

## SENATE THIRD READING

SB 775 (Ashby)

As Amended September 2, 2025

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Extends the sunset date for the California Board of Psychology (BOP) and the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) until January 1, 2030, and makes additional technical changes, statutory improvements, and policy reforms in response to issues raised during the boards' sunset review oversight process.

**Major Provisions**

- 1) Require research psychoanalysts and student research psychoanalysts to complete various education and training.
- 2) Clarify that the current authorization for a person who is licensed as a psychologist in another state, U.S. territory, or Canada to offer psychological services in California is limited to 30 *consecutive days, if specified conditions are met* (emphasis added to distinguish from existing law), and sunset this authorization on January 1, 2030.
- 3) Reinstate a \$25 fee to add or change a supervisor for a psychological testing technician.
- 4) Expand the allowable degrees for registration as a psychological testing technician to include neuroscience, cognitive science, or behavioral science, and give the BOP the final determination as to whether a degree or degree program qualifies.
- 5) Extend to January 1, 2030, existing authorization for a person who holds a license in another jurisdiction of the United States as a marriage and family therapist, professional clinical counselor, or clinical social worker, to provide professional services in California for 30 consecutive days, *if they submit a signed statement, under penalty of perjury, acknowledging that they are subject to the jurisdiction of the BBS and agreeing to be bound by the laws of this state* (emphasis added to distinguish from existing law).
- 6) Authorize the BBS to require a registrant or applicant for licensure as a marriage and family therapist to pass a clinical examination administered by the BBS *or by a public or private organization, as specified by the BBS in regulations* (emphasis added to distinguish from existing law).
- 7) Repeals the sunset date on provisions allowing supervision of marriage and family therapist trainees and associates, clinical social work associates, and professional clinical counselor trainees and associates via videoconferencing in all settings, not just in exempt settings.
- 8) Enumerates eligibility requirements for a retired license issued by the BBS.
- 9) Clarifies and enumerates new requirements for an educational psychologist license.
- 10) Extends the sunset date for the BOP and BBS to January 1, 2030.

**COMMENTS**

*Board of Psychology and Board of Behavioral Sciences.* Through its administration and enforcement of the Licensing Law, the BOP regulates psychologists, psychological associates, psychological testing technicians, research psychoanalysts, and student research psychoanalysts. The BBS licenses and regulates Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs), Licensed Educational Psychologists (LEPs), and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCCs). The BBS also registers Associate clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional clinical counselors.

*Sunset Review and Current Issues.* In preparation for the sunset hearings, committee staff publish background papers that identify outstanding issues related to the entity being reviewed. All background papers are available on the committee's website:

<https://abp.assembly.ca.gov/hearings/joint-sunset-review-oversight-hearings>. The following issues are addressed in this bill:

*Board of Psychology:*

- 1) *Sunset Issue no. 5: Examination, education, and experience requirements for associates.* Registered psychological associates are required to have completed a master's degree in psychology, a master's degree in education specializing in education psychology, counseling psychology, or school psychology, or be admitted candidates for a doctoral degree in psychology, education, or a related field as specified. If the applicant is an admitted candidate for a doctoral degree in a field other than psychology or education, they must have satisfactorily completed three or more years of postgraduate education in psychology and have passed preliminary doctoral examinations. A foreign doctoral degree may satisfy the degree requirements if certain conditions are met. This bill clarifies the requirements for a qualifying degree.
- 2) *Sunset Issue no. 6. Change-of-supervisor fee for psychological testing technicians.* Psychological testing technicians are required to work under the direct supervision of the licensed psychologist and must notify the BOP of any changes to their direct supervisor, provide specified information about their new supervisor, and pay a fee. The fee was initially set at \$25, but SB 816 (Roth), Chapter 723, Statutes of 2023, erroneously deleted the fee altogether when it established a fee for psychological associates to add or change supervisors. This bill replaces the \$25 fee for psychological testing technicians.
- 3) *Sunset Issue no. 8: Allowable Degrees for Psychological Testing Technician Registration.* Psychological testing technicians are required to have a bachelor's degree in psychology or education with specialization in educational psychology, counseling psychology, or school psychology. However, the California Psychological Association (CPA) argues that the specificity of current law has prevented applicants with similar degrees from successfully registering with the BOP. This bill expands the bachelor's degrees allowable for registration as a psychological testing technician.
- 4) *Sunset Issue no. 9: Research Psychoanalysts and Student Research Psychoanalysts.* SB 815 (Roth), Chapter 294, Statutes of 2023, transferred oversight of research psychoanalysts and student research psychoanalysts from the Medical Board of California to the BOP on January 1, 2025. This bill subjects research psychoanalysts and

student research psychoanalysts to various educational, notice, and other legal requirements consistent with those for licensed psychologists.

- 5) *Sunset Issue no. 14: Temporary Practice.* BPC Section 2912 permits a psychologist licensed in another state or Canada at the doctoral level to provide psychological services in California for up to 30 days in a calendar year. It is currently unclear whether the limit applies to consecutive or nonconsecutive days. Moreover, it is uncertain whether "day" means any portion of a day or a specific number of hours in a day. This bill clarifies that the current authorization is limited to 30 consecutive days, provided specified conditions are met, and extends the temporary practice allowance to January 1, 2030.
- 6) *Sunset Issue no. 16. Technical Cleanup.* This bill includes numerous clarifying and technical amendments.
- 7) *Sunset Issue no. 17. Sunset Extension.* This bill extends the BOP's sunset date to January 1, 2030.

