

CALIFORNIA SEX OFFENDER MANAGEMENT BOARD

Sex Offender Treatment Provider Certification Requirements

Rev. April 2016



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STATE OF CALIFORNIA SEX OFFENDER TREATMENT PROVIDER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



CALIFORNIA SEX OFFENDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (CASOMB)

Introduction:

Mental health professionals who provide treatment services for adult sexual offenders need to bring to the task specialized training, education, and experience that prepare them to work within this specialized field. Sex offender-specific assessment and treatment require significant clinical skill and experience. A competent therapist will have specialized knowledge and techniques that are based on empirical evidence. The ultimate goal of treatment is to motivate and enable the offender to develop the ability to self-regulate his or her behavior and by doing so increase safety for children and other vulnerable persons in the community. Maintaining and demonstrating evidence of one's scope of practice and scope of competence in working with adult sexual offenders is a legal and ethical responsibility of each licensed psychotherapist in California treating these individuals.

Sex offender-specific treatment is an important part of the Containment Model of sex offender management. Collaboration among treatment providers, parole agents, probation officers, polygraph examiners, and other stakeholders working together with a victim advocacy perspective is the key to the true partnership necessary for the successful treatment and supervision of sexual offenders.

Applicants who fulfill the following requirements are eligible to become certified practitioners at one of the three levels described in Part Two. Additionally, a provider who treats PC 290 registered sexual offenders under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system pursuant to PC 1203.067 and 3008 must also use sexual offender-specific treatment as described in the CASOMB Program Certification requirements. Certified providers must work within a Certified Program.

CASOMB may revise these standards and requirements at any time. These criteria are for those mental health practitioners who provide treatment and evaluation of all sex offenders pursuant to Penal Code section 290.09. The Board recognizes that treatment and evaluation of adult sex offenders is significantly different from such services as provided to juveniles who have sexual behavior problems.

Supervision: The word “supervision” as used in this document refers to formal oversight provided to treatment professionals. Supervision for CASOMB purposes may or may not meet the supervision requirements for mental health licensure or for any other purpose.

PART ONE: REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO ALL PROVIDERS

The following requirements and explanations apply to all individuals seeking certification or recertification at any one of the three levels described in Part Two: Independent Practitioner, Associate Practitioner, or Apprentice Practitioner.

A. Training Requirements for Initial Certification or Re-Certification

As will be detailed in the following sections, a specified amount of training is required for initial certification at each of the three levels of certified practitioners. Applicants are not required to submit documentation of their training as a required part of the process of seeking certification. However, applicants must sign attestation forms, under penalty of perjury, indicating that they have participated in the required training and that they are able to substantiate their claim to have met the requirements for hours of training if such substantiation is requested by CASOMB. The training must relate to sex offender evaluation, treatment, and management and the focus of the training must be a subject listed on the Approved Topic List found in Appendix A.

The word “training” as used in this document refers to a comparatively formalized educational experience. To be acceptable as “training” for purposes of certification, an educational experience must meet all of the following criteria:

1. be focused on one or more content areas in Appendix A,
2. be planned,
3. be scheduled prior to its occurrence,
4. be announced in written form,
5. have a clear and announced time frame,
6. be structured and
7. have some form of written outline demonstrating internal structure, and
8. be presented by one or more persons with expertise with the content material.

It is not necessary that it be formally certified Continuing Education Units (CEU) as long as it meets the requirements stated here. Hours spent actually training may be counted as training hours for the presenter.

The following are offered as examples of the types of educational experiences that would be considered acceptable “training” for certification purposes.

- formal trainings, conference presentations or similar experiences that clearly qualify as CEU for therapist license recertification purposes
- online CEU educational experiences which meet requirements for State licensing purposes
- educational experiences, including online trainings, offered by a reputable organization such as the California Coalition on Sexual Offending (CCOSO), the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) or other recognized providers

- formal intra-agency in-service staff trainings that are announced, structured, etc. as enumerated in the paragraph above

Examples of types of educational experiences that would not be considered acceptable “training” for certification purposes include, but are not limited to:

- consultations or conversations with experts
- non-formalized self-study such as reading a journal article or a book
- providing presentations to non-professionals, such as community groups, etc.
- reading or participating in list-serves, blogs, etc. – even when the content is highly relevant
- supervision sessions, whether given or received
- case conferences, Containment Team meetings and similar events

B. Experience Requirements for Initial Certification or Re-Certification

As will be detailed in the following sections, a specified amount of specialized experience providing services to sex offenders is required for initial certification at each of the three levels of certified practitioners. The sex-offender specific experience detailed below can have been obtained in a variety of settings, including, but not limited to, community-based outpatient settings, institutional settings, and residential treatment settings. This experience can have been obtained by working with registered or non-registered sex offenders in California or out of state. No more than 20% of a provider’s experience can have been obtained by working with juveniles who have engaged in problem sexual behavior. Applicants are not required to submit documentation of their experience as part of the process of seeking certification. However, applicants must sign attestation forms under penalty of perjury, indicating they have accumulated the required amount of experience and that they are able to document their claim to have met the experience requirements if such substantiation is requested by CASOMB.

