

Wyoming Administrative Rules

Mental Health Professions Board

Mental Health Professions Licensing Board

Chapter 10: Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Effective Date: 07/26/2019 to 12/17/2021

Rule Type: Superceded Rules & Regulations

Reference Number: 078.0001.10.07262019

Chapter 10

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Section 1. The Practice of a Marriage and Family Therapist. The practice of a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist is the rendering of professional couples, marital and family therapy services and treatment to individuals, family groups, organizations, couples, marital pairs, singly or in groups. Couples, marital and family therapy includes, but is not limited to, performing mental health procedures, the assessment, diagnosis and treatment, including psychotherapy, of nervous, emotional, and mental disorders, whether cognitive, affective or behavioral, within the context of couples, marital and family systems within the range of the professional's preparation. Couples, marital and family therapy involves the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples, marital pairs and families for the purpose of treating such diagnosed nervous and mental disorders.

(a) The practice of marriage and family therapy may be either face-to-face that involves the synchronous interaction between an individual or groups of individuals using what is seen and heard in person to communicate, or

(b) Via methods of electronic delivery that involves the use of electronic or other means (e.g. telephone, computers, etc.) to provide the service.

(i) When using electronic delivery means, all use must be in compliance with all professional ethical standards and all other requirements in these rules;

(ii) Special care should be taken to ensure the confidentiality and security of the provision of services; and

(iii) The Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist shall provide only those services that are legal within the state that the recipient of services lives.

Section 2. General Requirements for Licensure. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the Board receives all documentation necessary to prove to the Board's satisfaction that the applicant meets all the requirements for licensure herein. The applicant shall provide satisfactory evidence to the Board that they:

(a) are of majority age;

(b) have no felony convictions, and no misdemeanor convictions that relate adversely to the practice of marriage and family therapy or to the ability to practice marriage and family therapy, although exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the Board if consistent with the public interest;

(c) are legal inhabitants of the United States; and

- (d) satisfy the requirements established in these rules.

Section 3. Education Requirement for Licensure.

(a) All educational requirements for licensure shall be met through the completion of a master's degree program in marriage and family therapy from a Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) or Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs- Marriage and Family Counseling (CACREP-MCFC) accredited program. The Board will only accept the education from a CACREP-MCFC program if the applicant was enrolled in the program prior to January 1, 2020.

(b) Applicants who have completed couple, marriage and family therapy programs not accredited by COAMFTE or CACREP-MCFC may be deemed to have met the educational requirement provided they meet the following criteria:

(i) The graduate degree program, and any applicable additional graduate level course work, was completed at an educational institution accredited by one of the regional or national institutional accrediting bodies recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

(ii) The program was substantially similar in content as required by COAMFTE or CACREP-MCFC including instructor qualifications, clinical supervision, practicum and internship requirements and course work.

(iii) The official transcripts, course prefixes, and course descriptions clearly identify the educational program as preparing persons to be couples, marriage and family therapists.

(iv) Course work shall be completed in a master's or doctoral program or subsequent graduate level coursework.

(v) The applicant has completed a minimum of seventy-two (72) quarter hours or forty-eight (48) semester hours of graduate level coursework.

(vi) Course work for those graduating from programs prior to January 1, 2020 was completed in each of the core areas defined herein:

(A) Individual and Family Development (9 semester credits)- Courses in this area include content on individual and family development across the lifespan. Content should provide knowledge of individual personality development and its normal and abnormal manifestations. The applicant should have relevant coursework in human development across the life span which includes special issues that affect an individual's development. This material should be integrated with systems concepts. Topic areas may include human development, child/adolescent development, psychopathology, personality theory, human sexuality, and other psychosocial development including career development, or other courses related directly to

human development. Test and measurement courses are not acceptable in this area.

(B) Theoretical Knowledge of Couples, Marital and Family Therapy (9 semester credits)- Courses in this area address the historical development, theoretical and empirical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of couples, marriage and family therapy. Content enables students to conceptualize and distinguish the critical epistemological issues in the profession of couples, marriage and family therapy and provide a comprehensive survey and substantive understanding of the major models of marriage, couples, and family therapy. All courses in this area must have a major focus from a systems theory orientation. Topic areas may include systems theory, family subsystems, blended family, gender issues in families, cultural issues in families, or other courses directly related to couples, marital and family theory. Survey or overview courses in which systems is one of several theories covered are not appropriate. Courses in which systems theory is the major focus and other theories are studied in relation to systems theory are appropriate.

