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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC

DIVISION 2. HEALING ARTS [500 - 4999.129] (*Division 2 enacted by Stats. 1937, Ch. 399.*)

CHAPTER 10. Psychiatric Technicians [4500 - 4548] (*Chapter 10 added by Stats. 1959, Ch. 1851.*)

ARTICLE 1. Generally [4500 - 4509.5] (*Article 1 added by Stats. 1959, Ch. 1851.*)

[4500.](#) This chapter is known and may be cited as the "Psychiatric Technicians Law."

(*Added by Stats. 1959, Ch. 1851.*)

[4501.](#) (a) As used in this chapter, "board" means the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians of the State of California.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029, and as of that date is repealed.

(*Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 590, Sec. 8. (AB 3255) Effective January 1, 2025. Repealed as of January 1, 2029, by its own provisions.*)

[4501.1.](#) Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the board in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount.

(*Added by Stats. 2002, Ch. 107, Sec. 18. Effective January 1, 2003.*)

[4501.2.](#) Notwithstanding any other law, the repeal of Section 4501 renders the successor entity to the board in Section 4501 subject to review by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature.

(*Added by Stats. 2017, Ch. 586, Sec. 12. (AB 1229) Effective January 1, 2018.*)

[4502.](#) As used in this chapter, "psychiatric technician" means any person who, for compensation or personal profit, implements procedures and techniques that involve understanding of cause and effect and that are used in the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of mentally ill or emotionally disturbed persons, or persons with intellectual disabilities, and who has one or more of the following:

(a) Direct responsibility for administering or implementing specific therapeutic procedures, techniques, treatments, or medications with the aim of enabling recipients or patients to make optimal use of their therapeutic regime, their social and personal resources, and their residential care.

(b) Direct responsibility for the application of interpersonal and technical skills in the observation and recognition of symptoms and reactions of recipients or patients, for the accurate recording of these symptoms and reactions, and for the carrying out of treatments and medications as prescribed by a licensed physician and surgeon or a psychiatrist.

The psychiatric technician in the performance of these procedures and techniques is responsible to the director of the service in which those duties are performed. The director may be a licensed physician and surgeon, psychiatrist, psychologist, rehabilitation therapist, social worker, registered nurse, or other professional personnel.

Nothing herein shall authorize a licensed psychiatric technician to practice medicine or surgery or to undertake the prevention, treatment, or cure of disease, pain, injury, deformity, or mental or physical condition in violation of the law.

(*Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 632, Sec. 34. (AB 1536) Effective January 1, 2022.*)

[4502.1.](#) A psychiatric technician, working in a mental health facility or developmental disability facility, when prescribed by a licensed physician and surgeon, may administer medications by hypodermic injection.

(*Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 632, Sec. 35. (AB 1536) Effective January 1, 2022.*)

4502.2. A psychiatric technician, when prescribed by a licensed physician and surgeon, may withdraw blood from a patient with a mental illness or developmental disability if the psychiatric technician has received certification from the board that the psychiatric technician has completed a prescribed course of instruction approved by the board or has demonstrated competence to the satisfaction of the board.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 632, Sec. 36. (AB 1536) Effective January 1, 2022.)

4502.3. (a) A psychiatric technician, when prescribed by a licensed physician and surgeon, may perform the following activities on a patient with a mental illness or developmental disability:

- (1) Tuberculin, coccidioidin, and histoplasmin skin tests, providing the administration is within the course of a tuberculosis control program.
- (2) Immunization techniques, providing the administration is upon the standing orders of a supervising licensed physician and surgeon or pursuant to written guidelines adopted by a hospital or medical group with whom the supervising licensed physician and surgeon is associated.

(b) In performing activities pursuant to subdivision (a), the psychiatric technician shall satisfactorily demonstrate competence in all of the following:

- (1) Administering the testing or immunization agents, including knowledge of all indications and contraindications for the administration of the agents.
- (2) Recognizing any emergency reactions to the agent that constitute a danger to the health or life of the patient.
- (3) Treating those emergency reactions by using procedures, medication, and equipment within the scope of practice of the psychiatric technician.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 632, Sec. 37. (AB 1536) Effective January 1, 2022.)

4503. (a) The board shall administer and enforce the provisions of this chapter.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029, and as of that date is repealed.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 590, Sec. 9. (AB 3255) Effective January 1, 2025. Repealed as of January 1, 2029, by its own provisions.)

4503.1. Notwithstanding any other law, the repeal of Section 4503 renders the successor entity to the board in Section 4503 subject to review by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature.

(Added by Stats. 2017, Ch. 586, Sec. 14. (AB 1229) Effective January 1, 2018.)

4504. (a) The board shall prosecute all persons guilty of violating the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The board may employ clerical assistance as it deems necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this chapter. The board may fix the compensation to be paid for those services and may incur other expenses as it may deem necessary.

(c) The board may adopt, amend, or repeal rules and regulations as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Those rules and regulations shall be adopted in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code).

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 632, Sec. 39. (AB 1536) Effective January 1, 2022.)

4505. Except as provided by Section 159.5, the board may employ whatever personnel is necessary for the administration of this chapter.

(Amended by Stats. 1983, Ch. 376, Sec. 1.)

4507. This chapter shall not apply to the following:

- (a) Physicians and surgeons licensed pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 2000) of Division 2.
- (b) Psychologists licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 2900) of Division 2.
- (c) Registered nurses licensed pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 2700) of Division 2.
- (d) Vocational nurses licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 2840) of Division 2.
- (e) Social workers or clinical social workers licensed pursuant to Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 4991) of Division 2.

- (f) Marriage and family therapists licensed pursuant to Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 4980) of Division 2.
- (g) Professional clinical counselors licensed pursuant to Chapter 16 (commencing with Section 4999.10) of Division 2.
- (h) Teachers credentialed pursuant to Article 1 (commencing with Section 44200) of Chapter 2 of Part 25 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Education Code.
- (i) Occupational therapists as specified in Chapter 5.6 (commencing with Section 2570) of Division 2.
- (j) Art therapists, dance therapists, music therapists, and recreation therapists, as defined in Division 5 (commencing with Section 70001) of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, who are personnel of health facilities licensed pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 1250) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (k) Any other categories of persons the board determines are entitled to exemption from this chapter because they have complied with other licensing provisions of this code or because they are deemed by statute or by regulations contained in the California Code of Regulations to be adequately trained in their respective occupations. The exemptions shall apply only to a given specialized area of training within the specific discipline for which the exemption is granted.

(Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 389, Sec. 3. (AB 2296) Effective January 1, 2019.)

4508. This chapter does not prohibit provisions of the services regulated herein with or without compensation or personal profit, when done by the tenets of any well-recognized church or denomination, so long as they do not otherwise engage in the practice set forth in the chapter.

(Added by Stats. 1968, Ch. 1323.)

4509.5. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent persons from performing services described in Section 4502 for purposes of training to qualify for licensure under a program approved by the board or for training in another allied professional field.

(Added by Stats. 1969, Ch. 1073.)