

Title 22. Examining Boards.
Part 35. Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists.
Chapter 801. Licensure and Regulation of Marriage and Family Therapists.
Subchapter F. Academic Requirements for Examination and Licensure.
Amendments §§801.112, 801.114

Proposed Preamble

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists (board) proposes amendments to §§801.112 and 801.114, concerning the licensing and regulation of marriage and family therapists.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The proposed amendments indicate certain required academic requirements for examination and licensure. The amendments specify the academic requirements, and the amendments also include new requirements for applicants beginning a graduate degree program in marriage and family therapy on or after August 1, 2017.

SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

The following amendments are proposed concerning Subchapter F (relating to Academic Requirements for Examination and Licensure).

Amendments to §801.112 define the type of degrees that meet the academic requirements for licensure and also specify requirements regarding coursework, including changes to those candidates that begin their academic program on or after January 1, 2017.

Amendments to §801.114 add language to include additional courses that will be required for applicants beginning a graduate degree program in marriage and family therapy or a mental health-related field, starting on or after August 1, 2017.

FISCAL NOTE

Sarah Faszholz, Interim Executive Director, has determined that for each year of the first five years that the sections will be in effect, there will be no fiscal implications to state or local governments as a result of enforcing and administering the sections as proposed.

SMALL AND MICRO-BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS

Ms. Faszholz has also determined that there will be no effect on small businesses or micro-businesses required to comply with the sections as proposed. This was determined by interpretation of the rules that small businesses and micro-businesses will not be required to alter their business practices in order to comply with the sections.

ECONOMIC COSTS TO PERSONS AND IMPACT ON LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

There are potential economic costs to persons who are required to comply with the sections as proposed. Those candidates beginning a graduate degree program in marriage and family therapy or a mental health-related field and who wish to practice marriage and family therapy may face additional economic costs if they begin the graduate degree program on or after August 1, 2017, as these applicants must complete additional coursework not required for candidates who begin their graduate degree program prior to August 1, 2017. Additionally, a marriage and family therapist associate who begins their program on or after January 1, 2017, will also face potential additional costs due to the additional required courses. There is no anticipated negative impact on local employment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

In addition, Ms. Faszholz has also determined that for each year of the first five years the sections are in effect, the public will benefit from the adoption of the sections. The public benefit anticipated as a result of enforcing or administering the section is to continue to ensure public health and safety through the licensing and regulation of marriage and family therapists.

REGULATORY ANALYSIS

The board has determined that this proposal is not a "major environmental rule" as defined by Government Code, §2001.0225. "Major environmental rule" is defined to mean a rule the specific intent of which is to protect the environment or reduce risk to human health from environmental exposure and that may adversely affect, in a material way, the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment or the public health and safety of a state or a sector of the state. This proposal is not specifically intended to protect the environment or reduce risks to human health from environmental exposure.

TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The board has determined that the proposal does not restrict or limit an owner's right to his or her property that would otherwise exist in the absence of government action and, therefore, does not constitute a taking under Government Code, §2007.043.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments on the proposed rules may be submitted to Sarah Faszholz, Interim Executive Director, Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, Mail Code 1982, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347, or by email to mft@dshs.state.tx.us. When emailing comments, please indicate "Comments on Proposed Rules" in the subject line. Comments will be accepted for 30 days following publication of the proposal in the *Texas Register*.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The amendments are authorized by the Texas Occupations Code, §502.152, which authorizes the board to adopt rules necessary for the performance of its duties, as well as under the Texas Occupations Code, §502.153, which authorizes the board to set fees reasonable and necessary to cover the costs of administering this chapter.

The amendments affect Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 502.

Legend: (Proposed Amendment(s))

Single Underline = Proposed new language

[Bold, Print, and Brackets] = Current language proposed for deletion

Regular Print = Current language

(No change.) = No changes are being considered for the designated subdivision

§801.112. General.

