

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE  
GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,  
SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS  
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 135, RULE 5-.02 2 PROFESSIONAL  
COUNSELORS AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

RULE 135-5-.02 Professional Counselors

**TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter “Board”) proposes an amendment to Rule 135-5-.02 Professional Counselors (herein after “proposed rule”).

This notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule, and a synopsis of the proposed rule are being sent to all persons who have requested, in writing, to be included on a notification list. This notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule, and a synopsis of the proposed rule may also be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. The documents will also be available for review on the Board’s website at [Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage & Family Therapists | Georgia Secretary of State \(ga.gov\)](https://www.ga.gov/secretaryofstate/professional-licensing-boards). Copies may also be requested by contacting the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

The public will have an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed rule amendment at a public hearing to be held at **10:15 a.m., Friday August 11, 2023** in the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. If the Board office remains closed due to the public health emergency (COVID-19), the hearing will be held via teleconference. Please see Board’s website for information on how to join the meeting via teleconference.

Interested parties affected by the rule may submit written comments to the Board no later than close of business on **August 4, 2023**. Written comments must be legible, signed, contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number, email address), and addressed to Gabriel Sterling, Interim Division Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217.

During the public hearing, anyone may present data, make a statement, comment, or offer a viewpoint or argument, whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements will be limited to five (5) minutes per person.

The Board voted to post this Notice of Intent at its meeting on May 12, 2023. The Board also voted that the formulation and adoption of this rule amendment does not impose an excessive regulatory cost on any licensee, and any cost to comply with the proposed rule amendment cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-6, 43-10A-8, 43-10A-9, and 43-10A-11. Additionally, the Board voted that it was neither legal nor feasible in meeting the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-6, 43-10A-8, 43-10A-9, and 43-10A-11 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(a)(3)(A), (B), (C) and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of professional counseling, social work or marriage and family therapy.

According to the Department of Law of the State of Georgia, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists has the authority to adopt proposed Rule 135-5-.01 pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-6, 43-10A-8, 43-10A-9, and 43-10A-11. For further information, contact the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

This notice is given in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4.

This the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

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Gabriel Sterling  
Interim Division Director  
Professional Licensing Boards Division

Posted: \_\_\_\_\_

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES OF TO THE  
GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL  
WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST'S RULES  
RULE 135-5-.02**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the proposed adoption is to amend the rule to reflect statutory updates form HB972/Act 813 effective July 1, 2022. Rule has also been reorganized to make it easier to review the requirements for licensure.

**135-5-.02 Professional Counselors**

Pursuant to Official Code of Georgia Annotated 43-10A-11 an applicant for a license in Professional Counseling must meet the following requirements.

**(a) Definitions.**

1. **"The Practice of Professional Counseling"** means practice ~~in that specialty~~ which utilizes counseling and psychotherapy to evaluate, diagnose and treat emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, behavioral, or affective. ~~The practice~~ Professional Counseling is further defined in O.C.G.A. 43-10A-3(~~10-14~~).

2. **"Direction"** means the ongoing administrative ~~overseeing~~ oversight by an employer or superior of a ~~Professional Counselor's practitioner's~~ practitioner's work in the practice of professional counseling, ~~as defined by 135-5-.01 (a)(1) by a director.~~ The director person providing direction shall be responsible for assuring the quality of the services rendered by that practitioner and shall ensure that qualified supervision or intervention occurs in situations, which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner.

3. **"Director"** means the ~~person who provides direction and who is either the employer of the person-practitioner, who receives direction or is the superior in the administrative chain of command, who to the person who receives direction.~~ provides oversight for all services rendered by the practitioner to include, but not be limited to, client assignment and fees, and who has the ultimate responsibility for assuring the quality of all services provided. The director shall ensure that appropriate intervention occurs in situations which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner. The director shall further assure that clients are seen only when the approved director, an appropriate superior or, in temporary situations, a designated emergency contact is onsite or available for clinical consultation.

(i) The Director shall **not** also serve as the "supervisor" of the practitioner to whom they are providing direction.

(ii) Directors shall not provide direction to family members, nor shall they provide direction to any practitioner with whom they have a boundary conflict or conflict of interest, including a financial interest and/or familial relationship. In addition the practitioner or any of that practitioner's family members shall

not have an ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity where the director is employed or where the practitioner provides professional counseling services.

(iii) Family Member means members of a practitioner's immediate family, by direct descent or by marriage.

4. "Supervision" means the direct clinical review, for the purpose of training or teaching, ~~by a supervisor of a Professional Counselor's interaction with their client(s). of the practitioner's interaction with clients as well as the development of the practitioner's professional identity, ethics, and clinical skills. The purpose of supervision is to promote the development of the practitioner's clinical skills. Supervision is separate from any managerial role of client care, and Supervision may include, without being limited to, the review of case presentations, audiotapes, videotapes, and direct observation of the practitioner's clinical skills. Supervision does not require the supervisor to be present at the work site with the supervisee practitioner. Supervision and~~ may be provided pro bono or for a fee. The supervision may be provided either face to face or by technology assisted media, in compliance with the telemental health rules, such as but not limited to videoconference or telephone. Both supervisors and supervisees are required to maintain a contemporaneous record of the date, duration, type (individual, paired, or group), and a brief summary of the pertinent activity for each supervision session to be submitted to the Board upon request. If there are any discrepancies in hours, contemporaneous documentation of supervision will be requested.

