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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 14. Social Workers [4991 - 4998.5]** ( *Chapter 14 added by Stats. 1985, Ch. 820, Sec. 1.* )

**ARTICLE 4. Licensure [4996 - 4997.1]** ( *Heading of Article 4 amended by Stats. 2006, Ch. 659, Sec. 26.* )

**4996.** (a) Only individuals who have received a license under this article may style themselves as "Licensed Clinical Social Workers." Every individual who styles himself or herself or who holds himself or herself out to be a licensed clinical social worker, or who uses any words or symbols indicating or tending to indicate that he or she is a licensed clinical social worker, without holding his or her license in good standing under this article, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) It is unlawful for any person to engage in the practice of clinical social work unless at the time of so doing such person holds a valid, unexpired, and unrevoked license under this article.

(c) A clinical social worker licensed under this chapter is a licentiate for purposes of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 805, and thus is a health care practitioner subject to the provisions of Section 2290.5 pursuant to subdivision (b) of that section.

(Amended by Stats. 2003, Ch. 20, Sec. 5. Effective January 1, 2004.)

**4996.1.** (a) Effective January 1, 2016, the board shall issue a clinical social worker license to each applicant who qualifies pursuant to this article and who successfully passes a California law and ethics examination and a clinical examination. An applicant who has successfully passed a previously administered written examination may be subsequently required to take and pass another written examination.

(b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

(Amended (as amended by Stats. 2012, Ch. 799, Sec. 53) by Stats. 2013, Ch. 473, Sec. 43. (SB 821) Effective January 1, 2014. Section operative January 1, 2016, by its own provisions.)

**4996.2.** Each applicant for a license shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant complies with all of the following requirements:

(a) Is at least 21 years of age.

(b) Has received a master's degree from an accredited school of social work.

(c) Has had two years of supervised post-master's degree experience, as specified in Section 4996.23.

(d) Not be subject to denial of licensure pursuant to Section 480. The board shall not issue a registration or license to any person who has been convicted of any crime in this or another state or in a territory of the United States that involves sexual abuse of children or who is required to register pursuant to Section 290 of the Penal Code or the equivalent in another state or territory, in accordance with Section 480.

(e) Has completed adequate instruction and training in the subject of alcoholism and other chemical substance dependency. This requirement applies only to applicants who matriculate on or after January 1, 1986.

(f) Has completed instruction and training in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention. This requirement applies to an applicant who began graduate training during the period commencing on January 1, 1995, and ending on December 31, 2003. An applicant who began graduate training on or after January 1, 2004, shall complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of coursework in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies, including knowledge of community resources, cultural factors, and same gender abuse dynamics. Coursework required under this subdivision may be satisfactory if taken either in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or in a separate course.

(g) Has completed a minimum of 10 contact hours of training or coursework in human sexuality as specified in Section 1807 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. This training or coursework may be satisfactory if taken either in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or in a separate course.

(h) Has completed a minimum of seven contact hours of training or coursework in child abuse assessment and reporting as specified in Section 1807.2 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. This training or coursework may be satisfactory if taken either in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or in a separate course.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 49. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.3.** (a) The board shall assess the following fees relating to the licensure of clinical social workers:

(1) The application fee for registration as an associate clinical social worker shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(2) The fee for annual renewal of an associate clinical social worker registration shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(3) The fee for application for licensure shall be two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of five hundred dollars (\$500).

(4) (A) (i) The fee for the board-administered clinical examination, if the board chooses to adopt this examination in regulations, shall be two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of five hundred dollars (\$500).

(ii) The fee for the California law and ethics examination shall be one hundred fifty dollars (\$150). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of three hundred dollars (\$300).

(B) An applicant who fails to appear for an examination, after having been scheduled to take the examination, shall forfeit the examination fees.

(C) The amount of the examination fees shall be based on the actual cost to the board of developing, purchasing, and grading each examination and the actual cost to the board of administering each examination. The written examination fees shall be adjusted periodically by regulation to reflect the actual costs incurred by the board.

(5) The fee for rescoring an examination shall be twenty dollars (\$20).

(6) The fee for issuance of an initial license shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of four hundred dollars (\$400).

(7) The fee for the two-year license renewal shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). The board may adopt regulations to set the fee at a higher amount, up to a maximum of four hundred dollars (\$400).

(8) The renewal delinquency fee shall be one-half of the fee for license renewal. A person who permits their license to expire shall be subject to the delinquency fee.

(9) The fee for issuance of a replacement registration, license, or certificate shall be twenty dollars (\$20).

(10) The fee for issuance of a certificate or letter of good standing shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25).

(11) The fee for issuance of a retired license shall be forty dollars (\$40).

(b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2021.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 50. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.4.** (a) Effective January 1, 2016, an applicant who fails the clinical examination may, within one year from the notification date of failure, retake that examination as regularly scheduled, without further application, upon payment of the required examination fees. Thereafter, the applicant shall not be eligible for further examination until he or she files a new application, meets all current requirements, and pays all required fees.

(b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

*(Amended (as amended by Stats. 2012, Ch. 799, Sec. 57) by Stats. 2013, Ch. 473, Sec. 47. (SB 821) Effective January 1, 2014. Section operative January 1, 2016, by its own provisions.)*

**4996.5.** The board shall issue a license to each applicant meeting the requirements of this article, which license, so long as the renewal fees have been paid, licenses the holder to engage in the practice of clinical social work as defined in Section 4996.9, entitles the holder to use the title of licensed clinical social worker, and authorizes the holder to hold himself or herself out as qualified to perform any of the functions delineated by this chapter. The form and content of the license shall be determined by the director in accordance with Section 164.

*(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 307, Sec. 62. (SB 821) Effective January 1, 2010.)*

**4996.6.** (a) Licenses issued under this chapter shall expire no more than 24 months after the issue date. The expiration date of the original license shall be set by the board.

(b) To renew an unexpired license, the licensee shall, on or before the expiration date of the license, complete the following actions:

(1) Apply for a renewal on a form prescribed by the board.

(2) Pay a two-year renewal fee prescribed by the board.

(3) Certify compliance with the continuing education requirements set forth in Section 4996.22.

(4) Notify the board whether he or she has been convicted, as defined in Section 490, of a misdemeanor or felony, or whether any disciplinary action has been taken by any regulatory or licensing board in this or any other state, subsequent to the licensee's last renewal.

(c) To renew an expired license within three years of its expiration, the licensee shall, as a condition precedent to renewal, complete all of the actions described in subdivision (b) and pay a delinquency fee.

(d) A license that is not renewed within three years after its expiration may not be renewed, restored, reinstated, or reissued thereafter; however, the former licensee may apply for and obtain a new license if he or she satisfies all of the following requirements:

(1) No fact, circumstance, or condition exists that, if the license were issued, would justify its revocation or suspension.

(2) He or she submits an application for licensure.

(3) He or she takes and passes the current licensing examinations.

(4) He or she submits the licensure application fees and the fee for initial license issuance.

