

HB 975

2024

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to background screening requirements  
3           for health care practitioners; amending s. 456.0135,  
4           F.S.; expanding certain background screening  
5           requirements to apply to all health care  
6           practitioners, rather than specified practitioners;  
7           requiring health care practitioners licensed before a  
8           specified date to comply with the background screening  
9           requirements by a specified date; amending ss.  
10          457.105, 463.006, 465.007, 465.0075, 465.013, 465.014,  
11          466.006, 466.0067, 466.007, 467.011, 468.1185,  
12          468.1215, 468.1695, 468.209, 468.213, 468.355,  
13          468.358, 468.509, 468.513, 468.803, 478.45, 483.815,  
14          483.901, 483.914, 484.007, 484.045, 486.031, 486.102,  
15          490.005, 490.0051, 490.006, 491.0045, 491.0046,  
16          491.005, and 491.006, F.S.; revising licensure,  
17          registration, or certification requirements, as  
18          applicable, for acupuncturists; optometrists;  
19          pharmacists; pharmacist licenses by endorsement;  
20          registered pharmacy interns; pharmacy technicians;  
21          dentists; health access dental licenses; dental  
22          hygienists; midwives; speech-language pathologists and  
23          audiologists; speech-language pathology assistants and  
24          audiology assistants; nursing home administrators;  
25          occupational therapists and occupational therapy

26 assistants; occupational therapist and occupational  
27 therapy assistant licenses by endorsement; respiratory  
28 therapists; respiratory therapist licenses by  
29 endorsement; dietitian/nutritionists;  
30 dietitian/nutritionist licenses by endorsement;  
31 practitioners of orthotics, prosthetics, or  
32 pedorthics; electrologists; clinical laboratory  
33 personnel; medical physicists; genetic counselors;  
34 opticians; hearing aid specialists; physical  
35 therapists; physical therapist assistants;  
36 psychologists and school psychologists; provisional  
37 licenses for psychologists; psychologist and school  
38 psychologist licenses by endorsement; intern  
39 registrations for clinical social work, marriage and  
40 family therapy, and mental health counseling;  
41 provisional licenses for clinical social workers,  
42 marriage and family therapists, and mental health  
43 counselors; clinical social workers, marriage and  
44 family therapists, and mental health counselors; and  
45 clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist,  
46 and mental health counselor licenses by endorsement,  
47 respectively, to include background screening  
48 requirements; making conforming and technical changes;  
49 amending ss. 486.025, 486.0715, 486.1065, and 491.003,  
50 F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing an

51 effective date.

52

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

54

55 Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 456.0135, Florida  
 56 Statutes, is amended to read:

57 456.0135 General background screening provisions.—

58 (1) An application for initial licensure received on or  
 59 after January 1, 2013, under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter  
 60 460, chapter 461, chapter 462, chapter 463, chapter 464, chapter  
 61 465 s. 465.022, chapter 466, chapter 467, part I, part II, part  
 62 III, part V, part X, part XIII, or part XIV of chapter 468,  
 63 chapter 478, ~~or~~ chapter 480, chapter 483, chapter 484, chapter  
 64 486, chapter 490, or chapter 491 must ~~shall~~ include fingerprints  
 65 pursuant to procedures established by the department through a  
 66 vendor approved by the Department of Law Enforcement and fees  
 67 imposed for the initial screening and retention of fingerprints.  
 68 Fingerprints must be submitted electronically to the Department  
 69 of Law Enforcement for state processing, and the Department of  
 70 Law Enforcement shall forward the fingerprints to the Federal  
 71 Bureau of Investigation for national processing. Each board, or  
 72 the department if there is no board, must ~~shall~~ screen the  
 73 results to determine whether ~~if~~ an applicant meets licensure  
 74 requirements. For any subsequent renewal of the applicant's  
 75 license which ~~that~~ requires a national criminal history check,

76 | the department shall request the Department of Law Enforcement  
77 | to forward the retained fingerprints of the applicant to the  
78 | Federal Bureau of Investigation unless the fingerprints are  
79 | enrolled in the national retained print arrest notification  
80 | program.

81 |       Section 2. Health care practitioners as defined in s.  
82 | 456.001, Florida Statutes, who were licensed before July 1,  
83 | 2024, must comply with the background screening requirements of  
84 | s. 456.0135, Florida Statutes, by July 1, 2025.

85 |       Section 3. Subsection (2) of section 457.105, Florida  
86 | Statutes, is amended to read:

87 |       457.105 Licensure qualifications and fees.—

88 |       (2) A person may become licensed to practice acupuncture  
89 | if the person applies to the department and meets all of the  
90 | following criteria:

91 |       (a) Is 21 years of age or older, has good moral character,  
92 | and has the ability to communicate in English, which is  
93 | demonstrated by having passed the national written examination  
94 | in English or, if such examination was passed in a foreign  
95 | language, by also having passed a nationally recognized English  
96 | proficiency examination.†

97 |       (b) Has completed 60 college credits from an accredited  
98 | postsecondary institution as a prerequisite to enrollment in an  
99 | authorized 3-year course of study in acupuncture and oriental  
100 | medicine, and has completed a 3-year course of study in

101 acupuncture and oriental medicine, and effective July 31, 2001,  
 102 a 4-year course of study in acupuncture and oriental medicine,  
 103 which meets standards established by the board by rule, which  
 104 standards include, but are not limited to, successful completion  
 105 of academic courses in western anatomy, western physiology,  
 106 western pathology, western biomedical terminology, first aid,  
 107 and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). However, any person who  
 108 enrolled in an authorized course of study in acupuncture before  
 109 August 1, 1997, must have completed only a 2-year course of  
 110 study which meets standards established by the board by rule,  
 111 which standards must include, but are not limited to, successful  
 112 completion of academic courses in western anatomy, western  
 113 physiology, and western pathology.†

114 (c) Has successfully completed a board-approved national  
 115 certification process, is actively licensed in a state that has  
 116 examination requirements that are substantially equivalent to or  
 117 more stringent than those of this state, or passes an  
 118 examination administered by the department, which examination  
 119 tests the applicant's competency and knowledge of the practice  
 120 of acupuncture and oriental medicine. At the request of any  
 121 applicant, oriental nomenclature for the points must ~~shall~~ be  
 122 used in the examination. The examination must ~~shall~~ include a  
 123 practical examination of the knowledge and skills required to  
 124 practice modern and traditional acupuncture and oriental  
 125 medicine, covering diagnostic and treatment techniques and

126 | procedures, ~~and~~

127 | (d) Pays the required fees set by the board by rule not to  
128 | exceed the following amounts:

129 | 1. Examination fee: \$500 plus the actual per applicant  
130 | cost to the department for purchase of the written and practical  
131 | portions of the examination from a national organization  
132 | approved by the board.

133 | 2. Application fee: \$300.

134 | 3. Reexamination fee: \$500 plus the actual per applicant  
135 | cost to the department for purchase of the written and practical  
136 | portions of the examination from a national organization  
137 | approved by the board.

138 | 4. Initial biennial licensure fee: \$400, if licensed in  
139 | the first half of the biennium, and \$200, if licensed in the  
140 | second half of the biennium.

141 | (e) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
142 | 456.0135.

143 | Section 4. Subsection (1) of section 463.006, Florida  
144 | Statutes, is amended to read:

145 | 463.006 Licensure and certification by examination.—

146 | (1) Any person desiring to be a licensed practitioner  
147 | under ~~pursuant to~~ this chapter must apply to the department,  
148 | submit to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135,  
149 | and ~~must~~ submit proof to the department that she or he meets all  
150 | of the following criteria:

151 (a) Has completed the application forms as required by the  
 152 board, remitted an application fee for certification not to  
 153 exceed \$250, remitted an examination fee for certification not  
 154 to exceed \$250, and remitted an examination fee for licensure  
 155 not to exceed \$325, all as set by the board.

156 (b) Is at least 18 years of age.