(i) **Individual Supervision** means one supervisor meeting with a maximum of two supervisees for no less than one (1) clock hour (50 to 60 minutes).

(ii) **Group Supervision** means at least one supervisor meeting with a maximum of six individual supervisees for no less than one and a half (1.5) clock hours and will be accepted only if each individual group supervisee signs and dates the contemporaneous record.

5. "**Supervisor**" means a licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist who complies with the ethical standards of practice of their profession with particular attention being paid to prohibited dual relationships. In addition,

(i) ~~a~~ A supervisor who holds a master's degree must have three (3) years of post-licensure experience; and

(ii) ~~a~~ A supervisor who holds a specialist degree must have two (2) years of post-licensure experience; and

(iii) ~~a~~ A supervisor who holds a doctoral degree must have one (1) year of post-licensure experience; and

(iv) ~~f~~ For supervision entered into **after September 30, 2018**, a supervisor who is a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold either a National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) Approved Clinical Supervisor credential or a Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia (LPCAGA) Certified Professional Counselor Supervisor credential.

(v) ~~however, t~~The Board in its discretion may approve a supervisor whose experience is substantially similar to those stated herein.

(vi) ~~i~~In a supervised practicum or internship which is part of the graduate degree program, either the course instructor of record or the on-site clinical instructor must be a qualified supervisor OR, in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

6. For supervision entered into on or after **January 1, 2024, "Supervisor"** for post-master's work experience under supervision means a licensed Professional Counselor, who meets the specific requirements as outlined below. The required practicum or internship primarily counseling in content may be supervised by a licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, Psychiatrist or in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

(i) The supervisor shall **not** also serve as the director of the individual who receives supervision.

(ii) A supervisor must have three (3) years of post-licensure experience.

(iii) A supervisor who is a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold, in addition to meeting (i) and (ii) above, either a National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) Approved Clinical Supervisor credential or a Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia (LPCAGA) Certified Professional Counselor Supervisor credential.

(iv) The Board in its discretion may approve a supervisor who is licensed and in good standing and whose experience is substantially similar to those stated herein. Approval must be granted prior to the supervision beginning and must be approved through the Petition for Waiver of a Board rule (Reference OCGA 50-13-9.1).

(v) Supervisors shall not provide supervision to family members, nor shall they provide supervision to any practitioner with whom they have a boundary conflict or conflict of interest, including a financial interest and/or familial relationship. In addition, the practitioner or any of that practitioner's family members shall not have an ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity where the supervisor is employed or where the practitioner provides professional counseling services.

(vi) Family Member means members of a practitioner's immediate family, by direct descent or by marriage.

6 7. "**Directed Work Experience**" means time spent under direction engaging in the practice of Professional Counseling.

~~(i) all work sites must include a formal structure related to the practice of professional counseling as defined in Rule 135 5 .01(a)(1). Valid work sites should have measurable detailed documentation for every candidate, to include a signed contractual agreement that outlines the job description, office hours, performance review procedures and dismissal policies.~~

~~(ii) non-compensated experiences or services will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine acceptability in defining the working relationship for the purposes of obtainment of the required post-master's directed work experience only if they meet these requirements. The agreement between the work site and the candidate should be akin to employment.~~

~~(iii) applicants may, at the discretion of the Board, be required to submit documentation substantiating (a) the nature of the working relationship with the directed experience site, (b) the formal structure of the organization, and (c) whether any licensed or associate-licensed individuals work there to ensure compliance and understanding of these requirements.~~

(i) A minimum of 40% percent of the required annual hours shall be direct clinical work experience.

(ii) Psychoeducation shall not be more than 30% of the total direct work experience.

(iii) Assessment and referral activities shall not be more than 30% of the total direct work experience.

(iv) "Direct work experience" means contact with one or more clients and includes diagnosis, assessment, and treatment, and may also include psychoeducation for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders.

(v) "Indirect Work Experience" means training for, and the performance of, professional counseling functions including, but not limited to, case consultation, case staffing, treatment teams, direction, or continuing education courses.

(vi) The practitioner, or any of that practitioner's family members, shall not have any ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity in which the professional counseling services will be provided by the practitioner.

(vii) The practitioner receiving directed work experience pursuant to this rule shall not engage in the independent practice of professional counseling. All clients must be assigned to the practitioner by the Director of the supervisee. Practitioners shall not directly recruit clients.

(viii) The practitioner while receiving directed work experience pursuant to this rule, shall not be directly compensated by clients.

(ix) The directed work experience for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors shall be in a rehabilitation setting defined as a practice, or in a rehabilitation center, and is restricted to counseling those individuals who are seeking re-training for the work force.

(x) Directed work experience for School Counselors may only be obtained while school is in session and students are present for the hours to be accepted toward those required for licensure.