(C) Clinical Knowledge of Couples, Marital and Family Therapy (9 semester credits)- Courses in this area address, from a relational/systemic perspective, psychopharmacology, physical health and illness, traditional psychodiagnostic categories, and the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of major mental health issues. Content addresses contemporary issues, which include but are not limited to gender, sexual functioning, sexual orientation, sex therapy, violence, addictions, and abuse, in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families from a relational/systemic perspective. Material addresses a wide variety of presenting clinical problems. Courses in this area should have a major focus on advanced family systems theories and systemic therapeutic interventions. This area is intended to provide a substantive understanding of the major theories of systems change and the applied practices evolving from each theoretical orientation. Major theoretical approaches may include strategic, structural, object relations family therapy, behavioral family therapy, communications family therapy, intergenerational family therapy, systemic sex therapy, or other courses directly related to couples, marital and family therapy. Survey or overview courses in which family therapy is one of several types of theories covered is not acceptable.

(D) Research (3 semester credits)- Courses in this area include significant material on research in couple and family therapy. Content focuses on research methodology, data analysis and the evaluation of research including quantitative and qualitative research and its methods. Individual personality, test and measurement, and library research courses are not acceptable toward this area.

(E) Professional Identify & Ethics (3 semester credits)- Courses in this area are intended to contribute to the professional development of the therapist. Content includes professional identity, including professional socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure, and certification. Coursework focuses on ethical issues related to the profession of individual, couples, marriage and family therapy. Other areas that need to be addressed include the AAMFT Code of Ethics, confidentiality issues, the legal responsibilities and liabilities of clinical practice and research, family law, record keeping, reimbursement, the business aspects of practice, and familiarity with regional and federal laws as they relate to the practice of individual, couple and family therapy. Religious ethics courses and moral theology

are not accepted towards this area.

(F) Clinical Practicum/Internship (9 semester credits)- Applicants shall complete a supervised clinical practicum/internship with individuals, couples, and families.

(vii) Course work for those graduating from programs after January 1, 2020 was completed in each of the core areas defined herein:

(A) Foundations of Relational/Systemic Practice, Theories & Models (Minimum of 6 semester credits/8 quarter credits/90 clock hours) This area facilitates students developing competencies in the foundations and critical epistemological issues of MFTs. It includes the historical development of the relational/systemic perspective and contemporary conceptual foundations of MFTs, and early and contemporary models of MFT, including evidence-based practice and the biopsychosocial perspective.

(B) Clinical Treatment with Individuals, Couples and Families (Minimum of 6 Credits/8 quarter credits/90 clock hours) This area facilitates students developing competencies in treatment approaches specifically designed for use with a wide range of diverse individuals, couples, and families, including sex therapy, same-sex couples, working with young children, adolescents and elderly, interfaith couples, and includes a focus on evidence-based practice. Programs must include content on crisis intervention.

(C) Diverse, Multicultural and/or Underserved Communities (Minimum of 3 Credits/4 quarter credits/45 clock hours). This area facilitates students developing competencies in understanding and applying knowledge of diversity, power, privilege and oppression as these relate to race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, disability, health status, religious, spiritual and/or beliefs, nation of origin or other relevant social categories throughout the curriculum. It includes practice with diverse, international, multicultural, marginalized, and/or underserved communities, including developing competencies in working with sexual and gender minorities and their families as well as anti-racist practices.

(D) Research & Evaluation (Minimum of 3 Credits/4 quarter credits/45 clock hours). This area facilitates students developing competencies in MFT research and evaluation methods, and in evidence-based practice, including becoming an informed consumer of couple, marriage, and family therapy research. If the program's mission, goals, and outcomes include preparing students for doctoral degree programs, the program must include an increased emphasis on research.

(E) Professional Identity, Law, Ethics & Social Responsibility (Minimum of 3 Credits/4 quarter credits/45 clock hours). This area addresses the development of a MFT Identity and socialization, and facilitates students developing competencies in ethics in MFT practice, including understanding and applying the AAMFT Code of Ethics and understanding legal responsibilities.

(F) Biopsychosocial Health & Development Across the Life Span

(Minimum of 3 Credits/4 quarter credits/45 clock hours). This area addresses individual and family development, human sexuality, and biopsychosocial health across the lifespan.

(G) Systemic/Relational Assessment & Mental Health Diagnosis and Treatment (Minimum of 3 Credits/4 quarter credits/45 clock hours). This area facilitates students developing competencies in traditional psycho-diagnostic categories, psychopharmacology, the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of major mental health issues as well as a wide variety of common presenting problems including addiction, suicide, trauma, abuse, intra-familial violence, and therapy for individuals, couples, and families managing acute chronic medical conditions, utilizing a relational/systemic philosophy.