157 (c) Has graduated from an accredited school or college of  
 158 optometry approved by rule of the board.

159 (d) Is of good moral character.

160 (e) Has successfully completed at least 110 hours of  
 161 transcript-quality coursework and clinical training in general  
 162 and ocular pharmacology as determined by the board, at an  
 163 institution that:

164 1. Has facilities for both didactic and clinical  
 165 instructions in pharmacology; and

166 2. Is accredited by a regional or professional accrediting  
 167 organization that is recognized and approved by the Commission  
 168 on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or the United  
 169 States Department of Education.

170 (f) Has completed at least 1 year of supervised experience  
 171 in differential diagnosis of eye disease or disorders as part of  
 172 the optometric training or in a clinical setting as part of the  
 173 optometric experience.

174 Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 465.007, Florida  
 175 Statutes, is amended to read:

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176 465.007 Licensure by examination.—

177 (1) Any person desiring to be licensed as a pharmacist  
178 shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination.  
179 The department shall examine each applicant who the board  
180 certifies has met all of the following criteria:

181 (a) Completed the application form and remitted an  
182 examination fee set by the board not to exceed \$100 plus the  
183 actual per applicant cost to the department for purchase of  
184 portions of the examination from the National Association of  
185 Boards of Pharmacy or a similar national organization. The fees  
186 authorized under this section shall be established in sufficient  
187 amounts to cover administrative costs.

188 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
189 s. 456.0135.

190 (c) Submitted satisfactory proof that she or he is not  
191 less than 18 years of age and:

192 1. Is a recipient of a degree from a school or college of  
193 pharmacy accredited by an accrediting agency recognized and  
194 approved by the United States Office of Education; or

195 2. Is a graduate of a 4-year undergraduate pharmacy  
196 program of a school or college of pharmacy located outside the  
197 United States, has demonstrated proficiency in English by  
198 passing both the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)  
199 and the Test of Spoken English (TSE), has passed the Foreign  
200 Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination that is approved by



201 rule of the board, and has completed a minimum of 500 hours in a  
 202 supervised work activity program within this state under the  
 203 supervision of a pharmacist licensed by the department, which  
 204 program is approved by the board.

205 ~~(d)-(e)~~ Submitted satisfactory proof that she or he has  
 206 completed an internship program approved by the board. No such  
 207 board-approved program shall exceed 2,080 hours, all of which  
 208 may be obtained prior to graduation.

209 Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 465.0075, Florida  
 210 Statutes, is amended to read:

211 465.0075 Licensure by endorsement; requirements; fee.—

212 (1) The department shall issue a license by endorsement to  
 213 any applicant who applies to the department and remits a  
 214 nonrefundable fee of not more than \$100, as set by the board,  
 215 and ~~who whom~~ the board certifies has met all of the following  
 216 criteria:

217 (a) ~~Has~~ Met the qualifications for licensure in s.  
 218 465.007(1)(b), ~~and~~ (c), and (d).~~†~~

219 (b) ~~Has~~ Obtained a passing score, as established by rule  
 220 of the board, on the licensure examination of the National  
 221 Association of Boards of Pharmacy or a similar nationally  
 222 recognized examination, if the board certifies that the  
 223 applicant has taken the required examination.~~†~~

224 (c)1. ~~Has~~ Submitted evidence of the active licensed  
 225 practice of pharmacy, including practice in community or public

226 health by persons employed by a governmental entity, in another  
 227 jurisdiction for at least 2 of the immediately preceding 5 years  
 228 or evidence of successful completion of board-approved  
 229 postgraduate training or a board-approved clinical competency  
 230 examination within the year immediately preceding application  
 231 for licensure; or

232 2. ~~Has~~ Completed an internship meeting the requirements of  
 233 s. 465.007(1)(d) ~~s. 465.007(1)(c)~~ within the 2 years immediately  
 234 preceding application. ~~;~~ and

235 (d) ~~Has~~ Obtained a passing score on the pharmacy  
 236 jurisprudence portions of the licensure examination, as required  
 237 by board rule.

238 Section 7. Section 465.013, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 239 to read:

240 465.013 Registration of pharmacy interns.—The department  
 241 shall register as pharmacy interns persons certified by the  
 242 board as being enrolled in an intern program at an accredited  
 243 school or college of pharmacy or who are graduates of accredited  
 244 schools or colleges of pharmacy and are not yet licensed in the  
 245 state. Applicants for registration must submit to background  
 246 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135. The board may refuse  
 247 to certify to the department or may revoke the registration of  
 248 any intern for good cause, including grounds enumerated in this  
 249 chapter for revocation of pharmacists' licenses.

250 Section 8. Subsection (2) of section 465.014, Florida

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251 Statutes, is amended to read:

252 465.014 Pharmacy technician.—

253 (2) Any person who wishes to work as a pharmacy technician  
254 in this state must register by filing an application with the  
255 board on a form adopted by rule of the board and submit to  
256 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135. The board  
257 shall register each applicant who has remitted a registration  
258 fee set by the board, not to exceed \$50 biennially; has  
259 completed the application form and remitted a nonrefundable  
260 application fee set by the board, not to exceed \$50; has  
261 submitted to background screening; is at least 17 years of age;  
262 and has completed a pharmacy technician training program  
263 approved by the Board of Pharmacy. Notwithstanding any  
264 requirements in this subsection, any registered pharmacy  
265 technician registered pursuant to this section before January 1,  
266 2011, who has worked as a pharmacy technician for a minimum of  
267 1,500 hours under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist or  
268 received certification as a pharmacy technician by certification  
269 program accredited by the National Commission for Certifying  
270 Agencies is exempt from the requirement to complete an initial  
271 training program for purposes of registration as required by  
272 this subsection.

273 Section 9. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
274 466.006, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

275 466.006 Examination of dentists.—

276 (1)  
 277 (b)1. Any person desiring to be licensed as a dentist  
 278 shall apply to the department to take the licensure examinations  
 279 and shall verify the information required on the application by  
 280 oath. The application must ~~shall~~ include two recent photographs.  
 281 There shall be an application fee set by the board not to exceed  
 282 \$100 which shall be nonrefundable and. ~~There shall also be an~~  
 283 ~~examination fee set by the board, which shall not to~~ exceed \$425  
 284 plus the actual per applicant cost to the department for  
 285 purchase of some or all of the examination from the American  
 286 Board of Dental Examiners or its successor entity, if any,  
 287 provided the board finds the successor entity's clinical  
 288 examination complies with ~~the provisions of~~ this section. The  
 289 examination fee may be refunded ~~refundable~~ if the applicant is  
 290 found ineligible to take the examinations.

291 2. Applicants for licensure must also submit to background  
 292 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

293 Section 10. Section 466.0067, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 294 to read:

295 466.0067 Application for health access dental license.—The  
 296 Legislature finds that there is an important state interest in  
 297 attracting dentists to practice in underserved health access  
 298 settings in this state and further, that allowing out-of-state  
 299 dentists who meet certain criteria to practice in health access  
 300 settings without the supervision of a dentist licensed in this

301 state is substantially related to achieving this important state  
302 interest. Therefore, notwithstanding the requirements of s.  
303 466.006, the board shall grant a health access dental license to  
304 practice dentistry in this state in health access settings as  
305 defined in s. 466.003 to an applicant who meets all of the  
306 following criteria:

307 (1) Files an appropriate application approved by the  
308 board.~~†~~

309 (2) Pays an application license fee for a health access  
310 dental license, laws-and-rule exam fee, and an initial licensure  
311 fee. The fees specified in this subsection may not differ from  
312 an applicant seeking licensure pursuant to s. 466.006.~~†~~

313 (3) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
314 with s. 456.0135 and has not been convicted of or pled nolo  
315 contendere to, regardless of adjudication, any felony or  
316 misdemeanor related to the practice of a health care  
317 profession.~~†~~

