

Department of Health Services

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Divisions

Administration
Behavioral Health
Primary Health
Public Health

County of Sacramento

Memorandum

Date: September 1, 2025

To: Sacramento County Contracted Providers

From: Lori Miller, LCSW
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Subject: New AOD Counselor Education Requirements

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has provided new information regarding the education requirements for registered and certified alcohol or other drug (AOD) counselors due to the passage of [AB 2473](#). The purpose of this memo is to inform you of those updates.

[Behavioral Health Information Notice \(BHIN\) # 25-029](#) outlines the new AOD Counselor education requirements, passed via AB 2473 in 2022, and has been finalized and posted by DHCS, and is effective January 1, 2026. AB 2473 established core competency education requirements for registered and certified counselors and increased the number of educational hours for registered counselors to be aligned with what is required of Medi-Cal Certified Peer Support Specialists.

A **free**, asynchronous online course sponsored by DHCS will be made available by the University of California San Diego in early 2026 and will be available through June 30, 2028. **Counselors and providers do not need to pay for training.**

A few key components of [BHIN 25-029](#) include:

- The policy in this BHIN takes effect January 1, 2026.
- ***Registered counselors that have completed fewer than 315 hours of AOD education in total must provide written documentation to their certifying organization that they***

completed 50 hours of AOD education to qualify for registration renewal.

- The education must include topics set forth in [9 CCR § 13040](#) subdivisions (a)(1) through (5) or any core competency topics discussed in [BHIN 25-029](#).
- An individual who registers as a counselor for the first time on or after July 1, 2025, must complete a minimum of 80 hours of education, including education in specified core competency education topics within 6 months of registration.
- ***Counselors that register between July 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025, become subject to the six-month timeframe on January 1, 2026.***
 - Therefore, individuals who register between July 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025, shall complete the 80 hours of education including core competency education topics by July 1, 2026.
 - For individuals who register on or after January 1, 2026, the six-month window takes effect immediately. Individuals shall be eligible to complete any education deficiencies before their one-year registration expires.

Individuals may contact their certifying organization directly or visit the following websites to determine if an education provider is approved by the certifying organization:

- CCAPP: <https://ccappeducation.org/find-a-school/#/?accreditations=15&radius=3000>
- CADTP: <https://cadtpcounselors.org/education-directory/>
- CAADE: [Accredited Alcohol and Drug Studies Higher Education Programs – CAADE](#)