



Department of Behavioral Health
INFORMATION NOTICE 17-12

Date December 7, 2017

To All Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Staff and Contract Agencies

From Veronica Kelley, LCSW, Director

Subject Implementation of Title Change ("Intern" to "Associate") of Marriage and Family Therapist Interns and Professional Clinical Counselor Interns

Introduction Effective January 1, 2018, the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) shall implement changes in accordance with legislative requirements pertaining to title changes for marriage and family therapist (MFT) interns and professional clinical counselor (PCC) interns.

Background The title changes in the Business and Professions Code are being implemented due to concerns voiced by stakeholders and registrants that the titles may not be an accurate representation of the registrants' post-master's degree status.

Change The title changes for MFT and PCC interns are as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Current Title(s) and New Title(s). It lists the transition of Marriage and Family Therapist and Professional Clinical Counselor titles from intern/registrant to associate levels.

Continued to Next Page

Information Notice 17-12, Continued

Change, cont'd **Note:** Abbreviations and derivatives for the new titles are not recognized at this time and therefore prohibited; only the new titles may be used. Titles such as “Marriage and Family Therapy Associate”, “MFTA”, “Professional Clinical Counselor Associate”, or “PCCA” are not considered acceptable titles, and will not be recognized by law. Should the BBS issue approved abbreviations, DBH will provide notification.

Adherence to Regulations MFT and PCC registrants shall adhere to the following regulations:

- Continue using the title “intern” until **January 01, 2018**, when they then must begin using the title “**associate**.”
- Beginning **January 1, 2018**, all printed names and signatures of MFT registrants and PCC registrants, must adhere to the new titles.
- Interns and trainees must continue to provide disclosure to consumers prior to performing services.
- When ordering business cards:
 - Advertising requirements must be followed, and
 - Supervisors are mandated to be listed on all business cards for pre-licensed positions, per department policy.

Note: The titles for MFT trainees and PCC trainees, who are graduate degree students and do not register with BBS, will not change at this time, additionally, Registered Associate Clinical Social Workers are keeping the title “associate”, and are also not affected by this change.

Reference

- [Senate Bill 1478](#), Chapter 489, Section 4980.09
- BBS website, <http://www.bbs.ca.gov/>
- BBS, Implementation of Title Change (“Intern” to “Associate”) Marriage and Family Therapist Interns and Professional Clinical Counselor Interns, http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/title_change_faq.pdf

Questions For questions regarding this Information Notice, please contact the Workforce Education and Training Intern Program at internprogram@dbh.sbcounty.gov or (909) 252-4043.
