

26 (16) "Registered associate marriage and family therapist
 27 ~~intern~~" means a person registered under this chapter who is
 28 completing the post-master's clinical experience requirement
 29 specified in s. 491.005(3)(c).

30 (17) "Registered associate mental health counselor ~~intern~~"
 31 means a person registered under this chapter who is completing
 32 the post-master's clinical experience requirement specified in
 33 s. 491.005(4)(c).

34 Section 2. Section 491.0045, Florida Statutes, is amended
 35 to read:

36 491.0045 Associate Intern registration; requirements.—

37 (1) An individual who has not satisfied the postgraduate
 38 or post-master's level experience requirements, as specified in
 39 s. 491.005(1)(c), (3)(c), or (4)(c), must register as an
 40 associate intern in the profession for which he or she is
 41 seeking full licensure before commencing the post-master's
 42 experience requirement or an individual who intends to satisfy
 43 part of the required graduate-level practicum, internship, or
 44 field experience, outside the academic arena for any profession,
 45 and must register as an associate intern in the profession for
 46 which he or she is seeking full licensure before commencing the
 47 practicum, internship, or field experience.

48 (2) The department shall register as an associate a
 49 clinical social worker ~~intern~~, an associate marriage and family
 50 therapist ~~intern~~, or an associate mental health counselor ~~intern~~

51 each applicant whom ~~who~~ the board certifies has:

52 (a) Completed the application form and remitted a
53 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$200, as set by
54 board rule;

55 (b)1. Completed the education requirements as specified in
56 s. 491.005(1)(c), (3)(c), or (4)(c) for the profession for which
57 he or she is applying for licensure, if needed; and

58 2. Submitted an acceptable supervision plan, as determined
59 by the board, for meeting the practicum, internship, or field
60 work required for licensure that was not satisfied in his or her
61 graduate program.

62 (c) Identified a qualified supervisor.

63 (3) An individual registered under this section must
64 remain under supervision while practicing under registered
65 associate ~~intern~~ status.

66 (4) An individual who fails to comply with this section
67 may not be granted a full license under this chapter, and any
68 time spent by the individual completing the experience
69 requirement as specified in s. 491.005(1)(c), (3)(c), or (4)(c)
70 before registering as an associate ~~intern~~ does not count toward
71 completion of the requirement.

72 (5) An associate ~~intern~~ registration is valid for 5 years.

73 (6) Any registration issued after March 31, 2017, expires
74 60 months after the date it is issued. The board may make a one-
75 time exception to the requirements of this subsection in

76 emergency or hardship cases, as defined by board rule, if the
 77 candidate has passed the theory and practice examination
 78 described in s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), and (4)(d).

79 (7) An individual who has held a provisional license
 80 issued by the board may not apply for an associate ~~intern~~
 81 registration in the same profession.

82 Section 3. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1), paragraph (c)
 83 of subsection (3), and paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection (4)
 84 of section 491.005, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

85 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

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

91 (c) Completed at least 2 years of clinical social work
 92 experience, which took place subsequent to completion of a
 93 graduate degree in social work at an institution meeting the
 94 accreditation requirements of this section, under the
 95 supervision of a licensed clinical social worker or the
 96 equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as determined by the
 97 board. An individual who intends to practice in Florida to
 98 satisfy clinical experience requirements must register pursuant
 99 to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If the applicant's
 100 graduate program was not a program which emphasized direct

101 clinical patient or client health care services as described in
102 subparagraph (b)2., the supervised experience requirement must
103 take place after the applicant has completed a minimum of 15
104 semester hours or 22 quarter hours of the coursework required. A
105 doctoral internship may be applied toward the clinical social
106 work experience requirement. ~~A licensed mental health~~
107 ~~professional must be on the premises when clinical services are~~
108 ~~provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.~~

109 (3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of
110 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by
111 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage
112 and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies
113 has met all of the following criteria:

114 (c) Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience
115 during which 50 percent of the applicant's clients were
116 receiving marriage and family therapy services, which must be at
117 the post-master's level under the supervision of a licensed
118 marriage and family therapist with at least 5 years of
119 experience, or the equivalent, who is a qualified supervisor as
120 determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice
121 in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must
122 register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If
123 a graduate has a master's degree with a major emphasis in
124 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field which did
125 not include all of the coursework required by paragraph (b),

126 credit for the post-master's level clinical experience may not
 127 commence until the applicant has completed a minimum of 10 of
 128 the courses required by paragraph (b), as determined by the
 129 board, and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of the
 130 course credits must have been completed in the area of marriage
 131 and family systems, theories, or techniques. Within the 2 years
 132 of required experience, the applicant must ~~shall~~ provide direct
 133 individual, group, or family therapy and counseling to cases
 134 including those involving unmarried dyads, married couples,
 135 separating and divorcing couples, and family groups that include
 136 children. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the
 137 clinical experience requirement. ~~A licensed mental health~~
 138 ~~professional must be on the premises when clinical services are~~
 139 ~~provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.~~

140
 141 For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license
 142 as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the
 143 requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not
 144 exceed those stated in this subsection.

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

150 (b)1. Attained a minimum of an earned master's degree from

151 a mental health counseling program accredited by the Council for
152 the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
153 which consists of at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours
154 of clinical and didactic instruction, including a course in
155 human sexuality and a course in substance abuse. If the master's
156 degree is earned from a program related to the practice of
157 mental health counseling which is not accredited by the Council
158 for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational
159 Programs, ~~then~~ the coursework and practicum, internship, or
160 fieldwork must consist of at least 60 semester hours or 80
161 quarter hours and meet all of the following requirements:

162 a. Thirty-three semester hours or 44 quarter hours of
163 graduate coursework, which must include a minimum of 3 semester
164 hours or 4 quarter hours of graduate-level coursework in each of
165 the following 11 content areas: counseling theories and
166 practice; human growth and development; diagnosis and treatment
167 of psychopathology; human sexuality; group theories and
168 practice; individual evaluation and assessment; career and
169 lifestyle assessment; research and program evaluation; social
170 and cultural foundations; substance abuse; and legal, ethical,
171 and professional standards issues in the practice of mental
172 health counseling. Courses in research, thesis or dissertation
173 work, practicums, internships, or fieldwork may not be applied
174 toward this requirement.

175 b. A minimum of 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours of

176 graduate-level coursework addressing diagnostic processes,
177 including differential diagnosis and the use of the current
178 diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the American
179 Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of
180 Mental Disorders. The graduate program must have emphasized the
181 common core curricular experience.

182 c. The equivalent, as determined by the board, of at least
183 700 hours of university-sponsored supervised clinical practicum,
184 internship, or field experience that includes at least 280 hours
185 of direct client services, as required in the accrediting
186 standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and
187 Related Educational Programs for mental health counseling
188 programs. This experience may not be used to satisfy the post-
189 master's clinical experience requirement.

190 2. Provided additional documentation if a course title
191 that appears on the applicant's transcript does not clearly
192 identify the content of the coursework. The documentation must
193 include, but is not limited to, a syllabus or catalog
194 description published for the course.

195
196 Education and training in mental health counseling must have
197 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the
198 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an
199 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for
200 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or

201 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an
202 institution of higher education located outside the United
203 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled
204 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard
205 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of
206 training of those institutions in the United States which are
207 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by
208 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor
209 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been
210 received in an institution or program of higher education
211 officially recognized by the government of the country in which
212 it is located as an institution or program to train students to
213 practice as mental health counselors. The applicant has the
214 burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision
215 have been met, and the board shall require documentation, such
216 as an evaluation by a foreign equivalency determination service,
217 as evidence that the applicant's graduate degree program and
218 education were equivalent to an accredited program in this
219 country. Beginning July 1, 2025, an applicant must have a
220 master's degree from a program that is accredited by the Council
221 for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational
222 Programs, the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation
223 Council, or an equivalent accrediting body which consists of at
224 least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours to apply for
225 licensure under this paragraph.