(a) The board shall accept the following as meeting academic requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist associate:

(1) a master's **[degree]** or doctorate degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE);

(2) a master's degree from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling (MCFC) specialization which meets the requirements of §801.114(b)(8) of this title (relating to Academic Course Content) and starts on or after January 1, 2017; or

[(2) a master's degree or doctorate degree in marriage and family therapy from an accredited institution or program as defined in §801.2 of this title (relating to Definitions), but the program is not accredited by COAMFTE, provided that the practicum is at least 9 credit hours or 12 months. If the practicum is not at least 9 credit hours or 12 months an applicant may be approved to take the licensing examination and may be issued an associate license upon successfully passing the examination. Prior to receiving a license as a marriage and family therapist under this section, the applicant shall complete the pre-graduation practicum deficit in addition to the post-graduate supervised experience requirements consistent with the requirements in §801.142 of this title (relating to Supervised Clinical Experience Requirements and Conditions); or]

(3) a master's or doctorate degree from an accredited institution or program as defined in §801.2 of this title (relating to Definitions) in a related mental health field with a planned course of study in marriage and family therapy as described in §801.113(d) and (e) of this title (relating to Academic Requirements) with the required minimum course content as described in §801.114 of this title **[(relating to Academic Course Content)]**. Prior to being qualified to receive a license as a marriage and family therapist under this section, the applicant shall complete the pre-graduation practicum deficit in addition to the post-graduate supervised experience requirements consistent with the requirements in §801.142 of this title (relating to Supervised Clinical Experience Requirements and Conditions).

(b) - (c) (No change.)

(d) Undergraduate courses taken by an applicant that meet the academic requirements shall not be accepted by the board unless the applicant's official transcripts clearly show that the courses were awarded graduate credit by the school.

(e) Coursework submitted by an applicant must clearly show that it was completed with a passing grade or for credit.

[(d) The board shall count no undergraduate level courses taken by an applicant as meeting any academic requirements unless the applicant's official transcripts clearly shows that the course was awarded graduate credit by the school.]

[(e) The board shall accept no coursework which an applicant's transcripts indicate was not completed with a passing grade or for credit.]

(f) - (g) (No change.)

§801.114. Academic Course Content.

(a) An applicant who holds a graduate degree in a mental health-related field must have course work in each of the following areas (one course is equal to three semester hours):

- (1) theoretical foundations of marriage and family therapy--one course;
- (2) assessment and treatment in marriage and family therapy--four courses;
- (3) human development, gender, multicultural issues and family studies--two courses;
- (4) psychopathology--one course;
- (5) professional ethics--one course;
- (6) applied professional research--one course; and
- (7) supervised clinical practicum--12 months or nine hours.

(b) An applicant who begins a graduate degree program in marriage and family therapy or a mental health-related field on or after August 1, 2017, must complete course work and the minimum required semester hours in each of the following areas (one course is equal to three semester hours):

(1) theoretical knowledge and foundations of marriage and family therapy--including but is not limited to the historical development, theoretical and empirical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of marriage and family therapy (3 semester hours);

(2) assessment and treatment in marriage and family therapy--including but is not limited to treatment approaches specifically designed for use with a wide range of diverse

couples, families, and children, including sex therapy, same sex couples, young children, adolescents, interfaith couples, crisis intervention, and elderly (12 semester hours);

(3) human development, gender, multicultural issues and family studies (6 semester hours);

(4) psychopathology--including but is not limited to traditional psycho-diagnostic categories including knowledge and use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (3 semester hours);

(5) professional ethics--including but is not limited to professional identity of the marriage, couple, and family therapist, including professional socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure and certification; and ethical issues related to the profession of marriage, couple, and family therapy as well as the practice of individual therapy (3 semester hours);

(6) applied professional research--including but is not limited to research evidence related to MFT, becoming an informed consumer of research, and research and evaluation methods (3 semester hours);

(7) treatment of addictions and management of crisis situations (no minimum requirements);

(8) supervised clinical practicum--12 months or nine semester hours. During the supervised clinical practicum, the applicant must have 300 hours of experience (direct and non-direct), including a minimum of 75 hours of direct client contact with couples and families out of an overall minimum of 150 hours of direct client contact). The board may count excess practicum hours toward the experience requirements of this subchapter if:

(A) the hours were part of the applicant's academic practicum or internship accumulated after the commencement of the applicant's planned graduate program;

(B) the relational, or other direct client contact hours and/or non-direct hours that are in excess of the 300-hour practicum required by this paragraph; and

(C) no more than 400 hours of the direct plus non-direct hours.

(c) The remaining courses needed to meet the 45/60 graduate semester hour requirement shall be marriage and family therapy or related course work that are in areas directly supporting the development of an applicant's professional marriage and family, individual, or group therapy skills.