

§13858. Requirements for licensure

To be eligible for a license to practice counseling at any level, an applicant must be at least 18 years of age and satisfactorily pass any examination as the board may prescribe by its rules. Each applicant must demonstrate trustworthiness and competence to engage in the practice of counseling in such a manner as to safeguard the interests of the public. Each applicant must submit an application and pay the fee as set under section 13859. The license categories "licensed clinical professional counselor," "licensed pastoral counselor" and "licensed marriage and family therapist" are of equivalent clinical status. Clinical status grants the ability to diagnose and treat mental health disorders. [PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. EE, §5 (AMD).]

The following shall be considered as minimum evidence satisfactory to the board that an applicant is qualified for licensure under this chapter. [PL 1989, c. 465, §3 (NEW).]

1. Licensed professional counselor. To be qualified as a licensed professional counselor, an applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the counseling profession, successfully complete the examination prescribed by the board and have:

A. A master's degree or a doctoral degree in counseling or an allied mental health field from an accredited institution or a program approved by the board. Such schooling must include a minimum core curriculum and total credit hours as adopted by the board; and [PL 2003, c. 542, §2 (AMD).]

B. Two years of experience after obtainment of a master's degree or a doctoral degree with a minimum of 2,000 hours of supervised experience. [PL 2003, c. 542, §2 (AMD).]
[PL 2003, c. 542, §2 (AMD).]

2. Licensed clinical professional counselor. To be qualified as a licensed clinical professional counselor, an applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the counseling profession, successfully complete the examination prescribed by the board and have:

A. A master's degree or a doctoral degree in counseling or an allied mental health field from an accredited institution or a program approved by the board. Such schooling must include a minimum core curriculum and total credit hours as adopted by the board; [PL 2013, c. 262, §5 (AMD).]

B. Two years of experience after obtainment of a master's degree or a doctoral degree to include at least 3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience with a minimum of 100 hours of personal supervision; and [PL 2013, c. 262, §5 (AMD).]

C. Beginning January 1, 2020, demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board successful completion of a minimum of 12 hours of course work in family or intimate partner violence, including course work in spousal or partner abuse that addresses screening, referral and intervention strategies, including knowledge of community resources, cultural factors, evidence-based risk assessment and same-gender abuse dynamics. An applicant may fulfill this requirement through course work taken in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or through separate course work provided through contact hours, Internet hours or distance learning programs, as evidenced by certification from an accredited educational institution. The board shall accept certification from the accredited educational institution from which the applicant is a graduate that verifies the applicant's satisfaction of this requirement within the applicant's completed course curriculum. An applicant for initial licensure that is unable to demonstrate completion of the requirements of this paragraph at the time the initial application is submitted shall demonstrate to the board that these requirements have been fulfilled upon the applicant's first application for license renewal. [PL 2013, c. 262, §5 (NEW).]
[PL 2013, c. 262, §5 (AMD).]

3. Licensed marriage and family therapist. To be qualified as a licensed marriage and family therapist, an applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the counseling profession, successfully complete the examination prescribed by the board and have:

- A. A master's degree or a doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or its equivalent from an accredited institution or a program approved by the board. Such schooling must include a minimum core curriculum to include a one-year clinical practicum and total credit hours adopted by the board; and [PL 2003, c. 542, §2 (AMD).]
- B. Two years of experience after obtainment of a master's degree or a doctoral degree comprised of at least 1,000 hours of direct clinical contact with couples and families and 200 hours of supervision, at least 100 of which must be individual supervision. [PL 2003, c. 542, §2 (AMD).]

Notwithstanding the requirements for conditional licensure in section 13851, subsection 4, the board may grant a temporary conditional license for a period not to exceed 6 months to an applicant who meets the requirements of this subsection except for the successful completion of the examination prescribed by the board. In addition, the applicant must be employed at an agency under clinical supervision and must apply for and successfully complete the examination within this 6-month period. If the applicant fails the examination, the applicant is prohibited from using any clinical experience gained during the 6-month period that the applicant held the temporary conditional license to qualify for licensure.

[PL 2009, c. 172, §1 (AMD).]

3-A. Licensed pastoral counselor. To be qualified as a licensed pastoral counselor, an applicant must have:

- A. Demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the standard ethics of the pastoral counseling profession; [PL 1989, c. 895, §12 (NEW).]
- B. Received a Master of Divinity degree or a Doctor of Divinity degree, or an equivalent degree approved by the board, from an accredited institution or a program approved by the board. Academic preparation includes a minimum graduate core curriculum to include 20 credit hours of counseling and human relations and 400 hours of clinical pastoral education; [PL 2003, c. 542, §3 (AMD).]
- C. Two years of experience after attainment of the degree, comprised of at least 1,000 hours of direct clinical contact with individuals, couples and families; [PL 1989, c. 895, §12 (NEW).]
- D. Two hundred hours of supervision, including at least 1/3 of those hours with a certified pastoral counseling supervisor, at least 30 hours of which must be interdisciplinary, 30 hours of which must be individual supervision by one supervisor of no more than 3 cases from intake to termination, and 70 hours of which must be individual supervision of multiple case material; [PL 1989, c. 895, §12 (NEW).]
- E. A call, appointment or charge by a church, synagogue, religious order or other clearly defined legal religious organization to perform these services as a function of ministry; and [PL 1989, c. 895, §12 (NEW).]
- F. Completed successfully the examination prescribed by the board pursuant to subsection 5. [PL 1989, c. 895, §12 (NEW).]

[PL 2003, c. 542, §3 (AMD).]

4. Supervision. Supervision may be provided by a qualified and duly certified or licensed counseling professional, clinical social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist. Any other supervisor must be individually approved by the board.

[PL 1989, c. 465, §3 (NEW).]

5. Examination. All applicants are required to pass a written examination in subjects the board deems necessary to determine the fitness of the applicant to practice. The board shall establish the passing score for all examinations. Examinations must be held at least twice a year. The examination must be graded using established written base line scores for failure or passage, be based on accepted counseling criteria and include measurable and clearly defined procedures for grading the results and issuing a pass or fail decision. Decisions on all examinations must be in writing and include a grade and, whenever possible, a summary of the criteria for the grade and an explanation of the procedure for reexamination or appeal.

[PL 1989, c. 465, §3 (NEW); PL 1989, c. 895, §13 (AMD).]

6. Existing counselors.

[PL 1995, c. 259, §1 (RP).]

7. License not allowed. Notwithstanding subsections 1 to 5, an individual whose license, certification or registration has been revoked or suspended in this or any other state and in this or any other related field, may not be licensed under this section, unless the period of revocation or suspension has been completed and the board has conducted a competency review and determined that an acceptable degree of rehabilitation has been accomplished.

[PL 1995, c. 259, §2 (AMD).]

8. Rulemaking. The board shall adopt rules to implement the provisions of subsections 1, 2 and 3 and subsection 3-A, paragraph B. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

[PL 2003, c. 542, §4 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1989, c. 465, §3 (NEW). PL 1989, c. 895, §§1,22 (AFF). PL 1989, c. 895, §§12-14 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 263, §§3,4 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 263, §§5,6 (AFF). PL 1995, c. 259, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 386, §T2 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 542, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. EE, §5 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 172, §1 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 262, §5 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the First Regular and First Special Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through November 1, 2023. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.