

ASSEMBLY, No. 5808

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 1, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Allows certain mental health professionals to apply volunteer services performed for certain organizations towards credits or hours needed to fulfill continuing education requirements.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/14/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning continuing education requirements for mental
2 health professionals and supplementing P.L.1999, c.403 (C.45:1-
3 7.1 et seq.).

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5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

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8 1. a. As used in this section:

9 “Division” means the Division of Consumer Affairs in the
10 Department of Law and Public Safety.

11 “Frontline healthcare professional” means a healthcare
12 professional licensed or certified to practice in New Jersey who
13 provides direct, in-person care to patients, which care may include
14 but is not limited to testing; general, primary, and emergency care;
15 and care provided at New Jersey Department of Health-licensed
16 facilities.

17 “Licensee” means an individual licensed or certified in New
18 Jersey as a licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed
19 associate marriage and family therapist, licensed professional
20 counselor, licensed associate professional counselor, licensed
21 rehabilitation counselor, licensed clinical alcohol and drug
22 counselor, certified alcohol and drug counselor, licensed
23 professional art therapist, physician, advanced practice nurse,
24 licensed psychologist, State-certified psychoanalyst, or licensed
25 clinical social worker.

26 “Volunteer services” means services provided by a licensee for
27 which the licensee does not receive payment and the patient is not
28 charged, and which are provided:

29 (1) to low-income patients who are not covered by any public or
30 private third party payer;

31 (2) to frontline healthcare professionals; or

32 (3) through an organization that provides mental health services,
33 including crisis intervention and referrals, to low-income, uninsured
34 individuals or to individuals in crisis.

35 b. A licensee may seek a waiver of the continuing education
36 requirements described in chapters 34, 34C, 34D, 35, 37, 42, 42A,
37 and 44G of Title 13 of the New Jersey Administrative Code by
38 providing certain volunteer services. Every two hours of providing
39 the volunteer services shall offset one hour or one credit of
40 continuing education. The number of continuing education contact
41 hours or credits that may be offset by providing volunteer services
42 is as follows:

43 (1) A licensed marriage and family therapist may offset up to 20
44 contact hours;

45 (2) A licensed associate marriage and family therapist may
46 offset up to 10 contact hours;

47 (3) A licensed professional counselor or licensed associate
48 professional counselor may offset up to 20 contact hours;

- 1 (4) A licensed rehabilitation counselor may offset up to 10
2 contact hours;
- 3 5. A licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselor may offset up
4 to 10 contact hours;
- 5 6. A certified alcohol and drug counselor may offset up to 15
6 contact hours;
- 7 7. A licensed professional art therapist may offset up to 10
8 contact hours;
- 9 8. A physician who provides psychiatric services may offset up
10 to 10 Category I continuing medical education credits;
- 11 9. An advanced practice nurse who provides psychiatric
12 services may offset up to 15 hours of continuing education;
- 13 10. A licensed psychologist may offset up to 10 credits of
14 continuing education;
- 15 11. A State-certified psychoanalyst may offset up to five credits
16 of continuing education; and
- 17 12. A licensed clinical social worker may offset up to 10 credits
18 of continuing education.
- 19 c. The time spent performing volunteer services shall not
20 substitute for continuing education hours or credits that are
21 specifically allocated in the New Jersey Administrative Code to
22 required topics, including, but not limited to, ethics, cultural
23 competency, opioid prescription, or jurisprudence.
- 24 d. A licensee shall maintain contemporaneous records
25 indicating the number of hours of volunteer services provided and
26 containing information sufficient to reflect compliance with this act.
27 The records shall be maintained for the duration established by the
28 applicable board for continuing education records.
- 29 e. Nothing in this act shall affect supervision requirements for
30 a licensed or certified mental health professional who is required to
31 be supervised in order to provide the mental health services for
32 which that professional is licensed or certified to provide.

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34 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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39 This bill allows certain mental health professionals to offset
40 every two hours of volunteer service for one hour or one credit of
41 continuing education required to be fulfilled each biennial licensure
42 renewal period. The time spent performing volunteer services is not
43 to substitute for continuing education hours or credits that are
44 specifically allocated in the New Jersey Administrative Code to
45 required topics, including, but not limited to, ethics, cultural
46 competency, opioid prescription, or jurisprudence.

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1 Moreover, a licensee is to maintain contemporaneous records
2 indicating the number of hours of volunteer services provided and
3 containing information sufficient to reflect compliance with the bill.
4 Such records shall be maintained for the duration established by the
5 applicable board for continuing education records. Lastly, nothing
6 in the bill is to impact any supervision requirements for the licensed
7 or certified mental health professional who must be supervised in
8 order to provide the mental health services for which they are
9 licensed or certified to provide.