(xi) All work sites must include a formal structure related to the practice of professional counseling

(I) Work sites acceptable to the Board may include, but are not limited to, education, rehabilitation, career development, mental health or community organizations.

(II) Practice without direction is not considered a work setting acceptable to the Board.

(III) Valid work sites shall employ at least one licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist and should have measurable detailed documentation for every practitioner, to include a signed contractual agreement that outlines the job description, office hours, performance review procedures and dismissal policies.

(IV) Non-compensated experiences or services will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine acceptability only if they meet the above requirements, specific to the post-master's directed work experience. The agreement between the work site and practitioner should be akin to employment.

#### **7 8. "Years of Directed Experience with concurrent Supervision"**

(i) "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 600 hours of directed experience acquired within a period of not less than twelve months and not more than twenty months.

~~(ii) "Two years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1200 hours of directed experience under supervision acquired within a period of not less than twenty-four months and not more than 60 months.~~

~~(iii) "Three years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1800 hours of directed experience under supervision acquired within a period of not less than thirty-six months and not more than 60 months.~~

~~(iv) "Four years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 2400 hours of directed experience under supervision acquired within a period of not less than forty-eight months and not more than 60 months.~~

~~(v i) After September 30, 2018 "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience acquired in one year as defined below. not less than a twelve (12) month period. The number of required years of Directed Experience is based on the applicant's educational credentials as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(b)2.~~

(I) "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience with 35 concurrent supervision hours, acquired within a period of not less than twelve months and not more than twenty months.

(II) "Two years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 2000 hours of directed experience with 70 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than twenty-four months and not more than thirty-two months.

(III) "Three years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 3000 hours of directed experience with 105 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than thirty-six months and not more than forty-four months.

(IV) "Four years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 4000 hours of directed experience with 140 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than forty-eight months and not more than sixty months.

~~(vi ii) After September 30, 2018, all Directed Experience under Supervision, as defined above, must be obtained within the a sixty (60) months period and further, shall be obtained within the ten (10) year period prior to the date of application. Endorsement applications will be considered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Board.~~

(iii) Directed work experience under supervision entered into on or after January 1, 2024 means:



(I) "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience with 50 concurrent supervision hours, acquired within a period of not less than twelve months and not more than twenty months.

(II) "Two years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 2000 hours of directed experience with 100 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than twenty-four months and not more than thirty-two months.

(III) Directed Experience under Supervision, as defined above, must be obtained within a sixty (60) month period.

(iv) The sixty (60) months of directed work experience concurrent with supervision shall be obtained within the ten (10) year period prior to the date of application.

#### **8. ~~"Years of Supervision"~~**

~~(i) "One year of Supervision" means a minimum of 30 hours of supervision obtained during one year of Directed Experience as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(7).~~

~~(ii) "Two years of Supervision" means a minimum of 60 hours of supervision obtained during two years of Directed Experience as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(7).~~

~~(iii) "Three years of Supervision" means a minimum of 90 hours of supervision obtained during three years of Directed Experience as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(7).~~

~~(iv) "Four years of Supervision" means a minimum of 120 hours of supervision obtained during four years of Directed Experience as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(7).~~

~~(v) After September 30, 2018, "One year of Supervision" means a minimum of thirty five (35) hours of supervision obtained during one twelve (12) month period of Directed Experience as defined in Rule 135-5-.02(7).~~

~~(vi) After September 30, 2018, all Supervision must be obtained within the sixty (60) months prior to the date of application. Endorsement applications will be considered on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Board.~~

~~9 "Work settings acceptable to the Board" means a directed work settings in which the practice of Professional Counseling takes place and may include, but is not limited to, education, rehabilitation, career development, mental health, community, or industrial organizations. Practice without direction is not a work setting acceptable to the Board. Directed experience sites in the contract must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of "Directed Experience".~~

10 9. "Certified Rehabilitation Counselor" means a person who is certified as a rehabilitation counselor by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

11 10. **Program Primarily in Clinical Counseling or Counseling Psychology in Content" and "Program in Applied Psychology "** means a course of study at an accredited educational institution consisting of a master's specialist or doctoral degree which includes degree or higher from a regionally accredited program that consists of at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours, with an approved supervised internship or practicum consisting of at least 600 hours, that is primarily the practice of professional counseling in content. includes The graduate level courses as specified in rule 135-5-.02(b)(1) below shall also be required 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. **After September 30, 2018** the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or a regionally accredited program recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

(i) — Counseling/Psychotherapy Theory, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counseling/psychotherapy and the major models of counseling/psychotherapy.

(ii) — A Counseling or Applied Psychology Practicum or Internship as part of the graduate degree program.

(iii) — Courses in six (6) of the following nine (9) content areas: After September 30, 2018, all 9 content areas of the following course work are required:

(I) — Human Growth and Development, which includes an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, personality theory, and learning theory, and which may provide a comprehensive overview of the factors, determinants, and stages that pertain to physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development and adaptation from infantile to geriatric stages.

(II) — Multicultural Counseling or Diversity Training, which includes an understanding of societal changes and trends, human roles, societal subgroups, diversity, social mores and interaction patterns, and differing lifestyles and competency in counseling a diverse clientele.

