



 Pearson | VUE

# California

## Board of Behavioral Sciences

Examination Candidate Handbook

January 2025

## STATE LICENSING INFORMATION

Candidates may contact the California Board of Behavioral Sciences with questions about obtaining or maintaining a license after the examination has been passed.

### California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS)

1625 N Market Blvd., S200  
Sacramento, CA 95834

**Phone**  
(916) 574-7830

**Email**  
[bbsexamunit@dca.ca.gov](mailto:bbsexamunit@dca.ca.gov)

**Website**  
[www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov)

## EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Candidates may contact Pearson VUE with questions about this handbook or about an upcoming examination.

### Pearson VUE California Board of Behavioral Sciences

*Attn: Regulatory Program*  
5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437

**Phone**  
(888) 281-0402

**Email**  
[pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com](mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com)

**Website**  
[www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com)

## QUICK REFERENCE

Candidates should thoroughly review this handbook, which contains examination content outlines and important information regarding eligibility and the examination and licensing application process.

### AUTHORIZATION TO TEST

Before taking an examination, candidates must submit an application and applicable fee to the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS). Applications can be found on [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov). Once the application requirements are met, Pearson VUE will send an authorization to test notice which includes an ID number that candidates will need to register to take the examination.

### RESERVATIONS

Candidates should make a reservation online at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date. **Walk-in examinations are not available.**

Once you have received your Authorization to Test, please schedule your test online by using the Pearson VUE web reservations site at [www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html](http://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html)

If you have been approved for examination accommodations, please schedule the examination as instructed on your accommodation approval letter.

### SCHEDULES & FEES

#### Test centers

Pearson Vue has Pearson Professional Sites as well as third party sites. Examinations can be taken at any test center with availability. Test center locations can be searched for at [www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html](http://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html).

#### Exam fees

The examination fee must be paid to the BBS prior to making an examination reservation. **Payment will not be accepted at the test center. Examination fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

### EXAM DAY

#### What to bring to the exam

Candidates should bring to the examination proper identification and other materials as dictated by the state licensing agency. A complete list appears in **What to Bring**.

#### Exam procedures

Candidates should report to the test center at least **thirty (30)** minutes before the examination begins. The time allotted for the examination varies, and each candidate will leave the test center with an official score report in hand.

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# OVERVIEW

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## **The candidate handbook is a useful tool in preparing for an examination.**

It is highly recommended that the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) Candidate Handbook be reviewed, with special attention given to the content outlines, before taking the examination.

## **Individuals who wish to obtain a license in the state of California must:**

### **1. Authorization to Test**

Before taking an examination, candidates must first submit an application and the applicable fee to the BBS.

The appropriate application can be found on [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov). When the application requirements are met,

Pearson VUE will send an authorization to test notice which includes an ID number that candidates will need to register to take the examination. See **Making an Exam Reservation**.

### **2. Make a reservation.**

Make a reservation (by phone or online) with Pearson VUE for the examination.

### **3. Go to the test center.**

Go to the test center on the day of the examination, bringing along all required materials. See **What to Bring**.

# INTRODUCTION

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidates may contact Pearson VUE with questions about this handbook or an examination.

<b>Pearson VUE/California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS)</b> 5601 Green Valley Dr. Bloomington, MN 55437		
<b>Phone:</b> (888) 281-0402	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.pearsonvue.com">www.pearsonvue.com</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com">pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com</a>

Live Chat is available to address your support inquiries and is the quickest way to reach a customer service agent. It's available from 8:00 AM through 5:00 PM Central Time, Monday through Friday, subject to change during locally designated holidays.

Please visit [www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html#contact](http://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html#contact) for further information.

Candidates may contact the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) with questions about obtaining or maintaining a license or registration.

<b>California Board of Behavioral Sciences</b> 1625 N Market Blvd., S200 Sacramento, CA 95834		
<b>Phone:</b> (916) 574-7830	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bbs.ca.gov">www.bbs.ca.gov</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:bbsexamunit@dca.ca.gov">bbsexamunit@dca.ca.gov</a>

## LICENSURE PROCESS

Licensure is the process by which an agency of state government or other jurisdiction grants permission to individuals to engage in the practice of, and prohibits all others from legally practicing, a particular profession, vocation, or occupation. By ensuring a minimum level of competence, the licensure process protects the general public. The state regulatory agency is responsible for establishing the acceptable level of safe practice and for determining whether an individual meets that standard.