(5) He or she complies with the fingerprint requirements established by board regulation.

*(Amended by Stats. 2017, Ch. 573, Sec. 13. (SB 800) Effective January 1, 2018.)*

**4996.61.** A suspended license is subject to expiration and shall be renewed as provided in this article, but such renewal does not entitle the licensee, while the license remains suspended and until it is reinstated, to engage in the activity to which the license relates, or in any other activity or conduct in violation of the order or judgment by which it was suspended.

*(Added by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 55. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.62.** A revoked license is subject to expiration as provided in this article, but it may not be renewed. If it is reinstated after its expiration, the licensee shall, as a condition precedent to its reinstatement, pay a reinstatement fee in an amount equal to the renewal fee in effect on the last regular renewal date before the date on which it is reinstated, plus the delinquency fee, if any, accrued at the time of its revocation.

*(Added by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 56. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.65.** (a) In addition to the fees charged pursuant to Section 4996.3 for the biennial renewal of a license pursuant to Section 4996.6, the board shall collect an additional fee of twenty dollars (\$20) at the time of renewal. The board shall transfer this amount to the Controller who shall deposit the funds in the Mental Health Practitioner Education Fund.

(b) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2018.

*(Repealed (in Sec. 5) and added by Stats. 2017, Ch. 557, Sec. 6. (AB 1188) Effective October 7, 2017. Section operative July 1, 2018, by its own provisions.)*

**4996.7.** A licensee shall display their license in a conspicuous place in the licensee's primary place of practice when rendering professional clinical services in person.

*(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 160, Sec. 11. (SB 1024) Effective January 1, 2025.)*

**4996.75.** (a) A licensee or registrant shall provide a client with a notice written in at least 12-point type prior to initiating psychotherapy services, or as soon as practicably possible thereafter, that reads as follows:

#### NOTICE TO CLIENTS

The Board of Behavioral Sciences receives and responds to complaints regarding services provided within the scope of practice of clinical social workers. You may contact the board online at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov), or by calling (916) 574-7830.

(b) On and after July 1, 2025, upon initiation of psychotherapy services with a client, the notice described in subdivision (a) shall also include the licensee's or registrant's full name as filed with the board, the license or registration number, the type of license or registration, and the license or registration expiration date.

(c) Delivery of the notice required by this section to the client shall be documented.

*(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 160, Sec. 12. (SB 1024) Effective January 1, 2025.)*

**4996.9.** The practice of clinical social work is defined as a service in which a special knowledge of social resources, human capabilities, and the part that unconscious motivation plays in determining behavior, is directed at helping people to achieve more adequate, satisfying, and productive social adjustments. The application of social work principles and methods includes, but is not restricted to, counseling and using applied psychotherapy of a nonmedical nature with individuals, families, or groups; providing information and referral services; providing or arranging for the provision of social services; explaining or interpreting the psychosocial aspects in the situations of individuals, families, or groups; helping communities to organize, to provide, or to improve social or health services; doing research related to social work; and the use, application, and integration of the coursework and experience required by Sections 4996.2 and 4996.23.

Psychotherapy, within the meaning of this chapter, is the use of psychosocial methods within a professional relationship, to assist the person or persons to achieve a better psychosocial adaptation, to acquire greater human realization of psychosocial potential and adaptation, and to modify internal and external conditions which affect individuals, groups, or communities in respect to behavior, emotions, and thinking, in respect to their intrapersonal and interpersonal processes.

*(Amended by Stats. 2013, Ch. 473, Sec. 48. (SB 821) Effective January 1, 2014.)*

**4996.10.** The provisions of this article shall be construed only as provisions relating to the examination and licensing of clinical social workers.

*(Added by Stats. 1985, Ch. 820, Sec. 1.)*

**4996.11.** The board may suspend or revoke the license of any person who is guilty on the grounds set forth in Section 4992.3. The proceedings for the suspension or revocation of licenses under this article shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, and the board shall have all the powers granted in that chapter.

*(Added by Stats. 1985, Ch. 820, Sec. 1.)*

**4996.12.** Any person who violates this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding a period of six months, or by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or by both.

*(Added by Stats. 1985, Ch. 820, Sec. 1.)*

**4996.13.** Nothing in this article shall prevent qualified members of other professional groups from doing work of a psychosocial nature consistent with the standards and ethics of their respective professions. However, they shall not hold themselves out to the public by any title or description of services incorporating the words psychosocial, or clinical social worker, or that they shall not state or imply that they are licensed to practice clinical social work. These qualified members of other professional groups include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) A physician and surgeon certified pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 2000).

(b) A psychologist licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 2900).

(c) Members of the State Bar of California.

(d) Marriage and family therapists licensed pursuant to Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 4980).

(e) Licensed professional clinical counselors pursuant to Chapter 16 (commencing with Section 4999.10).

(f) A priest, rabbi, or minister of the gospel of any religious denomination.

*(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 350, Sec. 36. (SB 943) Effective January 1, 2012.)*

**4996.14.** (a) This chapter shall not be construed to constrict, limit, or withdraw the Medical Practice Act, the Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Act, the Nursing Practice Act, the Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor Act, or the Psychology Licensing Law.

(b) This chapter shall not apply to an unlicensed or unregistered employee or volunteer working in a governmental entity, a school, a college, a university, or an institution that is both nonprofit and charitable if both of the following apply:

(1) The work of the employee or volunteer is performed under the oversight and direction of the entity.

(2) (A) On and after July 1, 2020, the employee or volunteer provides a client, prior to initiating psychotherapy services or as soon as practicably possible thereafter, a notice written in at least 12-point type that is in substantially the following form:

#### NOTICE TO CLIENTS

The (Name of office or unit) of the (Name of agency) receives and responds to complaints regarding the practice of psychotherapy by any unlicensed or unregistered practitioner providing services at (Name of agency). To file a complaint, contact (Telephone number, email address, internet website, or mailing address of agency).

The Board of Behavioral Sciences receives and responds to complaints regarding services provided by individuals licensed and registered by the board. If you have a complaint and are unsure if your practitioner is licensed or registered, please contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences at 916-574-7830 for assistance or utilize the board's online license verification feature by visiting [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov).

(B) The delivery of the notice described in subparagraph (A) to the client shall be documented.

(c) This chapter shall not apply to a person using hypnotic techniques if their client was referred by a physician and surgeon, dentist, or psychologist.

(d) This chapter shall not apply to a person using hypnotic techniques that offer vocational self-improvement, and the person is not performing therapy for emotional or mental disorders.

(e) Notwithstanding subdivisions (b) and (c) or Section 4996.13, all persons registered as associates or licensed under this chapter shall not be exempt from this chapter or the jurisdiction of the board.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 747, Sec. 10.5. (AB 690) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.14.1.** The settings described in Section 4996.14 are exempt settings and do not fall under the jurisdiction of this chapter or of the board except as specified in Section 4996.14, and with the following exceptions:

(a) Any individual working or volunteering in an exempt setting who is licensed or registered under this chapter shall fall under the jurisdiction of the board and is not exempt from this chapter.