C. Licensure Requirements for Initial Certification or Re-Certification

Every individual providing services as a Certified Practitioner at any level needs to have and maintain a status that authorizes her or him to provide mental health services in California or in the jurisdiction where such services are offered. In some cases, such status will be attained by holding a license for independent practice. In other cases, the supporting structure will be formal status as a registered Intern, a Psychological Assistant or some similar arrangement. In yet other cases the status will be maintained through participation in the training program of an academic institution. In unusual situations in which a standard licensure or registration status does not support the application for certification, the applicant must provide information clarifying her or his eligibility for CASOMB certification.

D. Background Check

Applicants must pass a criminal background check. In order to receive and maintain CASOMB certification, providers shall not have any prior or pending charges or convictions for sexually-related offenses or offenses involving

interpersonal violence, or any other charges or convictions which call into question the suitability of the applicant for certification. The applicant cannot be the subject of pending licensing revocation proceedings, and a pending licensing revocation proceeding may result in suspension of certification status. Decisions relating to whether criminal history charges or convictions or pending licensing revocation proceedings should bar certification or re-certification are decided by the CASOMB certification staff, by an exercise of reasonable discretion. Appeals are directed to the CASOMB Certification Appeals Committee. Applicants must submit fingerprints via Livescan so a criminal history background check can be conducted by the California Department of Justice. Each applicant is required to pay the associated costs for this process. (A list of LiveScan vendors in California can be found at <http://ag.ca.gov/fingerprints/publications/contact.php>.)

E. Fees

As required by statute [PC 9003(a)(3)], each applicant must pay the initial application fee or recertification fee. Advancement from Associate or Apprentice Practitioner level to a higher level of certification will be processed at no additional fee, but the original recertification date will remain the same. The current fee schedule is posted on the CASOMB web site.

F. Continued Placement on Certified Provider List

Certification as a provider, both for initial certification and for recertification, will be for a period of two years. The initial approval period for some applicants may be longer than two years so that the Board can adjust the times when recertification become due to allow a more even distribution of staff administrative efforts. Certified providers must apply for continued placement on the Certified Provider list every two (2) years by the date provided by CASOMB. The Board's staff will make reasonable efforts to provide advance notice of each certified practitioner's recertification date, but the final responsibility for tracking such recertification will remain with each practitioner. The provider seeking recertification must demonstrate compliance with the certification criteria for recertification as listed for each level.

G. Code of Ethics

In addition to following the generally accepted standards of practice of the provider's mental health profession or discipline, the individual shall also sign a document stating a commitment to adhere to the *Code of Ethics* published by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (available at www.atsa.com). All services are to be provided in a manner that is consistent with the accepted standard of practice in the sex offender provider community.

H. Letters of Reference

There is no general requirement that every applicant submit letters of reference. However, as determined on a case-by-case basis, applicants may be required to submit letters of reference or verification related to their application if requested to do so by CASOMB. Letters of reference addressing any relevant aspect of the applicant's professional conduct may also be required by the Board.

I. Malpractice Insurance

Professional malpractice insurance coverage is not required for certification but is strongly recommended.

J. Professional Organizations

Applicants are not required to be members of professional associations, although this is strongly encouraged as a means of staying current on research and best practices in the field. Such organizations include the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA), the California Coalition on Sexual Offending (CCOSO), the National Organization for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA), and the International Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders (IATSO).

K. Provisional Approval and Extension Period for Compliance

Individuals applying to be listed on the Certified Provider list who do not, at the time of application, meet one or more of the “Training” or “Experience” criteria for certification may be granted Provisional Approval. An applicant for provisional status must develop and submit a corrective action plan which explains how the deficiencies will be corrected within the specified time frame. The Plan must include a clear statement regarding his or her intent to comply with these criteria within the specified period. The corrective action plan must be approved by CASOMB before a certificate is issued.

There is no provisional status for the Apprentice Level.

L. Revocation, Denial, or Non-Recertification of Certification

Failure to comply with the requirements for certification or re-certification may result in removal from the certified provider list. CASOMB retains the right to revoke a certification, refuse to accept an application or refuse to renew a certification upon verification that the individual, whether a certified Independent Practitioner, Associate Practitioner or Apprentice Practitioner has incurred one or more of the following:

1. The individual has been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor involving a sexual or violent offense.
2. The individual has had state licensure or pre-license status currently revoked, canceled, suspended, not renewed, placed in inactive status or placed on probation by any state licensing body. Whether licensed or pre-licensed or in a training program, the provider must be in good standing with the appropriate licensing body or training program and must report any loss of that good standing status to CASOMB as soon as he or she becomes aware of it.
3. The individual has been determined by CASOMB to have engaged in deceit or fraud in connection with the delivery of services, supervision, or documentation of application requirements or eligibility.

