.

3.7   This policy does not apply to medical staff.

4.0 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 To provide documentation of BBS or Board of Psychology registration and annual renewals to supervisors and BHRS Quality Management (LCSW and MFT candidates).

4.2 To notify the staff member's licensing board within thirty (30) days of a legal name change; the reissued proof of registration with legal name should be submitted to BHRS Payroll/Personnel and QM as soon as available.

4.3 To remain aware of the schedule for written examinations in their field, and to plan to take such examinations at the earliest opportunity to meet registration/waiver timetables.

4.4 To be aware of annual renewal requirements, as well as reporting and notification requirements for any changes that may occur during the registration period, such as a change of primary supervisor.

4.5 To discuss licensing plans and any difficulties with their supervisors so that, if possible, contingency plans may be made.

4.6 To understand the consequences of failure to obtain a clinical licensure in the allowed time period.

5.0 WAIVER APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The supervisor shall review this policy with the candidate and confirm the candidate understands the policy. The Supervisor shall forward the Request for Waiver of Licensure form (Attachment A) to BHRS QM for transmittal to DHCS. QM maintains a copy of the approved waiver and sends the original to the applicant. QM notifies the BHRS payroll/personnel department of the waiver end date.

6.0 CANDIDATES FOR CALIFORNIA LICENSURE WHO ARE LICENSED IN ANOTHER STATE

The applicant for employment as a clinician must present evidence that he/she has investigated the process for California reciprocity and demonstrate eligibility, must discuss this timetable with the prospective supervisor, and must follow all requirements of the appropriate licensing board. The supervisor shall follow oversight procedures described above to assure progress towards California licensure in a timely manner.

7.0 ACHIEVEMENT OF LICENSE

Notice of newly licensed clinicians shall be sent to QM to terminate the registration/waiver oversight process.

Approved: _____*Signature on File*_____

Lisa Mancini, Interim Director
Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

Approved: _____*Signature on File*_____

Scott Gruendl, MPA, CPCO
Compliance Officer