(III) — Counseling Techniques or Skills, which includes an understanding of the philosophic bases of helping processes, helper self-understanding and self-development, and the facilitation of client change; OR Advanced Psychotherapy/Intervention Theory, which includes the in-depth study of the major theories, principles, methods and techniques of psychotherapy with individuals, groups or families, focusing on the treatment or prevention of

behavior disorders, adjustment problems, psychopathology, or other psychological disturbance.

~~(IV) — Group Dynamics and Group Counseling/Psychotherapy, which includes an understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling/psychotherapy theories; group leadership styles; group counseling/psychotherapy methods and skills; and other group approaches.~~

~~(V) — Lifestyle and Career Development, which includes an understanding of career development theories; occupational educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision making; and career development program planning, resources, and evaluation.~~

~~(VI) — Appraisal/Assessment of Individuals, which includes an understanding of psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal/assessment; validity and reliability; psychometric statistics; the selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of various assessment instruments; and the use of appraisal/assessment results in the counseling/psychotherapy process.~~

~~(VII) — Research Methods and Evaluation, which includes an understanding of types of research, statistics, research report development, research implementation, program evaluation, needs assessment, and ethical and legal considerations in research; OR Research Statistics, which includes an understanding of the theory, analysis and interpretation of manual or computer generated statistical measures.~~

~~(VIII) — Professional Orientation and Ethics, which includes an understanding of ethical and legal standards, professional roles, responsibilities, and functions; professional goals and objectives; professional organizations and associations; professional history and trends; professional preparation standards; and professional credentialing.~~

~~(IX) — Psychopathology, which includes theories, research, descriptive characteristics, categories, dynamics, and etiology of mental, behavioral, cognitive and personality disorders, with a focus on utilization of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM) and/or International Classification of Diseases (ICD).~~

(i) A practicum or internship that is primarily counseling in content includes at least 40% client contact and documentation.

**~~(b) An applicant who holds a master's degree from a program primarily counseling in content must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.~~**

**(b) Requirements for Licensure**

1. Education. After September 30, 2018, the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or be a program in a regionally accredited institution recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

2. Education. Effective July 1, 2022, the applicant must have earned a 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 and that includes a supervised practicum or internship that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program of at least 600 hours. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily clinical counseling or counseling psychology in content. The degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or be a program in a regionally accredited institution recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program

(i) In a supervised practicum or internship which is primarily counseling in content, and is part of the graduate degree program, either the course instructor of record or the on-site clinical instructor must be a qualified supervisor as defined above in 135-5-.02(a)(6) or in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

(ii) Graduate coursework in the following ten (10) content areas shall be required. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

**(I) Counseling/Psychotherapy Theory**, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counseling/psychotherapy and the major models of counseling/psychotherapy.

**(II) Human Growth and Development**, which includes an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, personality theory, and learning theory, and which may provide a comprehensive overview of the factors, determinants, and stages that pertain to physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development and adaptation from infancy to geriatric stages.

**(III) Multicultural Counseling or Diversity Training**, which includes an understanding of societal changes and trends, human roles, societal subgroups, diversity, social mores and interaction patterns, and differing lifestyles; and competency in counseling a diverse clientele.

**(IV) Counseling Techniques or Skills**, which includes an understanding of the philosophic bases of helping processes, helper self-understanding and self-development, and the facilitation of client change; Or **Advanced Psychotherapy/Intervention Theory**, which includes the in-depth study of the major theories, principles, methods and techniques of psychotherapy with individuals, groups or families, focusing on the treatment or prevention of behavior disorders, adjustment problems, psychopathology, or other psychological disturbance.

**(V) Group Dynamics and Group Counseling/Psychotherapy**, which includes an understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling/psychotherapy theories; group leadership styles; group counseling/psychotherapy methods and skills; and other group approaches.

**(VI) Lifestyle and Career Development**, which includes an understanding of career development theories; occupational educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision making; and career development program planning, resources, and evaluation.

**(VII) Appraisal/Assessment of Individuals**, which includes an understanding of psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal/assessment; validity and reliability; psychometric statistics; the selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of various assessment instruments; and the use of appraisal/assessment results in the counseling/psychotherapy process.

**(VIII) Research Methods and Evaluation**, which includes an understanding of types of research, statistics, research report development, research implementation, program evaluation, needs assessment, and ethical and legal considerations in research. OR **Research Statistics**, which includes an understanding of the theory, analysis and interpretation of manual or computer-generated statistical measures.

**(IX) Professional Orientation and Ethics**, which includes an understanding of ethical and legal standards, professional roles, responsibilities, and functions; professional goals and objectives; professional organizations and associations; professional history and

trends; professional preparation standards; and professional credentialing.

(X) **Psychopathology** which includes theories, research, descriptive characteristics, categories, dynamics, and etiology of mental, behavioral, cognitive and personality disorders with a focus on utilization of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM) and/or International Classification of Diseases (ICD).

Coursework shall encompass psychopathology from infancy to geriatric stages

(iii) If the degree program did not include all the following required courses, additional graduate level course work can be completed prior to, during, or after the degree program.