(b) An entity that is licensed or certified by a government regulatory agency to provide health care services shall not be considered an exempt setting unless the entity directly meets the criteria described in Section 4996.14.

*(Added by Stats. 2021, Ch. 747, Sec. 11. (AB 690) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.14.2.** (a) For the purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Nonexempt setting" means a setting that does not qualify as an exempt setting, as specified in Section 4996.14.

(2) "Private practice" means a type of nonexempt setting that meets all of the following criteria:

(A) The practice is owned by a health professional who is licensed under this division either independently or jointly with one or more other health professionals who are licensed under this division.

(B) The practice provides clinical mental health services, including psychotherapy, to clients.

(C) One or more licensed health professionals are responsible for the practice and for the services provided and set conditions of client payment or reimbursement for the provision of services.

(3) "Professional corporation" means a type of nonexempt setting and private practice that has been formed pursuant to Part 4 (commencing with Section 13400) of Division 3 of Title 1 of the Corporations Code.

(b) An active license or registration number shall be required to engage in the practice of clinical social work, as defined in Section 4996.9, in nonexempt settings at all times, except as follows:

(1) A social work intern may engage in the practice of clinical social work in a nonexempt setting that is not a private practice or a professional corporation, while pursuing a course of study leading to a master's degree in social work pursuant to Section 4996.15.

(2) An applicant for registration as an associate may engage in the practice of clinical social work in a nonexempt setting that is not a private practice or a professional corporation before their registration number is issued if they are in compliance with subdivision (b) of Section 4996.23 and are gaining supervised experience that meets the requirements of this chapter.

*(Added by Stats. 2021, Ch. 747, Sec. 12. (AB 690) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.15.** (a) Nothing in this article shall restrict or prevent psychosocial activities by employees of accredited academic institutions, public schools, government agencies, or nonprofit institutions who train graduate students pursuing a master's degree in social work in an accredited college or university. Any psychosocial activities by the employee shall be part of a supervised course of study and the graduate students shall be designated by titles such as social work interns, social work trainees, or other titles clearly indicating the training status appropriate to their level of training. The term "social work intern," however, shall be reserved for persons enrolled in a master's or doctoral training program in social work in an accredited school or department of social work.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a graduate student shall not perform clinical social work in a private practice or a professional corporation.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 747, Sec. 13. (AB 690) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.16.** Nothing in this chapter shall apply to any clinical social worker from outside this state, when in actual consultation with a licensed practitioner of this state, or when an invited guest of a professional association, or of an educational institution for the sole purpose of engaging in professional education through lectures, clinics, or demonstrations, if he or she is at the time of the consultation, lecture, or demonstration licensed to practice clinical social work in the state or country in which he or she resides. These clinical social workers shall not open an office or appoint a place to meet clients or receive calls from clients within the limits of this state.

*(Repealed and added by Stats. 1994, Ch. 26, Sec. 187. Effective March 30, 1994.)*

**4996.16.1.** (a) Notwithstanding Section 4996, a person who holds a license in another jurisdiction of the United States as a clinical social worker may provide clinical social work services in this state for a period not to exceed 30 consecutive days in any calendar year, if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The license from another jurisdiction is at the highest level for independent clinical practice in the jurisdiction in which the license was granted.

(2) The license from another jurisdiction is current, active, and unrestricted.

(3) The client is located in California during the time the person seeks to provide care in California.

(4) The client is a current client of the person and has an established, ongoing client-provider relationship with the person at the time the client became located in California.

(5) The person informs the client of the limited timeframe of the services and that the person is not licensed in California.

(6) The person provides the client with the Board of Behavioral Sciences' internet website address.

(7) The person informs the client of the jurisdiction in which the person is licensed and the type of license held and provides the client with the person's license number.

(b) A person who intends to provide clinical social work services pursuant to this section shall provide the board with all of the following information before providing services:

(1) The name under which the person is licensed in another jurisdiction, the person's mailing address, the person's phone number, the person's social security number or individual taxpayer identification number, and the person's electronic mailing address, if the person has an electronic mailing address.

(2) The jurisdiction in which the person is licensed, the type of license held, and the license number.

(3) The date on which the person will begin providing clinical social work services to the person's client in California.

(c) A person who provides services pursuant to this section is deemed to have agreed to practicing under the jurisdiction of the board and to be bound by the laws of this state.

(d) This section does not apply to any person licensed by the board whose license has been suspended or revoked.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2026, and as of that date is repealed.

*(Added by Stats. 2023, Ch. 640, Sec. 6. (AB 232) Effective January 1, 2024. Repealed as of January 1, 2026, by its own provisions.)*

**4996.17.1.** The board may issue a license to a person who, at the time of submitting an application for a license pursuant to this chapter, holds a license in another jurisdiction of the United States as a clinical social worker at the highest level for independent practice if all of the following requirements are met:

(a) The applicant's license in the other jurisdiction has been current, active, and unrestricted for at least two years immediately before the date the application was received by the board. The applicant shall disclose to the board for review any past restrictions or disciplinary actions on an out-of-state license and the board shall consider these actions in determining whether to issue a license to the applicant.

(b) The applicant's degree that qualified the applicant for the out-of-state license is a master's degree from an accredited school or department of social work.

(c) The applicant complies with the fingerprint requirements established in Section 144.

(d) The applicant completes the coursework specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) from an accredited school or department of social work, a school, college, or university accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education, a school, college, or university that is approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, or from a continuing education provider that is identified as acceptable by the board pursuant to Section 4996.22. Undergraduate coursework shall not satisfy these requirements.

(1) A minimum of 12 hours of coursework in California law and professional ethics. The content of the course shall include, but not be limited to, the following: advertising, scope of practice, scope of competence, treatment of minors, confidentiality, dangerous patients, psychotherapist-patient privilege, recordkeeping, patient access to records, state and federal laws related to confidentiality of patient health information, dual relationships, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, online therapy, insurance reimbursement, civil liability, disciplinary actions and unprofessional conduct, ethics complaints and ethical standards, termination of therapy, standards of care, relevant family law, therapist disclosures to patients, the application of legal and ethical standards in different types of work settings, and licensing law and process.

(2) At least one semester unit, or 15 hours, of instruction that includes an understanding of various California cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position.

(e) The applicant obtains a minimum of seven contact hours of training or coursework in child abuse assessment and reporting, as specified in Section 28, and any regulations promulgated thereunder.

(f) On and after January 1, 2021, the applicant shall show proof of completion of at least six hours of coursework or applied experience under supervision in suicide risk assessment and intervention using one of the methods specified in Section 4996.27.

(g) The applicant passes the board-administered California law and ethics examination required in Section 4996.1. The clinical examination required in Section 4996.1 shall be waived for an applicant qualifying under this section.

(h) This section was developed based on an examination of the licensure requirements for clinical social workers on a national level. This section shall not be construed to apply to any provisions under this division or Division 3 (commencing with Section 5000) other than this act.

