

Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Provider Definitions and Qualifications

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Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)

A CNS must be registered in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Registered Nursing](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS

Clinical Social Worker (CSW), Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT), Professional Clinical Counselor (PCC) Candidates

CSW, MFT and PCC candidates who have graduated from a master's program and are completing their required hours for licensure must register with the BBS as an Associate. The "[90 Day Rule](#)" set by the BBS allows candidates to count supervised experience toward licensure when gained during the window of time between the degree award date and the issue date of the associate registration number if BBS receives the associate application within 90 days of the degree award date.

SPA 23-0026 allows Medi-Cal BH delivery systems to utilize CSW, MFT and PCC candidates who have submitted their applications for Associate registration to BBS within 90 days of their degree award date and are completing supervised experience toward licensure to provide SMHS or DMC-ODS services to members. They must act within their scope of practice under California law. Medi-Cal BH delivery systems must obtain and maintain documentation to verify that the candidate's BBS application has been submitted and is pending and must subsequently verify that the registration is approved. In the event the BBS application is not approved by BBS, the services provided by the candidate are not Medi-Cal reimbursable.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Clinical Trainee

A clinical trainee is an unlicensed individual who is enrolled in a post-secondary educational degree program in the State of California that is required for the individual to obtain licensure as a Licensed Mental Health Professional; is participating in a practicum, clerkship, or internship approved by the individual's program; and meets all relevant requirements of the program and/or the applicable licensing board to participate in the practicum, clerkship or internship and provide Targeted Case Management, including, but not limited to, all coursework and supervised practice requirements.

Clinical Trainee provider types include: Nurse Practitioner Clinical Trainee, Licensed Psychologist Clinical Trainee, Licensed CSW Clinical Trainee, Licensed MFT Clinical Trainee, Licensed PCC Clinical Trainee, Licensed Psychiatric Technician Clinical Trainee, Registered Nurse Clinical Trainee, Licensed Vocational Nurse Clinical Trainee, Licensed OT Clinical Trainee, Licensed Physician Clinical Trainee, Registered Pharmacist Clinical Trainee, Physician Assistant Clinical Trainee, Clinical Nurse Specialist Clinical Trainee (SMHS Only)

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP)

A LMHP includes any of the following providers who are licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements: licensed physicians; licensed psychologists (includes waived psychologists); licensed clinical social workers (includes waived or registered clinical social workers); licensed professional clinical counselors (includes waived or registered professional clinical counselors); licensed marriage and family therapists (includes waived or registered marriage and family therapists); registered nurses (includes certified nurse specialists and nurse practitioners); licensed vocational nurses; licensed psychiatric technicians; and licensed occupational therapists.

Delivery System: SMHS

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

A Licensed Psychologist must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California Board of Psychology](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)

A LCSW must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)

A LMFT must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Occupational Therapist (OT)

A Licensed Occupational Therapist must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Occupational Therapists](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Physician (LP)

Licensed physicians must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [Medical Board of California](#) or the [Osteopathic Medical Board of California](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA)

LPHAs include any of the following: Physician, Nurse Practitioner (NP), Physician Assistant (PA), Registered Nurse, Registered Pharmacist, Licensed Clinical Psychologist (LCP), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Registered CSW, Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), Registered PCC, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), Registered MFT, Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), Licensed Occupational Therapist (LOT), and Licensed Psychiatric Technician (LPT).

Delivery System: DMC-ODS

Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)

A LPCC must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)

A LVN must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Medical Assistant (MA)

A MA is an individual who is at least 18 years of age, meets all applicable education, training and/or certification requirements, and provides administrative, clerical, and technical supportive services, according to their scope of practice, and provides services under the supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon as established by the corresponding state authority, or to the extent authorized under state law, a nurse practitioner or physician assistant that has been delegated supervisory authority by a physician and surgeon. The licensed physician and surgeon, nurse practitioner or physician assistant must be physically present in the treatment facility (medical office or clinic setting) during the provision of services by a medical assistant. Refer to the [Medical Board of California](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Medical Director of an OTP/NTP

The medical director of a Narcotic Treatment Program is a licensed physician in the State of California. Refer to [9 CCR § 10110](#) for more information.

Delivery System: DMC-ODS

Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist (MHRS)

A MHRS is an individual who has a baccalaureate degree and four years of experience in a mental health setting as a specialist in the fields of physical restoration, social adjustment, or vocational adjustment. Up to two years of graduate professional education may be substituted for the experience requirement on a year-for-year basis; up to two years of post-associate arts clinical experience may be substituted for the required educational experience in addition to the requirement of four years' experience in a mental health setting. Refer to [9 CCR § 630](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS

Nurse Practitioner (NP)

A NP must be registered in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Registered Nursing](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Other Qualified Provider/ Adjunct

Is an individual at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent degree plus two years of related paid or non-paid experience (including experience as a service recipient or caregiver of a service recipient), or related secondary education.

Delivery System: SMHS

Peer Support Specialist (PSS)

A PSS is an individual with a current State-approved Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program certification and must meet ongoing education requirements. Peer Support Specialists provide services under the direction of a Behavioral Health Professional. See [DHCS Peer Support Specialist](#) website for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Pharmacist

A pharmacist must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California State Board of Pharmacy](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Physician Assistant (PA)

A PA must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Physician Assistants Board](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Psychiatric Technician (PT)

A PT must be licensed in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Post-Graduate Training License (PTL)

A PTL is issued to an individual who has graduated from an approved medical school, passed all required examinations, has not received the minimum required Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited postgraduate training, and is enrolled in a Board-approved California residency program. The resident may engage in the practice of medicine only in connection with their duties as a resident in the approved training program, including its affiliated sites, or under those conditions as are approved in writing by the director of their program. More information is available from the [Medical Board of California](#).

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Registered MFT, CSW, PCC

Individuals who are in the process of obtaining registration as social work candidates, marriage and family therapist candidates and professional clinical counselor candidates, as well and individuals whose registrations as candidates for these license types have been approved by the [California Board of Behavioral Sciences](#).

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Registered Nurse (RN)

A RN must be registered in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. Refer to the [California Board of Registered Nursing](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Registered Psychologist

A Registered Psychologist must be registered in accordance with applicable State of California licensure requirements. See the [California Board of Psychology](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

SUD/AOD Counselors

An Alcohol or other drug (AOD) counselor that is either licensed, certified, or registered by an organization that is recognized by the Department of Health Care Services and accredited with the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). See the [DHCS Counselor Certification](#) website for more information.

Delivery System: DMC-ODS

Waivered Psychologists

For a psychologist candidate, “waivered” means an individual who either (1) is gaining the experience required for licensure or (2) was recruited for employment from outside California, has sufficient experience to gain admission to a licensing examination, and has been granted a professional licensing waiver approved by the Department of Health Care Services to the extent authorized under state law. See the [DHCS Professional Licensing Waiver](#) website for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS

Waivered SW, MFT, PCC

Waivered means a candidate who was recruited for employment from outside California, whose experience is sufficient to gain admission to the appropriate licensing examination and who has been granted a professional licensing waiver approved by the Department of Health Care Services to the extent authorized under state law. Refer to the [CA Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) for more information.

Delivery System: SMHS, DMC-ODS