

262 CMR 3.00: Requirements For Licensure As a Marriage and Family Therapist

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3.01: Preface

To qualify for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112, § 165, an applicant must provide evidence satisfactory to the Board that the professional standards and education experience requirements of one of the Licensure Eligibility Requirements described in 262 CMR 3.03 have been met by the applicant.

All licensed marriage and family therapists are charged with having knowledge of the existence of 262 CMR and are required to practice marriage and family therapy in accordance with them.

3.02 Definitions

AAMFT. The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Approved Supervisor.

(a) A marriage and family therapist designated as an " Approved Supervisor" by the AAMFT to supervise the clinical practice of marriage and family therapists, or

(b) a licensed marriage and family therapist, rehabilitation counselor, educational psychologist, mental health counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, all of whom holds a masters degree in either social work, marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation counseling, educational psychology, counseling or an equivalent field, or holds a doctorate degree in psychology, or a medical degree with a sub-specialization in psychiatry, and who:

1. has had primary supervisory responsibility for two practitioners providing marriage and family therapy for a period of two years or the equivalent; or
2. holds either a teaching or supervisory position in a recognized educational institution, institute or agency which trains marriage and family therapists, provides clinical services to individuals, couples and families on a regular basis, or offers graduate degrees in marriage and family therapy or a related field.

Board. Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Service Professions.

Clinical Internship or Practicum. A supervised internship or practicum in marriage and family therapy shall be included in the masters or doctoral program of study. The internship or practicum shall include a minimum of 300 hours of direct/face to face client contact with individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private) under the direction of an approved supervisor. The supervision shall consist of 100 face-to-face hours, of which 50 must be individual supervision. In addition, of the 100 hours of supervision, 25 hours must be supervision of direct observation or audio or videotape supervision.

Full-Time. 35 hours per week/48 weeks per year. The full-time practice of marriage and family therapy includes at least ten hours per week of clinical work with individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private).

Graduate Level Course. Three semester credit or four-quarter credit graduate credits from a Recognized Educational Institution.

Group Supervision. A regularly scheduled meeting of marriage and family therapy supervision of not more than six practitioners, plus an approved supervisor, for a period of at least 1½ hours "Peer" supervision will not be considered to be qualifying supervision for these purposes.

Individual Supervision. A regularly scheduled meeting of marriage and family therapy supervision of not more than two practitioners with an approved supervisor for a period of at least one hour.

Licensure Examination. The examination for licensure as a marriage and family therapist shall be the "Examination in Marital and Family Therapy" developed by the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards. The licensure examination is administered by the Board or its agent. For information on sites, dates, examination, and fees, contact the Board.

Marriage and Family Therapy. The rendering of professional mental health services to individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private) for compensation, monetary or otherwise. Said professional services shall include applying principles, methods and therapeutic techniques to individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private) for the purpose of resolving emotional conflict, modifying perceptions and behavior, enhancing communication and understanding among family members and the prevention of family and individual crises. Marriage and family therapists may also engage in psychotherapy of a non-medical nature with appropriate referrals to psychiatric resources and other mental health professionals and organizations.

Psychotherapy of a Non-medical Nature. The utilization of psychological and interpersonal theories and related practice methodologies to assess, diagnose, treat and interpret to modify conscious and unconscious processes of behavior.

Recognized Educational Institution. An educational institution licensed or accredited by the state in which it is located which meets national standards for the granting of a master's or doctoral degree. " National Standards" shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, approval by the United States Department of Education.

Related Field. Psychology, social work, counselor education, counseling psychology, theology, law, medicine, nursing, community mental health, education with a concentration in counseling or psychology, or other field determined by the Board to be a related field.

Supervised Clinical Experience (Post-degree). A minimum of 200 hours of supervision in the clinical practice of marriage and family therapy by an approved supervisor. A minimum of 100 hours of the required minimum 200 hours of supervision must be individual supervision.

3.03 Licensure Eligibility Requirements

A candidate for licensure as a marriage and family therapist must meet the minimum requirements of 262 CMR 3.03.

(1) Clinical Member of the AAMFT. A candidate applying under this category must provide satisfactory evidence that:

(a) the applicant is currently a clinical member in good standing of the AAMFT;

(b) The applicant has achieved a passing score on the national licensing examination, or its equivalent; or

(2) The following requirements:

(a) A master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or related field from a recognized educational institution.

1. Degree Completion Prior to July 1, 1999. The graduate program of study must be a minimum of 45 credit hours. If an applicant's degree was less than 45 hours, a further degree or CAGS (Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study) or its equivalent is required, which shall meet the 60 semester hour requirement.
2. Completion after July 1, 1999. The graduate program of study required must be a minimum of 60 semester hours. If an applicant's master's or doctoral degree program of study consisted of less than 60 semester hours, evidence of completion of graduate level courses outside of the degree program in the content areas listed in 262 CMR 3.03(2)(b) sufficient to meet the 60 semester hour degree, required courses, and internship or practicum requirements must be submitted to the Board for review and approval.

(b) Successful completion of:

1. Three graduate level courses in each of the following content areas (Total courses required = nine):
 - a. Marital and Family Studies. Family life cycle; sociology of the family; families under stress; the contemporary family; family in a social context; the cross-cultural family; and youth/adult/aging and the family; family subsystems; individual, interpersonal relationships (marital, parental, sibling).
 - b. Marital and Family Therapy. Family therapy methodology; family assessment; treatment and intervention methods; overview of major clinical theories of marital and family therapy.
 - c. Human Development. Human development; personality theory; human sexuality; psychopathology; behavior-pathology. One course in this category must be in psychopathology or its equivalent.
2. One graduate level course in each of the following content areas (Total courses required = 2):

- a. Professional Studies. Professional socialization and the role of the professional organization; legal responsibilities and liabilities; independent practice and interprofessional cooperation; ethics; family law.
- b. Research. Research design; methods; statistics; research in marital and family studies and therapy;
3. Clinical internship or practicum.

(3) Two Year Experience Requirement. A minimum of two years full-time, or equivalent part-time (3360 hours), post masters supervised clinical experience with individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private) for the purpose of assessment and intervention in a clinic or hospital licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Mental Health accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations or an equivalent center or institute, or under the direction of an approved supervisor. Private practice settings are not considered acceptable settings for this post-masters supervised clinical experience. 200 hours of supervision are required, of which 100 hours must be individual supervision. The required two years full-time, or equivalent part-time, supervised clinical experience in marriage and family therapy must include a minimum of 1000 hours of post-master's degree face-to-face contact hours of clinical experience with individuals, family groups, couples, groups or organizations (public or private) under the direction of an approved supervisor; a minimum 500 hours of which must be face-to-face contact hours of clinical experience with couples and families under the direction of an approved supervisor.

(4) Achievement of a passing score on the licensure examination.

3.04: Reciprocity

The Board shall issue a license without examination to an applicant licensed as a professional in a comparable field in another state whose requirements for the license are determined by the Board to be equivalent to or exceed the requirements of the Commonwealth.