



## EMPLOYMENT TIPS FOR FOREIGN TRAINED PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

### ***Do I need a license in order to work?***

Not necessarily. Psychologists and social workers need a license to practice psychotherapy whether in an organization or in their own private practice. However, there are many jobs available that do not require a license and that utilize the skills and knowledge of psychologists and social workers.

Most of these job opportunities are with “Community Based Organizations” or CBO’s that provide a range of social services. CBO’s are non-governmental organizations which are private and not for profit, commonly known as non-profit organizations. Generally these organizations are funded through a mix of government funds and private donations.

Services provided by non-profit or community based organizations include services for youth, children and the elderly; services to persons with disabilities including mental health disabilities, services for abused women, services to persons with substance abuse problems etc.

### ***Should I validate my education/credentials?***

Most employers will not require you to validate your credentials. However, since employers are generally not familiar with the education systems of other countries, it may be helpful for them to see the equivalency of your education in the United States. Some employers may also be interested in seeing the course content of your education.

### ***What about having work experience in the United States?***

Employers generally look for people with experience with the populations the serve. For example, if you are applying for a job as a “youth counselor”, the employer will want to see that you have experience working with young people. You need to decide your areas of interest in the human services field and consider doing some volunteer work in those areas to increase your opportunities of employment. Volunteer work can give you valuable experience in the United States, connect you with other professionals and facilitate local letters of recommendation.

### *Job Titles/Position Description*

- Counselor
- Case manager
- Outreach Worker
- Social Worker
- Residential Counselor

### *Job Areas*

- Human Services
- Social Services
- Health Services
- Non-profit Sector
- Substance Abuse
- Children Services
- Youth Services
- Senior Services

### *Web-sites*

- [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com)
- [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
- [www.opportunityknocks.org](http://www.opportunityknocks.org)

### *Evaluation of Credentials*

- International Education Research Foundation  
[www.ierf.org](http://www.ierf.org)
- Council on Social Work Education [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org)  
(social workers only)

**Overview** - California has one state licensing board for psychologists, the California Board of Psychology. The Board of Psychology only accepts degrees obtained in foreign countries outside of the United States and Canada if you have Doctorate equivalency if you have a Doctorate equivalency certified by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES.) The web site for the Board of Psychology is [www.Psychboard.ca.gov](http://www.Psychboard.ca.gov). The Board of Behavioral Sciences licenses Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Educational Psychologists requires three years experience as school psychologist in a public school. The best option for most foreign trained psychologists is to follow the process of obtaining a Marriage and Family Therapist License (MFT). The process is as follows:

- 1. International Education Research Foundation (IERF)** - IERF is the foreign credential evaluation service required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences in order to start the process of acquiring a license as a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT). Their address is Post Office Box 3665, Culver City, CA 90231-3665, Phone: 310.258.9451, Fax: 310.342.7086. You can go to their website at [www.ierf.org](http://www.ierf.org). You can download the application from their website. The type of report you need is a "Detail Report." In 2010, the cost for this report was \$165. You will need to send them copies of your transcripts and diploma. If the transcripts/diploma are not in English, you must send a "certified" translation of them. IERF will send you two copies of the evaluation. One copy is for you and the other copy will be in a sealed envelope. You will then mail the copy in the sealed envelope (do not open it) to the Board of Behavioral Sciences with your application.
- 2. Board of Behavioral Sciences** - Once you have your report from IERF, contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences to obtain the Marriage and Family Therapist Intern Registration Application Packet. You do not need to send the "Program Certification" form as part of your application. Their address is 1625 N Market Street, Suite S-200, Sacramento, CA 95834. Telephone: (916) 574-7830. Website- <http://www.bbs.ca.gov>. You can download the application from their website. The cost for this application was \$100 in 2010. The Board will issue you an "intern registration number." After you have this number, you can continue your licensing process. **Supervised Experience** - Once you receive your "intern registration number" from the Board, you must obtain 3,000 hours of supervised experience. You must be supervised by a person licensed for at least two years in California as a Marriage, Family and Child Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Psychologist, or Physician who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. You have six years from the time you register as an intern to obtain this experience. The supervised experience can be paid experience; however, you cannot receive payment as an independent contractor.
- 3. Additional Training** - There are eight additional educational requirements that you must obtain before submitting your application for a license. These are: **Alcoholism and Other Chemical Substance Dependency** (15 hours); **Human Sexuality** (10 hours); **Child Abuse** (7 hours); **Spousal or Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection, and Intervention** (no hour requirement for those who began their degree program for the period of January 1, 1995 through December 31, 2003 . 15 hours for those who began their degree program on and after January 1, 2004); **Aging and Long-Term Care** (10 hours); **California Law and Professional Ethics** (2 semester or 3 quarter units); **Psychological Testing** (2 semester or 3 quarter units); **Psychopharmacology** (2 semester or 3 quarter units.) All of the additional training listed above may be taken on-line as long as the training meets the specific requirements outlined in the Board's Licensing Laws and Regulations and the participant receives a certificate of completion.
- 4. Board of Behavioral Sciences** - After completing your 3,000 hours of supervised practice and the additional training required, contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences to obtain the Application for State License as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Their address is 1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200, Sacramento, CA 95834, Phone: (916) 574-7830, Fax: (916) 574-8625 Website- <http://www.bbs.ca.gov>. The fee for this application is \$200. After the Board reviews your application, they will inform you that you are eligible to take the Written Examination. Once you pass the written examination, you will be required to complete an application for the Oral Examination and submit it with a \$200 fee. After you pass the oral examination, you will submit a Request for Initial Licensure with a fee and get your license.

**San Francisco Welcome Back Center**  
1860 Hayes Street, Room 102  
San Francisco, CA 94117-1220  
(415) 561-1833

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