226 (c) Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience in
 227 mental health counseling, which must be at the post-master's
 228 level under the supervision of a licensed mental health
 229 counselor or the equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as
 230 determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice
 231 in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must
 232 register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If
 233 a graduate has a master's degree with a major related to the
 234 practice of mental health counseling which did not include all
 235 the coursework required under sub-subparagraphs (b)1.a. and b.,
 236 credit for the post-master's level clinical experience may not
 237 commence until the applicant has completed a minimum of seven of
 238 the courses required under sub-subparagraphs (b)1.a. and b., as
 239 determined by the board, one of which must be a course in
 240 psychopathology or abnormal psychology. A doctoral internship
 241 may be applied toward the clinical experience requirement. ~~A~~
 242 ~~licensed mental health professional must be on the premises when~~
 243 ~~clinical services are provided by a registered intern in a~~
 244 ~~private practice setting.~~

245 Section 4. Section 491.007, Florida Statutes, is amended
 246 to read:

247 491.007 Renewal of license, registration, or certificate.—

248 (1) The board or department shall prescribe by rule a
 249 method for the biennial renewal of licenses or certificates at a
 250 fee set by rule, not to exceed \$250.

251 (2) Each applicant for renewal must ~~shall~~ present
 252 satisfactory evidence that, in the period since the license or
 253 certificate was issued, the applicant has completed continuing
 254 education requirements set by rule of the board or department.
 255 No ~~Not~~ more than 25 classroom hours of continuing education per
 256 year may ~~shall~~ be required. A certified master social worker is
 257 exempt from the continuing education requirements for the first
 258 renewal of the certificate.

259 Section 5. Paragraphs (f), (n), (o), (p), (r), (s), and
 260 (u) of subsection (1) of section 491.009, Florida Statutes, are
 261 amended to read:

262 491.009 Discipline.—

263 (1) The following acts constitute grounds for denial of a
 264 license or disciplinary action, as specified in s. 456.072(2) or
 265 s. 491.017:

266 (f) Maintaining a professional association with any person
 267 who the applicant, licensee, registered associate ~~intern~~, or
 268 certificateholder knows, or has reason to believe, is in
 269 violation of this chapter or of a rule of the department or the
 270 board.

271 (n) Failing to make available to a patient or client, upon
 272 written request, copies of tests, reports, or documents in the
 273 possession or under the control of the licensee, registered
 274 associate ~~intern~~, or certificateholder which have been prepared
 275 for and paid for by the patient or client.

276 (o) Failing to respond within 30 days to a written
 277 communication from the department or the board concerning any
 278 investigation by the department or the board, or failing to make
 279 available any relevant records with respect to any investigation
 280 about the licensee's, registered associate's ~~intern's~~, or
 281 certificateholder's conduct or background.

282 (p) Being unable to practice the profession for which he
 283 or she is licensed, registered, or certified under this chapter
 284 with reasonable skill or competence as a result of any mental or
 285 physical condition or by reason of illness; drunkenness; or
 286 excessive use of drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other
 287 substance. In enforcing this paragraph, upon a finding by the
 288 State Surgeon General, the State Surgeon General's designee, or
 289 the board that probable cause exists to believe that the
 290 licensee, registered associate ~~intern~~, or certificateholder is
 291 unable to practice the profession because of the reasons stated
 292 in this paragraph, the department shall have the authority to
 293 compel a licensee, registered associate ~~intern~~, or
 294 certificateholder to submit to a mental or physical examination
 295 by psychologists, physicians, or other licensees under this
 296 chapter, designated by the department or board. If the licensee,
 297 registered associate ~~intern~~, or certificateholder refuses to
 298 comply with such order, the department's order directing the
 299 examination may be enforced by filing a petition for enforcement
 300 in the circuit court in the circuit in which the licensee,

301 registered associate intern, or certificateholder resides or
 302 does business. The licensee, registered associate intern, or
 303 certificateholder against whom the petition is filed may not be
 304 named or identified by initials in any public court records or
 305 documents, and the proceedings must ~~shall~~ be closed to the
 306 public. The department is ~~shall~~ be entitled to the summary
 307 procedure provided in s. 51.011. A licensee, registered
 308 associate intern, or certificateholder affected under this
 309 paragraph must, ~~shall~~ at reasonable intervals, be afforded an
 310 opportunity to demonstrate that he or she can resume the
 311 competent practice for which he or she is licensed, registered,
 312 or certified with reasonable skill and safety to patients.

