



Credentialing Standards for the
Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™
APT Professional Credentialing Program

This revision is effective as of July 1, 2022, and supersedes all previous versions.

APT may revise its Credentialing Program and its criteria, standards, process, and other aspects of the program at its sole discretion.

Credentialing Standards for the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ Credential

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Essential Credentialing Documents Housed Online

Glossary of Terms	online
Competencies	online
Application Denial, Complaints, and Appeals	online

All approval determinations are made at the sole discretion of APT based on all information received and reviewed, and that APT may approve or deny applications or renewals based on any and all information received by it during the application and renewal process or otherwise, including information that may be obtained independently or from third parties.

Credentialing Standards for the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ Credential

Mission

To promote the value of play, play therapy, and credentialed play therapists by advancing the development of mental health of all people including emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. As a diverse, equitable, and inclusive professional organization, we embrace:

- Increased appreciation of play and play therapy by the public
- Ethical practice of play therapy informed by research, education, and training
- Recognition of education grounded in seminal and historically significant play therapy theories

Statement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As an integral component of our organization, APT is committed to achieving and maintaining a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We are at our best when the principles of DEI are fully embedded in our governance, leadership, and organizational policies. Our unwavering goal is to generate programs and processes resulting in ongoing meaningful and sustainable organizational change toward DEI.

As part of this commitment, APT made DEI additions to the credentialing program in 2021, which go into effect January 1, 2023. These changes can be seen in the educational requirements of the RPT™ Credential as well as in the continuing education requirements. See [Summary of Program Changes](#).

APT credentials are conferred without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or national origin.

Program Intent

The intent of the APT Credentialing Program is to develop national standards for the competent practice of play therapy and the provision of play therapy supervision. We confer the Registered Play Therapist™ (RPT™), Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ (RPT-S™), and School Based-Registered Play Therapist™ (SB-RPT™) credentials upon those who meet these national standards to help consumers identify licensed clinical mental health professionals, with specialized training and experience in play therapy.

This is accomplished by integrating play therapy instruction, clinical experience, and supervision in a sequential three-phase approach that builds upon a completed graduate degree, and requires depth and breadth of play therapy instruction, experience, and supervision to ensure competencies in this specialty.

The updated credentialing standards, established in 2019, focus on promoting professional accountability and require ongoing professional growth and development that ultimately improve mental health services to the most vulnerable populations, especially children.

RPT-S™ Designation

The RPT-S™ designation represents an advanced level of expertise, as evidenced by ongoing practice and continued education, in the field of play therapy. As with one's primary license, it is important to recognize experience informs supervisory practice and that advanced clinical skills are needed before one may supervise others under the RPT-S™ designation. The RPT-S™ credential is granted when:

- a. applicant holds a current RPT™ designation,
- b. has held the RPT™ in good standing for the three (3) most recent consecutive years at the time of application, and
- c. with documentation of additional play therapy experience, continuing education, and supervisor instruction.

This allows play therapists to further mature in the field and to more fully hone and integrate their knowledge, skills, and person of therapist, prior to being considered for the RPT-S™ designation.

An RPT-S™ providing supervision to credentialing applicants also serves in a gatekeeping capacity. We believe it is the supervisors' obligation to identify gaps in knowledge and/or skill sets, to provide recommendations for remediation, when necessary, and to protect the integrity of the play therapy field and the vulnerable children and families play therapists serve.

As an RPT-S™, registrants are expected to display the abilities to:

1. Demonstrate advanced play therapy skills
2. Facilitate play therapist self-awareness and insight
3. Resolve supervisee reluctance and resistance
4. Utilize a variety of supervisory interventions
5. Facilitate parent consultation and involvement
6. Facilitate play therapist development as outlined in the [Play Therapy Competencies](#)
7. Build trust and rapport with supervisees
8. Develop professionalism, professional identities, and advocacy skills
9. Incorporate technology in supervision
10. Demonstrate multicultural competency

Application & Annual Fees

Applicants must first apply for, be granted, and maintain the RPT™ credential in good standing for the **three (3) most recent consecutive years** prior to applying for the RPT-S™ credential.