The state of California has retained the services of Pearson VUE to administer Behavioral Sciences exams. Pearson VUE is a leading provider of assessment services to regulatory agencies and national associations.

# STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

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The California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) established the requirements for qualifications for licensure. Applicants should read this candidate handbook and any other information provided by the BBS regarding license examinations.

The examinations are developed and maintained by the Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES), a division of the Department of Consumer Affairs. OPES staff are test validation and development specialists who are trained to develop and analyze occupational licensing examinations.

The development process involves Board-licensed practitioners who hold a current license and serve as subject matter experts (SMEs) specific to each license type. SMEs are trained by OPES staff in established examination development processes and measurement methodologies. The cooperative efforts among these members of licensed practitioners, OPES, and the BBS are necessary to achieve both the measurement and content standards for examination development and construction.

## AUTHORIZATION TO TEST

Before taking an examination, candidates must first submit an application and applicable fee to BBS. Applications can be found on [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov).

Once the application requirements are met, Pearson VUE will send an authorization to test notice which includes an ID number that candidates will need to register to take the examination.

## ABANDONMENT OF LICENSING APPLICATION

California Code of Regulations Section 1806:

An application shall be deemed abandoned under any of the circumstances described in this section. An application submitted after a previous application has been abandoned shall be treated as a new application, requiring the applicant to pay any fees required, and to meet current requirements.

(a) The applicant does not submit information required in order to correct the deficiencies specified in a deficiency letter within one (1) year from the date of the deficiency letter.

(b) The applicant for licensure, as defined in section 1805.01(a), does not maintain an active licensure application. An applicant maintains an "active licensure application" by participating in a required examination, as defined below, at least once every 365 days.

(1) The initial 365-day examination participation period shall begin on the date the applicant was sent a notification approving his or her licensure application.

(2) Subsequent 365-day examination participation periods shall begin on the date the applicant most recently participated in a required examination.

(3) "Required examination" is defined as an initial attempt or retake of an examination required by section 4980.397, 4989.20, 4992.05, or 4999.53 of the Code.

(c) The applicant fails to pay the initial license fee within one (1) year after notification by the board of successful completion of examination requirements.

An application submitted after a previous application has been abandoned shall be treated as a new application, requiring the applicant to pay any fees required, and to meet current requirements.

# RESERVATIONS

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## MILITARY SITE TESTING

California Board of Behavioral Sciences licensure exams are available at select Pearson VUE test centers on military installations across the globe. Service members, dependents, and contractors with authorized base access who want to gain California Board of Behavioral Sciences licensure from their duty station or assignment in another state and foreign deployment will have the option to take their exams without having to return to California to test.

To locate a Pearson VUE authorized testing center, visit [www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/military.html](http://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/military.html) and select California Behavioral Sciences program category.

In addition to Pearson VUE's standard ID policy (see **What to Bring**), candidates must have valid government ID and authorization to gain access to military testing sites. Civilians without valid government ID will be turned away by the test center and/or military entrance gate security.

## MAKING AN EXAM RESERVATION

**Walk-in examinations are not available.** Online reservations are the most efficient way for candidates to schedule their examination. After receiving an authorization to test notice and a candidate ID, candidates **must** go to [www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html](http://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/cabbs.html) to make an online reservation for an examination. Step-by-step instructions will lead the candidate through the rest of the examination reservation process.

Candidates **must** make an online reservation at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date. Candidates who wish to make a phone reservation at (888) 281-0402 must do so at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date.

**Before making a reservation, candidates should have the following:**

- Legal name of record with BBS
- The name of the examination(s)
- The preferred examination date and test center location
- If you have been approved for examination accommodations, please schedule the examination as instructed on your accommodation approval letter.

## CHANGE/CANCEL POLICY

If you wish to cancel your exam, you must contact Pearson VUE forty-eight (48) hours prior to your scheduled appointment. Cancelling an exam less than 48 hours prior to your appointment or missing your exam may result in forfeiting your exam fees.

When cancelling an examination, please be sure that the request is complete and you receive a confirmation. If you do not finalize the cancellation request, the change will not be processed and the original scheduled examination will remain in effect.

If you do not cancel the examination or fail to complete the cancellation request, this will reflect in a No Show result and the examination fee is forfeited.

To continue with the examination, you will need to submit a re-examination application. The re-examination application is available for online submission at [www.breeze.ca.gov](http://www.breeze.ca.gov). The waiting period will be waived as you did not see the examination.