318 (4) Submits proof of graduation from a dental school  
319 accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the  
320 American Dental Association or its successor agency.~~†~~

321 (5) Submits documentation that she or he has completed, or  
322 will obtain before licensure, continuing education equivalent to  
323 this state's requirement for dentists licensed under s. 466.006  
324 for the last full reporting biennium before applying for a  
325 health access dental license.~~†~~

326 (6) Submits proof of her or his successful completion of  
 327 parts I and II of the dental examination by the National Board  
 328 of Dental Examiners and a state or regional clinical dental  
 329 licensing examination that the board has determined effectively  
 330 measures the applicant's ability to practice safely.‡

331 (7) Currently holds a valid, active dental license in good  
 332 standing which has not been revoked, suspended, restricted, or  
 333 otherwise disciplined from another of the United States, the  
 334 District of Columbia, or a United States territory.‡

335 (8) Has never had a license revoked from another of the  
 336 United States, the District of Columbia, or a United States  
 337 territory.‡

338 (9) Has never failed the examination specified in s.  
 339 466.006, unless the applicant was reexamined pursuant to s.  
 340 466.006 and received a license to practice dentistry in this  
 341 state.‡

342 (10) Has not been reported to the National Practitioner  
 343 Data Bank, unless the applicant successfully appealed to have  
 344 his or her name removed from the data bank.‡

345 (11) Submits proof that he or she has been engaged in the  
 346 active, clinical practice of dentistry providing direct patient  
 347 care for 5 years immediately preceding the date of application,  
 348 or in instances when the applicant has graduated from an  
 349 accredited dental school within the preceding 5 years, submits  
 350 proof of continuous clinical practice providing direct patient

351 care since graduation.~~;~~ ~~and~~

352 (12) Has passed an examination covering the laws and rules  
 353 of the practice of dentistry in this state as described in s.  
 354 466.006(4) (a).

355 Section 11. Subsection (1) of section 466.007, Florida  
 356 Statutes, is amended to read:

357 466.007 Examination of dental hygienists.—

358 (1)1. Any person desiring to be licensed as a dental  
 359 hygienist shall apply to the department to take the licensure  
 360 examinations and shall verify the information required on the  
 361 application by oath. The application must ~~shall~~ include two  
 362 recent photographs of the applicant. There shall be a  
 363 nonrefundable application fee set by the board not to exceed  
 364 \$100 and an examination fee set by the board ~~which shall~~ not to  
 365 exceed ~~be more than~~ \$225. The examination fee may be refunded if  
 366 the applicant is found ineligible to take the examinations.

367 2. Applicants for licensure must also submit to background  
 368 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

369 Section 12. Subsection (5) is added to section 467.011,  
 370 Florida Statutes, to read:

371 467.011 Licensed midwives; qualifications; examination.—

372 The department shall issue a license to practice midwifery to an  
 373 applicant who meets all of the following criteria:

374 (5) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
 375 456.0135.

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376 Section 13. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 468.1185,  
377 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

378 468.1185 Licensure.—

379 (2) The board shall certify for licensure any applicant  
380 who has met all of the following criteria:

381 (a) Satisfied the education and supervised clinical  
382 requirements of s. 468.1155.

383 (b) Satisfied the professional experience requirement of  
384 s. 468.1165.

385 (c) Passed the licensure examination required by s.  
386 468.1175.

387 (d) For an applicant for an audiologist license who has  
388 obtained a doctoral degree in audiology, has satisfied the  
389 education and supervised clinical requirements of paragraph (a)  
390 and the professional experience requirements of paragraph (b).

391 (e) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
392 s. 456.0135.

393 (3) The board shall certify as qualified for a license by  
394 endorsement as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist an  
395 applicant who:

396 (a) Holds a valid license or certificate in another state  
397 or territory of the United States to practice the profession for  
398 which the application for licensure is made, if the criteria for  
399 issuance of such license were substantially equivalent to or  
400 more stringent than the licensure criteria which existed in this



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401 state at the time the license was issued; or

402 (b) Holds a valid certificate of clinical competence of  
403 the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association or board  
404 certification in audiology from the American Board of Audiology;  
405 and

406 (c) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
407 456.0135.

408 Section 14. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 468.1215,  
409 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

410 468.1215 Speech-language pathology assistant and audiology  
411 assistant; certification.—

412 (1) The department shall issue a certificate as a speech-  
413 language pathology assistant to each applicant who the board  
414 certifies has met all of the following criteria:

415 (a) Completed the application form and remitted the  
416 required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

417 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
418 s. 456.0135.

419 (c) Earned a bachelor's degree from a college or  
420 university accredited by a regional association of colleges and  
421 schools recognized by the Department of Education which includes  
422 at least 24 semester hours of coursework as approved by the  
423 board at an institution accredited by an accrediting agency  
424 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

425 (2) The department shall issue a certificate as an

426 audiology assistant to each applicant who the board certifies  
427 has met all of the following criteria:

428 (a) Completed the application form and remitted the  
429 required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

430 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
431 s. 456.0135.

432 (c) Earned a high school diploma or its equivalent.

433 Section 15. Present subsections (2), (3), and (4) of  
434 section 468.1695, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
435 subsections (3), (4), and (5), respectively, a new subsection  
436 (2) is added to that section, and present subsection (2) of that  
437 section is amended, to read:

438 468.1695 Licensure by examination.—

439 (2) Applicants for licensure must also submit to  
440 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

441 (3)~~(2)~~ The department shall examine each applicant who the  
442 board certifies has completed the application form, submitted to  
443 background screening, and remitted an examination fee set by the  
444 board not to exceed \$250 and who:

445 (a)1. Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited  
446 college or university and majored in health care administration,  
447 health services administration, or an equivalent major, or has  
448 credit for at least 60 semester hours in subjects, as prescribed  
449 by rule of the board, which prepare the applicant for total  
450 management of a nursing home; and

451           2. Has fulfilled the requirements of a college-affiliated  
 452 or university-affiliated internship in nursing home  
 453 administration or of a 1,000-hour nursing home administrator-in-  
 454 training program prescribed by the board; or

455           (b)1. Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited  
 456 college or university; and

457           2.a. Has fulfilled the requirements of a 2,000-hour  
 458 nursing home administrator-in-training program prescribed by the  
 459 board; or

460           b. Has 1 year of management experience allowing for the  
 461 application of executive duties and skills, including the  
 462 staffing, budgeting, and directing of resident care, dietary,  
 463 and bookkeeping departments within a skilled nursing facility,  
 464 hospital, hospice, assisted living facility with a minimum of 60  
 465 licensed beds, or geriatric residential treatment program and,  
 466 if such experience is not in a skilled nursing facility, has  
 467 fulfilled the requirements of a 1,000-hour nursing home  
 468 administrator-in-training program prescribed by the board.

469           Section 16. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 468.209,  
 470 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

471           468.209 Requirements for licensure.—

472           (1) An applicant applying for a license as an occupational  
 473 therapist or as an occupational therapy assistant shall apply to  
 474 the department on forms furnished by the department. The  
 475 department shall license each applicant who the board certifies

476 meets all of the following criteria:

477 (a) Has completed the file a written application form and  
478 remitted, ~~accompanied by~~ the application for licensure fee  
479 prescribed in s. 468.221.

480 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
481 with s. 456.0135., ~~on forms provided by the department, showing~~  
482 ~~to the satisfaction of the board that she or he:~~

483 (c) ~~(a)~~ Is of good moral character.

484 (d) ~~(b)~~ Has successfully completed the academic  
485 requirements of an educational program in occupational therapy  
486 recognized by the board, with concentration in biologic or  
487 physical science, psychology, and sociology, and with education  
488 in selected manual skills. Such a program shall be accredited by  
489 the American Occupational Therapy Association's Accreditation  
490 Council for Occupational Therapy Education, or its successor.