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4. The individual has otherwise been determined by CASOMB not to meet the criteria for certification.

M. Appeal Process

Determinations made by the Board with regard to certification or recertification may be appealed by the affected individual. Particulars of the appeal procedures are noted in Part Three of this document.

N. Special Cases and Exceptions

The CASOMB Board may consider additional factors relevant to the certification and determination.

PART TWO: SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH CERTIFICATION LEVEL

I. INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER LEVEL

The Independent Practitioner designation describes individuals who qualify for the highest level of CASOMB certification. The Certified Independent Practitioner is recognized as qualified to practice in the field of sex offender evaluation and treatment in a fully independent way.

An Independent Practitioner's competence to provide any specific type of service is governed by all of the standards and regulations of his or her state mental health provider licensure, by the relevant professional Code of Ethics and by the Code of Ethics of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

Specifics for applying for Independent Practitioner status are described in *Sex Offender Treatment Provider –Independent Practitioner Level Application* which is posted on the CASOMB website.

A. Services which may be provided by a Certified Independent Practitioner

A provider certified at the Independent Practitioner level may practice independently and may provide evaluation, treatment and related services to sex offenders without supervision.

A Certified Independent Practitioner may supervise individuals at the Associate Practitioner or Apprentice Practitioner level who need such supervision in order to meet the requirements of these certification criteria. The amount of such supervision which can be provided is limited, based on the ratios described below.

For CASOMB certification purposes, the supervision ratio for any Independent Practitioner must not exceed a total of ten supervisee "points" regardless of the number of programs in which the Independent Practitioner is providing supervision.

For the purpose of calculating points, each Associate Practitioner who is being supervised counts as one (1) point and each Apprentice Practitioner counts as two (2) points. In special cases, because of geographical or other considerations, the Board may grant exceptions to this standard.

An Independent Practitioner providing supervision to an Associate Practitioner or Apprentice Practitioner is not required to be on site if the supervisee is licensed or is working under the appropriate supervision of some other licensed mental health practitioner in accord with state licensing laws and regulations.

The supervision provided under these criteria may be the same as and overlap with any supervision required for licensure or to meet the requirements of a training program. On the other hand, the supervision provided under these criteria may be completely separate from and independent of any supervision required and provided for licensure or training purposes. These standards and criteria are established completely separate from and without consideration of any supervision required for other purposes.

B. Requirements for Initial Certification of an Independent Practitioner

To qualify to provide sex offender treatment at the Independent Practitioner level, an individual must demonstrate that he or she meets all of the following criteria:

1. **EDUCATION.** An Independent Practitioner will have completed all the educational requirements that were needed to become licensed and to maintain licensure.
2. **LICENSURE.** An Independent Practitioner shall have attained and shall maintain a current license to independently practice in the mental health field as described above. The license must be issued by a State of California licensing board. If the client is being treated outside of California, the license must be issued by the jurisdiction in which the practitioner provides the services.
3. **EXPERIENCE.** The applicant shall, within the last two years, have completed a minimum of five hundred (500) hours of clinical experience specifically in the areas of evaluation and treatment of sex offenders.

These hours may have been obtained while functioning either as an independently licensed mental health professional or while working under pre-licensure supervision.

At least three hundred and fifty (350) of these hours shall have involved direct face-to-face therapy with offenders.

Practitioners who provide clinical supervision for therapists who are evaluating or treating sexual offenders may count hours of supervision directly related to such sexual offender services towards this experience requirement.

The Board recognizes that some clinicians may have accumulated a significant number of hours of direct client experience that may have been gained in years past. Applicants who have met a lifetime experience threshold of having provided at least two thousand (2,000) hours of direct sex offender specific treatment and assessment services and who continue to maintain professional involvement in the field will be allowed to

submit their lifetime experience in lieu of the 500 hours of experience obtained within the last two years.

The Board may require substantiation of a claim that the applicant's current involvement in the field is substantially relevant to the field of sex offender evaluation, treatment and management services.

4. **TRAINING.** The individual shall, within the last two years prior to initial certification, have accumulated a minimum of thirty (30) documented training hours related to sex offender evaluation, treatment, and management methods.

These training hours shall be in course topics included on the Approved Topic List provided in Appendix A. Twenty (20) hours of the thirty (30) hours must be in topic areas identified as Core Areas on the list of Approved Training Topics. (See details in Appendix A.)

The Independent Practitioner shall maintain a record of her or his training and continuing education hours as applicable to CASOMB requirements. The Independent Practitioner is required to sign an attestation under penalty of perjury that this training requirement has been fulfilled.

5. **SUPERVISION.** No additional supervision requirements are imposed upon an Independent Practitioner. The standard expectations for any mental health professional with respect to seeking consultation and supervision as needed are applicable.

