

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
Board of Licensure for Marriage and Family Therapists
(Amendment)

201 KAR 32:020. Equivalent course of study.

RELATES TO: KRS 335.330(1), (2)

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 335.320(9), 335.330(1), (2)

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 335.330(1) provides that the board shall define a course of study equivalent to a master's degree in marriage and family therapy and promulgate the equivalency standard by administrative regulations. This administrative regulation establishes the criteria for the equivalent course of study.

Section 1. Definition. "Related field" means psychology, community mental health, social work, or professional counseling.

Section 2. An applicant for licensure as a marriage and family therapist shall:

- (1) Comply with the requirements of KRS 335.330; and
- (2) Submit an application on the Application for Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist or Marriage and Family Therapist Associate form, incorporated by reference in 201 KAR 32:025.
- (3) An applicant completing a postgraduate degree program, master's degree program, or doctoral degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation ~~for~~^{of} Marriage and Family Education who also has completed a master's or doctoral degree program in a related field may count clinical contact hours and clinical supervision hours earned in a Commission on Accreditation ~~for~~^{of} Marriage and Family Education postgraduate degree program, masters degree program, or doctoral degree program towards the clinical supervision requirements for licensure.

Section 3. The basic core areas that are necessary in order to qualify as an equivalent course of study, shall include the following:

- (1) Marriage and family studies. This area shall include a minimum of three (3) courses (nine (9) semester hours, twelve (12) quarter hours, or 135 didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall be theoretical in nature and have a major focus of system theory orientation, and may include:
 - (a) Systems theory;
 - (b) Family development;
 - (c) Blended families;
 - (d) Cultural issues in families;
 - (e) Family subsystems;
 - (f) Major models of family systems theory; or
 - (g) Gender issues in families;
- (2) Marriage and family therapy. This area shall include a minimum of three (3) courses (nine (9) semester hours, twelve (12) quarter hours, or 135 didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall have a major focus on family systems theory and systemic therapeutic interventions. Courses shall relate to major theories of family systems change and therapeutic practices evolving from each theoretical model. Examples include:
 - (a) Structural communications family therapy;
 - (b) Strategic object relations family therapy;
 - (c) Behavioral family therapy;
 - (d) Intergenerational family therapy;
 - (e) Solution oriented family therapy;

- (f) Narrative family therapy; and
- (g) Systemic sex therapy;
- (3) Human development. This area shall include a minimum of three (3) courses (nine (9) semester hours, twelve (12) quarter hours, or 135 didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall provide knowledge of individual human personality development in both normal and abnormal manifestations. Topic areas include, for example:
 - (a) Human development;
 - (b) Personality theory;
 - (c) Human sexuality; and
 - (d) Effects of gender and cultural issues on human development;
- (4) Psychopathology and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. This area shall include a one (1) course minimum (three (3) semester hours, four (4) quarter hours, or forty-five (45) didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall include psychopathology, diagnosis through use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or applications of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders to marriage and family therapy;
- (5) Professional studies. This area shall include a minimum of one (1) course minimum (three (3) semester hours, four (4) quarter hours, or forty-five (45) didactic contact hours). Courses include, for example:
 - (a) Professional ethics in marriage and family therapy;
 - (b) Legal responsibilities of the therapist;
 - (c) Professional socialization and the role of the professional organization;
 - (d) Licensure or certification legislation; and
 - (e) Independent practice issues;
- (6) Research. This area shall include a minimum of one (1) course minimum (three (3) semester hours, four (4) quarter hours, or forty-five (45) didactic contact hours). Courses may include:
 - (a) Statistics;
 - (b) Research methods;
 - (c) Quantitative methodology; or
 - (d) Other courses designed to assist the student to understand and perform research; or
- (7) Practicum or internship. The practicum or internship shall include a minimum of one (1) year or 300 hours of supervised direct client contact with individuals, couples, and families for family therapy.
 - (a) An applicant who did not complete a clinical practicum in graduate school may satisfy the practicum requirement with his or her first 300 post masters' client contact hours.
 - (b) These hours shall not be counted toward the two (2) years of required post master's experience or the 200 hours of clinical supervision.

Section 4. A course used to fulfill one (1) of the requirements established in Section 2 of this administrative regulation shall not be used to fulfill more than one (1) of the basic core area requirements.

Section 5.

- (1) An applicant who completed a qualifying graduate degree in a mental health field prior to 1985 may substitute conferences, workshops, seminars, or in-service training related to marriage and family therapy attended or presented as a substitute for college coursework required in Section 3 of this administrative regulation.
- (2) Forty-five (45) contact hours of relevant content shall equal three (3) semester hours of credit.
- (3) A list of equivalencies the applicant wishes to have considered shall be organized by core area as established in Section 3 of this administrative regulation.

- (4) Appropriate documentation shall include:
- (a) Date;
 - (b) Title;
 - (c) Course description;
 - (d) Sponsoring organization;
 - (e) Presenter, including presenter's qualifications;
 - (f) Number of contact hours attended or presented; and
 - (g) Certificates of attendance.

Section 6. Other acceptable equivalencies shall be considered as follows:

- (1) One (1) graduate level course taught on a subject relevant to marriage and family therapy after 1985 shall be considered equivalent to three (3) semester hours of credit.
- (2) Publication on a subject relevant to marriage and family therapy dated after 1985 may be submitted as equivalencies as acceptable to the board. Credit shall be granted as follows:
 - (a)
 - 1. A chapter in a book is equivalent to three (3) semester hours of credit.
 - 2. An applicant who authors or edits a book shall be given credit equivalent to six (6) semester hours of credit.
 - 3. An applicant shall submit a copy of the title page, table of contents, and bibliography.
 - (b)
 - 1. Publication in a professional refereed journal shall be equivalent to three (3) semester hours of credit.
 - 2. An applicant shall submit the journal table of contents and a copy of the article as it appeared in the journal including bibliography.