491 (e) ~~(c)~~ Has successfully completed a period of supervised  
492 fieldwork experience at a recognized educational institution or  
493 a training program approved by the educational institution where  
494 she or he met the academic requirements. For an occupational  
495 therapist, a minimum of 6 months of supervised fieldwork  
496 experience is required. For an occupational therapy assistant, a  
497 minimum of 2 months of supervised fieldwork experience is  
498 required.

499 (f) ~~(d)~~ Has passed an examination conducted or adopted by  
500 the board as provided in s. 468.211.

501 (2) An applicant who has practiced as a state-licensed or  
 502 American Occupational Therapy Association-certified occupational  
 503 therapy assistant for 4 years and who, before January 24, 1988,  
 504 completed a minimum of 24 weeks of supervised occupational-  
 505 therapist-level fieldwork experience may take the examination to  
 506 be licensed as an occupational therapist without meeting the  
 507 educational requirements for occupational therapists made  
 508 otherwise applicable under paragraph (1) (d) ~~(1) (b)~~.

509 Section 17. Subsection (3) is added to section 468.213,  
 510 Florida Statutes, to read:

511 468.213 Licensure by endorsement.—

512 (3) Applicants for licensure by endorsement must submit to  
 513 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

514 Section 18. Section 468.355, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 515 to read:

516 468.355 Licensure requirements.—To be eligible for  
 517 licensure by the board, an applicant must be an active  
 518 "certified respiratory therapist" or an active "registered  
 519 respiratory therapist" as designated by the National Board for  
 520 Respiratory Care, or its successor, and submit to background  
 521 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

522 Section 19. Subsection (4) of section 468.358, Florida  
 523 Statutes, is amended to read:

524 468.358 Licensure by endorsement.—

525 (4) Applicants for licensure ~~shall not be granted~~ by

526 | endorsement under as provided in this section must submit  
 527 | ~~without the submission of a proper application, remit and the~~  
 528 | ~~payment of the requisite application fee, and submit to~~  
 529 | background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135 fees  
 530 | ~~therefor.~~

531 | Section 20. Present subsections (2), (3), and (4) of  
 532 | section 468.509, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
 533 | subsections (3), (4), and (5), respectively, a new subsection  
 534 | (2) is added to that section, and present subsection (2) of that  
 535 | section is amended, to read:

536 | 468.509 Dietitian/nutritionist; requirements for  
 537 | licensure.—

538 | (2) Applicants for licensure must also submit to  
 539 | background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

540 | (3)-(2) The department shall examine any applicant who the  
 541 | board certifies has completed the application form, submitted to  
 542 | background screening, and remitted the application and  
 543 | examination fees specified in s. 468.508 and who:

544 | (a)1. Possesses a baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate  
 545 | degree with a major course of study in human nutrition, food and  
 546 | nutrition, dietetics, or food management, or an equivalent major  
 547 | course of study, from a school or program accredited, at the  
 548 | time of the applicant's graduation, by the appropriate  
 549 | accrediting agency recognized by the Commission on Recognition  
 550 | of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department

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551 of Education; and

552 2. Has completed a preprofessional experience component of  
553 not less than 900 hours or has education or experience  
554 determined to be equivalent by the board; or

555 (b)1. Has an academic degree, from a foreign country, that  
556 has been validated by an accrediting agency approved by the  
557 United States Department of Education as equivalent to the  
558 baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate degree conferred by a  
559 regionally accredited college or university in the United  
560 States;

561 2. Has completed a major course of study in human  
562 nutrition, food and nutrition, dietetics, or food management;  
563 and

564 3. Has completed a preprofessional experience component of  
565 not less than 900 hours or has education or experience  
566 determined to be equivalent by the board.

567 Section 21. Subsection (1) of section 468.513, Florida  
568 Statutes, is amended to read:

569 468.513 Dietitian/nutritionist; licensure by endorsement.—

570 (1) The department shall issue a license to practice  
571 dietetics and nutrition by endorsement to any applicant who  
572 submits to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135  
573 and the board certifies as qualified, upon receipt of a  
574 completed application and the fee specified in s. 468.508.

575 Section 22. Subsection (2) of section 468.803, Florida

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576 Statutes, is amended to read:

577 468.803 License, registration, and examination  
578 requirements.—

579 (2) An applicant for registration, examination, or  
580 licensure must apply to the department on a form prescribed by  
581 the board for consideration of board approval. Each initial  
582 applicant shall submit fingerprints to the department in  
583 accordance with s. 456.0135 and any other procedures specified  
584 by the department for state and national criminal history checks  
585 of the applicant. The board shall screen the results to  
586 determine if an applicant meets licensure requirements. The  
587 board shall consider for examination, registration, or licensure  
588 each applicant whom the board verifies meets all of the  
589 following criteria:

590 (a) Has submitted the completed application and completed  
591 the fingerprinting requirements and has paid the applicable  
592 application fee, not to exceed \$500. The application fee is  
593 nonrefundable.†

594 (b) Is of good moral character.†

595 (c) Is 18 years of age or older.†~~and~~

596 (d) Has completed the appropriate educational preparation.

597 Section 23. Subsection (1) of section 478.45, Florida

598 Statutes, is amended to read:

599 478.45 Requirements for licensure.—

600 (1) An applicant applying for licensure as an



601 electrologist shall apply to the department on forms furnished  
 602 by the department. The department shall license each applicant  
 603 who the board certifies meets all of the following criteria:

604 (a) Has completed the file a written application form and  
 605 remitted, accompanied by the application for licensure fee  
 606 prescribed in s. 478.55.

607 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
 608 with s. 456.0135., on a form provided by the board, showing to  
 609 the satisfaction of the board that the applicant:

610 (c)-(a) Is at least 18 years old.

611 (d)-(b) Is of good moral character.

612 (e)-(e) Possesses a high school diploma or a high school  
 613 equivalency diploma.

614 (f)-(d) Has not committed an act in any jurisdiction which  
 615 would constitute grounds for disciplining an electrologist in  
 616 this state.

617 (g)-(e) Has successfully completed the academic  
 618 requirements of an electrolysis training program, not to exceed  
 619 120 hours, and the practical application thereof as approved by  
 620 the board.

621 Section 24. Section 483.815, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 622 to read:

623 483.815 Application for clinical laboratory personnel  
 624 license.—An application for a clinical laboratory personnel  
 625 license shall be made under oath on forms provided by the

626 department and shall be accompanied by payment of fees as  
627 provided by this part. Applicants for licensure must also submit  
628 to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135. A  
629 license may be issued authorizing the performance of procedures  
630 of one or more categories.

631 Section 25. Present paragraphs (b) through (k) of  
632 subsection (4) of section 483.901, Florida Statutes, are  
633 redesignated as paragraphs (c) through (l), respectively, a new  
634 paragraph (b) is added to that subsection, and paragraph (a) of  
635 that subsection is amended, to read:

636 483.901 Medical physicists; definitions; licensure.—

637 (4) LICENSE REQUIRED.—An individual may not engage in the  
638 practice of medical physics, including the specialties of  
639 diagnostic radiological physics, therapeutic radiological  
640 physics, medical nuclear radiological physics, or medical health  
641 physics, without a license issued by the department for the  
642 appropriate specialty.

643 (a) The department shall adopt rules to administer this  
644 section which specify license application and renewal fees,  
645 continuing education requirements, background screening  
646 requirements, and standards for practicing medical physics. The  
647 department shall require a minimum of 24 hours per biennium of  
648 continuing education offered by an organization approved by the  
649 department. The department may adopt rules to specify continuing  
650 education requirements for persons who hold a license in more

651 | than one specialty.

652 |       (b) Applicants for a medical physicist license must submit  
 653 | to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

654 |       Section 26. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 483.914,  
 655 | Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

656 |       483.914 Licensure requirements.—

657 |       (2) The department shall issue a license, valid for 2  
 658 | years, to each applicant who meets all of the following  
 659 | criteria:

660 |       (a) Has completed an application.

661 |       (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
 662 | with s. 456.0135.