*(Added by Stats. 2019, Ch. 380, Sec. 9. (SB 679) Effective January 1, 2020.)*

**4996.17.2.** (a) This section applies to persons with education gained from an out-of-state school or experience gained outside of California who apply for licensure or registration and who do not qualify for a license under Section 4996.17.1.

(b) The board shall accept experience gained outside of California for the purpose of satisfying the licensure requirements if the experience is substantially the equivalent to the requirements of this chapter. If the applicant has fewer than 3,000 hours of qualifying supervised experience, the board shall accept as qualifying experience the amount of time the applicant held an active license in good standing in another state or country as a clinical social worker at the highest level for independent practice at a rate of 100 hours per month, up to a maximum of 1,200 hours.



(c) The board shall accept education gained from an out-of-state school for purposes of satisfying licensure or registration requirements if the applicant has received a master's degree from an accredited school of social work, or complies with subdivision (e) of Section 4996.18.

(d) In addition to the experience and education described in subdivisions (b) and (c), the applicant shall pass, or have passed, the licensing examinations as specified in Section 4996.1 and pay the required fees. Issuance of the license is conditioned upon all of the following:

(1) The applicant has supervised experience as described in subdivision (b).

(2) Completion of the coursework or training specified in this paragraph taken from an accredited school or department of social work, a school, college, or university accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education, a school, college, or university that is approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, or from a continuing education provider that is identified as acceptable to the board pursuant to Section 4996.22. Undergraduate coursework shall not satisfy this requirement. This coursework may be completed while registered as an associate, unless otherwise specified.

(A) A minimum of seven contact hours of training or coursework in child abuse assessment and reporting, as specified in Section 28, and any regulations promulgated thereunder.

(B) A minimum of 10 contact hours of training or coursework in human sexuality, as specified in Section 25, and any regulations promulgated thereunder.

(C) A minimum of 15 contact hours of training or coursework in alcoholism and other chemical substance dependency, as specified by regulation.

(D) A minimum of 15 contact hours of coursework or training in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies.

(E) A minimum of 10 contact hours of coursework in aging and long-term care, as specified in Section 4996.25.

(F) Completion of a 12-hour course in California law and professional ethics. The content of the course shall include, but not be limited to, the following: advertising, scope of practice, scope of competence, treatment of minors, confidentiality, dangerous patients, psychotherapist-patient privilege, recordkeeping, patient access to records, state and federal laws related to confidentiality of patient health information, dual relationships, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, online therapy, insurance reimbursement, civil liability, disciplinary actions and unprofessional conduct, ethics complaints and ethical standards, termination of therapy, standards of care, relevant family law, therapist disclosures to patients, the application of legal and ethical standards in different types of work settings, and licensing law and process. This coursework shall be completed before registration as an associate.

(G) At least one semester unit, or 15 hours, of instruction that includes an understanding of various California cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position.

(3) On and after January 1, 2021, an applicant for licensure shall show proof of completion of at least six hours of coursework or applied experience under supervision in suicide risk assessment and intervention using one of the methods specified in Section 4996.27.

(4) The applicant's license is in good standing and is not suspended, revoked, restricted, sanctioned, or voluntarily surrendered in any state.

(5) The applicant is not currently under investigation in any other state, and has not been charged with an offense for any act substantially related to the practice of social work by any public agency, entered into any consent agreement or been subject to an administrative decision that contains conditions placed by an agency upon an applicant's professional conduct or practice, including any voluntary surrender of license, or been the subject of an adverse judgment resulting from the practice of social work that the board determines constitutes evidence of a pattern of incompetence or negligence.

(6) The applicant shall provide a certification from each state where the applicant holds a license pertaining to licensure, disciplinary action, and complaints pending.

(7) The applicant is not subject to denial of licensure under Section 480, 4992.3, 4992.35, or 4992.36.

(e) An applicant who obtained a license or registration under another state or country may qualify for licensure with the board without taking the clinical examination specified in Section 4996.1 if both of the following conditions are met:

(1) The applicant obtained a passing score on the clinical licensing examination set forth in regulation as accepted by the board.



(2) The applicant's license or registration in that state or country is active and in good standing at the time of the application and is not revoked, suspended, surrendered, denied, or otherwise restricted or encumbered.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 52. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.18.** (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 4996.23, an applicant shall have an active registration with the board as an associate clinical social worker in order to gain hours of supervised experience. The application shall be made on a form prescribed by the board.

(b) An applicant for registration shall satisfy the following requirements:

(1) Possess a master's degree from an accredited school or department of social work.

(2) Not be subject to denial of licensure pursuant to Section 480.

(3) Have completed training or coursework, which may be embedded within more than one course, in California law and professional ethics for clinical social workers. The coursework shall be taken from an accredited school or department of social work, a school, college, or university accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education, a school, college, or university that is approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, or from a continuing education provider that is acceptable to the board, as defined in Section 4996.22. Undergraduate coursework shall not satisfy this requirement. The coursework shall include instruction in all of the following areas of study:

(A) Contemporary professional ethics and statutes, regulations, and court decisions that delineate the scope of practice of clinical social work.

(B) The therapeutic, clinical, and practical considerations involved in the legal and ethical practice of clinical social work, including, but not limited to, family law.

(C) The current legal patterns and trends in the mental health professions.

(D) The psychotherapist-patient privilege, confidentiality, dangerous patients, and the treatment of minors with and without parental consent.

(E) A recognition and exploration of the relationship between a practitioner's sense of self and human values, and the practitioner's professional behavior and ethics.

(F) The application of legal and ethical standards in different types of work settings.

(G) Licensing law and process.

(c) An applicant who possesses a master's degree from a school or department of social work that is a candidate for accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education shall be eligible, and, except as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 4996.23, shall be required to register as an associate clinical social worker in order to gain experience toward licensure if the applicant is not subject to denial of licensure pursuant to Section 480. That applicant shall not, however, be eligible to take the clinical examination until the school or department of social work has received accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education.

(d) An applicant who possesses a master's degree from an accredited school or department of social work shall be able to apply experience the applicant obtained during the time the accredited school or department was in candidacy status by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education toward the licensure requirements, if the experience meets the requirements of Section 4996.23. This subdivision shall apply retroactively to persons who possess a master's degree from an accredited school or department of social work and who obtained experience during the time the accredited school or department was in candidacy status by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education.

(e) An applicant for registration or licensure trained in an educational institution outside the United States shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board that the applicant possesses a master's of social work degree that is equivalent to a master's degree issued from a school or department of social work that is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education. These applicants shall provide the board with a comprehensive evaluation of the degree and shall provide any other documentation the board deems necessary. The board has the authority to make the final determination as to whether a degree meets all requirements, including, but not limited to, course requirements regardless of evaluation or accreditation.

(f) All applicants for licensure and registrants shall be at all times under the supervision of a supervisor who shall be responsible for ensuring that the extent, kind, and quality of counseling performed is consistent with the training and experience of the person being

supervised and who shall be responsible to the board for compliance with all laws governing the practice of clinical social work.