(iv) Applicants who have obtained their degrees from an educational degree program located outside of the United States shall have their educational credentials evaluated by a Board approved independent foreign credential service.

(v) Degrees received on or after **May 31, 2026**, must be a program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

### 3. Educational Degrees

**(b i) An applicant who holds a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology primarily counseling in content must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.**

~~1. Education. The applicant must have earned a master's degree from an institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). After September 30, 2018 the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or a regionally accredited program recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution in order to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily counseling in content and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)11.~~

2. (I) A “Masters” degree must be so designated by the educational

institution awarding the master's degree and indicated on the official transcript along with the date conferred.

3. **(II) Directed Experience under with concurrent Supervision.**

The applicant must present evidence of ~~four (4) years of post-master's directed experience under supervision [see definitions in Rule 135-5-.02(a)] in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board OR three (3) two (2) years of post-master's degree directed experience under supervision in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board and a supervised counseling practicum or internship of at least 300-600 hours which was part of the graduate degree program. **After September 30, 2018, 600 practicum or internship hours will be required.** A minimum of The two (2) years of the supervision must be provided by a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor, and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)6., except that if the supervision was acquired prior to September 23, 1993, such supervision may have been provided by any qualified supervisor. Directed experience sites ~~in the contract~~ must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a)(6)8 above, the definition of "Directed Experience".~~

4. (III) Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.

~~(e) An applicant who holds a **specialist degree** from a program that is primarily counseling in content must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.~~

~~1. Education. The applicant must have earned a specialist degree from an institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. After September 30, 2018 the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or a regionally accredited program recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution in order to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily counseling in content and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)11.~~

~~2. A "Specialist" degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the specialist degree and indicated on the official transcript.~~



~~3. Directed Experience under Supervision. The applicant must present evidence of two (2) years of post-master's directed experience under supervision [see definitions at 135-5-.02(a)] in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board and a supervised counseling practicum or internship of at least 300 hours which was part of the graduate degree program OR, in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board. After September 30, 2018, 600 practicum or internship hours will be required. A minimum of one (1) year of the supervision must be provided by a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a) 5, except that if the supervision was acquired prior to September 23, 1993, such supervision may have been provided by any qualified supervisor. Directed experience sites in the contract must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of "Directed Experience".~~

~~4. Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.~~

**(d ii) An applicant who holds a doctoral degree from a program primarily counseling in content must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.**

~~4. (I) Education. The applicant must have earned a doctoral degree from an a recognized educational institution which, in a program that is primarily the practice of professional counseling in content and requires at least one year of a supervised internship, also primarily counseling in content in a work setting acceptable to the Board. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily counseling in content. ~~a~~At the time the degree was awarded, was the educational institution must have been accredited by a regional body-recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. After September 30, 2018 the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or be a program in a regionally accredited program institution recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP ~~or CORE~~ accredited program. ~~The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution in order to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily counseling in content and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)11.~~~~



I. A practicum or internship that is primarily counseling in content includes at least 40% client contact and documentation.

(II) Degrees received on or after **May 31, 2026** must be a program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

~~2. (III) A “Doctoral” degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the doctoral degree and indicated on the official transcript along with the date conferred.~~

~~3. (IV) Directed Experience under with concurrent Supervision. The applicant must present evidence of one (1) year of supervised counseling internship of at least seven hundred fifty (750) hours during the doctorate degree program in a work setting acceptable to the Board. OR one (1) year of post-master’s directed experience under supervision [see definitions in Rule 135-5-.02(a)] in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board. A minimum of half of the one year of ~~supervision~~ the supervised counseling internship must be provided by a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)~~5,6~~. The remaining months of the supervision may be obtained by any eligible supervisor who meets the requirements of 135-5-.02(a)(5) except that if the supervision was acquired prior to September 23, 1993, such supervision may have been provided by any qualified supervisor. Directed experience sites ~~in the contract~~ must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of “Directed Experience”.~~

~~4. (V) Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.~~

~~(e) An applicant who is a **Certified Rehabilitation Counselor** must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor:~~

~~1. Education. The applicant must have earned a master’s degree from in a rehabilitation counseling program which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education; OR a master’s degree from an institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation with documented graduate level coursework demonstrating that the degree program is primarily counseling in content and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)11. After September 30, 2018 the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related~~

~~Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or a regionally accredited program recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program.~~

~~2. A “masters” degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the master’s degree and indicated on the official transcript.~~

~~3. Directed Experience under Supervision. The applicant must present evidence of three (3) years of post-master’s directed experience providing rehabilitation services in a rehabilitation setting acceptable to the Board under the supervision [see definitions in Rule 135-5-.02(a)] of a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or other qualified supervisor. OR, two (2) years of post-master’s directed experience providing rehabilitation services in a rehabilitation setting acceptable to the Board under the supervision [see definitions in Rule 135-5-.02(a)] of a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or other qualified supervisor and a supervised counseling practicum or internship of at least 300 hours which was part of the graduate degree program. After September 30, 2018, 600 practicum or internship hours will be required. A minimum of one (1) year of the supervision must be provided by a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a) 5. Directed experience sites in the contract must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of “Directed Experience”.~~