663 |       (c) Is of good moral character.

664 |       (d)~~(e)~~ Provides satisfactory documentation of having  
 665 | earned:

666 |       1. A master's degree from a genetic counseling training  
 667 | program or its equivalent as determined by the Accreditation  
 668 | Council of Genetic Counseling or its successor or an equivalent  
 669 | entity; or

670 |       2. A doctoral degree from a medical genetics training  
 671 | program accredited by the American Board of Medical Genetics and  
 672 | Genomics or the Canadian College of Medical Geneticists.

673 |       (e)~~(d)~~ Has passed the examination for certification as:

674 |       1. A genetic counselor by the American Board of Genetic  
 675 | Counseling, Inc., the American Board of Medical Genetics and

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676 Genomics, or the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors; or  
677 2. A medical or clinical geneticist by the American Board  
678 of Medical Genetics and Genomics or the Canadian College of  
679 Medical Geneticists.

680 (3) The department may issue a temporary license for up to  
681 2 years to an applicant who meets all requirements for licensure  
682 except for the certification examination requirement imposed  
683 under paragraph (2)(e) ~~(2)(d)~~ and is eligible to sit for that  
684 certification examination.

685 Section 27. Subsection (1) of section 484.007, Florida  
686 Statutes, is amended to read:

687 484.007 Licensure of opticians; permitting of optical  
688 establishments.—

689 (1) Any person desiring to practice opticianry shall apply  
690 to the department, upon forms prescribed by it, to take a  
691 licensure examination. The department shall examine each  
692 applicant who the board certifies meets all of the following  
693 criteria:

694 (a) Has completed the application form and remitted a  
695 nonrefundable application fee set by the board, in the amount of  
696 \$100 or less, and an examination fee set by the board, in the  
697 amount of \$325 plus the actual per applicant cost to the  
698 department for purchase of portions of the examination from the  
699 American Board of Opticianry or a similar national organization,  
700 or less, and refundable if the board finds the applicant

701 ineligible to take the examination.†

702 (b) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
 703 456.0135.

704 (c) Is not less than 18 years of age.†

705 (d)-(e) Is a graduate of an accredited high school or  
 706 possesses a certificate of equivalency of a high school  
 707 education.†~~and~~

708 (e)1.~~(d)1.~~ Has received an associate degree, or its  
 709 equivalent, in opticianry from an educational institution the  
 710 curriculum of which is accredited by an accrediting agency  
 711 recognized and approved by the United States Department of  
 712 Education or the Council on Postsecondary Education or approved  
 713 by the board;

714 2. Is an individual licensed to practice the profession of  
 715 opticianry pursuant to a regulatory licensing law of another  
 716 state, territory, or jurisdiction of the United States, who has  
 717 actively practiced in such other state, territory, or  
 718 jurisdiction for more than 3 years immediately preceding  
 719 application, and who meets the examination qualifications as  
 720 provided in this subsection;

721 3. Is an individual who has actively practiced in another  
 722 state, territory, or jurisdiction of the United States for more  
 723 than 5 years immediately preceding application and who provides  
 724 tax or business records, affidavits, or other satisfactory  
 725 documentation of such practice and who meets the examination

726 qualifications as provided in this subsection; or

727 4. Has registered as an apprentice with the department and  
728 paid a registration fee not to exceed \$60, as set by rule of the  
729 board. The apprentice shall complete 6,240 hours of training  
730 under the supervision of an optician licensed in this state for  
731 at least 1 year or of a physician or optometrist licensed under  
732 the laws of this state. These requirements must be met within 5  
733 years after the date of registration. However, any time spent in  
734 a recognized school may be considered as part of the  
735 apprenticeship program provided herein. The board may establish  
736 administrative processing fees sufficient to cover the cost of  
737 administering apprentice rules adopted ~~as promulgated~~ by the  
738 board.

739 Section 28. Subsection (2) of section 484.045, Florida  
740 Statutes, is amended to read:

741 484.045 Licensure by examination.—

742 (2) The department shall license each applicant who the  
743 board certifies meets all of the following criteria:

744 (a) Has completed the application form and remitted the  
745 required fees.

746 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
747 with s. 456.0135.

748 (c) Is of good moral character.

749 (d)-(e) Is 18 years of age or older.

750 (e)-(d) Is a graduate of an accredited high school or its

751 equivalent.

752 (f)1.~~(e)1.~~ Has met the requirements of the training  
753 program; or

754 2.a. Has a valid, current license as a hearing aid  
755 specialist or its equivalent from another state and has been  
756 actively practicing in such capacity for at least 12 months; or

757 b. Is currently certified by the National Board for  
758 Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences and has been  
759 actively practicing for at least 12 months.

760 (g)~~(f)~~ Has passed an examination, as prescribed by board  
761 rule.

762 (h)~~(g)~~ Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of  
763 the board, knowledge of state laws and rules relating to the  
764 fitting and dispensing of prescription hearing aids.

765 Section 29. Section 486.031, Florida Statutes, is amended  
766 to read:

767 486.031 Physical therapist; licensing requirements.—To be  
768 eligible for licensing as a physical therapist, an applicant  
769 must meet all of the following criteria:

770 (1) Be at least 18 years old.;

771 (2) Be of good moral character.

772 (3) Have submitted to background screening in accordance  
773 with s. 456.0135.~~;~~ ~~and~~

774 (4) (a)~~(3) (a)~~ Have ~~been~~ graduated from a school of physical  
775 therapy which has been approved for the educational preparation

776 of physical therapists by the appropriate accrediting agency  
777 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or  
778 its successor entity, ~~Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary~~  
779 ~~Accreditation~~ or the United States Department of Education at  
780 the time of her or his graduation and have passed, to the  
781 satisfaction of the board, the American Registry Examination  
782 prior to 1971 or a national examination approved by the board to  
783 determine her or his fitness for practice as a physical  
784 therapist as hereinafter provided;

785 (b) Have received a diploma from a program in physical  
786 therapy in a foreign country and have educational credentials  
787 deemed equivalent to those required for the educational  
788 preparation of physical therapists in this country, as  
789 recognized by the appropriate agency as identified by the board,  
790 and have passed to the satisfaction of the board an examination  
791 to determine her or his fitness for practice as a physical  
792 therapist as hereinafter provided; or

793 (c) Be entitled to licensure without examination as  
794 provided in s. 486.081.

795 Section 30. Section 486.102, Florida Statutes, is amended  
796 to read:

797 486.102 Physical therapist assistant; licensing  
798 requirements.—To be eligible for licensing by the board as a  
799 physical therapist assistant, an applicant must meet all of the  
800 following criteria:



- 801           (1) Be at least 18 years old.†
- 802           (2) Be of good moral character.
- 803           (3) Have submitted to background screening in accordance
- 804 with s. 456.0135.† and
- 805           (4) (a) (3) (a) Have ~~been~~ graduated from a school giving a
- 806 course of not less than 2 years for physical therapist
- 807 assistants, which has been approved for the educational
- 808 preparation of physical therapist assistants by the appropriate
- 809 accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher
- 810 Education Accreditation, or its successor entity, Commission on
- 811 Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or the United States
- 812 Department of Education,† at the time of her or his graduation
- 813 and have passed to the satisfaction of the board an examination
- 814 to determine her or his fitness for practice as a physical
- 815 therapist assistant as hereinafter provided;
- 816           (b) Have ~~been~~ graduated from a school giving a course for
- 817 physical therapist assistants in a foreign country and have
- 818 educational credentials deemed equivalent to those required for
- 819 the educational preparation of physical therapist assistants in
- 820 this country, as recognized by the appropriate agency as
- 821 identified by the board, and passed to the satisfaction of the
- 822 board an examination to determine her or his fitness for
- 823 practice as a physical therapist assistant as hereinafter
- 824 provided;
- 825           (c) Be entitled to licensure without examination as

826 provided in s. 486.107; or

827 (d) Have been enrolled between July 1, 2014, and July 1,  
828 2016, in a physical therapist assistant school in this state  
829 which was accredited at the time of enrollment; and

830 1. Have ~~been graduated or be eligible to graduate from~~  
831 ~~such school no later than July 1, 2018;~~ and

832 2. Have passed to the satisfaction of the board an  
833 examination to determine his or her fitness for practice as a  
834 physical therapist assistant as provided in s. 486.104.

