

California Victim Compensation Board
Proposal for Mental Health Guideline Updates

September 17, 2026

Background

In July 2026, this Board adopted the mental health regulations located at California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 649.26, 649.29.1, and 649.29.2. The approved regulations are a representation of the current Mental Health Guidelines (Guidelines) that were previously vetted with stakeholders and presented to and adopted by the Board. The approved regulations are the result of the careful weighing of alternatives, giving full consideration of all feedback, comments, suggestions and proposals from various parties, stakeholders and experts at the time of their initial drafting and adoption.

Once the regulations adopted by this Board are published by the Office of Administrative Law, the current Guidelines will be duplicative and unnecessary. As a result, the current Guidelines should be abolished while retaining the previously approved Mental Health Reimbursement rates.

Authority

The California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) has the authority, pursuant to Government Code section 13957.2, to establish maximum rates and service limitations for reimbursement of mental health and counseling services. Section 13957.2 provides in pertinent part:

(a) The board may establish maximum rates and services limitations for reimbursement of medical and medical-related services and for mental health and counseling services. The adoption, amendment, and repeal of these service limitations and maximum rates shall not be subject to the rulemaking provision of the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1). An informational copy of the service limitations and maximum rates shall be filed with the Secretary of State upon adoption by the board.

Reimbursement of mental health expenses by CalVCB is based on the definitions, session limitations, documentation requirements and other criteria set forth in the CalVCB Mental Health and Counseling Service Maximum Rates and Service Limitations for Reimbursement, more commonly known as the Mental Health Guidelines (Guidelines).

These Guidelines are subject to the maximum reimbursement provisions of Government Code §13957 and other statutes governing the administration of the California Victim Compensation Program codified in Government Code § 13900, et seq.

Discussion

In 2006, the Board approved a set of Mental Health Guidelines, which clarified how the program should interpret statutory language and apply it to policies and procedures, established to provide consistency and clarity in the processing and reimbursement of expenses related to mental health claims. While the authority to set maximum rates and service limitations already existed in statute under Government Code section 13957.2, for ease of reference, the Mental Health Guidelines also included maximum rates and service limitations related to the reimbursement of mental health services. Upon their approval, the guidelines were filed with the Secretary of State.¹

Since the inception of the Guidelines in 2006, CalVCB has remained consistent in bringing any proposed changes to the Guidelines before the Board for approval, after which they have been filed with the Secretary of State. The most recent version of the Mental Health Guidelines was adopted by the Board at its November 2022 meeting and filed with the Secretary of State in December 2022.

Over the last twenty years, several regulations have been put in place to clarify statutory language related to mental health services for purposes of claim processing and bill reimbursement. In early 2026, program and legal staff underwent an extensive review of the Mental Health Guidelines to determine whether there remained a need for the Mental Health Guidelines following promulgation of the mental health regulations as the regulations adopted by the Board in July 2026 (and effective January 1, 2027) replace all the service limitations that were previously included in the Guidelines. Accordingly, all that remains of the prior iteration of the Guidelines are the reimbursement rates (attached).

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Mental Health Guidelines be abolished effective January 1, 2027, and that the previously approved Mental Health Reimbursement Rates be retained.

¹ California Regulatory Notice Register 2006, Volume No. 5-Z, p. 143-144. (2006).

CaIVCB MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER RATES

(Rev. 5/2024)



Provider Type	License or Certificate	Services	Rates Effective 4/1/2011	Rates Effective 12/15/2022	Rates Effective 6/1/2024
Licensed Psychiatrist (MD)	A, C, or G	Individual/family therapy	\$117/hour	\$152/hour	\$152/hour
		Medication management	\$117/hour	\$152/hour	\$152/hour
		Group therapy	\$46.80/hour	\$46.80/hour	\$46.80/hour
Licensed Psychologist	PSY	Individual/family therapy	\$99/hour	\$129/hour	\$129/hour
		Group therapy	\$39.60/hour	\$39.60/hour	\$39.60/hour
Psychological Associate (must be supervised by a licensed psychologist)	PSB	Individual/family therapy	\$75/hour	\$97/hour	\$97/hour
		Group therapy	\$30/hour	\$30/hour	\$30/hour
Licensed Clinical Social Worker	LCSW	Individual/family therapy	\$81/hour	\$105/hour	\$105/hour
		Group therapy	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour
Associate Clinical Social Worker (must be supervised by a licensed therapist)	ASW	Individual/family therapy	\$75/hour	\$97/hour	\$97/hour
		Group therapy	\$30/hour	\$30/hour	\$30/hour
Licensed Marriage Family Therapist	LMFT	Individual/family therapy	\$81/hour	\$105/hour	\$105/hour
		Group therapy	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour
Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (must be supervised by a licensed therapist)	AMFT	Individual/family therapy	\$75/hour	\$97/hour	\$97/hour
		Group therapy	\$30/hour	\$30/hour	\$30/hour
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor	LPCC	Individual/family therapy	\$81/hour	\$105/hour	\$105/hour
		Group therapy	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour

Provider Type	License or Certificate	Services	Rates Effective 4/1/2011	Rates Effective 12/15/2022	Rates Effective 6/1/2024
Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (must be supervised by a licensed therapist)	APCC	Individual/family therapy	\$75/hour	\$97/hour	\$97/hour
		Group therapy	\$30/hour	\$30/hour	\$30/hour
Clinical Nurse Specialist	CNS	Individual/family therapy	\$81/hour	\$105/hour	\$105/hour
		Group therapy	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse	PMHN	Individual/family therapy	\$81/hour	\$105/hour	\$105/hour
		Group therapy	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour	\$32.40/hour
Nurse Practitioner/ Physician Assistant	NP, PA	Medication management	Medicare Rate	Medicare Rate	Medicare Rate
Licensed Physician	A, C, or G	Medication management	Medicare Rate	Medicare Rate	Medicare Rate
Certified Child Life Specialist (must be supervised by a licensed therapist)	Certified by the Association of Child Life Professionals	Individual/family therapy	N/A	N/A	\$38/hour
Rape Crisis Peer Counselor	Certified by Rape Crisis Center	Individual therapy for no more than 10 weeks, plus one series of group sessions.	\$15/hour	\$15/hour	\$15/hour