

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred House
3 Bill No. 661 entitled “An act relating to licensure of mental health
4 professionals” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and
5 recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 * * * Continuing Education Units; Psychologists * * *

8 Sec. 1. 26 V.S.A. § 3015 is amended to read:

9 § 3015. RENEWALS

10 (a) Licenses shall be renewed every two years upon payment of the
11 required fee.

12 * * *

13 (d) Continuing education units.

14 (1) As a condition of renewal, the Board ~~may~~ shall require that licensees
15 establish that they have satisfied continuing education requirements established
16 by Board rule and this subsection.

17 (2) At least three continuing education units shall be in the area of
18 systematic oppression and anti-oppressive practice.

19 (3) Synchronous virtual continuing education credits shall be approvable
20 and accepted as live in-person training.

1 (4) Upon application, the Board may exempt from continuing education
2 requirements a licensee on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, if obtaining
3 continuing education credits would be impossible in practice or a significant
4 hardship for the licensee.

5 (5) If the licensee is licensed in one or more other mental health
6 professions under this title, continuing education units completed for one
7 mental health profession shall count toward the required continuing education
8 units for the other mental health profession or professions for which the
9 licensee is licensed under this title.

10 * * * Continuing Education Units; Social Workers * * *

11 Sec. 2. 26 V.S.A. § 3208 is amended to read:

12 § 3208. RENEWALS

13 * * *

14 (d) As a condition of renewal, a licensee shall complete continuing
15 education, approved by the Director by rule, during the preceding two-year
16 period. For purposes of this subsection, the Director may require, by rule, not
17 more than 20 hours of approved continuing social work education as a
18 condition of renewal. Synchronous virtual continuing education credits shall
19 be approvable and accepted as live in-person training. At least three
20 continuing education units shall be in the area of systematic oppression and
21 anti-oppressive practice. If the licensee is licensed in one or more other mental

1 health professions under this title, continuing education units completed for
2 one mental health profession shall count toward the required continuing
3 education units for the other mental health profession or professions for which
4 the licensee is licensed under this title.

5 * * *

6 * * * Continuing Education Units; Alcohol and Drug Abuse

7 Counselors * * *

8 Sec. 3. 26 V.S.A. § 3238 is amended to read:

9 § 3238. BIENNIAL RENEWALS

10 (a) Licenses and certifications shall be renewed every two years on a
11 schedule set by the Office upon:

12 (1) ~~payment~~ Payment of the required fee; ~~and~~.

13 (2) ~~documentation~~ Documentation that the applicant has completed at
14 least 40 hours of continuing education, approved by the Director. Synchronous
15 virtual continuing education credits shall be approvable and accepted as live
16 in-person training. At least three continuing education units shall be in the
17 area of systematic oppression and anti-oppressive practice. If the licensee is
18 licensed in one or more other mental health professions under this title,
19 continuing education units completed for one mental health profession shall
20 count toward the required continuing education units for the other mental

1 health profession or professions for which the licensee is licensed under this
2 title.

3 * * *

4 * * * Continuing Education Units; Clinical Mental Health

5 Counselors * * *

6 Sec. 4. 26 V.S.A. § 3269 is amended to read:

7 § 3269. RENEWALS

8 Licenses shall be renewed every two years upon payment of required fees
9 and proof of such continuing education as the Board may require by rule and
10 as required by this section. Synchronous virtual continuing education credits
11 shall be approvable and accepted as live in-person training. At least three
12 continuing education units shall be in the area of systematic oppression and
13 anti-oppressive practice. If the licensee is licensed in one or more other mental
14 health professions under this title, continuing education units completed for
15 one mental health profession shall count toward the required continuing
16 education units for the other mental health profession or professions for which
17 the licensee is licensed under this title.

*** Continuing Education Units; Marriage and Family
Therapists ***

Sec. 5. 26 V.S.A. § 4040 is amended to read:

§ 4040. RENEWALS

(a) Licenses shall be renewed every two years upon payment of the required fee, provided the person applying for renewal has completed at least 20 hours of continuing education, approved by the Board, during the preceding two-year period.

(1) The Board shall establish, by rule, guidelines and criteria for continuing education credit. Synchronous virtual continuing education credits shall be approvable and accepted as live in-person training. At least three continuing education units shall be in the area of systematic oppression and anti-oppressive practice.

(2) The continuing education requirement shall not apply for the first renewal period. If the licensee is licensed in one or more other mental health professions under this title, continuing education units completed for one mental health profession shall count toward the required continuing education units for the other mental health profession or professions for which the licensee is licensed under this title.

1 * * * Continuing Education Units; Applied Behavior Analysts * * *

2 Sec. 7. 26 V.S.A. § 4925 is amended to read:

3 § 4925. RENEWALS

4 * * *

5 (c) As a condition of renewal, the Director may by rule require that a
6 licensee establish that ~~he or she~~ the licensee has completed continuing
7 education.

8 (1) The Director may accept proof of current certification from the
9 Behavior Analyst Certification Board as evidence of continuing competency if
10 the Director finds that the maintenance of such certification implies
11 appropriate continuing education consistent with this subsection and Board
12 rule.

13 (2) Synchronous virtual continuing education credits shall be approvable
14 and accepted as live in-person training. At least three continuing education
15 units shall be in the area of systematic oppression and anti-oppressive practice.

16 (3) If the licensee is licensed in one or more other mental health
17 professions under this title, continuing education units completed for one
18 mental health profession shall count toward the required continuing education
19 units for the other mental health profession or professions for which the
20 licensee is licensed under this title.

21 * * *

1 * * * Mental Health Professional Licensure; Study * * *

2 Sec. 8. MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE; STUDY

3 (a) Study. The Office of Professional Regulation shall conduct a study on:

4 (1) the possibility of streamlining the licensure of mental health
5 professionals practicing in the State, including a review of the feasibility of
6 creating one mental health professional license with endorsements for specific
7 mental health professions;

8 (2) whether additional regulation of supervisors for mental health
9 professionals in training is necessary, including a review of potential limits on
10 areas of mental health work a supervisor may supervise based on the
11 supervisor’s own work experience and education, the rate or fee a supervisor
12 may charge for providing supervision, and the number of supervisees assigned
13 to one supervisor; and

14 (3) the barriers for individuals who are Black, Indigenous, or Persons of
15 Color (BIPOC), refugees and new Americans, individuals with low income,
16 those individuals with disabilities, and those individuals with lived mental
17 health and substance use experience entering mental health professions
18 regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation.

19 (b) Stakeholder input. The Director of the Office of Professional
20 Regulation shall seek the input and recommendations of the following
21 stakeholders in completing the study:

1 (1) representatives of each mental health care profession associated
2 with the Office of Professional Regulation, selected by their respective
3 licensing board or by the Director;

4 (2) the Commissioner of Mental Health or designee;

5 (3) the Commissioner of Health Equity or designee;

6 (4) representatives of mental health care professional organizations;

7 (5) representatives of health insurers;

8 (6) individuals in mental health care professions or seeking to enter
9 mental health care professions, selected by AALV, Inc., the Vermont
10 Commission on Native American Affairs, the Vermont Center for
11 Independent Living, and Outright Vermont; and

12 (7) other interested stakeholders, including individuals from diverse
13 backgrounds to represent the interests of communities of color and other
14 historically underrepresented populations in mental health care professions.

15 (c) Findings and recommendations. On or before December 15, 2024, the
16 Director of the Office of Professional Regulation shall provide the Office’s
17 findings and recommendations to the House Committees on Health Care and
18 on Government Operations and the Senate Committees on Health and
19 Welfare and on Government Operations.