C. Requirements for Provisional Certification for Independent Practitioners

To apply for provisional status at the Independent level, the applicant must be licensed for the independent provision of mental health services. In addition, the applicant must have a minimum of 350 hours of experience specifically in the areas of evaluation and treatment of sex offenders within the last two years, 250 of which must have been direct face to face therapy with offenders, or providing supervision. Further, the applicant must have a minimum of 25 hours of training within the last two years related to sex offender evaluation, treatment and management methods, with 20 of those hours in Core Topics. Provisionally approved Independent Practitioners may not supervise other practitioners.

Applicants for provision Independent Practitioner status shall have one year from the date of the approved corrective action plan to rectify the area(s) of deficiency. Applicants granted provisional status are required to re-apply for full (non-provisional) status when the deficiencies have been remedied. It is the provider's responsibility to notify CASOMB and reapply as soon as the deficiencies have been corrected. The re-application must include documentation that the full requirements have been met.

CASOMB has elected to extend the period allowing for “provisional” certifications for those who apply by July 1, 2016.

D. Requirements for Recertification for an Independent Practitioner

A Certified Independent Practitioner will remain on the Certified Provider list, unless explicitly removed for cause, for a period of two years. The initial listing period may vary depending upon the recertification date which is determined by the birthdate of the applicant. The certification must be renewed every two years thereafter. The recertification date is listed on the provider’s certificate.

It is the practitioner’s responsibility to keep track of her or his recertification date. Prior to the expiration of her or his certification status, the Independent Practitioner must submit an Application for Provider Recertification as well as all supporting documentation required for recertification. The Application for Provider Recertification shall be submitted with a postmark of sixty (60) days prior to the recertification due date. The Application for Provider Recertification and the fee schedule can be found on the CASOMB web site.

A new Live Scan fingerprinting procedure is not required for recertification. To renew certification status, an Independent Practitioner must take the following actions and meet the following criteria:

- a. **EXPERIENCE.** The Independent Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has accumulated a minimum of two hundred and fifty (250) hours of clinical experience over the course of the previous two years. At least two hundred (200) of those hours shall be face-to-face therapy or evaluation with sex offenders.

An Independent Practitioner who provides clinical supervision for therapists who are treating sexual offenders may count hours of supervision related to sexual offenders toward this experience requirement.

An Independent Practitioner who was certified on the basis of having 2,000 hours lifetime experience and current professional involvement in the field shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she continues to be involved in the sexual offender assessment, treatment, and management field at a level equivalent to the original certification requirement.

- b. **TRAINING.** The Independent Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has completed a minimum of thirty (30) hours of continuing education and training over the course of the previous two years. At least twenty (20) of those thirty hours must be in the Core Areas described on the Approved Training Topics list. (See Appendix A)
- c. **SUPERVISION.** No specific amount of supervision is required for recertification as an Independent Practitioner.

II. ASSOCIATE PRACTITIONER LEVEL

The Associate Practitioner designation describes individuals who already have a significant amount of experience and training in the field of sex offender evaluation and treatment but who either are not yet licensed by the state to independently deliver mental health services or are not yet at the requisite level of experience and training needed to be certified as an Independent Practitioner by the Board.

An Associate Practitioner's competence to provide any specific type of service is governed by all of the standards and regulations of his or her state mental health provider licensure, by the relevant professional Code of Ethics and by the Code of Ethics of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

Specifics for applying for Associate Practitioner status and the timetable for submissions are described in the *Sex Offender Treatment Provider –Associate Practitioner Level Application* which is posted on the CASOMB website.

A. Services which may be provided by a Certified Associate Practitioner

A provider certified at the Associate Practitioner level may evaluate and treat sex offenders while working under the supervision of a Certified Independent Practitioner.

A Certified Associate Practitioner may supervise individuals at the Apprentice Practitioner level who need such supervision in order to meet the requirements of the certification criteria. The amount of such supervision that can be provided is limited, based on the ratios described below.

For CASOMB certification purposes, the supervision ratio for any Associate Practitioner must not exceed a total six (6) supervisee "points" regardless of the number of programs in which the Associate Practitioner is providing supervision.

For the purpose of calculating points, each Apprentice Practitioner who is being supervised counts as two (2) points. In special cases, because of geographical or other considerations, the Board may grant exceptions to this standard.

An Associate Practitioner providing supervision to an Apprentice Practitioner is not required to be on site if the supervisee is licensed or is working under the appropriate supervision of some other licensed mental health practitioner in accord with state licensing laws and regulations.

The supervision provided under these criteria may be the same as and overlap with any supervision required for State licensure or to meet the requirements of a training program. On the other hand, the supervision provided under these criteria may be completely separate from and independent of any supervision required and provided for State licensure or training purposes. These standards and criteria are established completely separate from and without consideration of any supervision required for other purposes.