Candidates who have had their supervision/experience approved must take an examination within one-year from initial approval or within one-year from a failed attempt. Please see the Abandonment of Licensing Application section for additional information.

## ABSENCE/LATENESS POLICY

Candidates who are late to or absent from an examination may be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness of the candidate or that of the candidate's immediate family member
- Death in the immediate family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Court appearance or jury duty
- Military duty
- Weather emergency

Candidates who are absent from or late to an examination and have not changed or canceled the reservation according to the **Change/Cancel Policy** will not be admitted to the examination and will forfeit the examination fee. Written verification and supporting documentation for excused absences must be submitted to Pearson VUE within fourteen (14) days of the original examination date. Written verification and supporting documentation can be sent by fax to (888) 204-6291 or mailed to the following address:

**Pearson VUE/California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS)**

5601 Green Valley Dr., Bloomington, MN 55437

Pearson VUE may accept the above reasons to be excused from the scheduled exam. If approved, this would allow you the opportunity to reschedule the examination without a re-examination application.

This DOES NOT extend the eligibility end date for candidates who have had their supervision/experience approved. Candidates who have had their supervision/experience approved must take an examination within one-year from initial approval or within one-year from a failed attempt. Please see the Abandonment of Licensing Application section for additional information.

## WEATHER DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

If severe weather or a natural disaster makes the Pearson VUE test center inaccessible or unsafe, the examination may be delayed or canceled. Pearson VUE will notify and reschedule candidates in the case of severe weather.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Pearson VUE complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. The purpose of accommodations is to provide candidates with full access to the test. Accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or test completion. Pearson VUE provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

Test accommodations may include things such as:

- A separate testing room
- Extra testing time
- A Reader or Recorder, for individuals with mobility or vision impairments and cannot read or write on their own

Test accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. All candidates who are requesting accommodations because of a disability must provide appropriate documentation of their condition and how it is expected to affect their ability to take the test under standard conditions. This may include:

- Supporting documentation from the professional who diagnosed the condition, including the credentials that qualify the professional to make this diagnosis
- A description of past accommodations the candidate has received



The steps to follow when requesting test accommodations vary, depending on your test program sponsor. To begin, go to <http://pearsonvue.com/accommodations>, and then select your test program sponsor from the alphabetized list. Candidates who have additional questions concerning test accommodations may contact the ADA Coordinator at [accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com](mailto:accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com).

The Board reviews and approves English as a Second Language (ESL) accommodation requests. To request an ESL accommodation, please visit our website [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) in the Exams tab to download the ESL application. For ESL accommodation assistance, please use the Contact Us tab on our website [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) to Message the Board.

# EXAM DAY

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## CALIFORNIA LAW SECURITY PROCEDURES

Section 123 of the California Business and Professions Code states: It is a misdemeanor for any person to engage in any conduct which subverts or attempts to subvert any licensing examination or the administration of an examination, including, but not limited to:

- Conduct which violates the security of the examination materials;
- Removing from the examination room any examination materials without authorization;
- The unauthorized reproduction by any means of any portion of the actual licensing examination;
- Aiding by any means the unauthorized reproduction of any portion of the licensing examination;
- Paying or using professional or paid examination-takers for the purpose of reconstructing any portion of the licensing examination;
- Obtaining examination questions or other examination material, except by specific authorization either before, during, or after an examination; or
- Selling, distributing, buying, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of a future, current, or previously administered licensing examination.
- Communicating with any other examinee during the administration of a licensing examination.
- Copying answers from another examinee or permitting one's answers to be copied by another examinee.
- Having in one's possession during the administration of the licensing examination any books, equipment, notes, written or printed materials, or data of any kind, other than the examination materials distributed, or otherwise authorized to be in one's possession during the examination.
- Impersonating any examinee or having an impersonator take the licensing examination on one's behalf.

Nothing in this section shall preclude prosecution under authority provided for in any other provision of law. In addition to any other penalties, a person found guilty of violating this section, shall be liable for the actual damages sustained by the agency administering the examination not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) and the costs of litigation.

## WHAT TO BRING

### Required Items

All candidates must bring to the test center on examination day the following:

- Two (2) forms of signature identification, one of which must be government-issued and photo-bearing

### REQUIRED ITEMS

Candidates who do not present the required items will be denied admission to the examination, will be considered absent, and will forfeit the examination fee.

