



## Credentialing Guide: **School Based-Registered Play Therapist (SB-RPT)**

### Applicants

The Association for Play Therapy (APT) is a national professional society formed in 1982 to advance the play therapy modality and the knowledge and expertise of those mental health professionals engaged in play therapy practice, instruction, and supervision.

We confer our School Based-Registered Play Therapist™ (SB-RPT) credential upon those licensed or certified school counselors or school psychologists to help consumers identify those with specialized training and experience in play therapy.

To earn this prestigious credential, please observe these steps:

- Review this guide.
- Contact our office with questions.
- Submit your completed application and fee with supporting materials.

An application is valid for 12 months after submission. Once earned, the credential is renewed annually on your approval anniversary date upon application and payment of applicable fees.

Thank you for your interest in play therapy and our credentialing program!

**Claudia Vega, Ph.D.**, Clinical Coordinator, [cvega@a4pt.org](mailto:cvega@a4pt.org)

**Carol Guerrero, CAP**, Administrative Services Coordinator, [cguerrero@a4pt.org](mailto:cguerrero@a4pt.org)

Association for Play Therapy  
401 Clovis Ave., Suite 107  
Clovis, CA 93612  
Tel (559) 298-3400 / Fax (559) 298-3410  
[www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)

## Credentialing Application Overview

This chart summarizes the criteria that applicants must satisfy to earn the School Based-Registered Play Therapist (SB-RPT) credential.

Review the following pages for details.

#	APPLICATION CRITERIA	SB-RPT
0200	License	Current and active individual state license or certificate from the State Department of Education to independently practice as a school counselor or school psychologist.
0300	Educational Degrees	<p>Master's or higher mental health degree with demonstrated coursework in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• child development,</li> <li>• theories of personality,</li> <li>• principles of psychotherapy,</li> <li>• child &amp; adolescent psychopathology, and</li> <li>• ethics</li> </ul> <p>APT will preview your transcripts for a fee.</p>
0400	Clinical Experience	General clinical experience required by the State Department of Education school counselor or school psychologist license/certification, plus 2 years of continuous work in school setting.
0500	Play Therapy Training	150 hours of play therapy specific instruction from institutions of higher education or APT-Approved Providers (limit 50 non-contact hours).
0600	Supervised Play Therapy Experience & Supervision	<p>Applicant for the SB-RPT must be supervised <b>by an RPT-S</b> for a period of no less than 1 school year during which the applicant documents a minimum of 600 direct client hours utilizing play therapy plus 50 hours of concurrent supervision. A maximum of 25 hours of the 50 hours of supervision may be in a group setting.</p> <p>These supervised hours must be completed during or after the applicant earned his/her Master's degree.</p>
0900	Renewal Criteria	<p><b>Annual:</b> Current and active individual state license or certificate from the State Department of Education to independently practice as a school counselor or school psychologist.</p> <p><b>CE Cycle (every 36 months):</b> 18 hours of play therapy specific instruction from institutions of higher education or APT Approved Providers. Plus (3) three hours of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) specific training (or diagnosis/psychopathology).</p>

## Terms

To ensure clarity of understanding and to both simplify and standardize usage, the meaning of these words and phrases are described below:

1. **Application fees** are fees paid to have your application reviewed and processed.
2. **APT** refers to the Association for Play Therapy, a national professional society in the United States.

