



Board of Behavioral Sciences



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Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
Department of Consumer Affairs

UPDATED REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE NOTICE TO PSYCHOTHERAPY CLIENTS

Beginning July 1, 2020, all mental health counselors, whether licensed or unlicensed, were required to provide a notice to each of their clients stating where they can file a complaint. (AB 630, Chapter 229, Statutes of 2019)

Effective January 1, 2022, there are some changes to the timing of when you must provide the notice and to documentation requirements. In addition, if you are not licensed or registered with the Board and are providing mental health counseling in an exempt setting, there are some changes you need to make to the wording of the notice moving forward.

When do I Provide This Notice?

For new clients, you are required to provide this notice prior to initiating psychotherapy services, or as soon as practicably possible thereafter. The “as soon as practicably possible thereafter” allowance is new, and is intended to allow a provider to provide services first in an emergency, and then provide the notice once the emergency has passed and it is appropriate to do so.

Am I Required to Document Delivery of the Notice?

Yes- for new clients that you see as of January 1, 2022 on, you are required to document in the client’s record that you delivered the notice.

If I am not Licensed or Registered with the Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board), but Providing Mental Health Counseling in an Exempt Setting, What Does the Notice Need to Say?

If you are unlicensed or unregistered with the Board but providing services within the scope of practice of Board licensees in an exempt setting (a governmental entity, a school, college, or university, or an institution that is both nonprofit and charitable), the wording of the notice has changed. You are required to provide your clients with a notice about how to file a complaint with your agency. The fact that your setting is considered exempt is conditional upon you doing this.

The notice must be in at least 12-point font, and must be 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.

If I am Licensed or Registered with the Board of Behavioral Sciences (Board), What Does the Notice Need to Say?

If you are a Board licensee or registrant, the wording of the notice has not changed. You must provide your new clients with a notice in at least 12-point font, 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 ([include your profession: marriage and family therapists/licensed educational psychologists/clinical social workers/professional clinical counselors]). You may contact the board online at www.bbs.ca.gov, or by calling (916) 574-7830.

Do I Need to Provide this New Version of the Notice to Existing Clients?

No. You do not need to distribute the new version of the notice to existing clients. You only need to distribute the new version, as listed above, to new clients you begin seeing on or after January 1, 2022.