

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to marriage and family therapists;
 3 amending s. 491.005, F.S.; providing equivalent
 4 education requirements for licensure by examination;
 5 conforming provisions to changes made by the act;
 6 amending s. 491.006, F.S.; deleting certain education
 7 requirements for licensure or certification by
 8 endorsement; providing an effective date.

9
 10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

11
 12 Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 491.005, Florida
 13 Statutes, is amended to read:

14 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

15 (3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of
 16 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by
 17 board rule, plus the actual cost ~~to the department~~ for the
 18 purchase of the examination from the Association of Marital and
 19 Family Therapy Regulatory Boards ~~Board~~, or its successor ~~similar~~
 20 ~~national~~ organization, the department shall issue a license as a
 21 marriage and family therapist to an applicant who the board
 22 certifies:

23 (a) Has submitted an application and paid the appropriate
 24 fee.

25 (b) ~~1-~~ Has a minimum of a master's degree with major

26 | emphasis in marriage and family therapy from a program
27 | accredited by the Commission of Accreditation for Marriage and
28 | Family Therapy Education or from a Florida university program
29 | accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and
30 | Related Educational Programs, or a closely related field, and
31 | has completed graduate courses approved by the Florida Board of
32 | Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental
33 | Health Counseling. ~~all of the following requirements:~~

34 | a. ~~Thirty-six semester hours or 48 quarter hours of~~
35 | ~~graduate coursework, which must include a minimum of 3 semester~~
36 | ~~hours or 4 quarter hours of graduate-level course credits in~~
37 | ~~each of the following nine areas: dynamics of marriage and~~
38 | ~~family systems; marriage therapy and counseling theory and~~
39 | ~~techniques; family therapy and counseling theory and techniques;~~
40 | ~~individual human development theories throughout the life cycle;~~
41 | ~~personality theory or general counseling theory and techniques;~~
42 | ~~psychopathology; human sexuality theory and counseling~~
43 | ~~techniques; psychosocial theory; and substance abuse theory and~~
44 | ~~counseling techniques. Courses in research, evaluation,~~
45 | ~~appraisal, assessment, or testing theories and procedures;~~
46 | ~~thesis or dissertation work; or practicums, internships, or~~
47 | ~~fieldwork may not be applied toward this requirement.~~

48 | b. ~~A minimum of one graduate-level course of 3 semester~~
49 | ~~hours or 4 quarter hours in legal, ethical, and professional~~
50 | ~~standards issues in the practice of marriage and family therapy~~

51 ~~or a course determined by the board to be equivalent.~~

52 ~~e. A minimum of one graduate-level course of 3 semester~~
53 ~~hours or 4 quarter hours in diagnosis, appraisal, assessment,~~
54 ~~and testing for individual or interpersonal disorder or~~
55 ~~dysfunction; and a minimum of one 3 semester-hour or 4 quarter-~~
56 ~~hour graduate-level course in behavioral research which focuses~~
57 ~~on the interpretation and application of research data as it~~
58 ~~applies to clinical practice. Credit for thesis or dissertation~~
59 ~~work, practicums, internships, or fieldwork may not be applied~~
60 ~~toward this requirement.~~

61 ~~d. A minimum of one supervised clinical practicum,~~
62 ~~internship, or field experience in a marriage and family~~
63 ~~counseling setting, during which the student provided 180 direct~~
64 ~~client contact hours of marriage and family therapy services~~
65 ~~under the supervision of an individual who met the requirements~~
66 ~~for supervision under paragraph (c). This requirement may be met~~
67 ~~by a supervised practice experience which took place outside the~~
68 ~~academic arena, but which is certified as equivalent to a~~
69 ~~graduate-level practicum or internship program which required a~~
70 ~~minimum of 180 direct client contact hours of marriage and~~
71 ~~family therapy services currently offered within an academic~~
72 ~~program of a college or university accredited by an accrediting~~
73 ~~agency approved by the United States Department of Education, or~~
74 ~~an institution which is publicly recognized as a member in good~~
75 ~~standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of~~

76 ~~Canada or a training institution accredited by the Commission on~~
 77 ~~Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education~~
 78 ~~recognized by the United States Department of Education.~~
 79 ~~Certification shall be required from an official of such~~
 80 ~~college, university, or training institution.~~

81 ~~2. If the course title which appears on the applicant's~~
 82 ~~transcript does not clearly identify the content of the~~
 83 ~~coursework, the applicant shall be required to provide~~
 84 ~~additional documentation, including, but not limited to, a~~
 85 ~~syllabus or catalog description published for the course.~~