~~4. Certification. The applicant must hold the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor designation.~~

~~5. Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.~~

~~(f) An applicant who holds a **master’s degree in psychology** must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.~~

~~1. Education. The applicant must have earned a master’s degree in a program of applied psychology which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). After September 30, 2018, the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or a regionally accredited program recognized by the Council on Higher~~

~~Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution in order to demonstrate that the degree program is a program of applied psychology. The degree program must meet the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a) 11.~~

~~2. A “Masters” degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the master’s degree and indicated on the official transcript.~~

~~**3. Directed Experience under Supervision.** The applicant must present evidence of four (4) years of post-master’s directed experience under supervision [see definitions in Rule 135-5-.02(a)] in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board OR three (3) years of post-master’s directed experience under supervision in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board and a supervised counseling or applied psychology practicum or internship of at least 300 hours which was part of the graduate degree program. A minimum of two (2) years of the supervision must be provided by a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor who meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a) 5, or a licensed Psychologist, except that if the supervision was acquired prior to January 1, 2004, such supervision may have been provided by a person with a master’s degree from an accredited educational institution in a program of applied psychology. Directed experience sites in the contract must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of “Directed Experience”.~~

~~4. Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.~~

**Statutory Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-6, 43-10A-8, 43-10A-9, and 43-10A-11.**

**RULES OF THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL  
COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY  
THERAPISTS, CHAPTER 135-5 REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE**

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**135-5-.02 Professional Counselors**

Pursuant to Official Code of Georgia Annotated 43-10A-11 an applicant for a license in Professional Counseling must meet the following requirements.

**(a) Definitions.**

1. **"The Practice of Professional Counseling"** means practice which utilizes counseling and psychotherapy to evaluate, diagnose and treat emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, behavioral, or affective. Professional Counseling is further defined in O.C.G.A. 43-10A-3(14).

2. **"Direction"** means the ongoing administrative oversight by an employer or superior of a practitioner's work in professional counseling. The person providing direction shall be responsible for assuring the quality of the services rendered by that practitioner and shall ensure that qualified supervision or intervention occurs in situations, which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner.

3. **"Director"** means the employer of the practitioner, or the superior in the administrative chain of command, who provides oversight for all services rendered by the practitioner to include, but not be limited to, client assignment and fees, and who has the ultimate responsibility for assuring the quality of all services provided. The director shall ensure that appropriate intervention occurs in situations which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner. The director shall further assure that clients are seen only when the approved director, an appropriate superior or, in temporary situations, a designated emergency contact is onsite or available for clinical consultation.

(i) The Director shall **not** also serve as the "supervisor" of the practitioner to whom they are providing direction.

(ii) Directors shall not provide direction to family members, nor shall they provide direction to any practitioner with whom they have a boundary conflict or conflict of interest, including a financial interest and/or familial relationship. In addition the practitioner or any of that practitioner's family members shall not have an ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity where the director is employed or where the practitioner provides professional counseling services.

(iii) Family Member means members of a practitioner's immediate family, by direct descent or by marriage.

4. "Supervision" means the direct clinical review, for the purpose of training or teaching of the practitioner's interaction with clients as well as the development of the practitioner's professional identity, ethics, and clinical skills. Supervision is separate from any managerial role of client care, and may include, without being limited to, the review of case presentations, audiotapes, videotapes, and direct observation of the practitioner's clinical skills. Supervision does not require the supervisor to be present at the work site with the practitioner and may be provided pro bono or for a fee. The supervision may be provided either face to face or by technology assisted media, in compliance with the telemental health rules, such as but not limited to videoconference or telephone.

(i) **Individual Supervision** means one supervisor meeting with a maximum of two supervisees for no less than one (1) clock hour (50 to 60 minutes).

(ii) **Group Supervision** means at least one supervisor meeting with a maximum of six individual supervisees for no less than one and a half (1.5) clock hours and will be accepted only if each individual group supervisee signs and dates the contemporaneous record.

5. "**Supervisor**" means a licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist who complies with the ethical standards of practice of their profession with particular attention being paid to prohibited dual relationships. In addition,

(i) A supervisor who holds a master's degree must have three (3) years of post-licensure experience; and

(ii) A supervisor who holds a specialist degree must have two (2) years of post-licensure experience; and

(iii) A supervisor who holds a doctoral degree must have one (1) year of post-licensure experience; and

(iv) For supervision entered into **after September 30, 2018**, a supervisor who is a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold either a National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) Approved Clinical Supervisor credential or a Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia (LPCAGA) Certified Professional Counselor Supervisor credential.

(v) The Board in its discretion may approve a supervisor whose experience is substantially similar to those stated herein.

(vi) In a supervised practicum or internship which is part of the graduate degree program, either the course instructor of record or the on-site clinical instructor must be a qualified supervisor OR, in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

6. For supervision entered into on or after **January 1, 2024**, "**Supervisor**" for post-master's work experience under supervision means a licensed Professional Counselor, who meets the specific requirements as outlined below. The required practicum or internship primarily counseling in content may be supervised by a licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, Psychiatrist or in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

(i) The supervisor shall **not** also serve as the director of the individual who receives supervision.