(H) The following areas must be covered in the curriculum in some way, though there are no minimum credit requirements:

(i) Contemporary Issues. This area facilitates students developing competencies in emerging and evolving contemporary challenges, problems, and/or recent developments at the interface of Couple or Marriage and Family Therapy knowledge and practice, and the broader local, regional, and global context. This includes such issues as immigration, technology, same-sex marriage, violence in schools, etc. These issues are to reflect the context of the program and the program's mission, goals, and outcomes.

(ii) Community Intersections & Collaboration. This area facilitates students developing competencies in practice within defined contexts (e.g., healthcare settings, schools, military settings, private practice) or nontraditional MFT professional practice using therapeutic competencies congruent with the program's mission, goals, and outcomes (e.g., community advocacy, psycho-educational groups). It also addresses developing competency in multidisciplinary collaboration.

(I) Practicum or internship. Includes a minimum of 500 clinical contact hours with individuals, couples, families and other systems physically present, at least 40% of which must be relational. The 500 hours must occur over a minimum of twelve months of clinical practice. The 500 hours may include a maximum of 100 alternative hours or clinical activity (e.g., couple or family groups, live cases where reflecting teams are directly involved in working with clients, etc.) that is directly related to the program's mission, outcomes, and goals. Alternatively, the program may demonstrate that graduating students achieve a competency level equivalent to the 500 client contact hours. The program must define this competency level and document how students are evaluated and achieve the defined level. The program demonstrates a consistent set of evaluation criteria for achieving the defined level of competency across all students. In addition, programs that do not require 500 hours must document that students are informed about licensure portability issues that may result from not having 500 hours. Those programs requiring less than 500 hours may not use alternative hours to count toward total client contact hours. The program demonstrates a commitment to relational/systemic-oriented supervision. Students must receive at least 100 hours of supervision. Supervision can be individual or group and must include a minimum of 50 hours of supervision utilizing observable data. Supervision may utilize digital technology in which participants are not in the same location as long as the majority of supervision is with supervisor and supervisee physically

present in the same location and appropriate mechanisms/precautions are in place to ensure the confidentiality and security of the means of technology delivery.

(viii) Three (3) semester credits is equivalent to four (4) quarter credits.

Section 4. Supervised Training/Work Experience Requirement for Licensure.

(a) A minimum of three thousand (3,000) hours of supervised clinical training/work experience in individual, couple, marriage and family therapy under the direct supervision of a designated qualified clinical supervisor is required for all applicants. This experience shall meet the requirements set forth in these rules. The hours must be completed over a period of not less than eighteen (18) months or more than thirty-six (36) months unless granted an extension by the Board.

(i) All three thousand (3,000) hours of supervised clinical training/work experience required shall be completed after the award of the graduate degree.

(ii) Of the three thousand (3,000) hours required, at least one thousand two hundred (1,200) hours shall be direct client contact hours.

(A) Of the one thousand two hundred (1,200) direct client contact hours at least five hundred (500) hours must be direct clinical services to couples and families.

(iii) The balance of the remaining indirect hours shall consist of work experience that supports the direct client contact hours, e.g. charting, preparation, meetings, trainings, and/or the other duties of marriage and family counseling.

(b) An applicant shall have a minimum of one hundred (100) post graduate hours of clinical supervision with a DQCS as described in Chapter 18.

Section 5. Examination Requirement for Licensure.

(a) The Board shall accept a passing score as established by the examination provider on one of the following examinations:

(i) The Association of Marital and Family Therapists Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) examination; or

(ii) Other examination as may be approved by the Board.

Section 6. License by Reciprocity. An individual who has a master's degree or higher in marriage family therapy, has passed the examination as required in Section 5 of this Chapter, and holds a license that is free from discipline and in good standing to engage in the practice of marriage and family therapy under the laws of another state may, upon approval of the board, be issued a license as a Marriage and Family Therapist in this state. If the individual has held a license to practice marriage and family therapy in more than one state, the individual

shall be required to provide verification that all licenses held within the last five (5) years have not had any discipline against the license.

Section 7. Standards of Conduct.

(a) The terms “Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist” or “Marriage and Family Therapist” shall be used only after the applicant is granted licensure by the Board.

(b) The Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist shall comply with the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy “Code of Ethics” incorporated into these rules in Chapter 15.