86
 87 The required master's degree must have been received in an
 88 institution of higher education which at the time the applicant
 89 graduated was: fully accredited by a regional accrediting body
 90 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation
 91 ~~Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation;~~
 92 publicly recognized as a member in good standing with the
 93 ~~Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada;~~ or an
 94 institution of higher education located outside the United
 95 States and Canada, which at the time the applicant was enrolled
 96 and at the time the applicant graduated maintained a standard of
 97 training substantially equivalent to the standards of training
 98 of those institutions in the United States which are accredited
 99 by a regional accrediting body recognized by the Council for
 100 Higher Education Accreditation ~~Commission on Recognition of~~

101 ~~Postsecondary Accreditation.~~ Such foreign education and training
102 must have been received in an institution or program of higher
103 education officially recognized by the government of the country
104 in which it is located as an institution or program to train
105 students to practice as professional marriage and family
106 therapists or psychotherapists. The burden of establishing that
107 the requirements of this provision have been met shall be upon
108 the applicant, and the board shall require documentation, such
109 as, but not limited to, an evaluation by a foreign equivalency
110 determination service, as evidence that the applicant's graduate
111 degree program and education were equivalent to an accredited
112 program in this country. An applicant with a master's degree
113 from a program which did not emphasize marriage and family
114 therapy may complete the coursework requirement in a training
115 institution fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation
116 for Marriage and Family Therapy Education recognized by the
117 United States Department of Education.

118 (c) Has had at least 2 years of clinical experience during
119 which 50 percent of the applicant's clients were receiving
120 marriage and family therapy services, which must be at the post-
121 master's level under the supervision of a licensed marriage and
122 family therapist with at least 5 years of experience, or the
123 equivalent, who is a qualified supervisor as determined by the
124 board. An individual who intends to practice in Florida to
125 satisfy the clinical experience requirements must register

126 | pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If a
127 | graduate has a master's degree with a major emphasis in marriage
128 | and family therapy or a closely related field ~~that did not~~
129 | ~~include all the coursework required under sub-subparagraphs~~
130 | ~~(b)1.a.-e.~~, credit for the post-master's level clinical
131 | experience shall not commence until the applicant has completed
132 | ~~a minimum of 10 of the graduate courses required under~~
133 | subparagraph (b) ~~sub-subparagraphs (b)1.a.-e.~~, as determined by
134 | the board, ~~and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of~~
135 | ~~the course credits must have been completed in the area of~~
136 | ~~marriage and family systems, theories, or techniques~~. Within the
137 | 2 ~~3~~ years of required experience, the applicant shall provide
138 | direct individual, group, or family therapy and counseling, to
139 | include the following categories of cases: unmarried dyads,
140 | married couples, separating and divorcing couples, and family
141 | groups including children. A doctoral internship may be applied
142 | toward the clinical experience requirement. A licensed mental
143 | health professional must be on the premises when clinical
144 | services are provided by a registered intern in a private
145 | practice setting.

146 | (d) Has passed a theory and practice examination
147 | designated ~~provided~~ by the board ~~department~~ for this purpose.

148 | (e) Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of
149 | the board, knowledge of the laws and rules governing the
150 | practice of clinical social work, marriage and family therapy,

151 and mental health counseling.

152 (f) For the purposes of dual licensure, the department
153 shall license as a marriage and family therapist any person who
154 meets the requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure
155 shall not exceed those stated in this subsection.

156 Section 2. Section 491.006, Florida Statutes, is amended
157 to read:

158 491.006 Licensure or certification by endorsement.—

159 (1) The department shall license or grant a certificate to
160 a person in a profession regulated by this chapter who, upon
161 applying to the department and remitting the appropriate fee,
162 demonstrates to the board that he or she:

163 (a) Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of
164 the board, knowledge of the laws and rules governing the
165 practice of clinical social work, marriage and family therapy,
166 and mental health counseling.

167 (b)1. Holds an active valid license to practice and has
168 actively practiced the profession for which licensure is applied
169 in another state for 3 of the last 5 years immediately preceding
170 licensure.

171 ~~2. Meets the education requirements of this chapter for~~
172 ~~the profession for which licensure is applied.~~

173 2.3. Has passed a substantially equivalent licensing
174 examination in another state or has passed the licensure
175 examination in this state in the profession for which the

176 applicant seeks licensure.

177 3.4~~4~~ Holds a license in good standing, is not under
178 investigation for an act that would constitute a violation of
179 this chapter, and has not been found to have committed any act
180 that would constitute a violation of this chapter. The fees paid
181 by any applicant for certification as a master social worker
182 under this section are nonrefundable.

183 (2) The department shall not issue a license or
184 certificate by endorsement to any applicant who is under
185 investigation in this or another jurisdiction for an act which
186 would constitute a violation of this chapter until such time as
187 the investigation is complete, at which time the provisions of
188 s. 491.009 shall apply.

189 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.