B. Requirements for Initial Certification of an Associate Practitioner

To qualify to provide sex offender treatment at the Associate Practitioner level, an individual must demonstrate that he or she meets all of the following criteria:

1. **EDUCATION.** An Associate Practitioner shall have a Master's degree or above in a behavioral science area of study recognized by a California licensing board or by the licensing jurisdiction in which the individual practices.
2. **LICENSURE.** An Associate Practitioner shall meet one of the following requirements:
 - i. The individual shall have attained and shall maintain a current license to independently practice in the mental health field as described above. The license must be issued by a State of California licensing board. If the client is being treated outside of California, the license must be issued by the jurisdiction in which the practitioner provides the services.
 - ii. The individual shall have the required status as a trainee, intern, Psychological Assistant or the equivalent to qualify to provide mental health services, under supervision, in California or in the jurisdiction in which the services are actually provided.
3. **EXPERIENCE.** The applicant shall, within the last two years, have completed a minimum of three hundred (300) hours of clinical experience specifically in the areas of evaluation and treatment of sex offenders, or have met the requirements for a provisional Independent Practitioner outlined in Section K of Part I.

These hours may have been obtained while functioning either as an independently licensed mental health professional or while working under pre-licensure supervision.

At least two hundred (200) of these hours must be face-to-face therapy with adult sex offenders, either alone or as a co-therapist. Co-therapy experience is strongly encouraged.

Practitioners who provide clinical supervision for therapists who are evaluating or treating sexual offenders may count hours of supervision directly related to such sexual offender services towards this experience requirement.

4. **TRAINING.** The individual shall, within the last two years prior to initial certification, have accumulated a minimum of twenty (20) documented training hours related to sex offender evaluation, treatment, and management methods.

These training hours shall be in course topics included on the Approved Topic List provided in Appendix A. Fifteen (15) of the twenty hours must be in topic areas identified as Core Areas on the list of *Approved Training Topics*. (Appendix A)

The Associate Practitioner will be required to sign an attestation under penalty of perjury that this training requirement has been fulfilled.

5. **SUPERVISION:** Any sex-offender related services regulated by the CASOMB criteria and provided by an Associate Practitioner must be provided under the supervision of an Independent Practitioner.

For purposes of this certification an Associate Practitioner must receive a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision for every twenty (20) hours of direct sex offender services. The required supervision may either be provided in a face-to-face setting or provided by telephone or other electronic means. Additionally, the Independent Practitioner providing clinical supervision for the Associate Practitioner will be required to sign an attestation under penalty of perjury that this supervision requirement has been fulfilled.

If the Associate Practitioner is not licensed as a mental health professional, it is to be understood that the individual will continue to receive supervision as required by the state licensing authority or, if applicable, by his or her academic training program. Supervision for CASOMB purposes may or may not meet the criteria for State licensing purposes.

C. Requirements for Provisional Certification for Associate Practitioners

To apply for provisional status at the Associate Level, the applicant must have a minimum of 200 hours of experience specifically in the areas of evaluation and treatment of sex offenders within the last two years. At least 100 of those hours must have involved delivering direct face-to-face therapy with sex offenders or providing supervision.

In addition, the applicant must have a minimum of 15 hours of training within the last two years related to sex offender evaluation, treatment and management methods. At least 10 of those hours must be in Core Topics.

A provisionally certified Associate Practitioner may not supervise other practitioners.

Applicants for provisional Associate Practitioner status shall have one year from the date of an approved corrective action plan to rectify the area(s) of deficiency. Applicants granted provisional status are required to re-apply for full (non-provisional) status when the deficiencies have been remedied. It is the provider's responsibility to notify CASOMB and reapply as soon as the deficiencies have

been corrected. The re-application must include documentation that the full requirements have been met.

D. Requirements for Recertification for an Associate Practitioner

An Associate Practitioner will remain on the Certified Provider list, unless explicitly removed for cause, for a period of at least two years. The initial listing period may vary depending upon the recertification date which is determined by the birthdate of the applicant. Recertification must occur every two years thereafter. The recertification date is listed on the provider's certificate.

Prior to the expiration of his or her certification status, the Associate Practitioner must submit the documentation required for recertification. Specifics of the procedure and the timetable for submission are described in the Application Checklist procedures section of the recertification application. A new Live Scan fingerprinting procedure is not required for recertification.

There is no limit to the length of time an individual may remain at the Associate Practitioner status, provided the required recertification is successfully completed as specified.

To renew certification status, an Associate Practitioner must take the following actions and meet the following criteria:

- a. **Experience.** The Associate Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has accumulated a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) hours of clinical experience over the course of the previous two years. At least one hundred (100) of those hours shall be face-to-face therapy or evaluation with sex offenders.

An Associate Practitioner who provides clinical supervision for therapists who are treating sexual offenders may count hours of supervision related to sexual offenders toward this experience requirement.