835 Section 31. Present paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of  
836 subsection (1) of section 490.005, Florida Statutes, are  
837 redesignated as paragraphs (c), (d), and (e), respectively, a  
838 new paragraph (b) is added to that subsection, and subsection  
839 (2) is amended, to read:

840 490.005 Licensure by examination.—

841 (1) Any person desiring to be licensed as a psychologist  
842 shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination.  
843 The department shall license each applicant whom the board  
844 certifies has met all of the following requirements:

845 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
846 s. 456.0135.

847 (2) Any person desiring to be licensed as a school  
848 psychologist shall apply to the department to take the licensure  
849 examination. The department shall license each applicant who the  
850 department certifies has met all of the following requirements:

851 (a) Satisfactorily completed the application form and  
852 submitted a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$250 and  
853 an examination fee sufficient to cover the per applicant cost to  
854 the department for development, purchase, and administration of  
855 the examination, but not to exceed \$250 as set by department  
856 rule.

857 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
858 s. 456.0135.

859 (c) Submitted satisfactory proof to the department that  
860 the applicant:

861 1. Has received a doctorate, specialist, or equivalent  
862 degree from a program primarily psychological in nature and has  
863 completed 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate  
864 study, in areas related to school psychology as defined by rule  
865 of the department, from a college or university which at the  
866 time the applicant was enrolled and graduated was accredited by  
867 an accrediting agency recognized and approved by the Council for  
868 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
869 from an institution that is a member in good standing with the  
870 Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

871 2. Has had a minimum of 3 years of experience in school  
872 psychology, 2 years of which must be supervised by an individual  
873 who is a licensed school psychologist or who has otherwise  
874 qualified as a school psychologist supervisor, by education and  
875 experience, as set forth by rule of the department. A doctoral

876 | internship may be applied toward the supervision requirement.

877 |         3. Has passed an examination provided by the department.

878 |         Section 32. Present paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection  
879 | (1) of section 490.0051, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
880 | paragraphs (c) and (d), respectively, and a new paragraph (b) is  
881 | added to that subsection, to read:

882 |             490.0051 Provisional licensure; requirements.—

883 |             (1) The department shall issue a provisional psychology  
884 | license to each applicant whom the board certifies has met all  
885 | of the following criteria:

886 |             (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
887 | s. 456.0135.

888 |         Section 33. Subsection (1) of section 490.006, Florida  
889 | Statutes, is amended to read:

890 |             490.006 Licensure by endorsement.—

891 |             (1) The department shall license a person as a  
892 | psychologist or school psychologist who, upon applying to the  
893 | department, submitting to background screening in accordance  
894 | with s. 456.0135, and remitting the appropriate fee,  
895 | demonstrates to the department or, in the case of psychologists,  
896 | to the board that the applicant:

897 |             (a) Is a diplomate in good standing with the American  
898 | Board of Professional Psychology, Inc.; or

899 |             (b) Possesses a doctoral degree in psychology and has at  
900 | least 10 years of experience as a licensed psychologist in any

901 jurisdiction or territory of the United States within the 25  
902 years preceding the date of application.

903 Section 34. Subsections (1), (2), (4), and (6) of section  
904 491.0045, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

905 491.0045 Intern registration; requirements.—

906 (1) An individual who has not satisfied the postgraduate  
907 or post-master's level experience requirements, as specified in  
908 s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(c), (3)(c), or~~  
909 ~~(4)(c)~~, must register as an intern in the profession for which  
910 he or she is seeking licensure before commencing the post-  
911 master's experience requirement or an individual who intends to  
912 satisfy part of the required graduate-level practicum,  
913 internship, or field experience, outside the academic arena for  
914 any profession, and must register as an intern in the profession  
915 for which he or she is seeking licensure before commencing the  
916 practicum, internship, or field experience.

917 (2) The department shall register as a clinical social  
918 worker intern, marriage and family therapist intern, or mental  
919 health counselor intern each applicant who the board certifies  
920 has met all of the following criteria:

921 (a) Completed the application form and remitted a  
922 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
923 board rule.†

924 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
925 s. 456.0135.

926 (c)1. Completed the education requirements as specified in  
 927 s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(e), (3)(e), or~~  
 928 ~~(4)(e)~~ for the profession for which he or she is applying for  
 929 licensure, if needed; and

930 2. Submitted an acceptable supervision plan, as determined  
 931 by the board, for meeting the practicum, internship, or field  
 932 work required for licensure that was not satisfied in his or her  
 933 graduate program.

934 (d)~~(e)~~ Identified a qualified supervisor.

935 (4) An individual who fails to comply with this section  
 936 may not be granted a license under this chapter, and any time  
 937 spent by the individual completing the experience requirement as  
 938 specified in s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s.~~  
 939 ~~491.005(1)(e), (3)(e), or (4)(e)~~ before registering as an intern  
 940 does not count toward completion of the requirement.

941 (6) Any registration issued after March 31, 2017, expires  
 942 60 months after the date it is issued. The board may make a one-  
 943 time exception to the requirements of this subsection in  
 944 emergency or hardship cases, as defined by board rule, if the  
 945 candidate has passed the theory and practice examination  
 946 described in s. 491.005(1)(e), (3)(e), and (4)(e) ~~s.~~  
 947 ~~491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), and (4)(d)~~.

948 Section 35. Subsection (2) of section 491.0046, Florida  
 949 Statutes, is amended to read:

950 491.0046 Provisional license; requirements.—

951 (2) The department shall issue a provisional clinical  
 952 social worker license, provisional marriage and family therapist  
 953 license, or provisional mental health counselor license to each  
 954 applicant who the board certifies has met all of the following  
 955 criteria:

956 (a) Completed the application form and remitted a  
 957 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$100, as set by  
 958 board rule. ~~;~~ ~~and~~

959 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 960 s. 456.0135.

961 (c) Earned a graduate degree in social work, a graduate  
 962 degree with a major emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a  
 963 closely related field, or a graduate degree in a major related  
 964 to the practice of mental health counseling. ~~;~~ ~~and~~

965 (d) ~~(e)~~ Met the following minimum coursework requirements:

966 1. For clinical social work, a minimum of 15 semester  
 967 hours or 22 quarter hours of the coursework required by s.  
 968 491.005(1)(c)2.b. ~~s. 491.005(1)(b)2.b.~~

969 2. For marriage and family therapy, 10 of the courses  
 970 required by s. 491.005(3)(c) ~~s. 491.005(3)(b)~~, as determined by  
 971 the board, and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of  
 972 the course credits must have been completed in the area of  
 973 marriage and family systems, theories, or techniques.

974 3. For mental health counseling, a minimum of seven of the  
 975 courses required under s. 491.005(4)(c)1.a., b., or c. ~~s.~~

976 | ~~491.005(4)(b)1.a.-c.~~

977 | Section 36. Subsections (1) through (4) of section  
978 | 491.005, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

979 | 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

980 | (1) CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK.—Upon verification of  
981 | documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
982 | board rule, the department shall issue a license as a clinical  
983 | social worker to an applicant whom the board certifies has met  
984 | all of the following criteria:

985 | (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.

986 | (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
987 | s. 456.0135.

