



## AREA OF FOCUS

### PORTABILITY OF LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Licensure for the behavioral health workforce is regulated by state licensing boards; while the current system was created to provide oversight of behavioral health services, it limits transfer of licensure when practitioners move or change jobs across state lines.



## Recommendations

### Interstate licensure compacts

Several states have joined interstate licensure compacts (such as the PSYPACT), which allow for behavioral health providers to practice across state lines within the other states that adopt the compacts.<sup>1</sup>

### Reciprocity or endorsement to out-of-state providers

States can offer reciprocity or endorsement of out-of-state licenses to allow for practice across state lines.

### Modified telehealth licensure rules during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 public health emergency period, all 50 states were given emergency authority to waive licensing requirements for providers conducting telehealth services. As the emergency authority was lifted, some states have allowed these waivers to expire while others have passed legislation to make the waivers permanent.<sup>2</sup>

### Streamlined licensure processes

Applying for licensure across state lines can be an expensive, time-consuming, and burdensome process for behavioral health providers. States can streamline the application process for licenses by eliminating unnecessary steps for providers who already have licenses in other states.



## Examples

### Delaware, Reciprocity of licenses

Delaware offers reciprocity of licenses for clinical social workers to providers who have already passed the ASWB exam and hold a current clinical social work license in any other United States state or territory.<sup>3</sup>

### South Dakota, Licensure by Endorsement

South Dakota provides licensure by endorsement to out-of-state licensed counselors from other states or territories who have been licensed and actively practicing for at least three continuous years prior to applying for endorsement.<sup>4</sup>

### International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC), Reciprocity of certifications

The International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) has created an agreement for member state peer certification boards to adhere to the minimum standards set forth by the IC&RC.<sup>5</sup>



## Action Steps

State licensing boards of the various behavioral health fields can re-examine the licensing requirements placed on individual providers who wish to practice in their state. This could be particularly impactful for states with rural populations wishing to attract more providers to their mental health provider shortage areas.



ATTC

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- <sup>1</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures. (2022, May 20). State strategies to recruit and retain the Behavioral Health Workforce. <https://www.ncsl.org/health/state-strategies-to-recruit-and-retain-the-behavioral-health-workforce>
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, May 11). Licensing across state lines. [telehealth.hhs.gov](https://telehealth.hhs.gov/licensure/licensing-across-state-lines) <https://telehealth.hhs.gov/licensure/licensing-across-state-lines>
- <sup>3</sup> Delaware Division of Professional Regulation. (n.d.). Clinical Social Worker Licensure. <https://dpr.delaware.gov/boards/socialworkers/newlicense/>
- <sup>4</sup> South Dakota Legislature (2020). Codified Law 36-32-67. <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/36-32-67>
- <sup>5</sup> Mental Health America. (n.d.) How to become a Peer Support Specialist. <https://www.mhanational.org/how-become-peer-support-specialist>