(g) All applicants and registrants shall inform each client or patient before performing any professional services that the applicant or registrant is unlicensed and is under the supervision of a licensed professional.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 647, Sec. 53. (SB 801) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.19.** Nothing in this article shall prohibit the acts or practices of a licensed clinical social workers' corporation duly certificated pursuant to the Moscone-Knox Professional Corporation Act, as contained in Part 4 (commencing with Section 13400) of Division 3 of Title 1 of the Corporations Code and Article 5 (commencing with Section 4998), when the corporation is in compliance with (a) the Moscone-Knox Professional Corporation Act; (b) Article 5 (commencing with Section 4998); and (c) all other statutes and all rules and regulations now or hereafter enacted or adopted pertaining to the corporation and the conduct of its affairs.

*(Added by renumbering Section 4996.18 by Stats. 1987, Ch. 826, Sec. 8.)*

**4996.20.** (a) "Supervisor," as used in this chapter, means an individual who meets all of the following requirements:

(1) Has held an active license for at least two years within the five-year period immediately preceding any supervision as either:

(A) A licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed marriage and family therapist, psychologist licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 2900), licensed clinical social worker, licensed educational psychologist, or equivalent out-of-state license. A licensed educational psychologist may only supervise the provision of educationally related mental health services that are consistent with the scope of practice of an educational psychologist, as specified in Section 4989.14.

(B) A physician and surgeon who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology or an out-of-state licensed physician and surgeon who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

(2) For at least two years within the five-year period immediately preceding any supervision, has practiced psychotherapy, provided psychological counseling pursuant to paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) of Section 4989.14, or provided direct clinical supervision of psychotherapy performed by associate clinical social workers, associate marriage and family therapists or trainees, or associate professional clinical counselors. Supervision of psychotherapy performed by a social work intern or a professional clinical counselor trainee shall be accepted if the supervision provided is substantially equivalent to the supervision required for registrants.

(3) Has received training in supervision as specified in this chapter and by regulation.

(4) Has not provided therapeutic services to the supervisee.

(5) Has and maintains a current and active license that is not under suspension or probation as one of the following:

(A) A marriage and family therapist, professional clinical counselor, clinical social worker, or licensed educational psychologist issued by the board.

(B) A psychologist licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 2900).

(C) A physician and surgeon who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

(6) Is not a spouse, domestic partner, or relative of the supervisee.

(7) Does not currently have or previously had a personal, professional, or business relationship with the supervisee that undermines the authority or effectiveness of the supervision.

(b) As used in this chapter, the term "supervision" means responsibility for, and control of, the quality of mental health and related services provided by the supervisee. Consultation or peer discussion shall not be considered supervision and shall not qualify as supervised experience.

"Supervision" includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(1) Ensuring the extent, kind, and quality of counseling performed is consistent with the education, training, and experience of the supervisee.

(2) Monitoring and evaluating the supervisee's assessment, diagnosis, and treatment decisions and providing regular feedback.

(3) Monitoring and evaluating the supervisee's ability to provide services at the site or sites where the supervisee is practicing and to the particular clientele being served.

(4) Monitoring and addressing clinical dynamics, including, but not limited to, countertransference-, intrapsychic-, interpersonal-, or trauma-related issues that may affect the supervisory or the practitioner-patient relationship.

(5) Ensuring the supervisee's compliance with laws and regulations governing the practice of clinical social work.

(6) Reviewing the supervisee's progress notes, process notes, and other patient treatment records, as deemed appropriate by the supervisor.

(7) With the client's written consent, providing direct observation or review of audio or video recordings of the supervisee's counseling or therapy, as deemed appropriate by the supervisor.

*(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 511, Sec. 30. (SB 1495) Effective January 1, 2023.)*

**4996.21.** The board may audit the records of any supervisor to verify the completion of the supervisor qualifications specified by this chapter and by regulation. A supervisor shall maintain records of completion of the required supervisor qualifications for seven years after termination of supervision and shall make these records available to the board for auditing purposes upon request.

*(Added by Stats. 2018, Ch. 743, Sec. 30. (AB 93) Effective January 1, 2019.)*

**4996.22.** (a) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (d), the board shall not renew any license pursuant to this chapter unless the applicant certifies to the board, on a form prescribed by the board, that the applicant has completed not less than 36 hours of approved continuing education in or relevant to the field of social work in the preceding two years, as determined by the board.

(2) The board shall not renew any license of an applicant who began graduate study before January 1, 2004, pursuant to this chapter unless the applicant certifies to the board that during the applicant's first renewal period after the operative date of this section, the applicant completed a continuing education course in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies, including community resources, cultural factors, and same gender abuse dynamics. On and after January 1, 2005, the course shall consist of not less than seven hours of training. Equivalent courses in spousal or partner abuse assessment, detection, and intervention strategies taken before the operative date of this section or proof of equivalent teaching or practice experience may be submitted to the board and at its discretion, may be accepted in satisfaction of this requirement. Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this paragraph shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education required under paragraph (1).

(3) The board shall not renew any registration pursuant to this chapter unless the registrant certifies under penalty of perjury to the board, and on a form prescribed by the board, that they have completed not less than three hours of continuing education in the subject of California law and ethics during the preceding year.

(b) (1) In determining its continuing education requirements, the board shall consider including a course in menopausal mental health.

(2) In determining its continuing education requirements, the board shall consider including a course in maternal mental health.

(c) The board shall have the right to audit the records of any applicant to verify the completion of the continuing education requirement. Applicants shall maintain records of completion of required continuing education coursework for a minimum of two years and shall make these records available to the board for auditing purposes upon request.

(d) The board may establish exceptions from the continuing education requirement of this section for good cause as defined by the board.

(e) The continuing education shall be obtained from one of the following sources:

(1) An accredited school of social work, as defined in Section 4991.2, or a school or department of social work that is a candidate for accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as requiring coursework to be offered as part of a regular degree program.

(2) A school, college, or university accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education or a school, college, or university that is approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education.

(3) Another continuing education provider, as specified by the board by regulation.

(f) The board shall establish, by regulation, a procedure for identifying acceptable providers of continuing education courses, and all providers of continuing education, as described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (e), shall adhere to the procedures established by the board. The board may revoke or deny the right of a provider to offer continuing education coursework pursuant to this section for failure to comply with this section or any regulation adopted pursuant to this section.

(g) Training, education, and coursework by approved providers shall incorporate one or more of the following:

- (1) Aspects of the discipline that are fundamental to the understanding, or the practice, of social work.
- (2) Aspects of the social work discipline in which significant recent developments have occurred.
- (3) Aspects of other related disciplines that enhance the understanding, or the practice, of social work.

(h) A system of continuing education for licensed clinical social workers shall include courses directly related to the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of the client population being served.

(i) The continuing education requirements of this section shall comply fully with the guidelines for mandatory continuing education established by the Department of Consumer Affairs pursuant to Section 166.

(j) The board may adopt regulations as necessary to implement this section.