3. **APT-Approved Providers** refers to those individuals, organizations, and businesses that are designated by APT as “approved providers of play therapy continuing education” to provide graduate-level programs presented by graduate-level instructors for individuals with Master or higher mental health degrees.
4. **CE** is the acronym for “continuing education” (or “training”) hours earned at conferences, workshops, and other forums.
5. **Clock hours** are used to convert certain training-related activities into hours. Graduate coursework may be converted to clock hours based on the calculation described in Section 0505. Relevant publications may be converted to clock hours based on the calculation described in Section 0901.
6. **Contact education** and continuing education programs refer to those in which “students enjoy in-person or distance interaction with a live instructor in real time”. “Non-Contact” programs are essentially home study or other programs that do not include such interaction.
7. **Contact or In-Person Supervision** is when you meet face-to-face with your supervisor to discuss your play therapy case, notes, reports, session video. There is no limit to the number of hours that you may obtain in this manner.
8. **Clinical practitioner or practitioner** refers to a licensed clinical mental health professional authorized to independently provide clinical mental health services in their primary discipline. A “school based-practitioner” refers to a licensed or certified school counselor or school psychologist authorized to independently practice as such by the State Department of Education.
9. **Group Supervision** consists of one supervisor and at least two but not more than 10 supervisees. Consult chart in Section 603.
10. **Individual Supervision** is defined as one supervisor and one supervisee.
11. **Individual in Group Supervision.** You may obtain individual supervision hours within a group only if focus was on your play therapy case, notes, reports, or session video and does not exceed 10 supervisees. There is no limit to the number of hours that may be obtained in this manner.
12. **Institutions** refer to institutions of higher education, i.e. colleges and universities. Several institutions have been designated by APT as “approved centers of play therapy education” because they provide graduate-level programs presented by graduate-level instructors for individuals with or earning Master’s or higher clinical mental health degrees.
13. **License or certificate** refers to an individually issued current and active school counselor or school psychologist license/certificate to independently practice as a school counselor or school psychologist. Excluded are temporary and learning licenses issued to interns, associates, and to those engaged in school counseling/psychologist practice under supervision or another’s license.
14. **Member** refers to a Professional, International, or Affiliate member of the Association for Play Therapy. You do not need to be a member to earn and maintain an SB-RPT credential.
15. **Mental health degree** refers to earning a Master’s or higher clinical mental health degree from an institution of higher education.
16. **Multicultural Competency** refers to the ability of play therapists to 1) become and remain aware of their own cultural backgrounds, influences, and biases (including but not limited to religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race), 2) acquire and continuously seek knowledge about how cultural backgrounds, influences, and biases operate in the lives of their clients, and 3) demonstrate culturally-appropriate therapeutic skills.
17. **Non-Contact or Distance Supervision** occurs when you meet with your supervisor via telephone or online to discuss your play therapy case notes, reports, or session video. The applicant/supervisee is responsible for assuring acceptance and compliance with state board regulations in his or her specific discipline, up to and including verification identity by either party. There is no limit to the number of hours that you may obtain in this manner.
18. **Renewal fees** are due annually and are to maintain your credential active. Annual APT membership dues are unrelated and billed separately.

19. **RPT** is the acronym for the Registered Play Therapist credential.
20. **RPT-S** is the acronym for the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor credential.
21. **RPT/S** is the collective acronym for both the Registered Play Therapist (RPT) and Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor (RPT-S) credentials.
22. **SB-RPT** is the acronym for the School Based-Registered Play Therapist credential.
23. **State Department of Education** refers to a state department of education or similar state government agency which promulgates school counselor or school psychologist standards and practices and investigates and penalizes violations of such standards and practices. For SB-RPT candidates and designees who are employed in a school setting, their State Department of Education license or certification must allow them to practice in the state in which the school is located. For SB-RPT candidates and designees who are not employed in a school setting, their State Department of Education license or certificate may be from any state, provided that if such a candidate or designee gains employment in a school setting, their license or certificate must allow them to practice in that state.
24. **Supervisors** are clinical mental health professionals who are licensed to practice in their respective primary disciplines and recognized by their licensing boards as eligible to supervise; expected to know and abide by their respective ethics and standards; subject to disciplinary action by their respective boards of license and accountable for the actions of their supervisees.

## **Guide**

### **0100. Applicant Information**

Provide your contact information so we may contact you regarding your application. In addition, this information will be listed on our website once approved.

