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Board Certified-Telemental Health Professional Credential Eligibility Policy

TITLE: Board Certified-Telemental Health Professional Credential Eligibility Policy

Policy Number: POL.01.100.BC-TMH-Eligibility.03221.vF

Policy Manager: Director of Certification and Credentialing Services

Applies to: BC-TMH Applicants

Date Approved: 2/18/2021

A. INTRODUCTION.

The Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) administers a rigorous, examination-based, professional credential program for telemental health specialization recognition – designated as the CCE Board Certified-Telemental Health (BC-TMH) Program. Those individuals who wish to be granted the BC-TMH credential must demonstrate that they have achieved state licensure or national certification as a counselor or other licensed, behavioral, or mental health professional. Additionally, qualified applicants must meet specific educational requirements related to a professional specialization in telemental health services, and successfully complete an examination to assess content knowledge in order to satisfy the requirements of this Program.

Effective as of July 1, 2021 this Policy establishes and explains the requirements which must be satisfied in order to obtain the BC-TMH credential, including the BC-TMH standards, guidelines, and procedures (BC-TMH Program). Questions concerning this Policy or the credentialing process should be directed to the Director of Certification and Credentialing Services.

B. PURPOSE.

The primary purpose of this Policy is to identify and explain the Board Certified-Telemental Health (BC-TMH) credential eligibility requirements. Specifically, the BC-TMH Program establishes valid and appropriate eligibility requirements concerning: professional education necessary for competent practice as a telemental health specialist; professional knowledge demonstrated by the completion of a comprehensive examination; and, ethical standards and the reporting of ethics-related matters.

Applicants for the BC-TMH credential understand and agree that their professional qualifications, including their education, clinical knowledge and ethical standing will be evaluated by the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE), and that such CCE eligibility determinations are final. CCE has the exclusive authority to make and issue all BC-TMH credential eligibility decisions.

C. CREDENTIAL EDUCATION/TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

In order to qualify for BC-TMH credential eligibility, the applicant must satisfy certain education and training rules, which include specific requirements relative to: current professional licensure or national certification in counseling or a related behavioral or mental health discipline in good standing; educational training completion; training contact hours fulfillment; and, telemental health-related content completion.

Consistent with the terms of this Policy, applicants must satisfy the following education and training requirements in order to be eligible for the BC-TMH credential:

1. Professional License Or National Certification: In order to qualify for the credential, applicants must hold either: (a) a State professional license in a behavioral/mental health field in good standing with the issuing agency, which authorizes the applicant for independent practice in that field; or, (b) national certification as a NBCC National Certified Counselor (NCC) or Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) in good standing. Applicants must submit a true copy of such current license or certification.
2. Training Requirements: In order to qualify for the credential, applicants must have completed at least nine (9) clock hours of approved, telemental health training program or courses, consistent with the requirements in this Policy. The completion of this requirement must be verified by the submission of official certificates of completion issued by an appropriate training program.
3. Training Content Areas Requirement: In order to qualify for the credential, applicants must complete approved telemental health training courses, which include and address the following content areas:
 - a. Professional Orientation to TeleMental Health (TMH)
 - b. Client-Practitioner Protocols
 - c. Disclosure & Informed Consent
 - d. Technology
 - e. Professional, Legal, and Ethical Considerations
 - f. Crisis Management

4. Verification of Training Requirements Completion: Credential training requirements must be verified by CCE through the review of an official certificate of completion, appropriately marked as official by the training provider, which shows the completion of a required training program or courses from a CCE approved training program provider. CCE also may require the submission of qualifying course syllabi necessary to verify course alignment with the telemental health content areas. For a list of approved training providers, please access the information at: <https://www.cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/training>
5. Certification Educational Eligibility Appeals: Under certain, limited circumstances, an applicant, who is denied eligibility for the BC-TMH credential, may submit an appeal and request for reconsideration of his/her eligibility with respect to the training requirements in this Policy. All such appeals must be submitted consistent with the requirements of the Application and Certification Appeals Procedures, which is published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/Assets/Certification/appealsprocedures.pdf>.

D. EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS.

In order to be eligible for the BC-TMH credential, applicants must achieve a passing score on the Telemental Health Examination (TMHE or Examination). Complete information about the Examination may be found at: <https://www.cce-global.org/credentialing/bctmh/requirements>.

1. Examination Requirements: Applicants must successfully complete the Telemental Health Examination (TMHE) to fulfill the examination requirement for the BC-TMH credential. The Examination measures an examinee's knowledge and understanding of theoretical and skill-based tenets necessary to practice competently as a mental health provider in telemental health settings. The TMHE consists of approximately one hundred (100) multiple-choice questions, of which twenty (20) items are included for field testing and are not scored. Two hours are allowed for the completion of the TMHE.
2. Special Examination Accommodations: CCE complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and ensures that no applicant with a qualified disability is deprived of the opportunity to take an Examination solely by reason of that disability. CCE will provide reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. A complete explanation of the CCE disability accommodations rules and procedure is provided in the Special Examination Accommodations Policy, which is published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/exams/accommodations>.
3. Examination Retest Policy: Applicants, who fail to pass the TMHE on the first attempt, are eligible to schedule a retest 90 days after the failed attempt and may schedule a retest on the next available administration date by re-registering for the Examination, including the payment of the required fee. Applicants are permitted to retest up to two (2), additional test administrations through the credential application process within two (2) years of the applicant's original application date. If an applicant fails the Examination three (3) times, or when two (2) years have passed since submission of the credential

application, the application will be closed, and a new BC-TMH application must be submitted if the applicant seeks to be credentialed by CCE.

4. Examination Appeals: Under certain, limited circumstances, applicants, who fail to pass the TMHE, may submit an appeal and request another test administration without a re-registration fee. The permitted reasons or grounds for appeal are explained in the CCE Examination Appeal Policy, and are summarized as follows:
 - a. Examination Administration Appeals. The applicant claims that a test administration condition negatively affected his/her ability to complete or pass the Examination, including certain appeals related to: physical test site problems; test computer equipment problems; test administration issues; or, conduct issues concerning test center personnel or others present during the test administration.
 - b. Special Examination Accommodation Appeals. The applicant claims that he/she was not provided with an approved special examination accommodation during the test administration, or alleges that another problem existed with respect to a disability accommodation during an Examination administration. An applicant cannot submit an appeal concerning a special disability accommodation that was not previously approved by CCE.
 - c. Examination Content Appeals. The applicant claims that one (1) or more specific Examination items and/or answers are inaccurate or incorrect, and that his/her failure to receive credit for such items and/or answers caused the applicant to fail the Examination.
 - d. Unacceptable Grounds For Examination Appeals. As established and explained in the CCE Examination Appeal Policy, applicant claims and issues concerning a variety of test-related circumstances cannot be the subject of an Examination appeal, including, but not limited to: lack of understanding of test administration policies, instructions, and requirements; test anxiety or nervousness; a personal situation that may have negatively affected the applicant, such as illness, injury, or family problem; errors related to understanding or recording test questions; computer-related problems that are not promptly reported to a proctor, or do not significantly affect the test administration; reasonable and commonly occurring sounds in the testing location; late test arrival; the general validity of the Examination; the Examination passing score; and, a belief that the applicant should have received a passing score on the Examination.

E. ETHICS REQUIREMENTS.

CCE applicants and credential holders are responsible for ensuring that their behavior adheres to the standards and rules identified in all applicable ethics codes, including professional license and certification ethical standards, and all applicable CCE policies.

1. Ethics Requirement: CCE applicants and credential holders must ensure that their professional and public behaviors are consistent with the conduct standards set forth in the CCE Eligibility Ethics Policy, the Code of Ethics and conduct standards applicable to their professional license and/or national certification, and the CCE Ethics Case Procedures.

2. Ethics Disclosure Requirement: As a condition of credential eligibility, an applicant must accurately and fully complete the required BC-TMH Application Sections titled: Attestation; and, Applicant Agreement and Release Authorization. These Application Sections require the disclosure of all prior legal, criminal, and disciplinary matters related to the applicant. All such application ethics-related disclosures are reviewed in accordance with the CCE Credential Eligibility Ethics Policy, which is published at: <https://www.nbcc.org/ethics/certification>.