



Professional Licensing & Certification Unit Guidance Letter

Number: GL 20-5000
Title: Telehealth for Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists & Associates in Response to COVID-19
Provider Types: Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists & Associates
Date Issued: April 23, 2020

1.0 Subject and Purpose

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists (TSBEMFT) requested the Office of the Governor suspend certain regulatory requirements in response to the state of disaster declared in Texas and the United States of America relating to COVID-19. In accordance with Texas Government Code §418.016, the Office of the Governor granted TSBEMFT’s request to suspend these rules. This suspension is in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor or until the March 13, 2020, disaster declaration is lifted or expires. This letter describes the state rules waived or suspended during the disaster.

2.0 Policy Details & Provider Responsibilities

The Office of the Governor waived rules related to training required for a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) and licensed marriage and family therapist associate (LMFT-A) to provide telehealth services. Under this waiver, LMFTs and LMFT-As (under appropriate supervision) may immediately provide counseling to clients via audio and video services without receiving education, training, or supervised experience in the specific technology. In addition, LMFTs and LMFT-As will not be required to maintain documentation of their training or supervision related to technology-assisted services at this time. LMFTs and LMFT-As will be

required to comply with the original provisions at a later date, as required by HHSC.

The following rules are suspended:

- Marriage & Family Therapists
 - Rules: Texas Administrative Code, Title 22 (25 TAC), Part 35, [§801.58\(d\)](#)
 - Statutes: N/A

3.0 Background/History

In accordance with Texas Government Code §418.016, the Office of the Governor granted TSBEMFT's request to suspend these rules on April 22, 2020. This suspension is in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor or until the March 13, 2020, disaster declaration is lifted or expires.

4.0 Resources

Governor Abbott's Disaster Declaration is available at:

https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/DISASTER_covid19_disaster_proclamation_IMAGE_03-13-2020.pdf

5.0 Contact Information

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Policy, Rules, and Training Section by email at: HCQ_PRT@hhsc.state.tx.us.

If you have any questions regarding LMFT licensure and training requirements, please contact the Professional Licensing and Certification Unit at MFT@hhsc.state.tx.us.