*(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 836, Sec. 6.5. (AB 2581) Effective January 1, 2025.)*

**4996.23.** (a) To qualify for licensure, each applicant shall complete 3,000 hours of post-master's degree supervised experience related to the practice of clinical social work. Except as provided in subdivision (b), experience shall not be gained until the applicant is registered as an associate clinical social worker.

(b) Postdegree hours of experience gained before the issuance of an associate registration shall be credited toward licensure if all of the following apply:

- (1) The registration applicant applies for the associate registration and the board receives the application within 90 days of the granting of the qualifying master's or doctoral degree.
- (2) For applicants completing graduate study on or after January 1, 2020, the experience is obtained at a workplace that, prior to the registration applicant gaining supervised experience hours, requires completed Live Scan fingerprinting. The applicant shall provide the board with a copy of that completed "State of California Request for Live Scan Service" form with the application for licensure.
- (3) The board subsequently grants the associate registration.

(c) The applicant shall not be employed or volunteer in a private practice or a professional corporation until the applicant has been issued an associate registration by the board.

(d) The experience shall be as follows:

(1) (A) At least 1,700 hours shall be gained under the supervision of a licensed clinical social worker. The remaining required supervised experience may be gained under the supervision of a physician and surgeon who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, licensed professional clinical counselor, licensed marriage and family therapist, psychologist licensed pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 2900), licensed educational psychologist, or licensed clinical social worker.

(B) A maximum of 1,200 hours gained under the supervision of a licensed educational psychologist providing educationally related mental health services that are consistent with the scope of practice of an educational psychologist, as specified in Section 4989.14.

(2) A minimum of 2,000 hours in clinical psychosocial diagnosis, assessment, and treatment, including psychotherapy or counseling; however, at least 750 hours shall be face-to-face individual or group psychotherapy provided in the context of clinical social work services.

(3) A maximum of 1,000 hours in client-centered advocacy, consultation, evaluation, research, direct supervisor contact, and workshops, seminars, training sessions, or conferences directly related to clinical social work that have been approved by the applicant's supervisor.

(4) A minimum of two years of supervised experience is required to be obtained over a period of not less than 104 weeks and shall have been gained within the six years immediately preceding the date on which the application for licensure was received by the board.

(5) No more than 40 hours of experience may be credited in any seven consecutive days.

(6) For hours gained on or after January 1, 2010, no more than six hours of supervision, whether individual, triadic, or group supervision, shall be credited during any single week.

(e) An individual who submits an application for licensure between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2020, may alternatively qualify under the experience requirements of this section that were in place on January 1, 2015.

*(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 747, Sec. 14. (AB 690) Effective January 1, 2022.)*

**4996.23.1.** (a) Except for experience gained by attending workshops, seminars, training sessions, or conferences, as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 4996.23, direct supervisor contact shall occur as follows:

(1) Supervision shall include at least one hour of direct supervisor contact each week for which experience is credited in each work setting.

(2) An associate gaining experience who performs more than 10 hours of direct clinical counseling in a week in any setting shall receive at least one additional hour of direct supervisor contact for that setting.

(b) (1) For purposes of this chapter, "one hour of direct supervisor contact" means any of the following:

(A) Individual supervision, which means one hour of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and one person receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services.

(B) Triadic supervision, which means one hour of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and two persons receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services.

(C) Group supervision, which means two hours of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and no more than eight persons receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services. Segments of group supervision may be split into no less than one continuous hour. A supervisor shall ensure that the amount and degree of supervision is appropriate for each person in the group.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, "face-to-face contact" means in-person contact, contact via two-way, real-time videoconferencing, or some combination of these.

(c) The supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state laws relating to confidentiality of patient health information.

(d) (1) Within 60 days of the commencement of supervision, a supervisor shall conduct a meeting with the supervisee during which the supervisor shall assess the appropriateness of allowing the supervisee to receive supervision via two-way, real-time videoconferencing. This assessment of appropriateness shall include, but is not limited to, the abilities of the supervisee, the preferences of both the supervisee and supervisor, and the privacy of the locations of the supervisee and supervisor while supervision is conducted.

(2) The supervisor shall document the results of the assessment made pursuant to paragraph (1), and shall not utilize supervision via two-way, real-time videoconferencing if their assessment finds it is not appropriate.

(e) Direct supervisor contact shall occur within the same week as the hours claimed.

(f) Of the 104 weeks of required supervision, 52 weeks shall be individual supervision, triadic supervision, or a combination of both.

(g) Of the 52 weeks of required individual or triadic supervision, no less than 13 weeks shall be supervised by a licensed clinical social worker.

(h) Alternative supervision may be arranged during a supervisor's vacation or sick leave if the alternative supervision meets the requirements of this chapter.

(i) Notwithstanding any other law, once the required number of experience hours are gained, an associate clinical social worker or applicant for licensure shall receive a minimum of one hour of direct supervisor contact per week for each practice setting in which direct clinical counseling is performed. Once the required number of experience hours are gained, further supervision for nonclinical practice, as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 4996.23, shall be at the supervisor's discretion.

(j) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2026, and as of that date is repealed.

*(Amended (as amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 204, Sec. 3) by Stats. 2024, Ch. 160, Sec. 8. (SB 1024) Effective January 1, 2025. Repealed as of January 1, 2026, by its own provisions. See later operative version, as amended by Sec. 9 of Stats. 2024, Ch. 160.)*

**4996.23.1.** (a) Except for experience gained by attending workshops, seminars, training sessions, or conferences, as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 4996.23, direct supervisor contact shall occur as follows:

(1) Supervision shall include at least one hour of direct supervisor contact each week for which experience is credited in each work setting.

(2) An associate gaining experience who performs more than 10 hours of direct clinical counseling in a week in any setting shall receive at least one additional hour of direct supervisor contact for that setting.

(b) For purposes of this chapter, "one hour of direct supervisor contact" means any of the following:

(1) Individual supervision, which means one hour of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and one person receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services.

(2) Triadic supervision, which means one hour of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and two persons receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services.

(3) Group supervision, which means two hours of face-to-face contact between one supervisor and no more than eight persons receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services. Segments of group supervision may be split into no less than one continuous hour. A supervisor shall ensure that the amount and degree of supervision is appropriate for each person in the group.

(c) Direct supervisor contact shall occur within the same week as the hours claimed.

(d) Of the 104 weeks of required supervision, 52 weeks shall be individual supervision, triadic supervision, or a combination of both.

(e) Of the 52 weeks of required individual or triadic supervision, no less than 13 weeks shall be supervised by a licensed clinical social worker.

(f) Alternative supervision may be arranged during a supervisor's vacation or sick leave if the alternative supervision meets the requirements of this chapter.

(g) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), a supervisee working in an exempt setting described in Section 4996.14 may obtain the required weekly direct supervisor contact via two-way, real-time videoconferencing. The supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with state and federal laws relating to confidentiality of patient health information.