RPT-S™ applications are welcome upon the completion and documentation of all credentialing requirements. An RPT-S™ application will remain open for a maximum of 12 months after review of the application to permit the applicant to address any deficiencies found during the review process. Once earned, the credential must be renewed annually. Play therapy specific continuing education is due every 3-years (see **Section 08** for renewal criteria and process) to maintain the RPT-S Credential.

RPT-S™ Application Fee		RPT-S™ Annual Renewal Fee	
Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
\$245.00	\$375.00	\$ 90.00	\$180.00

Application fees: The non-refundable application fee is \$245.00 (or \$375.00 for non-members).

Annual Renewal fees: Renewal fees are billed and due annually upon your anniversary date (see **Section 08** for renewal criteria and process). APT Membership is applied for, and billed separately from Credentialing fees.

RPT-S™ Application Instructions

1. Review the RPT-S™ Credentialing Standards. APT reserves the right to unilaterally revise, from time to time, the terms and conditions, this guide, governing policies, approval and renewal criteria, and other facets of this agreement.
2. Before starting the application process, please have the following documents available upload (**.pdf files**)
 - a. Copy of current and active clinical mental health license (**Section 01** Upload).
 - b. Copy of completed Form A - to document clinical and play therapy experience (**Section 02 & 03** Upload).
 - c. Copy of state licensing board requirements and proof of eligibility to provide clinical supervision (**Section 04** Upload).
 - d. Copy of certificates or documentation of both clinical supervisor instruction and play therapy specific supervisor instruction (**Section 05** Upload).
 - e. Required continuing education hours (**Section 06** Upload).
 - f. Signed copy of RPT-S™ Attestation (**Section 07** Upload).
3. Complete the online application, application fee, and upload the required documentation when prompted.

You will receive a confirmation email from APT upon receipt of your application. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. APT will notify applicants within 6 – 8 weeks via email regarding the status of their application.

Should there be a change in your licensure status at any time during the application process or once approved, you are required to immediately notify APT in writing.

If after reviewing the RPT-S™ Credentialing Standards you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Program Criteria Overview

The RPT-S™ is intended for professionals who, at the time of application, have held the RPT™ credential in good standing for the **three (3) most recent consecutive years**. This chart summarizes the criteria that applicants must satisfy to earn the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ (RPT-S™) credential.

Section	Credentialing Criteria								
01 - License	Required to hold a current, active, and unconditional individual state license to independently provide clinical mental health services in one of the following general practice disciplines: counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, or social work.								
02 - Clinical Experience	An additional three (3) years and 3,000 hours of direct client contact AFTER issuance of full, clinical licensure.								
03 - Play Therapy Experience	An additional 500 hours of direct client contact of play therapy experience AFTER attainment of RPT™ credential. These hours need not be supervised, must be verified.								
04 - State Board Requirements & Approval	Must be approved by state licensing board to provide clinical supervision to others.								
05 - Supervisor Instruction	<p>Complete 30 hours of clinical supervisor instruction, six (6) of which must be play therapy specific. These hours may not have been previously submitted with your RPT™ application or subsequent renewals.</p> <p>These hours may be contact or non-contact hours.</p> <p>State approved supervisors see Section 05.</p>								
06 - Verification of CE Hours	<p>To demonstrate ongoing professional development during the transition from an RPT™ to an RPT-S™ credential, applicants are required to submit verification of CE hours.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Length of time since last CE cycle</th><th>Numbers of CE hours due with RPT-S application</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-12 months</td><td>8 hours</td></tr> <tr> <td>13-24 months</td><td>16 hours</td></tr> <tr> <td>25-36 months</td><td>24 hours</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Length of time since last CE cycle	Numbers of CE hours due with RPT-S application	0-12 months	8 hours	13-24 months	16 hours	25-36 months	24 hours
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13-24 months	16 hours								
25-36 months	24 hours								

Section 01 - Verification of License

Applicants must hold a current, active, and unconditional state mental health license in the general practice fields of counseling, marriage and family therapy, psychiatry, psychology, or social work indicating you are legally permitted to independently provide clinical mental health services. An add-on specialty license (e.g.: addictions, art therapy, dance/movement therapy, etc.) is not acceptable in lieu of a clinical mental health license in any of the aforementioned general practice disciplines. Attach a copy of license.