(ii) A supervisor must have three (3) years of post-licensure experience.

(iii) A supervisor who is a Licensed Professional Counselor must hold, in addition to meeting (i) and (ii) above, either a National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) Approved Clinical Supervisor credential or a Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia (LPCAGA) Certified Professional Counselor Supervisor credential.

(iv) The Board in its discretion may approve a supervisor who is licensed and in good standing and whose experience is substantially similar to those stated herein. Approval must be granted prior to the supervision beginning and must be approved through the Petition for Waiver of a Board rule (Reference OCGA 50-13-9.1).

(v) Supervisors shall not provide supervision to family members, nor shall they provide supervision to any practitioner with whom they have a boundary conflict or conflict of interest, including a financial interest and/or familial relationship. In addition, the practitioner or any of that practitioner's family members shall not have an ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity where the supervisor is employed or where the practitioner provides professional counseling services.

(vi) Family Member means members of a practitioner's immediate family, by direct descent or by marriage.

7. "**Directed Work Experience**" means time spent under direction engaging in the practice of Professional Counseling.

(i) A minimum of 40% percent of the required annual hours shall be direct clinical work experience.

(ii) Psychoeducation shall not be more than 30% of the total direct work experience.

(iii) Assessment and referral activities shall not be more than 30% of the total direct work experience.

(iv) “Direct work experience” means contact with one or more clients and includes diagnosis, assessment, and treatment, and may also include psychoeducation for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders.

(v) “Indirect Work Experience” means training for, and the performance of, professional counseling functions including, but not limited to, case consultation, case staffing, treatment teams, direction, or continuing education courses.

(vi) The practitioner, or any of that practitioner’s family members, shall not have any ownership interest in, operate, or manage the business entity in which the professional counseling services will be provided by the practitioner.

(vii) The practitioner receiving directed work experience pursuant to this rule shall not engage in the independent practice of professional counseling. All clients must be assigned to the practitioner by the Director of the supervisee. Practitioners shall not directly recruit clients.

(viii) The practitioner while receiving directed work experience pursuant to this rule, shall not be directly compensated by clients.

(ix) The directed work experience for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors shall be in a rehabilitation setting defined as a practice, or in a rehabilitation center, and is restricted to counseling those individuals who are seeking re-training for the work force.

(x) Directed work experience for School Counselors may only be obtained while school is in session and students are present for the hours to be accepted toward those required for licensure.

(xi) All work sites must include a formal structure related to the practice of professional counseling

(I) Work sites acceptable to the Board may include, but are not limited to, education, rehabilitation, career development, mental health, or community organizations.

(II) Practice without direction is not considered a work setting acceptable to the Board.

(III) Valid work sites shall employ at least one licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist and should have measurable detailed documentation for every practitioner, to include a signed contractual

agreement that outlines the job description, office hours, performance review procedures and dismissal policies.

(IV) Non-compensated experiences or services will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine acceptability only if they meet the above requirements, specific to the post-master's directed work experience. The agreement between the work site and practitioner should be akin to employment.

## **8. "Years of Directed Experience with concurrent Supervision"**

(i) After September 30, 2018 "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience acquired in one year as defined below.

(I) "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience with 35 concurrent supervision hours, acquired within a period of not less than twelve months and not more than twenty months.

(II) "Two years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 2000 hours of directed experience with 70 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than twenty-four months and not more than thirty-two months.

(III) "Three years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 3000 hours of directed experience with 105 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than thirty-six months and not more than forty-four months.

(IV) "Four years of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 4000 hours of directed experience with 140 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than forty-eight months and not more than sixty months.

(ii) Directed Experience under Supervision, as defined above, must be obtained within a sixty (60) months period and further, shall be obtained within the ten (10) year period prior to the date of application.

(iii) Directed work experience under supervision entered into on or after January 1, 2024 means:

(I) "One year of Directed Experience" means a minimum of 1000 hours of directed experience with 50 concurrent supervision hours, acquired within a period of not less than twelve months and not more than twenty months.



(II) “Two years of Directed Experience” means a minimum of 2000 hours of directed experience with 100 concurrent supervision hours, under supervision acquired within a period of not less than twenty-four months and not more than thirty-two months.

(III) Directed Experience under Supervision, as defined above, must be obtained within a sixty (60) month period.

(iv) The sixty (60) months of directed work experience concurrent with supervision shall be obtained within the ten (10) year period prior to the date of application.

9. “**Certified Rehabilitation Counselor**” means a person who is certified as a rehabilitation counselor by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

**(b) Requirements for Licensure**

3. Education. After September 30, 2018, the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or be a program in a regionally accredited institution recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

4. Education. Effective July 1, 2022, the applicant must have earned a 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 and that includes a supervised practicum or internship that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program of at least 600 hours. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily clinical counseling or counseling psychology in content. The degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) or be a program in a regionally accredited institution recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP or CORE accredited program

(i) In a supervised practicum or internship which is primarily counseling in content, and is part of the graduate degree program, either the course instructor of record or the on-site clinical instructor must be a qualified supervisor as defined above in 135-5-.02(a)(6) or in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

(ii) Graduate coursework in the following ten (10) content areas shall be required. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

(I) **Counseling/Psychotherapy Theory**, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counseling/psychotherapy and the major models of counseling/psychotherapy.