### **0200. Verification of State Department of Education License or Certification**

0201. **Attach** a copy of your State Department of Education individual license or certification indicating that you are legally permitted to independently practice as a school counselor or school psychologist. Do NOT submit original copies as all materials will be destroyed after review.
0202. APT only accepts licenses or certification that are issued by a State Department of Education that promulgates school counselor or school psychologist standards and practices and that investigates and penalizes violations of such standards and practices.
0203. A school counselor or school psychologist license should include the general clinical experience required by the State Department of Education for school counselors or school psychologist, plus two (2) years of continuous work in school setting.
0204. APT confers "practitioner credentials". If you are a school-based practitioner, you must maintain an active license or certificate from the State Department of Education in the state in which you practice.

### **0300. Verification of Graduate Degrees and Core Content Coursework**

0301. **Attach** a copy of your graduate transcript(s) issued by an institution of higher education. The date your graduate degree was conferred must be clearly visible.
0302. Your transcripts must indicate that you have completed coursework in these five (5) required core areas:
  1. Child Development
  2. Theories of Personality
  3. Principles of Psychotherapy
  4. Child and Adolescent Psychopathology
  5. Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues
0303. The core content areas listed in 302 may be covered in a single course or across multiple courses. The class titles may differ from APT's core area titles. See table below for examples of graduate course titles for each content area:

<b>Required Core Content Area:</b>	<b>Possible Titles of Courses on Transcripts (<i>List not exhaustive</i>)</b>
Child Development	Life Span Development, Human Behavior in Social Environment (HBSE) I
Theories of Personality	Counseling Theories, HBSE I or II
Psychotherapy	HBSE I or II, Counseling Process & Skills, Clinical SW Practice
Child & Adolescent Psychopathology	Abnormal Psychology or Behavior, HBSE III, DSM, Diagnosis & Treatment, Mental Emotional & Behavioral Disorders
Ethics	Intro into the Profession, SW Issues

0304. If you would like our assistance in determining whether or not your academic program covered the five content areas list above prior to submitting your application, please complete the Transcript Review form available on our website and submit it with your fee and transcripts. APT will verify whether or not your academic program has met this requirement. If you submit your completed application within one year from the date of review, you will receive a \$25 credit on your application fee.

#### **0400. Verification of General Clinical Experience**

**ALL Applicants** must have completed the general clinical experience requirements set by the State Department of Education for the school counselor or school psychologist license/certification, plus two (2) years of continuous work in school setting. Submit a copy of your license/certification and a copy of your licensing/certification requirements for verification.

#### **0500. Verification of Play Therapy Coursework & Trainings (Play Therapy Instruction Hours)**

0501. Attach copies of transcripts and/or training certificates issued by institutions of higher education and APT-Approved Providers to demonstrate that you earned 150 clock hours of play therapy specific training. Do NOT submit original copies of your certificates as all materials will be destroyed after review.

0502. Not more than 50 of the 150 play therapy specific clock hours may be non-contact.

0503. Clock hours earned from graduate internships and practicum are considered “experience hours,” not “instruction hours” are therefore are not eligible towards the 150 hours of play therapy specific training.

0504. APT recommends but does not require that the 150 clock hours of play therapy specific training be earned primarily in these four (4) areas:

1. Play Therapy History, 4-5 hours
2. Play Therapy Theories, 40-50 hours.
3. Play Therapy Techniques or Methods, 40-50 hours.
4. Play Therapy Applications, 40-50 hours

0505. Calculation of clock hours earned from graduate coursework:

1. Convert graduate courses to clock hours. Calculation: [number of weeks] x [number of class clock hours a week] x [1.5 factor]. Example: [15-week course] x [3 graduate hours a week] x [1.5 factor] = 67.5 clock hours.
2. Not more than 135 clock hours may be earned from the same instructor.
3. Audited courses must be displayed on transcripts and clock hours calculated as follows:
  - a. Clock hours. Example: [15-week course] x [3 graduate hours a week] x [1.0 factor] = 45 clock hours.
  - b. Additional credit may be earned if the instructor produces a signed letter attesting that the student also completed all assignments and projects. Example: [15-week course] x [3 graduate hours a week] x [1.5 factor] = 67.5 hours.