988 | (c)1. Received a doctoral degree in social work from a  
989 | graduate school of social work which at the time the applicant  
990 | graduated was accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by  
991 | the United States Department of Education or received a master's  
992 | degree in social work from a graduate school of social work  
993 | which at the time the applicant graduated:

994 | a. Was accredited by the Council on Social Work Education;

995 | b. Was accredited by the Canadian Association for Social  
996 | Work Education; or

997 | c. Has been determined to have been a program equivalent  
998 | to programs approved by the Council on Social Work Education by  
999 | the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service of the Council on  
1000 | Social Work Education. An applicant who graduated from a program



1001 at a university or college outside of the United States or  
 1002 Canada must present documentation of the equivalency  
 1003 determination from the council in order to qualify.

1004 2. The applicant's graduate program emphasized direct  
 1005 clinical patient or client health care services, including, but  
 1006 not limited to, coursework in clinical social work, psychiatric  
 1007 social work, medical social work, social casework,  
 1008 psychotherapy, or group therapy. The applicant's graduate  
 1009 program must have included all of the following coursework:

1010 a. A supervised field placement which was part of the  
 1011 applicant's advanced concentration in direct practice, during  
 1012 which the applicant provided clinical services directly to  
 1013 clients.

1014 b. Completion of 24 semester hours or 32 quarter hours in  
 1015 theory of human behavior and practice methods as courses in  
 1016 clinically oriented services, including a minimum of one course  
 1017 in psychopathology, and no more than one course in research,  
 1018 taken in a school of social work accredited or approved pursuant  
 1019 to subparagraph 1.

1020 3. If the course title which appears on the applicant's  
 1021 transcript does not clearly identify the content of the  
 1022 coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation,  
 1023 including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description  
 1024 published for the course.

1025 (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical social work

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1026 | experience, which took place subsequent to completion of a  
1027 | graduate degree in social work at an institution meeting the  
1028 | accreditation requirements of this section, under the  
1029 | supervision of a licensed clinical social worker or the  
1030 | equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as determined by the  
1031 | board. An individual who intends to practice in Florida to  
1032 | satisfy clinical experience requirements must register pursuant  
1033 | to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If the applicant's  
1034 | graduate program was not a program which emphasized direct  
1035 | clinical patient or client health care services as described in  
1036 | subparagraph (c)2. ~~(b)2.~~, the supervised experience requirement  
1037 | must take place after the applicant has completed a minimum of  
1038 | 15 semester hours or 22 quarter hours of the coursework  
1039 | required. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
1040 | clinical social work experience requirement. A licensed mental  
1041 | health professional must be on the premises when clinical  
1042 | services are provided by a registered intern in a private  
1043 | practice setting.

1044 |       ~~(e)~~(d) Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
1045 | by board rule.

1046 |       ~~(f)~~(e) Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
1047 | knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
1048 | clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
1049 | health counseling.

1050 |       (2) CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK.—

1051           (a) Notwithstanding ~~the provisions of~~ paragraph (1)(c)  
1052 ~~(1)(b)~~, coursework which was taken at a baccalaureate level  
1053 shall not be considered toward completion of education  
1054 requirements for licensure unless an official of the graduate  
1055 program certifies in writing on the graduate school's stationery  
1056 that a specific course, which students enrolled in the same  
1057 graduate program were ordinarily required to complete at the  
1058 graduate level, was waived or exempted based on completion of a  
1059 similar course at the baccalaureate level. If this condition is  
1060 met, the board shall apply the baccalaureate course named toward  
1061 the education requirements.

1062           (b) An applicant from a master's or doctoral program in  
1063 social work which did not emphasize direct patient or client  
1064 services may complete the clinical curriculum content  
1065 requirement by returning to a graduate program accredited by the  
1066 Council on Social Work Education or the Canadian Association of  
1067 Schools of Social Work, or to a clinical social work graduate  
1068 program with comparable standards, in order to complete the  
1069 education requirements for examination. However, a maximum of 6  
1070 semester or 9 quarter hours of the clinical curriculum content  
1071 requirement may be completed by credit awarded for independent  
1072 study coursework as defined by board rule.

1073           (3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of  
1074 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
1075 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage

1076 and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies  
 1077 has met all of the following criteria:

1078 (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.  
 1079 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1080 s. 456.0135.

1081 (c)1. Attained one of the following:

1082 a. A minimum of a master's degree in marriage and family  
 1083 therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on  
 1084 Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

1085 b. A minimum of a master's degree with a major emphasis in  
 1086 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field from a  
 1087 university program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of  
 1088 Counseling and Related Educational Programs and graduate courses  
 1089 approved by the board.

1090 c. A minimum of a master's degree with an emphasis in  
 1091 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a  
 1092 degree conferred before September 1, 2027, from an  
 1093 institutionally accredited college or university and graduate  
 1094 courses approved by the board.

1095 2. If the course title that appears on the applicant's  
 1096 transcript does not clearly identify the content of the  
 1097 coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation,  
 1098 including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description  
 1099 published for the course. The required master's degree must have  
 1100 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the

1101 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an  
1102 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for  
1103 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
1104 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an  
1105 institution of higher education located outside the United  
1106 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled  
1107 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard  
1108 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of  
1109 training of those institutions in the United States which are  
1110 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by  
1111 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor  
1112 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been  
1113 received in an institution or program of higher education  
1114 officially recognized by the government of the country in which  
1115 it is located as an institution or program to train students to  
1116 practice as professional marriage and family therapists or  
1117 psychotherapists. The applicant has the burden of establishing  
1118 that the requirements of this provision have been met, and the  
1119 board shall require documentation, such as an evaluation by a  
1120 foreign equivalency determination service, as evidence that the  
1121 applicant's graduate degree program and education were  
1122 equivalent to an accredited program in this country. An  
1123 applicant with a master's degree from a program that did not  
1124 emphasize marriage and family therapy may complete the  
1125 coursework requirement in a training institution fully

1126 accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and  
1127 Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States  
1128 Department of Education.

1129 (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience  
1130 during which 50 percent of the applicant's clients were  
1131 receiving marriage and family therapy services, which must be at  
1132 the post-master's level under the supervision of a licensed  
1133 marriage and family therapist with at least 5 years of  
1134 experience, or the equivalent, who is a qualified supervisor as  
1135 determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice  
1136 in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must  
1137 register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If  
1138 a graduate has a master's degree with a major emphasis in  
1139 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field which did  
1140 not include all of the coursework required by paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~,  
1141 credit for the post-master's level clinical experience may not  
1142 commence until the applicant has completed a minimum of 10 of  
1143 the courses required by paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~, as determined by the  
1144 board, and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of the  
1145 course credits must have been completed in the area of marriage  
1146 and family systems, theories, or techniques. Within the 2 years  
1147 of required experience, the applicant shall provide direct  
1148 individual, group, or family therapy and counseling to cases  
1149 including those involving unmarried dyads, married couples,  
1150 separating and divorcing couples, and family groups that include

1151 children. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
 1152 clinical experience requirement. A licensed mental health  
 1153 professional must be on the premises when clinical services are  
 1154 provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.

1155 (e)~~(d)~~ Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
 1156 by board rule.

1157 (f)~~(e)~~ Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
 1158 knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
 1159 clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
 1160 health counseling.

1161  
 1162 For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license  
 1163 as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the  
 1164 requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not  
 1165 exceed those stated in this subsection.

1166 (4) MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING.—Upon verification of  
 1167 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
 1168 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a mental  
 1169 health counselor to an applicant whom the board certifies has  
 1170 met all of the following criteria:

1171 (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.

1172 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1173 s. 456.0135.