### Acceptable Forms of Candidate Identification

Candidate must present **two (2)** forms of current signature identification. The name on the identification must exactly match the name on the registration. The primary identification must be government issued and photo-bearing with a signature and the secondary identification must contain a valid signature. Identification must be in English.

#### Primary ID (photograph and signature, not expired)

##### Government-issued Driver's License

- U.S. Dept. of State Driver's License
- U.S. Learner's Permit (plastic card only with photo and signature)
- National/State/Country ID card

- Passport
- Passport Card
- Military ID
- Military ID for spouses and dependents
- Alien Registration Card (Green Card, Permanent Resident Visa)

**Secondary ID (signature, not expired)**

- U.S. Social Security card
- Debit (ATM) or Credit card
- Any form of ID on the Primary ID list

If the ID presented has an embedded signature that is not visible (microchip), or is difficult or impossible to read, the candidate must present another form of identification from the Primary ID or Secondary ID list that contains a visible signature.

**Pearson VUE does not recognize grace periods. For example, if a candidate’s driver’s license expired yesterday and the state allows a 30-day grace period for renewing the ID, the ID is considered to be expired.**

If you are not allowed entrance to the scheduled examination due to incorrect identification, this will reflect in a No Show result and the examination fee is forfeited.

To continue with the examination, you will need to submit a re-examination application. The re-examination application is available for online submission at [www.breeze.ca.gov](http://www.breeze.ca.gov). The waiting period will be waived as you did not see the examination.

Candidates who have had their supervision/experience approved must take an examination within one-year from initial approval or within one-year from a failed attempt. Please see the Abandonment of Licensing Application section for additional information.

**EXAM PROCEDURES**

Candidates should report to the test center thirty (30) minutes before the examination and check in with the test center administrator. The candidate’s identification and other documentation will be reviewed and they will be photographed for the score report.

Candidates are required to review and sign a Candidate Rules Agreement form. If the Candidate Rules Agreement is not followed and/or cheating or tampering with the examination is suspected, the incident will be reported as such and the appropriate action will be taken. The examination fee will not be refunded, the exam may be determined invalid, and/or the state may take further action such as prohibiting candidates from retaking the examination and/or denying a license.

Candidates will have an opportunity to take a tutorial on the computer on which the examination will be administered. The time spent on this tutorial will not reduce the examination time. Candidates are encouraged to view the tutorial in its entirety. The examination administrators will answer questions, but candidates should be aware that the administrators are not familiar with the content of the examinations or with the state’s licensing requirements. Examination administrators have been instructed not to advise candidates on requirements for licensure.

**Palm Vein Recognition Technology**

Candidates will be required to have their palm scanned using Palm Vein Recognition technology. Pearson VUE’s company-owned sites are equipped with advanced palm vein recognition technology, which captures and recognizes the unique patterns in a candidate’s palm veins using non-intrusive, near-infrared scanning technology.

New candidates are enrolled in the biometric system during their first test center admission; their identities are then automatically verified when candidates take and return from breaks, and again when they test in the future at any biometrically equipped location worldwide. Palm vein recognition is secure, privacy friendly, fast, highly accurate, and virtually impossible to forge, and has replaced digital fingerprinting to become the standard biometric technology for candidate identification.

Candidates may begin the examination once they are familiar with the computer. The examination begins the moment a candidate looks at the first examination question. The time allotted for the examination varies (see chart below). The examination will end automatically after the examination time has expired, and candidates will leave the test center with their official scores in hand.

EXAMINATION TIME ALLOTTED			
EXAMINATION	NUMBER OF SCORED QUESTIONS	NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL PRETEST QUESTIONS	TIME ALLOTTED
(LCSW) Law and Ethics Examination	50	25	90
(LPCC) Law and Ethics Examination	50	25	90
(LMFT) Law and Ethics Examination	50	25	90
(LMFT) Clinical Examination	130	20	240
(LEP) Examination	100	25	150

### SCORE REPORTING

When candidates complete the examination, they will receive a score report marked “pass” or “fail.”

Candidates for LMFT Clinical and LEP examinations who receive a pass score can locate the form for the initial license on the BBS website.

Candidates who fail the examination will receive a score report that includes a numeric score and diagnostic information, as well as information about reexamination.

### REVIEW OF EXAMS

For security reasons, examination material is not available to candidates for review.

### RETAKE RULES

Candidates who fail an examination are eligible to submit a request to retake an examination. The re-examination application is available for online submission at [www.breeze.ca.gov](http://www.breeze.ca.gov). We can accept the re-examination application at any time, however, there is a waiting period between exams before it can be approved.