0506. Calculation of clock hours received from APT-Approved Providers:

1. One hour of training equals one clock hour.
2. Completion certificate must display the sponsor’s APT-Approved Provider number (i.e. APT-Approved Provider XX-XXX).
3. Not more than 135 clock hours may be earned from the same instructor.

## **0600. Verification of Supervised Play Therapy Experience and Supervision**

0601. Supervisors must be:
1. clinical mental health professionals, licensed to practice in their respective primary disciplines;
  2. recognized by their state mental health licensing boards as eligible to supervise;
  3. credentialed and maintain a current RPT-S;
  4. expected to know and abide by their respective ethics and standards;
  5. subject to disciplinary action by their respective boards of license and accountable for the actions of their supervisees.
0602. Types of Supervision:
1. Individual Supervision. Consists of one supervisor and one supervisee.
  2. Group Supervision. Consists of one supervisor and at least two but not more than 10 supervisees.
  3. Individual in Group Supervision: You may obtain individual supervision hours within a group only if focus was on your play therapy case, notes, reports, or session video and does not exceed 10 supervisees. There is no limit to the number of hours that may be obtained in this manner.
  4. Contact or In-Person Supervision: Occurs when you meet in-person with your supervisor to discuss case, notes, reports, session video, or by simultaneously but separately watching and discussing your session video. There is no limit to the number of hours that you may obtain in this manner.
  5. Non-Contact or Distance Supervision: Occurs when you meet with your supervisor via telephone or online to discuss your play therapy case notes, reports, or session video. There is no limit to the number of hours that you may obtain in this manner.
0603. Form A – Supervised Play Therapy Experience & Supervision:
1. These hours may have been accrued during or after earning your graduate degree, and must be completed under the supervision of an RPT-S.
  2. List the dates and the total # of hours you received your supervised play therapy experience. A minimum of 600 direct contact hours of supervised play therapy experience is required.
  3. A minimum of 50 hours of concurrent play therapy supervision is required, of which no more than 25 hours may be in group format. Of these supervision hours, you must obtain at least 10 hours of supervision from the same supervisor and be observed in at least one play therapy session.

## **0700. Attestation by Applicant**

By signing the application, you acknowledge, among other items set forth in the attestation, that:

1. You are agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions of the application.
2. You are establishing a contractual relationship with APT.
3. You understand that APT reserves the right to unilaterally revise, from time to time, the terms and conditions, governing policies, approval and renewal criteria, and other facets of this agreement.
4. You accept sole and total responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the information provided in your application.
5. Your state license or certificate from the State Department of Education authorizes you to practice in the state in which you are practicing. If you move to or practice in another state in which you are not licensed/certified and that state does not accept your current license/certificate, you must obtain a license or certification from the Department of Education of that state prior to beginning your practice. You must provide documentation of the new license or certification to APT at least twenty-one (21) days prior to commencing your practice in that state.
6. You agree to immediately notify APT by certified, registered or receipted mail if your State Department of Education license or certification as a school counselor or school psychologist expires, lapses, or is suspended or revoked.

## **0800. Application & Annual Fees, Payment Options**

**Application fees:** The non-refundable application fee includes complimentary initial 12-month activation fee.  
\$135.00 – SB-RPT applicant (non-member \$295.00).

**Annual Renewal fees:** Renewal fees are billed and due annually upon your anniversary date.  
\$ 55.00 –SB-RPT Renewal (non-member \$135.00).

**Payment:** Payment must be made payable only to “APT” and only in US dollars by check, money order, or credit card. Your check must display your name and contact information. A \$25 fee is assessed for insufficient funds. APT accepts only Visa or MasterCard.

