

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 educational requirements for licensure by examination;
 5 amending s. 491.006, F.S.; deleting certain education
 6 requirements for licensure or certification by
 7 endorsement; providing an effective date.

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

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 11 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section
 12 491.005, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

13 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

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

21 (b)1. Has a minimum of a master's degree with major
 22 emphasis in marriage and family therapy from a degree program
 23 accredited by the Commission of Accreditation for Marriage and
 24 Family Therapy Education or from a Florida university program
 25 accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and

26 | Related Educational Programs, or the equivalent ~~a closely~~
27 | ~~related field~~, and has completed all of the following
28 | requirements:

29 | a. Thirty-six semester hours or 48 quarter hours of
30 | graduate coursework approved by the Florida Board of Clinical
31 | Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health
32 | Counseling, which must include a minimum of 3 semester hours or
33 | 4 quarter hours of graduate-level course credits in each of the
34 | following nine areas: dynamics of marriage and family systems;
35 | marriage therapy and counseling theory and techniques; family
36 | therapy and counseling theory and techniques; individual human
37 | development theories throughout the life cycle; personality
38 | theory or general counseling theory and techniques;
39 | psychopathology; human sexuality theory and counseling
40 | techniques; psychosocial theory; and substance abuse theory and
41 | counseling techniques. Courses in research, evaluation,
42 | appraisal, assessment, or testing theories and procedures;
43 | thesis or dissertation work; or practicums, internships, or
44 | fieldwork may not be applied toward this requirement.

45 | b. A minimum of one graduate-level course of 3 semester
46 | hours or 4 quarter hours in legal, ethical, and professional
47 | standards issues in the practice of marriage and family therapy
48 | or a course determined by the board to be equivalent.

49 | c. A minimum of one graduate-level course of 3 semester
50 | hours or 4 quarter hours in diagnosis, appraisal, assessment,

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

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

76 Certification shall be required from an official of such
77 college, university, or training institution.

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

83
84 The required master's degree must have been received in an
85 institution of higher education which at the time the applicant
86 graduated was: fully accredited by a regional accrediting body
87 recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary
88 Accreditation; publicly recognized as a member in good standing
89 with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada; or
90 an institution of higher education located outside the United
91 States and Canada, which at the time the applicant was enrolled
92 and at the time the applicant graduated maintained a standard of
93 training substantially equivalent to the standards of training
94 of those institutions in the United States which are accredited
95 by a regional accrediting body recognized by the Commission on
96 Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation. Such foreign
97 education and training must have been received in an institution
98 or program of higher education officially recognized by the
99 government of the country in which it is located as an
100 institution or program to train students to practice as

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

114 Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 491.006, Florida
115 Statutes, is amended to read:

116 491.006 Licensure or certification by endorsement.—

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

121 (a) Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of
122 the board, knowledge of the laws and rules governing the
123 practice of clinical social work, marriage and family therapy,
124 and mental health counseling.

125 (b)1. Holds an active valid license to practice and has

126 actively practiced the profession for which licensure is applied
127 in another state for 3 of the last 5 years immediately preceding
128 licensure.

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

131 2.3. Has passed a substantially equivalent licensing
132 examination in another state or has passed the licensure
133 examination in this state in the profession for which the
134 applicant seeks licensure.

135 3.4. Holds a license in good standing, is not under
136 investigation for an act that would constitute a violation of
137 this chapter, and has not been found to have committed any act
138 that would constitute a violation of this chapter. The fees paid
139 by any applicant for certification as a master social worker
140 under this section are nonrefundable.

141 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.