An Associate Practitioner who was certified on the basis of lifetime experience and current professional involvement in the field shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she continues to be involved in the sexual offender assessment, treatment, and management field at a level equivalent to the original certification requirement.

- b. **Training.** The Associate Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has completed a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing education and training over the course of the previous two years.

At least fifteen (15) of those twenty hours must be in the Core Areas on the list of Approved Training Topics. (Appendix A)

- c. **SUPERVISION:** Any sex-offender related services regulated by the CASOMB criteria and provided by an Associate Practitioner must be provided under the direct supervision of an Independent Practitioner.

For purposes of recertification an Associate Practitioner must receive a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision for every twenty (20) hours of direct sex offender services. The required supervision may either be provided in a face-to-face setting or provided by telephone or other electronic means. Additionally, the Independent Practitioner providing clinical supervision for the Associate Practitioner will be required to sign an attestation under penalty of perjury that this supervision requirement has been fulfilled.

If the Associate Practitioner is not licensed as a mental health professional, it is to be understood that the individual will continue to receive supervision as required by the state licensing authority or, if applicable, by his or her academic training program.

Supervision for CASOMB purposes may or may not meet the criteria for State licensing purposes.

E. Movement of Associate Practitioner to Independent Practitioner Status

An Associate Practitioner may, but is not required to, upgrade to Independent Practitioner status if he or she meets all of the criteria for the Independent Practitioner level.

An Associate Practitioner wishing to move to Independent Practitioner status may initiate the process to do so at any point. To apply for Independent Practitioner status, the individual shall complete and submit the following:

- a. a new Independent Practitioner application with the upgrade box marked
- b. a signed attestation under penalty of perjury verifying that he or she has acquired the requisite hours of training and experience, and
- c. a statement from each Certified Independent or licensed Associate Practitioner who provided the claimed supervision verifying the following:
 - 1. the time frame in which supervision was provided
 - 2. the claimed hours of services provided by the supervisee are estimated to be correct
 - 3. the readiness of the individual to become an Independent Practitioner.

III. APPRENTICE PRACTITIONER LEVEL

The Apprentice Practitioner designation describes individuals who are only beginning to work in the field of sex offender evaluation and treatment but who have the specified minimal level of training in the required knowledge base.

An Apprentice Practitioner must be licensed as a mental health professional or must have a licensure status which allows the individual to provide mental health services in accord with California laws and regulations.

An applicant at this level would be an individual who meets the criteria in the previous sentence but does not yet possess the level of education or experience or training needed to be certified as an Associate Practitioner by the Board.

An Apprentice Practitioner's eligibility to provide any specific type of service is governed by all of the standards and regulations of his or her state mental health provider licensure, by the professional Code of Ethics governing the individual's discipline and by the Code of Ethics of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

Specifics of the procedures for applying for Apprentice Practitioner status are described in the *Sex Offender Treatment Provider –Apprentice Practitioner Level Application* which is posted on the CASOMB website.

A. Services which may be provided by a Certified Apprentice Practitioner

A provider certified at the Apprentice Practitioner level may treat sexual offenders under the supervision of a Certified Independent Practitioner or qualified Associate Practitioner.

Until the Apprentice Practitioner has completed 30 hours of observation as described below, he or she may co-lead groups or family therapy sessions but only with an Independent Practitioner or an Associate Practitioner present as co-facilitator.

A Certified Apprentice Practitioner, whether licensed or unlicensed, may not provide the supervision regulated by these criteria to any other person.

B. Requirements for Initial Certification of an Apprentice Practitioner

To qualify to provide sex offender treatment at the Apprentice Practitioner level, an individual must attest that he or she meets all of the following criteria:

1. **EDUCATION.** An Apprentice Practitioner shall hold at least a Baccalaureate Degree or above granted by a recognized educational institution and shall be enrolled in a program of study leading to a Master's degree or above in a behavioral science area of study recognized by a California licensing board or by the licensing jurisdiction in which the individual practices.

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2. **LICENSURE.** An Apprentice Practitioner shall meet one of the following requirements:
 - i. The individual shall have attained and shall maintain a current license to independently practice in the mental health field as described above. The license must be issued by a State of California licensing board. If the client is being treated outside of California, the license must be issued by the jurisdiction in which the practitioner provides the services.
 - ii. The individual shall have the required status -such as a trainee, intern, Psychological Assistant or the equivalent- to qualify to provide mental health services, under supervision, in California or in the jurisdiction in which the services are actually provided.
 3. **EXPERIENCE.** The applicant shall, within the last two years, have completed thirty (30) hours of observation of a Certified Independent or Associate Practitioner working directly with adult sex offenders in assessment, individual, family or group sessions. This experience must be completed before applying for the Apprentice Practitioner designation or starting to work without the experienced Practitioner present. Observed sessions may also include video-taped sessions or live viewing through one-way mirrors.
 4. **TRAINING.** The individual shall, within the last two years prior to initial certification, have accumulated a minimum of eight (8) documented training hours related to sex offender evaluation, treatment, and management methods. All of these hours must be in topic areas identified as Core Areas on the list of Approved Training Topics. (Appendix A)

The Apprentice Practitioner will be required to sign an attestation under penalty of perjury that this training requirement has been fulfilled.