## **0900. Renewal of SB-RPT Credential**

0901. Maintain your credential as follows:
1. Pay annual renewal fee.
  2. Provide documentation that your State Department of Education license or certification as a school counselor or school psychologist is in good standing.
  3. Earn at least 18 clock hours of graduate-level play therapy continuing education presented by graduate-level instructors during each 36-month continuing education cycle from these sources:
    - a. Institutions of higher education within or outside of the United States.
    - b. APT-Approved Providers within or outside of the United States.
    - c. Professional mental health or play therapy organizations outside of the United States that provide graduate-level play therapy continuing education presented by graduate-level instructors to professionals with Master or higher mental health degrees.
  4. Earn (3) three hours of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) specific training (or diagnosis/psychopathology). These hours may be contact or non-contact.
  5. Limitations:
    - a. Not more than 9 of the 18 hours may be non-contact hours.
    - b. Not more than 12 of the 18 hours may be earned via one or more of these play therapy specific options:
      - 1) Provide play therapy graduate-level instruction at an institution of higher education or continuing education conference, workshop, or other mental health forum (1 clock hour of instruction equals one hour of credit). Limit 6 hours.
      - 2) Author a play therapy publication, article, or chapter (1-15 pages equals three clock hours; 16-50 pages equals six clock hours; and 51-plus pages equals 12 clock hours). Limit 12 hours.
      - 3) Provide play therapy information via a non-mental health forum or to a non-mental health audience (one clock hour of education equals one hour of credit). Limit 6 hours.
      - 4) Excess clock hours may not be transferred to the next three-year continuing education cycle.
      - 5) APT reserves the right to review and reject the sponsor, content, and presenter of any education or continuing education program.
  6. If audited by APT, you must provide transcripts from institutions of higher education or certificates from APT-Approved Providers of Play Therapy Continuing Education (and displaying their Approved Provider number). Copies of course syllabi, registration materials, training programs, promotional flyers, etc. may also be requested. Do NOT submit original copies of your certificates as all materials will be destroyed after review.

## **1000. Denial, Revocation, Suspension, or Probation**

1001. An SB-RPT credential application may be denied, or APT may unilaterally revoke, suspend or place on probation an SB-RPT credential, for one or more of these reasons:
1. Disciplinary action is taken against you by the applicable licensing authority, including but not limited to the State Department of Education, that results in the suspension or revocation of your license or certification
  2. Conviction of a crime related to the provision of school counselor or school psychological services or a crime that would adversely affect the interests, effectiveness, reputation, or image of APT
  3. Falsification, by inclusion or omission, of information on the SB-RPT application or renewal or any supporting document
  4. Failure to complete SB-RPT credentialing application or renewal requirement
  5. Representing your RPT or RPT-S credential as your primary credential or mental health license
  6. Voluntary relinquishment of your license or certification
1002. If an initial or renewal application is denied because the SB-RPT applicant or designee disagrees with one or more policies pertaining to the approval of such applications, the SB-RPT applicant or designee may appeal to the CEO of APT (“CEO”). If the latter declines to grant such approval, the SB-RPT applicant or designee may ask that the CEO reconsider by consulting with the Chairs of the Board of Directors, the Ethics & Practices Committee, and/or the Registration & Continuing Education Committee regarding whether such policies should be changed. The reconsidered decision of the CEO is final.
1003. When issuing the revocation, suspension or prohibition of an SB-RPT credential, APT may identify the number of months before which the individual may reapply for or have reinstated the SB-RPT credential. In determining the number of months, APT may consider the extent of the infraction resulting in the revocation, suspension or prohibition and does not have to adhere to the time periods set forth in Section 1105 below. Subject to the review described in Section 1002 above, the decision of APT for revocation, suspension or prohibition and the time period therefore are final.

