

State of California Requirements for Mental Health Licensure

1. ***For Clinical Psychology Licensure: Section 2914 (c) of the California Business and Professions Code (BPC) and Section 1387 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR)*** requires two years (3,000 hours) of supervised professional experience, at least 1,500 of which must be completed post-doctoral degree graduation and before a license can be issued. During this time, the post-graduate works as a post-doc fellow or psychological assistant and income is substantially lower.
 2. ***For Marriage Family Therapy Licensure: The State of California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS)*** requires 3,000 hours of supervision post-graduation, limited to 1,500 hours per year – so it takes **at least two years** to complete an existing state requirement before a graduate can earn full income potential with license. While accruing supervision hours after graduation, a worker is registered as a Marriage and Family Therapy Intern or a Licensed Associate MFT (LAMFT) and earns a lower salary until they receive their independent license.
 3. ***For Clinical Counselor Licensure:*** California law requires 3,000 hours of supervised post-degree professional experience, including 104 supervised weeks, at lower pay to then qualify for LPCC licensure. It takes **at least two years** to complete this requirement post-graduation.
- **Clinical Psychologists** graduate with a PsyD or PhD degree, then find lower paid work as a Psychological Assistant or Post-Doc Fellow, where they will usually work for 2-3 years until they fulfill at least 1,500 clock hours of post-degree supervision. Data from the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) shows that 85% of doctoral program students in clinical psychology take over two years to complete post-degree hours and receive a license.

Clinical Psychologists take 2-3 years because 1500 hours typically represent direct psychological service hours. Most postdocs and associates are engaged in research, teaching and administration as part of their job duties that do not count toward the 1500 hours. Additionally, specialties like Neuropsychology, Forensic Psychology, Child Psychology and Health Psychology require two years of postdoctoral training before job eligibility. After completing their programs, graduates must complete 1500 to 2000 hours of supervised experience within 30 months. Then, they must pass the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) as one of the requirements for the licensure of psychologists in the United States.