RETAKE RULES	
Examination Name	Waiting Period
(LCSW) Law and Ethics	90 days
(LPCC) Law and Ethics	90 days
(LMFT) Law and Ethics	90 days
(LMFT) Clinical	90 days
(LEP) Licensed Educational Psychologists	120 days

## NO SHOW

If you do not take the examination as scheduled, this will reflect as a No Show and the examination fee is forfeited. To continue, you will need to submit a re-examination application. The re-examination application is available for online submission at [www.breeze.ca.gov](http://www.breeze.ca.gov). The waiting period will be waived as you did not see the examination. Candidates who have had their supervision/experience approved must take an examination within one-year from initial approval or within one-year from a failed attempt. Please see the Abandonment of Licensing Application section for additional information

## EXAMINATION RESULTS

There are multiple versions of each of the licensing examinations. These versions are known as *forms*. All forms of an examination are developed based on the content outlines. To ensure that no candidate is put at an unfair advantage or disadvantage due to the particular form of an examination that he or she is given, a statistical procedure known as equating is used to attain comparable form difficulty.

At the end of your examination you will receive a printed score report. Numerical (raw) scores are provided to candidates who fail, but are not provided to candidates who pass.

## DUPLICATE SCORE REPORTS

If you lose your Score Report or need a duplicate Score Report, please print it from your Pearson VUE account.

## TEST CENTER POLICIES

The following policies are observed at each test center. **Candidates who violate any of these policies will not be permitted to finish the examination and will be dismissed from the test center, forfeiting the examination fee.**

- **No personal items are allowed in the testing room.** Personal items include but are not limited to: cellular phones, hand-held computers or other electronic devices, pagers, watches, wallets, purses, firearms or other weapons, hats, bags, coats, books, notes, or pens or pencils.
- **CALCULATORS ARE NOT PERMITTED.**
- Candidates must store all personal items in a secure area as indicated by the administrator, or return items to their vehicle. All electronic devices must be turned off before storing them in a locker. **The test center is not responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced personal items.**
- Studying is not allowed in the test center. Visitors, children, family or friends are not allowed in the test center.
- Dictionaries, books, papers (including scratch paper), and reference materials are not permitted in the examination room (unless permitted by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences), and candidates are strongly urged not to bring such materials to the test center. Upon entering and being seated in the testing room, the test administrator will provide the candidate with materials to make notes or calculations and any other items specified by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. **The candidate may not write on these items before the exam begins or remove these items from the testing room.**
- Eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking, and/or making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates is prohibited during the exam.
- Break policies are established by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. To request an unscheduled break, the candidate **must** raise their hand to get the administrator's attention. **The exam clock will not stop while the candidate is taking a break.**
- Candidates must leave the testing room for all breaks. However, candidates are not permitted to leave the floor or building for any reason during this time, unless specified by the administrator and the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. If a candidate is discovered to have left the floor or building they will not be permitted to proceed with the examination and may forfeit the exam fees.

- While taking a break, candidates are permitted to access personal items that are being stored during the exam only if necessary—for example, personal medication that must be taken at a specific time. **However, a candidate must receive permission from the administrator prior to accessing personal items that have been stored.** Candidates are **not** allowed access to other items, including but not limited to, cellular phones, exam notes, and study guides, unless the California Board of Behavioral Sciences specifically permits this.
- Any candidate discovered causing a disturbance of any kind or engaging in any kind of misconduct—giving or receiving help; using notes, books, or other aids; taking part in an act of impersonation; or removing examination materials or notes from the examination room—will be summarily dismissed from the examination and will be reported to the state licensing agency. Decisions regarding disciplinary measures are the responsibility of the state licensing agency.

## QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE EXAM

For security reasons, examination material is not available to candidates for review. Candidates who have questions, comments, or concerns related to the exams, scoring or score reports, or who wish to verify any data held in Pearson VUE files, should direct written inquiries to Pearson VUE at the address provided on the inside front cover of this handbook. Candidates may also email their questions directly to Pearson VUE Customer Service at [pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com](mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com).

In all correspondence, candidates should provide their name and address information. If questions or comments concern an examination already taken, candidates should also include:

- the name of the examination
- the date the examination was taken
- the location of the test center

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

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### STUDY MATERIALS

Study material or practice examinations are not provided. Sample questions and examination outlines are provided.

# CALIFORNIA BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

## Content Outlines

# CALIFORNIA BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

## Sample Questions