(h) Notwithstanding any other law, once the required number of experience hours are gained, an associate clinical social worker or applicant for licensure shall receive a minimum of one hour of direct supervisor contact per week for each practice setting in which direct clinical counseling is performed. Once the required number of experience hours are gained, further supervision for nonclinical practice, as described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 4996.23, shall be at the supervisor's discretion.

(i) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2026.

*(Amended (as added by Stats. 2022, Ch. 204, Sec. 4) by Stats. 2024, Ch. 160, Sec. 9. (SB 1024) Effective January 1, 2025. Operative January 1, 2026, by its own provisions.)*

**4996.23.2.** (a) An associate clinical social worker or applicant for licensure shall only perform mental health and related services as an employee or as a volunteer, not as an independent contractor. The requirements of this chapter regarding hours of experience and supervision shall apply equally to employees and volunteers. An associate or applicant for licensure shall not perform any services or gain any experience within the scope of practice of the profession, as defined in Section 4996.9, as an independent contractor. While an associate may be either a paid employee or a volunteer, employers are encouraged to provide fair remuneration.

(1) If employed, an associate shall provide the board, upon application for licensure, with copies of the corresponding W-2 tax forms for each year of experience claimed.

(2) If volunteering, an associate shall provide the board, upon application for licensure, with a letter from their employer verifying the associate's status as a volunteer during the dates the experience was gained.

(b) Employment in a private practice or professional corporation shall not commence until the applicant has been registered as an associate clinical social worker.

(c) Experience shall only be gained in a setting that meets both of the following:

(1) Lawfully and regularly provides clinical social work, mental health counseling, or psychotherapy.

(2) Provides oversight to ensure that the associate's work at the setting meets the experience and supervision requirements set forth in this chapter and is within the scope of practice for the profession as defined in Section 4996.9.

(d) Only experience gained in the position for which the associate clinical social worker volunteers or is employed shall qualify as supervised experience.

(e) Any experience obtained under the supervision of a spouse or relative by blood or marriage shall not be credited toward the required hours of supervised experience. Any experience obtained under the supervision of a supervisor with whom the applicant has had or currently has a personal, professional, or business relationship that undermines the authority or effectiveness of the supervision shall not be credited toward the required hours of supervised experience.

(f) An associate clinical social worker or applicant for licensure who provides voluntary services in any lawful work setting and who only receives reimbursement for expenses actually incurred shall be considered an employee. The board may audit an applicant for licensure who receives reimbursement for expenses and the applicant shall have the burden of demonstrating that the payments received were for reimbursement of expenses actually incurred.

(g) An associate clinical social worker or applicant for licensure who receives a stipend or educational loan repayment from a program designed to encourage demographically underrepresented groups to enter the profession or to improve recruitment and retention in underserved regions or settings shall be considered an employee. The board may audit an applicant who receives a stipend or educational loan repayment and the applicant shall have the burden of demonstrating that the payments received were for the specified purposes.

(h) An associate or applicant for licensure shall not receive any remuneration from patients or clients and shall only be paid by their employer, if an employee.

(i) An associate or applicant for licensure shall have no proprietary interest in their employer's business and shall not lease or rent space, pay for furnishings, equipment, or supplies, or in any other way pay for the obligations of their employer.

(j) An associate may provide services via telehealth that are in the scope of practice as outlined in this chapter.

(k) Each educational institution preparing applicants pursuant to this chapter shall consider requiring, and shall encourage, its students to undergo individual, marital, conjoint, family, or group counseling or psychotherapy, as appropriate. Each supervisor shall consider, advise, and encourage their supervisees regarding the advisability of undertaking individual, marital, conjoint, family, or group counseling or psychotherapy, as appropriate. Insofar as it is deemed appropriate and is desired by the applicant, educational institutions and supervisors are encouraged to assist the applicant to locate counseling or psychotherapy at a reasonable cost.

*(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 520, Sec. 9. (AB 1759) Effective January 1, 2023.)*

**4996.23.3.** (a) An associate clinical social worker or an applicant for licensure shall only perform mental health and related services at the places where their employer permits business to be conducted.

(b) An associate who is employed by, or volunteering in, a private practice or a professional corporation shall be supervised by an individual who is both of the following:

(1) Is employed by or contracted by the associate's employer or is an owner of the private practice or professional corporation.

(2) Either provides psychotherapeutic services to clients for the associate's employer, or meets both of the following:

(A) The supervisor and the associate's employer have a written contract providing the supervisor the same access to the associate's clinical records provided to employees of that employer.

(B) The associate's clients authorize the release of their clinical records to the supervisor.

(c) At any one time, supervisors in nonexempt settings shall not serve as individual or triadic supervisors for more than a total of six persons who are not fully licensed at the highest level for independent clinical practice and who are receiving supervision for providing clinical mental health services in a nonexempt setting.

(d) A written oversight agreement, as specified by the board by regulation, shall be executed between the supervisor and employer when the supervisor is not employed by the supervisee's employer or is a volunteer. The supervisor shall evaluate the site or sites where the supervisee will be gaining experience to determine that the site or sites comply with the requirements of this chapter.

*(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 160, Sec. 10. (SB 1024) Effective January 1, 2025.)*

**4996.25.** (a) Any applicant for licensure as a licensed clinical social worker who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2004, shall complete, as a condition of licensure, a minimum of 10 contact hours of coursework in aging and long-term care, which could include, but is not limited to, the biological, social, and psychological aspects of aging. On and after January 1, 2012, this



coursework shall include instruction on the assessment and reporting of, as well as treatment related to, elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect.

(b) Coursework taken in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure pursuant to this chapter, or in a separate course of study, may, at the discretion of the board, fulfill the requirements of this section.

(c) In order to satisfy the coursework requirement of this section, the applicant shall submit to the board a certification from the chief academic officer of the educational institution from which the applicant graduated stating that the coursework required by this section is included within the institution's required curriculum for graduation, or within the coursework, that was completed by the applicant.

(d) The board shall not issue a license to the applicant until the applicant has met the requirements of this section.

*(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 552, Sec. 7. (AB 2435) Effective January 1, 2011.)*

**4996.26.** (a) A licensee who began graduate study prior to January 1, 2004, shall complete a three-hour continuing education course in aging and long-term care during his or her first renewal period after the operative date of this section, and shall submit to the board evidence acceptable to the board of the person's satisfactory completion of the course.

(b) The course shall include, but is not limited to, the biological, social, and psychological aspects of aging. On and after January 1, 2012, this coursework shall include instruction on the assessment and reporting of, as well as treatment related to, elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect.

(c) Any person seeking to meet the requirements of subdivision (a) of this section may submit to the board a certificate evidencing completion of equivalent courses in aging and long-term care taken prior to the operative date of this section, or proof of equivalent teaching or practice experience. The board, in its discretion, may accept that certification as meeting the requirements of this section.

(d) The board may not renew an applicant's license until the applicant has met the requirements of this section.

(e) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education required in Section 4996.22.

(f) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2005.