#### *Board of Behavioral Sciences.*

- 1) *Sunset Issue no. 3: Marriage and Family Therapy National Exam.* To become a LMFT in California, one must pass the Board-administered LMFT clinical exam. The Board, in collaboration with the Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES) and Board SMEs, develops the examination.

California is the only state that utilizes a Board-administered clinical exam; all other states require passing the AMFTRB Marital and Family Therapy National Exam (AMFTRB National Exam). Currently, the Board has adopted national clinical examinations for LCSWs and LPCCs, but has not adopted the AMFTRB National Exam for LMFTs. This bill authorizes the BBS to require a registrant or applicant for licensure as a marriage and family therapist to pass a clinical examination administered by the BBS *or by a public or private organization, as specified by the BBS in regulations* (emphasis added to distinguish from existing law).

- 2) *Sunset Issue no. 6: Video Supervision Allowance.* In 2022, the BBS sponsored AB 1758 (Aguiar-Curry), Chapter 204, Statutes of 2022, which allowed supervision of associates and trainees to take place via videoconferencing in all settings, not just exempt settings, until January 1, 2026. This bill repeals the sunset date.
- 3) *Sunset Issue no. 7: Temporary Practice Allowance.* In 2023, the BBS sponsored AB 232 (Aguiar-Curry), Chapter 640, Statutes of 2023, that provides a 30-day temporary practice allowance to qualifying practitioners licensed in another state who are treating existing clients in California or who are visiting or relocating to California. A temporary practice allowance may be requested only once per calendar year and is valid for 30 consecutive days. To qualify, a practitioner must hold a license in a jurisdiction that permits clinical practice at the highest level in that jurisdiction. The license must be current, active, and unrestricted, and the existing client must be located in California during the time they are seeking care. This bill extends to January 1, 2030, existing authorization for a person who holds a license in another jurisdiction of the United States as a marriage and family therapist, professional clinical counselor, or clinical social worker, to provide professional services in California for 30 consecutive days, *if they submit a signed*

*statement, under penalty of perjury, acknowledging that they are subject to the jurisdiction of the BBS and agreeing to be bound by the laws of this state* (emphasis added to distinguish from existing law).

- 4) *Sunset Issue no. 15: Technical Cleanup.* This bill included numerous clarifying and technical amendments.
- 5) *Sunset Issue no. 16. Sunset Extension.* This bill extends the BBS's sunset date to January 1, 2030.

### **According to the Author**

Each year, the Assembly Committee on Business and Professions and the Senate Committee on Business, Professions, and Economic Development hold joint sunset review oversight hearings to review the licensing boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). The DCA boards are responsible for protecting consumers and the public and regulating the professionals they license. The sunset review process provides an opportunity for the Legislature, DCA, boards, and stakeholders to discuss the boards' performance and make recommendations for improvements. This bill is a "sunset" bill, intended to extend the repeal date of two DCA boards—the Board of Psychology and the Board of Behavioral Sciences—and to incorporate the recommendations from their respective sunset review oversight hearings.

### **Arguments in Support**

The *California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists* writes in support:

CAMFT is particularly supportive of the added provision that would allow the BBS, through regulation, to adopt the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards' (AMFTRB) Marital and Family Therapy National Examination as the clinical examination for Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) licensure in California. California is currently the only state of fifty that has its own state clinical exam and has not adopted the AMFTRB national exam. Allowing the Board the ability to make this transition through the regulatory process will significantly improve license portability across state lines and expand federal employment opportunities for California MFTs while maintaining consumer protection.

The *California Association of School Psychologists* writes in support:

[This bill] provides essential support and clarity by establishing much needed standards for experience requirements of LEPs and the issuance and renewal of LEP licensees for In-State and Out-of-State applicants. With the passage of this provision in [this bill], California can attract and retain well-qualified professionals, alleviating staffing shortages and enhancing critical student support services.

### **Arguments in Opposition**

There is no opposition on file.

## **FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) *BOP*. Ongoing costs of approximately \$8.8 million annually for the continued operation of BOP's licensing and enforcement activities through January 1, 2030 (Psychology Fund). BOP anticipates minor and absorbable workload costs to implement the additional provisions of this bill. BOP notes reinstatement of the \$25 change-of-supervisor fee for Psychological Testing Technicians provides minor revenue, and the \$184 fingerprint hard card processing fee for out-of-state applicants who cannot use California's Live Scan system, allows BOP to absorb administrative costs.
- 2) *BBS*. Ongoing costs of approximately \$15.7 million annually for the continued operation of BBS' licensing and enforcement activities through January 1, 2030 (Behavioral Science Examiners Fund, Professions and Vocations Fund). BBS anticipates minor and absorbable workload costs to implement the additional provisions of the bill.

In addition, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Office of Information Services (OIS) estimates absorbable costs of \$26,000 to add two new fee codes for BOP and add two new business rules and update self-attestation language on various application types for BBS.

## VOTES

### SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1

**YES:** Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNERney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Reyes

### ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 16-0-2

**YES:** Berman, Flora, Ahrens, Alanis, Bains, Caloza, Elhawary, Hadwick, Haney, Irwin, Jackson, Krell, Lowenthal, Macedo, Nguyen, Pellerin

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Bauer-Kahan, Chen

### ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

**YES:** Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Ahrens, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Sanchez, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

## UPDATED

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