

Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists

Board Policies

(Effective Date: February 21, 2018)

I. Guidelines for an acceptable contract affidavit for postgraduate experience and supervision as it relates to an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) license:

The purpose of the Contract for Post Graduate Experience and Supervision is to provide structure and accountability for obtaining experience and supervision which qualifies an applicant to apply for full licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. (Rule 135-5-.05 further defines and describes the contract.)

➤ For applicants who **have already secured** a work site and supervision contract

1. Demographic and basic information re: the applicant and the graduate education experience must be completed as directed. (Part I)
2. The sections entitled Plan For Direction and Plan For Supervision are to be completed in full as directed. (Parts II, III, IV, and V)

➤ For applicants who **have not yet secured** a work site and supervision contract:

1. Demographic and basic information re: the applicant and the graduate education experience must be completed as directed in Part I. (Parts II and III can be completed only after a job has been secured.)
2. The sections entitled Plan for Direction and Plan for Supervision must include a description of the applicant's plans for seeking postgraduate experience and supervision. This might include job search activities that are already underway and/or might include consultation with qualifying supervisor to mentor the process of seeking a job. (Parts IV and V)
3. Once a job has been obtained and the supervision plan is in place, Parts II, III, IV and V must be completed in detail and the contract must be resubmitted to the Board within fourteen (14) business days.

Once a completed contract is registered, any proposed changes or updates to the contract must be submitted to the Board for approval. The Board, at its discretion, may ask for additional information at any time.

Postgraduate experience or supervision not submitted in the contract affidavit may be declined by the Board as meeting the requirements for licensure as an LMFT.

05-07-2010 Adopted

II. Sanctions and Fine Scale for Unlicensed Practice: Composite Board:

Practicing without a valid active Georgia license may constitute grounds, in the Boards discretion, for disciplinary sanctions including but not limited to the sanctions provided below.

Possible fines to be considered (mitigating circumstances may be taken into account in varying the fine amount and/or sanctions and is within the Boards discretion):

1. Practice over one month but not exceeding three months: fine of \$100.00 per month;
2. Practice over three months but not exceeding one year: fine of \$500.00;
3. Practice over one year but not exceeding two years: fine of \$750.00;
4. Practice over two years but not exceeding three years: fine of \$1,000.00;
5. Practice over three years: fine of \$1,000.00 plus an additional fine of \$100.00 for each month worked, or portion thereof, over three years not to exceed \$5,000.00.

04-13-2012 Adopted

III. ASWB Advanced Generalist Exam:

The Board will accept for licensure applicants whose passing exam score for the ASWB Advanced Generalist Exam (AGE) was obtained **on or before January 1, 2012**. For Georgia licensure applicants who took the Advanced Generalist Exam (AGE) **after January 1, 2012**, the test score will not be accepted.

04-05-2013 Adopted

IV. Associate Professional Counselor (APC) licensure applicants – RE: Contract Affidavits:

If an application for APC is complete except for the Contract Affidavit, and approved by two of the three members of the LPC Professional Standards Committee, then the applicant can be approved to sit for the exam and the approval letter sent out. The applicant will **NOT** receive a license until the Contract Affidavit is received and approved by the Board, even if the exam has been passed.

After one year, pursuant to rule 135-3-.01(3) (b), an incomplete application will be withdrawn and the individual will need to submit a new application and fee (transcripts, exam scores etc.....from first application will be retained, used for new application).

09-06-2013 Adopted

V. Reinstatement of Lapsed APC/AMFT Licenses:

APC/AMFT licenses are only valid for a five year period. An associate license that lapses for failure to renew may be reinstated **once** with the remaining time period of the initial five (5) years. Example: Issued APC/AMFT 1-1-11; Lapses 9-30-2012 = 21 months or 1 year and 9 months. The one-time reinstatement would be granted giving the associate license a balance of 39 months (or 3 years and 3 months) left before expiration.

An associate level license that lapses a second time shall not be reinstated.

09-06-2013 Adopted

VI. Degree Requirements:

Board rule 135-5-.01(a) 8 and 135-5-.02(a) (11) were amended effective March 17, 2015, and the following language (italics/underlined) was removed:

8. “**Program Primarily Counseling in Content**” and “**Program in Applied Psychology**” means a course of study at an accredited educational institution consisting of a master’s degree which includes **either** as part of the degree program **or as additional course work**

completed prior to, during or after the degree program, the following graduate level courses.

The Board proposes to add this language back into the sections of these two rules within the next few months. In the meantime, by this policy, any application submitted and reviewed by the Board from March 17, 2015 until these two rules can be amended, **whom the Board deems** to have been, or would be, adversely affected by the removal of the above referenced language may report additional course work completed prior to, during or after the degree program as part of their application materials without the filing of a Petition for Variance of a Board rule [O.C.G.A. § 50-13-9.1(b)(2)]

Adopted: 08-07-2015

**Rule amendment to insert this language back into this rule to become effective on or about 02-29-2016 (Adopted 02-05-2016 Meeting)*

VII. Directed Work Experience and Supervision Hours - Counselors:

It is the intention of the Professional Standards Committee, Licensed Professional Counselor members, that the Board rules referencing the Directed Work Experience and Supervision for licensure as a professional counselor, 135-5-.02, that the required post-master's hours of supervision and work experience be obtained consecutively each and every month for the duration of the required months/years of the post-master's experience. Therefore, a minimum number of hours for each month are expected to be accrued.