*(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 552, Sec. 8. (AB 2435) Effective January 1, 2011.)*

**4996.27.** (a) On or after January 1, 2021, an applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker shall show, as part of the application, that they have completed a minimum of six hours of coursework or applied experience under supervision in suicide risk assessment and intervention. This requirement shall be met in one of the following ways:

(1) Obtained as part of their qualifying graduate degree program. To satisfy this requirement, the applicant shall submit to the board a written certification from the registrar or training director of the educational institution or program from which the applicant graduated stating that the coursework required by this section is included within the institution's curriculum required for graduation at the time the applicant graduated, or within the coursework that was completed by the applicant.

(2) Obtained as part of their applied experience. Applied experience can be met in any of the following settings: practicum or associateship that meets the requirement of this chapter, formal postdoctoral placement that meets the requirements of Section 2911, or other qualifying supervised experience. To satisfy this requirement, the applicant shall submit to the board a written certification from the director of training for the program or primary supervisor where the qualifying experience has occurred stating that the training required by this section is included within the applied experience.

(3) By taking a continuing education course that meets the requirements of Section 4996.22. To satisfy this requirement, the applicant shall submit to the board a certification of completion.

(b) As a one-time requirement, a licensee prior to the time of their first renewal after January 1, 2021, or an applicant for reactivation or reinstatement to an active license status on or after January 1, 2021, shall have completed a minimum of six hours of coursework or applied experience under supervision in suicide risk assessment and intervention, using one of the methods specified in subdivision (a). Proof of compliance with this section shall be certified under penalty of perjury that they are in compliance with this section and shall be retained for submission to the board upon request.

*(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 511, Sec. 31. (SB 1495) Effective January 1, 2023.)*

**4996.27.1.** (a) On or after July 1, 2023, an applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker shall show, as part of the application, that they have completed a minimum of three hours of training or coursework in the provision of mental health services via telehealth, which shall include law and ethics related to telehealth. This requirement shall be met in one of the following ways:

(1) Obtained as part of their qualifying graduate degree program. To satisfy this requirement, the applicant shall submit to the board a written certification from the registrar or training director of the educational institution or program from which the applicant

graduated stating that the coursework required by this section is included within the institution's curriculum required for graduation at the time the applicant graduated, or within the coursework that was completed by the applicant.

(2) Obtained by completing a continuing education course that meets the requirements of Section 4996.22. To satisfy this requirement, the applicant shall submit to the board a certification of completion.

(b) As a one-time requirement, a licensee before the time of their first renewal after July 1, 2023, or an applicant for reactivation or reinstatement to an active license status on or after July 1, 2023, shall have completed a minimum of three hours of training or coursework in the provision of mental health services via telehealth, which shall include law and ethics related to telehealth, using one of the methods specified in subdivision (a)

(c) Proof of compliance with subdivision (b) shall be certified under penalty of perjury that they are in compliance with this section and shall be retained for submission to the board upon request.

*(Added by Stats. 2022, Ch. 520, Sec. 10. (AB 1759) Effective January 1, 2023.)*

**4996.28.** (a) Registration as an associate clinical social worker shall expire one year from the last day of the month during which it was issued. To renew a registration, the registrant shall, on or before the expiration date of the registration, complete all of the following actions:

(1) Apply for renewal on a form prescribed by the board.

(2) Pay a renewal fee prescribed by the board.

(3) Notify the board whether they have been convicted, as defined in Section 490, of a misdemeanor or felony, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken by a regulatory or licensing board in this or any other state, subsequent to the last renewal of the registration.

(4) Participate in the California law and ethics examination pursuant to Section 4992.09 each year until successful completion of this examination.

(5) Certify under penalty of perjury their compliance with the continuing education requirements set forth in Section 4996.22.

(b) An expired registration may be renewed by completing all of the actions described in paragraphs (1) to (5), inclusive, of subdivision (a).

(c) A registration as an associate clinical social worker may be renewed a maximum of five times. No registration shall be renewed or reinstated beyond six years from the last day of the month during which the registration was issued, regardless of whether the registration has been revoked. When no further renewals are possible, an applicant may apply for and obtain a subsequent associate clinical social worker registration number if the applicant meets all requirements for registration in effect at the time of their application for a subsequent associate clinical social worker registration number and has passed the California law and ethics examination pursuant to Section 4992.09. An applicant issued a subsequent associate registration number pursuant to this subdivision shall not be employed or volunteer in a private practice.

*(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 520, Sec. 11. (AB 1759) Effective January 1, 2023.)*

**4997.** (a) A licensee may apply to the board to request that his or her license be placed on inactive status.

(b) A licensee on inactive status shall be subject to this chapter and shall not engage in the practice of clinical social work in this state.

(c) A licensee who holds an inactive license shall pay a biennial fee in the amount of one-half of the standard renewal fee and shall be exempt from continuing education requirements.

(d) A licensee on inactive status who has not committed an act or crime constituting grounds for denial of licensure may, upon request, restore his or her license to practice clinical social work to active status.

(1) A licensee requesting his or her license be restored to active status between renewal cycles shall pay the remaining one-half of his or her renewal fee.

(2) A licensee requesting to restore his or her license to active status whose license will expire less than one year from the date of the request shall complete 18 hours of continuing education as specified in Section 4996.22.

(3) A licensee requesting to restore his or her license to active status whose license will expire more than one year from the date of the request shall complete 36 hours of continuing education as specified in Section 4996.22.

**4997.1.** (a) The board shall issue, upon application and payment of the fee fixed by this chapter, a retired license to a licensed clinical social worker who holds a license that is current and active or a license that is inactive, and whose license is not suspended, revoked, or otherwise punitively restricted by the board or subject to disciplinary action under this chapter.

(b) The holder of a retired license issued pursuant to this section shall not engage in any activity for which an active clinical social worker license is required.

(c) The holder of a retired license shall not be required to renew that license.

(d) The holder of a retired license may apply to restore to active status his or her license to practice clinical social work if that retired license was issued less than three years prior to the application date, and the applicant meets all of the following requirements:

(1) Has not committed an act or crime constituting grounds for denial of licensure.

(2) Pays the required renewal fee.

(3) Completes the required continuing education as specified in Section 4996.22.

(4) Complies with the fingerprint submission requirements established by the board in regulation.

(e) An applicant requesting to restore his or her license pursuant to subdivision (d), whose license was issued in accordance with this section less than one year from the date of the application, shall complete 18 hours of continuing education as specified in Section 4996.22.

(f) An applicant requesting to restore his or her license pursuant to subdivision (d), whose license was issued in accordance with this section one or more years from the date of application, shall complete 36 hours of continuing education as specified in Section 4996.22.

(g) The holder of a retired license may apply to restore to active status his or her license to practice clinical social work if that retired license was issued three or more years prior to the application date, and the applicant meets all of the following requirements:

(1) Has not committed an act or crime constituting grounds for denial of licensure.

(2) Applies for licensure and pays the required fees.

(3) Passes the examinations required for licensure.

(4) Complies with the fingerprint submission requirements established by the board in regulation.