

From: [National Standards of Practice](#)
To: [David Fye \[BSRB\]](#)
Cc: [BSRB](#)
Subject: Request for input: VA Marriage and Family Therapist National Standards of Practice
Date: Friday, April 26, 2024 1:59:54 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Letter from Dept of Veterans Affairs to Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Fye:

On behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), please find attached a letter from the VA Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Shereef Elnahal, outlining the National Standard of Practice for Marriage and Family Therapists at VA.

We would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt of this letter and your comments on the VA standard by June 25, 2024. Please email any comments or request for discussion to VA.NSP@va.gov.

Thank you for your assistance,

National Standards of Practice Team on behalf of the VHA Office of Regulations, Appeals, and Policy (10BRAP)
Phone: (202) 461-0500
Email: VA.NSP@va.gov
For more information on the national standards of practice go to:
<https://www.va.gov/standardspractice/>





DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Under Secretary for Health
Washington DC 20420

April 26, 2024

Mr. David B. Fye, J.D.
Executive Director
Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board
700 SW Harrison Street
Suite 420
Topeka, KS 66603

Dear Mr. Fye:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to honoring the Nation's Veterans by delivering world-class health care and service. In November 2020, VA [issued an interim final rule](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/12/2020-24817/authority-of-va-professionals-to-practice-health-care) (https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/12/2020-24817/authority-of-va-professionals-to-practice-health-care) confirming that VA health care professionals may practice their health care profession consistent with the scope and requirements of their VA employment, notwithstanding any state license, registration, certification, or other requirements that unduly interfere with their practice.

VA is developing national standards of practice to uphold safe, high-quality care for the Nation's Veterans in VA's integrated health care system and to ensure that VA health care professionals can meet the needs of Veterans when practicing within the scope of their VA employment. National standards are designed to increase Veterans' access to safe and effective health care, thereby improving health outcomes for the Nation's Veterans. These standards apply exclusively to VA employees, and most VA health care professionals will not experience any change in the way they practice health care. National standards of practice also protect VA health care professionals from state disciplinary action that is based solely on those professionals practicing within the scope of their VA employment, which includes their VA national standard of practice. However, that does not prevent state boards from taking disciplinary actions against health care professionals for negligence or misconduct.

To develop national standards, VA reviewed state licensure, certification, and registration requirements; identified enterprise-wide practices that would enhance the practice of the profession at all VA medical facilities; and engaged with both VA employees and external stakeholders such as Veterans Service Organizations, labor partners, and professional associations relevant to the occupation.

We would like to provide you, as a state licensing board for Marriage and Family Therapists, the opportunity to comment directly to us on the proposed national standard for Marriage and Family Therapists (enclosed). Please note, this standard is not final. The Marriage and Family Therapists national standard will be posted in the [Federal Register](#)

Page 2.

Mr. David B. Fye, J.D.

(<https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/veterans-affairs-department/>) for broader public comment; we will post the link to our [website](#) (<https://www.va.gov/STANDARDSOFPRACTICE/federalregister.asp/>) once the standard is available for public comment.

VA's proposed Marriage and Family Therapist standard of practice **does not** vary from your state's licensure requirements. However, there may be variances with other states' requirements.

If Kansas changes its requirements and places new limitations on the tasks and duties it allows which are inconsistent with what the national standard of practice authorizes, currently or in any future iteration, the national standard of practice preempts such limitations and authorizes the VA health care professional to continue to practice consistent with the tasks and duties as outlined in the national standard. We encourage you to contact VA.NSP@va.gov if at any time you enact such a restriction.

We would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt of this letter and your comments on the VA standard by June 25, 2024. Furthermore, please provide any context you believe would be appropriate on your state's licensing laws, regulations, requirements, or restrictions related to either the supervision of individuals in this occupation or the supervision of individuals in a related discipline that VA should consider. We also ask you to consider creating an exemption for Federal government employees within your state practice act.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss the standard through a follow-up meeting if desired. Please send your comments and meeting request to VA.NSP@va.gov.

Thank you for your support in enabling VA health professionals to provide the best care to the Nation's Veterans.

Sincerely,



Shereef Elnahal, M.D., MBA

Enclosure