313 (r) Failing to meet the minimum standards of performance
 314 in professional activities when measured against generally
 315 prevailing peer performance, including the undertaking of
 316 activities for which the licensee, registered associate intern,
 317 or certificateholder is not qualified by training or experience.

318 (s) Delegating professional responsibilities to a person
 319 who the licensee, registered associate intern, or
 320 certificateholder knows or has reason to know is not qualified
 321 by training or experience to perform such responsibilities.

322 (u) Failure of the licensee, registered associate intern,
 323 or certificateholder to maintain in confidence a communication
 324 made by a patient or client in the context of such services,
 325 except as provided in s. 491.0147.

326 Section 6. Paragraphs (i) through (l) of subsection (1) of
 327 section 491.012, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

328 491.012 Violations; penalty; injunction.—

329 (1) It is unlawful and a violation of this chapter for any
 330 person to:

331 (i) Practice clinical social work in this state for
 332 compensation, unless the person holds a valid, active license to
 333 practice clinical social work issued under ~~pursuant to~~ this
 334 chapter or is an associate intern registered pursuant to s.
 335 491.0045.

336 (j) Practice marriage and family therapy in this state for
 337 compensation, unless the person holds a valid, active license to
 338 practice marriage and family therapy issued under ~~pursuant to~~
 339 this chapter or is an associate intern registered pursuant to s.
 340 491.0045.

341 (k) Practice mental health counseling in this state for
 342 compensation, unless the person holds a valid, active license to
 343 practice mental health counseling issued under ~~pursuant to~~ this
 344 chapter or is an associate intern registered pursuant to s.
 345 491.0045.

346 (l) Use the following titles or any combination thereof,
 347 unless he or she holds a valid registration as an associate
 348 ~~intern~~ issued under ~~pursuant to~~ this chapter:

- 349 1. "Registered associate clinical social worker ~~intern~~."
 350 2. "Registered associate marriage and family therapist

351 ~~intern.~~"

352 3. "Registered associate mental health counselor ~~intern.~~"

353 Section 7. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section
354 491.014, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

355 (4) No person shall be required to be licensed,
356 provisionally licensed, registered, or certified under this
357 chapter who:

358 (c) Is a student providing services regulated under this
359 chapter who is pursuing a course of study which leads to a
360 degree in a profession regulated by this chapter, is providing
361 services in a training setting, provided such services and
362 associated activities constitute part of a supervised course of
363 study, and is designated by the title "student associate
364 ~~intern.~~"

365 Section 8. Subsection (2) of section 491.0149, Florida
366 Statutes, is amended to read:

367 491.0149 Display of license; use of professional title on
368 promotional materials.—

369 (2)(a) A person registered under this chapter as an
370 associate a clinical social worker ~~intern~~, an associate marriage
371 and family therapist ~~intern~~, or an associate mental health
372 counselor ~~intern~~ shall conspicuously display the valid
373 registration issued by the department or a true copy thereof at
374 each location at which the registered associate ~~intern~~ is
375 completing the experience requirements.

376 (b) A registered associate clinical social worker ~~intern~~
377 shall include the words "registered associate clinical social
378 worker ~~intern~~," a registered associate marriage and family
379 therapist ~~intern~~ shall include the words "registered associate
380 marriage and family therapist ~~intern~~," and a registered
381 associate mental health counselor ~~intern~~ shall include the words
382 "registered associate mental health counselor ~~intern~~" on all
383 promotional materials, including cards, brochures, stationery,
384 advertisements, and signs, naming the registered associate
385 ~~intern~~.

386 Section 9. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.