(II) **Human Growth and Development**, which includes an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, personality theory, and learning theory, and which may provide a comprehensive overview of the factors, determinants, and stages that pertain to physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development and adaptation from infancy to geriatric stages.

(III) **Multicultural Counseling or Diversity Training**, which includes an understanding of societal changes and trends, human roles, societal subgroups, diversity, social mores and interaction patterns, and differing lifestyles; and competency in counseling a diverse clientele.

(IV) **Counseling Techniques or Skills**, which includes an understanding of the philosophic bases of helping processes, helper self-understanding and self-development, and the facilitation of client change; Or **Advanced Psychotherapy/Intervention Theory**, which includes the in-depth study of the major theories, principles, methods and techniques of psychotherapy with individuals, groups or families, focusing on the treatment or prevention of behavior disorders, adjustment problems, psychopathology, or other psychological disturbance.

(V) **Group Dynamics and Group Counseling/Psychotherapy**, which includes an understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling/psychotherapy theories; group leadership styles; group counseling/psychotherapy methods and skills; and other group approaches.

(VI) **Lifestyle and Career Development**, which includes an understanding of career development theories; occupational educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision making; and career development program planning, resources, and evaluation.

(VII) **Appraisal/Assessment of Individuals**, which includes an understanding of psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal/assessment; validity and reliability; psychometric statistics; the

selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of various assessment instruments; and the use of appraisal/assessment results in the counseling/psychotherapy process.

(VIII) **Research Methods and Evaluation**, which includes an understanding of types of research, statistics, research report development, research implementation, program evaluation, needs assessment, and ethical and legal considerations in research. OR Research Statistics, which includes an understanding of the theory, analysis and interpretation of manual or computer-generated statistical measures.

(IX) **Professional Orientation and Ethics**, which includes an understanding of ethical and legal standards, professional roles, responsibilities, and functions; professional goals and objectives; professional organizations and associations; professional history and trends; professional preparation standards; and professional credentialing.

(X) **Psychopathology** which includes theories, research, descriptive characteristics, categories, dynamics, and etiology of mental, behavioral, cognitive and personality disorders with a focus on utilization of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM) and/or International Classification of Diseases (ICD). Coursework shall encompass psychopathology from infancy to geriatric stages

(iii) If the degree program did not include all the following required courses, additional graduate level course work can be completed prior to, during, or after the degree program.

(iv) Applicants who have obtained their degrees from an educational degree program located outside of the United States shall have their educational credentials evaluated by a Board approved independent foreign credential service.

(v) Degrees received on or after **May 31, 2026**, must be a program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

### 3. Educational Degrees

(i) An applicant who holds a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.

(I) A “Masters” degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the master’s degree and indicated on the official transcript along with the date conferred.

(II) **Directed Experience with concurrent Supervision.** The applicant must present evidence of two (2) years of post-degree directed experience under supervision in the practice of Professional Counseling in a work setting acceptable to the Board and a supervised counseling practicum or internship of at least 600 hours which was part of the graduate degree program. Directed experience sites must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a)8 above, the definition of “Directed Experience”.

(III) Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.

(ii) An applicant who holds a doctoral degree from a program primarily counseling in content must meet the following requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor.

(I) Education. The applicant must have earned a doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily the practice of professional counseling in content and requires at least one year of a supervised internship, also primarily counseling in content in a work setting acceptable to the Board. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution to demonstrate that the degree program is primarily counseling in content. At the time the degree was awarded the educational institution must have been accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. After September 30, 2018 the degree program must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) or be a program in a regionally accredited institution. The approved program must be substantially similar in coursework and content to a CACREP accredited program.

I. A practicum or internship that is primarily counseling in content includes at least 40% client contact and documentation.

(II) Degrees received on or after **May 31, 2026** must be a program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

(III) A “Doctoral” degree must be so designated by the educational institution awarding the doctoral degree and indicated on the official transcript along with the date conferred.

(IV) Directed Experience with concurrent Supervision. The applicant must present evidence of one (1) year of supervised counseling internship of at least seven hundred fifty (750) hours during the doctorate degree program in a work setting acceptable to the Board. A minimum of half of the one year of the supervised counseling internship must be provided by a supervisor who is a licensed Professional Counselor and meets the requirements in Rule 135-5-.02(a)6. The remaining months of the supervision may be obtained by any eligible supervisor who meets the requirements of 135-5-.02(a)(5) Directed experience sites must meet the requirements of rule 135-5-.02(a) (6) above, the definition of “Directed Experience”.

(V) Examination. To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor, applicant must pass the required competency examination for licensure prescribed by the Board.

**Statutory Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5, 43-10A-6, 43-10A-8, 43-10A-9, and 43-10A-11.**