1174 (c)1. Attained a minimum of an earned master's degree from  
 1175 a mental health counseling program accredited by the Council for

1176 the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs  
1177 which consists of at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours  
1178 of clinical and didactic instruction, including a course in  
1179 human sexuality and a course in substance abuse. If the master's  
1180 degree is earned from a program related to the practice of  
1181 mental health counseling which is not accredited by the Council  
1182 for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational  
1183 Programs, then the coursework and practicum, internship, or  
1184 fieldwork must consist of at least 60 semester hours or 80  
1185 quarter hours and meet all of the following requirements:

1186       a. Thirty-three semester hours or 44 quarter hours of  
1187 graduate coursework, which must include a minimum of 3 semester  
1188 hours or 4 quarter hours of graduate-level coursework in each of  
1189 the following 11 content areas: counseling theories and  
1190 practice; human growth and development; diagnosis and treatment  
1191 of psychopathology; human sexuality; group theories and  
1192 practice; individual evaluation and assessment; career and  
1193 lifestyle assessment; research and program evaluation; social  
1194 and cultural foundations; substance abuse; and legal, ethical,  
1195 and professional standards issues in the practice of mental  
1196 health counseling. Courses in research, thesis or dissertation  
1197 work, practicums, internships, or fieldwork may not be applied  
1198 toward this requirement.

1199       b. A minimum of 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours of  
1200 graduate-level coursework addressing diagnostic processes,



1201 including differential diagnosis and the use of the current  
1202 diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the American  
1203 Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of  
1204 Mental Disorders. The graduate program must have emphasized the  
1205 common core curricular experience.

1206 c. The equivalent, as determined by the board, of at least  
1207 700 hours of university-sponsored supervised clinical practicum,  
1208 internship, or field experience that includes at least 280 hours  
1209 of direct client services, as required in the accrediting  
1210 standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and  
1211 Related Educational Programs for mental health counseling  
1212 programs. This experience may not be used to satisfy the post-  
1213 master's clinical experience requirement.

1214 2. Provided additional documentation if a course title  
1215 that appears on the applicant's transcript does not clearly  
1216 identify the content of the coursework. The documentation must  
1217 include, but is not limited to, a syllabus or catalog  
1218 description published for the course.

1219  
1220 Education and training in mental health counseling must have  
1221 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the  
1222 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an  
1223 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for  
1224 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
1225 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an

1226 institution of higher education located outside the United  
1227 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled  
1228 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard  
1229 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of  
1230 training of those institutions in the United States which are  
1231 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by  
1232 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor  
1233 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been  
1234 received in an institution or program of higher education  
1235 officially recognized by the government of the country in which  
1236 it is located as an institution or program to train students to  
1237 practice as mental health counselors. The applicant has the  
1238 burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision  
1239 have been met, and the board shall require documentation, such  
1240 as an evaluation by a foreign equivalency determination service,  
1241 as evidence that the applicant's graduate degree program and  
1242 education were equivalent to an accredited program in this  
1243 country. Beginning July 1, 2025, an applicant must have a  
1244 master's degree from a program that is accredited by the Council  
1245 for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational  
1246 Programs, the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation  
1247 Council, or an equivalent accrediting body which consists of at  
1248 least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours to apply for  
1249 licensure under this paragraph.

1250 (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience

1251 in mental health counseling, which must be at the post-master's  
1252 level under the supervision of a licensed mental health  
1253 counselor or the equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as  
1254 determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice  
1255 in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must  
1256 register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If  
1257 a graduate has a master's degree with a major related to the  
1258 practice of mental health counseling which did not include all  
1259 the coursework required under sub-subparagraphs (c)1.a and b.  
1260 ~~(b)1.a. and b.~~, credit for the post-master's level clinical  
1261 experience may not commence until the applicant has completed a  
1262 minimum of seven of the courses required under sub-subparagraphs  
1263 (c)1.a and b. ~~(b)1.a. and b.~~, as determined by the board, one of  
1264 which must be a course in psychopathology or abnormal  
1265 psychology. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
1266 clinical experience requirement. A licensed mental health  
1267 professional must be on the premises when clinical services are  
1268 provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.

1269 (e)~~(d)~~ Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
1270 by board rule.

1271 (f)~~(e)~~ Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
1272 knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
1273 clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
1274 health counseling.

1275 Section 37. Subsection (1) of section 491.006, Florida

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1276 Statutes, is amended to read:

1277 491.006 Licensure or certification by endorsement.—

1278 (1) The department shall license or grant a certificate to  
1279 a person in a profession regulated by this chapter who, upon  
1280 applying to the department and remitting the appropriate fee,  
1281 demonstrates to the board that he or she:

1282 (a) Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of  
1283 the board, knowledge of the laws and rules governing the  
1284 practice of clinical social work, marriage and family therapy,  
1285 and mental health counseling.

1286 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
1287 s. 456.0135.

1288 (c)1. Holds an active valid license to practice and has  
1289 actively practiced the licensed profession in another state for  
1290 3 of the last 5 years immediately preceding licensure;

1291 2. Has passed a substantially equivalent licensing  
1292 examination in another state or has passed the licensure  
1293 examination in this state in the profession for which the  
1294 applicant seeks licensure; and

1295 3. Holds a license in good standing, is not under  
1296 investigation for an act that would constitute a violation of  
1297 this chapter, and has not been found to have committed any act  
1298 that would constitute a violation of this chapter.

1299  
1300 The fees paid by any applicant for certification as a master

1301 social worker under this section are nonrefundable.

1302 Section 38. Section 486.025, Florida Statutes, is amended  
1303 to read:

1304 486.025 Powers and duties of the Board of Physical Therapy  
1305 Practice.—The board may administer oaths, summon witnesses, take  
1306 testimony in all matters relating to its duties under this  
1307 chapter, establish or modify minimum standards of practice of  
1308 physical therapy as defined in s. 486.021, including, but not  
1309 limited to, standards of practice for the performance of dry  
1310 needling by physical therapists, and adopt rules pursuant to ss.  
1311 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this chapter. The board may  
1312 also review the standing and reputability of any school or  
1313 college offering courses in physical therapy and whether the  
1314 courses of such school or college in physical therapy meet the  
1315 standards established by the appropriate accrediting agency  
1316 referred to in s. 486.031(4)(a) ~~s. 486.031(3)(a)~~. In determining  
1317 the standing and reputability of any such school and whether the  
1318 school and courses meet such standards, the board may  
1319 investigate and personally inspect the school and courses.

1320 Section 39. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
1321 486.0715, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1322 486.0715 Physical therapist; issuance of temporary  
1323 permit.—

1324 (1) The board shall issue a temporary physical therapist  
1325 permit to an applicant who meets the following requirements:

1326 (b) Is a graduate of an approved United States physical  
 1327 therapy educational program and meets all the eligibility  
 1328 requirements for licensure under chapter ~~ch.~~ 456, s. 486.031(1) -  
 1329 (4)(a) ~~s. 486.031(1)-(3)(a)~~, and related rules, except passage  
 1330 of a national examination approved by the board is not required.

1331 Section 40. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
 1332 486.1065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1333 486.1065 Physical therapist assistant; issuance of  
 1334 temporary permit.—

1335 (1) The board shall issue a temporary physical therapist  
 1336 assistant permit to an applicant who meets the following  
 1337 requirements:

1338 (b) Is a graduate of an approved United States physical  
 1339 therapy assistant educational program and meets all the  
 1340 eligibility requirements for licensure under chapter ~~ch.~~ 456, s.  
 1341 486.102(1)-(4)(a) ~~s. 486.102(1)-(3)(a)~~, and related rules,  
 1342 except passage of a national examination approved by the board  
 1343 is not required.

1344 Section 41. Subsections (15), (16), and (17) of section  
 1345 491.003, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1346 491.003 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

1347 (15) "Registered clinical social worker intern" means a  
 1348 person registered under this chapter who is completing the  
 1349 postgraduate clinical social work experience requirement  
 1350 specified in s. 491.005(1)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(e)~~.

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1351 (16) "Registered marriage and family therapist intern"  
1352 means a person registered under this chapter who is completing  
1353 the post-master's clinical experience requirement specified in  
1354 s. 491.005(3)(d) ~~s. 491.005(3)(c)~~.

1355 (17) "Registered mental health counselor intern" means a  
1356 person registered under this chapter who is completing the post-  
1357 master's clinical experience requirement specified in s.  
1358 491.005(4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(4)(c)~~.

1359 Section 42. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.