5. **SUPERVISION.** Any sex offender related services regulated by the CASOMB criteria and provided by an Apprentice Practitioner must be provided under the supervision of an Independent Practitioner or a qualified Associate Practitioner.

If the Apprentice Practitioner is not licensed, it is to be understood that the individual will continue to receive supervision as required by the state licensing authority or, if applicable, by his or her academic training program.

The supervision described in this document may or may not be coextensive with any other supervision requirements for the Apprentice Practitioner so that the various types of supervision requirements may or may not be met by the same supervisor in the same supervision session.

The required supervision may either be provided in a face-to-face setting or provided by telephone or other electronic means.

For purposes of this certification an Apprentice Practitioner must receive a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision for every ten (10) hours of direct, face-to-face sex offender services.

C. Requirements for Recertification as an Apprentice Practitioner

An Apprentice Practitioner will remain on the Certified Provider list, unless explicitly removed for cause, for a period of two years. The initial listing period may vary depending upon the recertification date which is determined by the birthdate of the applicant. The initial period will not be less than two years.

Prior to the expiration of his or her certification status, the Apprentice Practitioner must submit the documentation required for recertification. Specifics of the procedure and the timetable for submission are described on the Application Checklist Section of the recertification application.

There is no limit to the length of time an individual may remain in the Apprentice Practitioner classification, provided that the required recertification is successfully completed as specified.

A new Live Scan fingerprinting procedure is not required for recertification.

To recertify, an Apprentice Practitioner must take the following actions and meet the following criteria:

- a. **Experience.** The Apprentice Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has accumulated a minimum of fifty (50) hours of clinical experience over the course of the previous two years. All fifty (50) of those hours shall be face-to-face therapy or evaluation with sex offenders.
- b. **Training.** The Apprentice Practitioner shall attest under penalty of perjury that he or she has completed a minimum of sixteen (16) hours of continuing education and training over the course of the previous two years, all of which must be in the Core Areas on the list of Approved Training Topics. (Appendix A)
- c. **Supervision.** For purposes of recertification, an Apprentice Practitioner must have received and continue to receive at least a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision for every ten (10) hours of direct, face-to-face sex offender services in order to stay at this level of certification. Supervision must be by an Independent or licensed Associate Practitioner, whether face-to-face, by telephone or through other electronic methods. (see Section 5 for additional information)

D. Movement from Apprentice Practitioner to Associate Practitioner Status

An Apprentice Practitioner may, but is not required to, upgrade to Independent or Associate Practitioner status once he or she meets the criteria and submits an application for the advanced level of certification.

An Apprentice Practitioner wishing to move to Independent or Associate Practitioner status may initiate the process to do so at any time. To apply for Independent or Associate Practitioner status the individual must complete the application and submit attestation under penalty of perjury verifying that he or she has acquired the requisite hours of training and experience.

In addition, the applicant shall submit a statement from each Certified Independent Practitioner or licensed Associate Practitioner who has provided the claimed supervision verifying the following:

1. the time frame in which supervision was provided
2. the claimed hours of services provided by the supervisee are estimated to be correct
3. the readiness of the individual to become an Independent or Associate Practitioner.

PART THREE: APPEAL OF DENIAL OF CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

I. APPEAL OF CERTIFICATION DENIAL

An applicant whose application for certification as a treatment provider has been denied may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee [AC] will be comprised of the Board Coordinator and two other persons. The two other persons may be CASOMB members. Non-board members with treatment expertise may also be designated to serve by CASOMB.

- A. The appeal must be made in writing and be received by the AC within 30 days after the denial was mailed to the address supplied by the applicant.
- B. The AC will consider only information that addresses the reasons for denial outlined in the denial letter. Other information will not be considered in the appeal process.
- C. The applicant must submit with the appeal all of the documentation necessary and available to support the challenge to denial of certification.
- D. The applicant may request either a hearing or a conference call with the AC in addition to the submission of the written appeal. The request must be made in writing at the time the written appeal is submitted. An applicant may bring one representative to the appellate hearing or conference call. Hearings or calls will be 30 minutes; 15 minutes for a verbal presentation by the appellant and 15 minutes for questions by the AC members.
- E. The AC will notify the appellant of the result in writing within two weeks after the AC determination, and the decision of the AC will be final.
- F. Individuals whose application has been denied and/or appeal has been denied, may re-apply for certification when the circumstances leading to the original denial of certification have substantively changed.

