

MEMORANDUM



DATE: April 12, 2023

TO: California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Association for Alcohol/Drug Educators
California Association of Alcohol & Drug Program Executives, Inc.
California Association of DUI Treatment Programs
California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies
California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals
California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies
California Hospital Association
California Opioid Maintenance Providers
California State Association of Counties
Coalition of Alcohol and Drug Associations
County Behavioral Health Directors
County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California
County Drug & Alcohol Administrators

FROM: Janelle Ito-Orille, Division Chief
Licensing and Certification Division

SUBJECT: [Assembly Bill 2473, Chapter 594](#) (Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 11833)

AB 2473 amended HSC section 11833, to establish core competency requirements for registered and certified AOD counselors. Implementation of these core competency requirements will alter the curriculum and number of hours of education that individuals must complete in order to apply to be registered or certified AOD counselors. The

purpose of this memorandum is to summarize AB 2473 and to advise that these new requirements will not go into effect prior to July 1, 2025 as specified in statute.

AB 2473 requires that a registered or certified counselor have an understanding of specific elements such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, American Society of Addiction Medicine, cultural competency and humility, case management, electronic health record systems, medication assisted treatment, clinical documentation, co-occurring substance use and mental health conditions, confidentiality, relevant law and ethics, professional boundaries, and delivery of services in the behavioral health delivery system.

An individual that registers as an AOD counselor shall complete the core competency requirements within six months from the date of registration. The education hours will count towards the total education hours that a counselor must complete to become certified.

AB 2473 requires that the education hour requirements for an individual who is registered as an AOD counselor cannot be lower than that for a certified peer support specialist. As of July 22, 2022, an individual obtaining a certification as a peer support specialist must complete 80 hours of education and 20 hours of continuing education as specified in [BHIN 21-041](#).

The statute includes two exemptions:

- 1) Counselors in good standing that registered with a state-approved CO prior to July 1, 2025, are exempt from the hour requirements HSC section 11833 (b)(4), and
- 2) Counselors in good standing that are registered with a state-approved CO and have a master's degree in psychology, social work, marriage and family therapy, or counseling are exempt from the core competency requirements specified in HSC section 11833 (b)(2).

DHCS will issue a behavioral health information notice further delineating the requirements to AB 2473 prior to July 1, 2025. If you have questions regarding this memorandum, please contact the Counselor and Medication Assisted Treatment Section by email at DHCSOCOMPLAINT@dhcs.ca.gov.