APT only accepts licenses that are unconditionally issued by an authority that promulgates mental health standards and practices and that investigates and penalizes violations of such standards and practices. Should there be a change in your licensure status at any time during the application process or once approved, you are required to immediately notify APT in writing.

Section 02 - Verification of Clinical Experience

Applicants must complete an *additional* three (3) years and 3,000 hours of direct client contact after issuance of full, clinical licensure. These hours must be verified by a licensed clinical mental health professional familiar with their clinical practice on Form A (available on APT website).

Section 03 - Verification of Play Therapy Experience

Applicants are required to complete an additional 500 hours of play therapy experience (direct client contact) AFTER attainment of RPT credential. These hours need not be supervised, but must be verified by a licensed clinical mental health professional familiar with their play therapy practice on Form A (available on APT website).

APT will accept previous *completed* versions of Form A, when the verifier is unable to sign off on the most current version available.

Section 04 - Verification of State Board Supervisor Requirements and Approval

Applicants must be approved by their state licensing board to provide supervision to others whether or not the applicant chooses to supervise towards another's licensure. Submit documentation, issued directly by your state licensing board, to support you have met this requirement. This may include a copy of your approval letter, a copy of the approval email, or a printout of the licensee verification or lookup page on your board's website.

For applicants whose state licensing board does not provide formal approval designation, your state licensure must either allow or not specifically prohibit you from supervising others.

Applicants must upload a copy of their state licensing board's requirement for supervisor approval when completing online application.

Section 05 - Verification of Supervisor Instruction

Applicants must complete **30 hours clinical supervisor instruction**, six (6) of which must be play therapy specific and sponsored by an APT Approved Provider.

The remaining 24 hours may be either specific to play therapy supervision or general clinical supervision. These hours may be obtained as contact or non-contact continuing education hours or through graduate coursework.

For state approved supervisors, where instruction is required to hold a supervisor designation, APT may accept those hours in lieu of the 24 remaining hours.

Please note: supervised supervision does not meet the supervisor instruction requirement.

Supervisor instruction hours **may not be included in the initial 150 clock hours of play therapy instruction previously submitted** with your RPT application or subsequent renewals.

Applicants must upload copies of certificates or documentation of all supervisor instruction.

APT requires that supervisor instruction address these core areas and recommends the number of hours identified adjacent to each core area:

1. Models, theories, and techniques of clinical supervision (10-12 hours),
2. Legal and ethical issues related to supervision (5-8 hours), i.e., vicarious liability; supervisory disclosure statement, supervisory contracts, supervisory informed consent; confidentiality, informed consent, and dual relationships; and gate-keeping responsibilities,
3. Clinical issues related to supervision (5-8 hours), i.e., transference and counter-transference, diversity, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout, and
4. Formal assessment of supervisees'/consultees' competencies in knowledge, skills, and/or professional engagement in the practice of play therapy as outline in the [Play Therapy Competencies](#) (10-12 hours).

Section 06 - Verification of Continuing Education Hours

To demonstrate ongoing professional development during the transition from an RPT™ to an RPT-S™ credential, applicants are required to submit verification of CE hours based on where they are in their 36-month CE cycle (see chart below).

Length of time since last CE cycle	Numbers of CE hours due with RPT-S application
0-12 months	8 hours
13-24 months	16 hours
25-36 months	24 hours

Please be advised, this requirement is separate from and in addition to the **Verification of Supervisor Instruction** requirement as specified in **Section 05**. Hours must be taken within the current CE cycle. CE submitted with a previous renewal will not be accepted. For additional information, please review **Section 08**.