PART FOUR: COMPLAINTS AGAINST TREATMENT PROVIDERS

I. COMPLAINT BY CLIENT (RECIPIENT OF SERVICES)

Any person receiving treatment services, who believes a certified treatment provider is not operating in compliance with a Certification Requirement, must address the issue with the provider prior to submitting a written complaint to CASOMB staff. If the matter is not resolved, then the person receiving treatment services may file a written complaint in accordance with the procedure delineated below.

II. WRITTEN COMPLAINT FILED WITH CASOMB STAFF

Should any person have reason to believe that a certified treatment provider is not operating in compliance with a Certification Requirement; the person may submit a complaint in writing to the Sex Offender Management Board staff, together with any available documentation. A complaint must be submitted on the Complaint Form in Appendix B; it must be signed by the complainant, and it must identify the specific requirement that has allegedly been violated. Review of complaints will be in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- A. The staff member may request more information from the complainant, a response from the provider, or take whatever other action is deemed appropriate.
- B. The following are possible findings and actions regarding complaints:
 - 1. Dismiss the complaint, identifying it as unfounded.
 - 2. Refer the complainant to a licensing agency.
 - 3. Contact the provider and/or the complainant to determine if the complaint can be resolved through mutual agreement. If mutual agreement is reached, the decision will be documented and placed in the provider's file.
 - 4. Find the complaint well founded and place a letter of admonition in the provider's file. A change in the provider's services may be recommended, or a provider may be asked to seek additional training or supervision. The letter of admonition and the provider's response to the recommendations may be taken into consideration when the provider is reviewed for recertification.
 - 5. Find the complaint well founded and take action to decertify the provider for failure to comply with Certification Requirements.
 - 6. Written notice of the findings and the reasons for those findings will be provided to the complainant and identified provider along with a notice of the right to file a written appeal within 30 days.

C. Any complainant or identified provider who wishes to appeal a finding on a complaint may appeal the decision to the Appeals Committee [AC], which will be comprised of the Board Coordinator and two other persons, comprised of staff members, who were not involved in addressing the complaint, and/or CASOMB members, and/or non-board members designated by CASOMB.

1. The appeal must be made in writing within 30 days after receiving notification of the finding.
2. The AC will consider only information that addresses the reason for the finding outlined in the written notice.
3. Either the party requesting the appeal or the other party may request either a hearing with the AC or a conference call with the AC. The request must be made in writing at the time of the appeal. Hearings or conference calls will be scheduled by the AC. Either party may have one representative with them. Hearings or calls will be 45 minutes long; 15 minutes for a verbal presentation by each party and 15 minutes for questions.
4. The AC will notify both parties of its decision in writing.
5. The decision of the AC will be final in the appeal process.

APPENDIX: APPROVED TRAINING TOPICS

I. CASOMB REQUIRED CORE TRAINING TOPICS

- Statistics on sex offense/victimization rates
- Sex offender/offense characteristics
- Sex offender risk assessment tools Certified by SARATSO
- Sex offender assessment procedures
- Sex offender evaluation and treatment planning
- Sex offender treatment and management techniques
- Risk, needs, and responsivity principles
- Evaluating and reducing denial in sex offenders
- Behavioral treatment techniques used with sexual offenders
- Cognitive behavioral techniques used with sexual offenders
- Relapse prevention with sexual offenders
- Physiological techniques including:
 - Penile plethysmography
 - Polygraph examination
 - Viewing measures of sexual interest
- Legal and ethical issues regarding sex offenders
- Special sex offender populations including:
 - Sadistic sex offenders
 - Offenders who have developmental disabilities
 - Compulsive sexual offenders
 - Female sex offenders
- Pharmacotherapy with sex offenders
- Group therapy dynamics
- Cycle of sexual abuse
- Thinking errors/ cognitive distortions used by sex offenders
- Development of deviant sexual fantasies
- Disturbances of sexual arousal
- Techniques for sexual arousal treatment
- Implementation of the Containment Model

II. CASOMB REQUIRED ADJUNCT TRAINING TOPICS

- California child, dependent adult, and elder abuse reporting requirements
- Motivational interviewing
 - Empathy training
- Victim Issues such as the effects of victimization
- Family reunification/visitation
- Impact of sex offenses on society
- Assessing treatment progress
- Secondary and vicarious trauma
- Wellness and self care
- Anger management
- Alcohol and other drug abuse assessment and treatment with sex offenders
- Human sexuality
- Supervision techniques with sex offenders
- Understanding the effects of psychiatric disorders on sexual offending including:
 - Psychopathy
 - Anti-social personality disorder
 - Bi-polar disorder
 - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
 - Post traumatic stress disorder
 - Neuro-developmental impairments
 - Traumatic brain injury
- Clinical supervision of therapists treating sexual offenders
- Requirements established by the Sex Offender Management
- Global positioning satellite technologies

Other topics listed, certified, or posted by the Board