## **1100. Complaint Process**

1101. APT may consider revoking, suspending, or placing on probation an SB-RPT credential if a complainant files a formal written complaint against one or more professionals with an SB-RPT credential with their State Department of Education or applicable licensing authority.
1. For example, if the California Department of Education has issued a license or certificate to an SB-RPT designee, then a complainant will be advised by APT to file a formal complaint with that Department.
  2. If the identity of the applicable authority is unknown to a complainant, the latter may contact APT to learn the identity of the authority upon which the SB-RPT designee's application or renewal application is based.
1102. If the formal complaint results in an adverse finding about and disciplinary action against an SB-RPT designee, the complainant may then file with the CEO a) a formal written complaint and b) a copy of the official written resolution to the complaint previously filed with the applicable licensing or certifying authority, typically the State Department of Education.
1. Complainants may themselves forward - or ask that the applicable state department of education licensing or certifying authorities forward - a copy of their resolution to the CEO.
  2. APT may take no action with respect to the SB-RPT designee against whom formal complaints are filed until its receipt of such formal written complaint resolutions.
1103. If the resolution of any formal complaint is adverse to an SB-RPT designee, then, within 10 calendar days of receipt of the resolution, the CEO shall send copies of the formal complaint and other documentation relating to the complaint, including the resolution of the licensing or certifying authority, to both the SB-RPT or and the Ethics & Practices Committee.
1104. An SB-RPT designee may submit to the Ethics & Practices Committee via the CEO a written statement in response to the complaint, resolution, and other documents within 10 calendar days of their receipt of such from the CEO.
1105. Within 30 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, resolution, and other documents, the Ethics & Practices Committee reviews and evaluates such items and determines if the SB-RPT credential should be:
1. Maintained.
  2. Placed on probation for six (6) or 12 months with all rights and privileges.
  3. Temporarily suspended for six (6) or 12 months without any rights and privileges.
  4. Permanently revoked.
1106. Within 10 calendar days of the decision of the Committee, the CEO advises the SB-RPT designee and complainant of the decision in writing.

## **1200. Appeal Process**

The SB-RPT designee may appeal any decision made by the Ethics & Practices Committee relating to any decision made by it to revoke, suspend, place on probation, or otherwise take disciplinary action against the SB-RPT for any reason identified in Section 1300 as follows:

1. File a written request (the "Appeal Request") with the CEO within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the decision or other action. The Appeal Request must contain the pertinent facts, the reason for the appeal, and any other information that the SB-RPT designee desires to convey but may not re-state any matters set forth in any written statement provided to APT pursuant to Section 1300.
2. Within 10 calendar days after receipt of the Appeal Request, the CEO shall advise the Chair of the Board to appoint an Appellate Committee comprising not fewer than five (5) licensed mental health professionals.
3. Within 10 calendar days after receipt of such appointment request, the Chair of the Board shall appoint the Appellate Committee and notify the CEO of the appointed Appellate Committee members.
4. Within 10 calendar days of the notice of the Appellate Committee members, the CEO shall forward to Appellate Committee these items:
  - a. Formal complaint to APT.
  - b. Resolution of initial complaint formally filed with licensing (or certifying) authority.
  - c. Response and other written statements by SB-RPT designee.
  - d. Resolution of APT Ethics & Practices Committee.
  - e. Appeal Request filed by SB-RPT designee.
5. The Appellate Committee shall render a decision, based upon submitted documents, to the CEO within 30 calendar days of receipt of such documents.

6. The CEO shall inform the SB-RPT designee of the Appellate Committee decision in writing within 10 calendar days of receipt thereof. The decision of the Appellate Committee is final.

### **Summary**

Believing that the general public is well served by licensed and play therapy-trained school counselors and school psychologists, APT welcomes SB-RPT credentialing applications and renewals and remains available to assist eligible professionals.

### **Contact**

If, after reviewing the SB-RPT Guide, you continue to have questions, please feel free to contact APT at (559) 298-3400 or [info@a4pt.org](mailto:info@a4pt.org).

**Claudia Vega, Ph.D.**, Clinical Coordinator, [cvega@a4pt.org](mailto:cvega@a4pt.org)

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