Section 07 - Attestation by Applicant

A comprehensive attestation is included with the online credentialing application. All applicants are encouraged to read the attestation before submitting an application in order to familiarize themselves with the terms and conditions therein.

To protect the public and reduce legal liability to APT, RPT™ and RPT-S™ credentials rely upon your strict adherence to the ethics and standards of conduct promulgated by your primary mental health discipline and are not reliant upon the play therapy best practices promulgated by APT.

By submitting an application to APT, you accept sole and total responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the information provided in your application and agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the application and as set forth in these Credentialing Standards.

Section 08 - Renewal of the RPT-S™ Credential

To maintain an active credential, please adhere to the processes outlined below. It is important to note that credentialing renewal invoices and all other communications are primarily sent via email. Please make sure your member profile is updated and/or notify APT when changes occur.

APT expects all registrants to be aware of the credentialing standards and requirements of holding a credential from the Association for Play Therapy (APT).

All Individuals that hold the Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor™ credential must:

1. **Renew their credential annually.** Every 12 months you will receive an RPT™ Renewal Notice at least 30 days prior to your renewal date. To maintain an active credential, a completed renewal form, signed attestation, and renewal fee must be submitted by your renewal date. APT will accept renewals up to two months early.
 - Save time and money by renewing your RPT™ credential for three years. This option is only available for current APT members, at the time their CE is due (every 36-months).
2. **License Update.** All credentialed play therapists are required to hold and maintain a current and active individual state license to independently provide clinical mental health services. It is the responsibility of all credentialed play therapists to ensure that current licensing information is updated annually (or when a state license is renewed), and that information is accurately reflected in their member profile. Non-members must submit documentation of license and all subsequent licensure renewals to info@a4pt.org.
3. **Continuing Education.** In addition to the annual requirements, all credentialed play therapists must also earn at least **24 clock hours** of post graduate-level play therapy CE every three-years. CE must be earned from institutions of higher education or APT Approved Providers, and must be presented by graduate-level instructors.
 - a. Of the **24** hours of play therapy CE:
 - (1) a minimum of **12 hours must be contact hours**, the additional 12 hours may be [non-contact hours or webinars](#), and
 - (2) two (2) hours must be in [cultural & social diversity](#) specific to play therapy.
 - b. Not more than **18 of the 24 hours** may be earned via one or more of these options.
 - (1) Provide contact play therapy graduate-level instruction at an institution of higher education.
 - one (1) graduate credit of instruction equals three (3) clock hours of credit. **Limit nine (9) hours.**
 - (2) Provide play therapy post graduate-level continuing education sponsored by APT Approved Providers.
 - one (1) clock hour of instruction equals one (1) hour of credit. **Limit nine (9) hours.**
 - (3) Author a play therapy publication, article, or chapter.
 - 1-15 pages equal one (1) clock hour,
 - 16-50 pages equals three (3) clock hours,
 - 51-plus pages equals six (6) clock hours. **Limit 12 hours.**
 - c. Excess clock hours may not be transferred to the next 36-month CE cycle.
4. Earn **six (6) hours of supervisor continuing education** for two (2) CE cycles and **three (3) hours** each cycle thereafter.
 - a. These hours are in addition to the 24 hours of required play therapy CE (as described in #3).
 - b. They may be general mental health or play therapy specific.
 - c. They may be contact hours or non-contact hours.
 - d. This requirement may be satisfied by providing supervisor instruction or authoring/editing supervisor materials.

Contact APT or log into your member profile for the exact number of supervisor CE hours due.

Audit

APT conducts audits of no more than 10% of credentialed play therapists annually. If audited by APT, you must provide copies of transcripts from institutions of higher education or certificates from APT Approved Providers. APT reserves the right to:

- a. request copies of course syllabi or CE certificates,
- b. review and reject the sponsor, content, and presenter of any education or CE program,
- c. require submittal of additional information to support a renewal application,
- d. obtain information independently or from third parties, including licensing agencies/boards, in review of renewal applications.