

Scope of Practice for Certified Anger Management Facilitators

Licensed Marriage and Family Counselors are permitted to provide counseling and psychotherapy within the scope of their practice as determined by the Board of Behavioral Sciences in California. Licensed Clinical Social Workers are also legally allowed to provide a wide range of interventions including counseling, psychotherapy and consultation of a non-medical nature. Psychologists can provide psychological testing, counseling, psychotherapy and other non-medical interventions related to the treatment of nervous and mental disorders.

In the absence of state law, though, there is technically no scope of practice for trained anger management providers. However, it is in the best interest of all non-licensed psychotherapists who are providers of anger management to be informed of the limitations of what a certified anger management facilitator should and should not do.

As the result of complaints to the Department of Consumer Affairs' regulatory agencies in California, several anger management providers are under investigation for providing counseling without a license. As the major provider of anger management facilitator certification in the nation, I take our responsibility as professional providers seriously and will do everything possible to cooperate in this investigation.

In this regards, I would like to make it clear that anger management is neither counseling nor psychotherapy. Anger management providers are trained to conduct an assessment for each client's level of functioning in: recognizing and managing anger and stress, communications, and emotional intelligence. Following the assessment, the anger management facilitator is trained to provide classes to help the client develop skills in those four areas. Therefore, the scope of practice is limited to teaching classes pertaining to the management of anger, either in groups or individual/executive coaching settings.

Finally, I encourage all consumers and providers to report any apparent violation of the aforementioned, implied scope of practice for certified anger management providers in California.

In order to protect consumers, we must regulate ourselves.

George Anderson, MSW, BCD, CAMF
Diplomate, American Association of Anger Management Providers
Fellow, American Orthopsychiatric Association