The maximum time frame for obtainment of the required hours of supervision and work experience is within 60 months from start date.

Also, the expectation is these hours are equally spread out over each month of the full 12 month/yearly periods. Individuals must document a full 12, 24, 36 or 48 months of supervision and work experience – whichever their degree/educational credentials dictate.

Contemporaneous logs MUST be kept and shall be subject to Board review upon request.

- NOTE: After September 30, 2018 the post-master's supervision hours change to 35 per 12 months/a year and the post-masters work experience hours change to 1000 per 12 months/a year.

Adopted 04-08-2016

VII. Endorsement – Professional Counselors:

Pending amendments adopted pursuant to Board rule 135-3-.04 Licensure by Endorsement, the Professional Standards Committee of licensed Professional Counselor Board members hereby implement this policy, upon approval by a full Board vote, with regard to licensure by endorsement into Georgia as a Professional Counselor:

- Verification of a minimum of two years of unrestricted licensure at the level of a Georgia licensed professional counselor, in good standing, from every state licensure Board of every state in which the applicant is currently, or has ever been, licensed. In addition, the applicant must verify active, unrestricted practice at the level of a Georgia licensed professional counselor for a minimum of two (2) years **immediately preceding** the date of application for licensure by Endorsement to the Georgia Board, and

- Verification of passing score on the NBCC NCE or NCMHCE exams; and,
- The Board may request further verification of any credential submitted if deemed necessary to evaluate the application.

Adopted 04-08-2016

VIII. Georgia Law Effective July 1, 2022 – Counselors

A. Applications and Licensure received, and date stamped on or before June 30, 2022:

Individuals who submitted an application for initial licensure as an **Associate Professional Counselor or Licensed Professional Counselor (APC/LPC)** which was **received and date stamped** by the Professional Licensing Board division staff **on or before June 30, 2022**, shall be required to meet the prior statutory licensure requirements and Board rules for education and directed work experience in effect prior to July 1, 2022. Specifically, in addition to other requirements, to include those previously outlined in O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-11(a), the following shall be required:

For licensure as an Associate Professional Counselor:

- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content or in a program of applied psychology, which degree includes a supervised internship or practicum as part of the degree program and registration with the board of an acceptable contract for obtaining the post-master's experience under direction and supervision required for licensure as a professional counselor.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (not previously licensed as an APC):

- A doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content and requires at least one-year of a supervised internship in a work setting acceptable to the Board; or
- A specialist degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content with supervised internship or practicum and two-years of post-master's directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board; or
- A master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or in a program that is primarily counseling in content from a recognized educational institution with supervised internship or practicum and three years of post-masters directed experience providing rehabilitation services in a rehabilitation setting under supervision. Up to

one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum or internship placement as part of the degree program; or

- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program; or
- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program of applied psychology with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (previously licensed as an APC)

Certain individuals submitting an application for a **Licensed Professional Counselor license who were previously licensed by the Board as an Associate Professional Counselor based on an application for APC licensure received and date stamped on or before June 30, 2022**, and their educational and directed work experience requirements having already been approved by the Board, shall not be subject to the new statutory provisions for the educational degree or number of years of directed work experience under supervision. Their application for a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) license shall be reviewed and processed pursuant to the statutory requirements and Board rules in place **on and before June 30, 2022, regardless of their date of application**. Specifically, the statutory requirements to become licensed as a Licensed Professional Counselor, for these referenced individuals, shall include the following:

- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content or in a program of applied psychology, with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program.
 - **However, APCs licensed before July 1, 2022, who meet the educational requirements in the current law, specifically, completion of a program that consists of 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours, shall be allowed to move forward with the LPC licensing process by completing the required two (2) years of Directed Work Experience with appropriate Supervision.**

B. Applications and Licensure received, and date stamped on or after July 1, 2022:

Individuals submitting an application for an initial license as an **Associate Professional Counselor or Licensed Professional Counselor (APC/LPC) received and date stamped** by the Professional Licensing Board Division **on or after July 1, 2022** shall

be required to meet the new statutory provisions for licensure (and any Board rules promulgated after July 1, 2022). Specifically, these applicants, in addition to other requirements outlined in O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-11(a), must demonstrate the following:

For licensure as an Associate Professional Counselor:

- A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of **at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours** with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program; and
- Registration with the Board of an acceptable contract for obtaining the post-degree experience under direction and supervision that is required for licensure as a professional counselor.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor:

- A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of **at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours** with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program; and
- **Two years** of post-degree experience under direction and supervision in a work setting acceptable to the Board; or
- A doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content and requires at least one-year of a supervised internship in a work setting acceptable to the Board.

**Approved by Governor Kemp: November 17, 2022
Docket # 22-09-001**