201 KAR 32:020

AMANDA BOMMER-VILLAVECES, Board Chair

APPROVED BY AGENCY: July 16, 2026

FILED WITH LRC: September 14, 2026 at 2:30 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT PERIOD: A public hearing on this administrative regulation shall be held on November 23, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. local prevailing time at the Mayo-Underwood Building, Room 127CW, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, Kentucky. Individuals interested in being heard at this hearing shall notify this agency in writing by five (5) workdays prior to the hearing, of their intent to attend. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing was received by that date, the hearing may be cancelled. A transcript of the public hearing will not be made unless a written request for a transcript is made. If you do not wish to be heard at the public hearing, you may submit written comments on the proposed administrative regulation. Written comments shall be accepted through November 30, 2026. Send written notification of intent to be heard at the public hearing or written comments on the proposed administrative regulation to the contact person by using the PPC public comment portal at the address listed below.

CONTACT PERSON: Name: Matthew D. Ellison, Title: Staff Attorney III, Agency: Department of Professional Licensing, Office of Legal Services, Address: 500 Mero Street, Phone Number: (502) 782-0706 (office), Fax: (502) 564-4818, Email: matthew.ellison@ky.gov, Link to PPC public comment portal: https://ppc.ky.gov/reg_comment.aspx

REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS AND TIERING STATEMENT

Contact Person:Matthew D. Ellison, Staff Attorney III, Phone: 502-782-0706, Email: matthew.ellison@ky.gov

Subject Headings:Licensing, Marriage and Family Therapy, Occupations and Professions

(1) Provide a brief summary of:

(a) What this administrative regulation does:

This administrative regulation establishes the requirements for an equivalent course of study as directed by KRS 335.330(1), which is an alternative educational requirement for an applicant to a master's degree in marriage and family therapy.

(b) The necessity of this administrative regulation:

This administrative regulation is necessary because the board is specifically directed by statute to promulgate an administrative regulation that establishes the criteria for an equivalent course of study.

(c) How this administrative regulation conforms to the content of the authorizing statutes:

This administrative regulation amendment conforms with the Board's authority in KRS 335.320(9) to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335.300 to 335.399, and it satisfies the specific directives of KRS 335.330(1) that an equivalent course of study be established by the board.

(d) How this administrative regulation currently assists or will assist in the effective administration of the statutes:

This administrative regulation assists in the effective administration of the statute by setting forth the express requirements for an applicant to qualify for licensure under an equivalent course of study.

(2) If this is an amendment to an existing administrative regulation, provide a brief summary of:

(a) How the amendment will change this existing administrative regulation:

This amendment corrects an inaccurate reference to the name of a national entity, but otherwise contains no substantive changes.

(b) The necessity of the amendment to this administrative regulation:

This amendment is necessary to correctly refer to the "Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Education."

(c) How the amendment conforms to the content of the authorizing statutes:

This administrative regulation amendment conforms with the board's authority in KRS 335.320(9) to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335.300 to 335.399. Further, it conforms with the board's authority in KRS 335.330(1) to establish the requirements of an equivalent course of study for applicants who do not have a master's degree in marriage and family therapy.

(d) How the amendment will assist in the effective administration of the statutes:

This amendment will assist in the effective administration of the statutes by providing correct terminology to assist applicants in determining whether their educational background qualifies as an equivalent course of study.

(3) Does this administrative regulation or amendment implement legislation from the previous five years? No.

(4) List the type and number of individuals, businesses, organizations, or state and local governments affected by this administrative regulation:

This administrative regulation may affect applicants for licensure who may have educational credentials aside from a master's degree in marriage and family therapy, which is estimated to be 10 or fewer applicants in a given year.

(5) Provide an analysis of how the entities identified in question (4) will be impacted by either the implementation of this administrative regulation, if new, or by the change, if it is an amendment, including:

(a) List the actions that each of the regulated entities identified in question (4) will have to take to comply with this administrative regulation or amendment:

No action will need to be taken by any current licensees or potential applicants to comply with this amendment.

(b) In complying with this administrative regulation or amendment, how much will it cost each of the entities identified in question (4):

There will be no cost for compliance with this amendment.

(c) As a result of compliance, what benefits will accrue to the entities identified in question (4):

Potential applicants will avoid any confusion as to what national entity is being referred to.

(6) Provide an estimate of how much it will cost the administrative body to implement this administrative regulation:

(a) Initially:

There will be no initial cost to the administrative body to implement this administrative regulation.

(b) On a continuing basis:

There will be no continuing cost to the administrative body to implement this administrative regulation.

(7) What is the source of the funding to be used for the implementation and enforcement of this administrative regulation or this amendment:

The Board's operations are funded by fees paid by license holders and applicants.

(8) Provide an assessment of whether an increase in fees or funding will be necessary to implement this administrative regulation, if new, or by the change if it is an amendment:

No increase in fees or funding will be necessary to implement this change to this administrative regulation.

(9) State whether or not this administrative regulation establishes any fees or directly or indirectly increases any fees:

This administrative regulation does not establish any new fees or increase any fees paid to the Board.

(10) TIERING: Is tiering applied?

Tiering is not applied because this regulation applies to all applicants equally.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(1) Identify each state statute, federal statute, or federal regulation that requires or authorizes the action taken by the administrative regulation:

. KSR 335.320(9) authorizes the Board to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335.300 to 335.399.

(2) State whether this administrative regulation is expressly authorized by an act of the General Assembly, and if so, identify the act:

This administrative regulation is not expressly authorized by any act of the General Assembly, aside from the general enabling statute, see KRS 335.320(9).

(3)(a) Identify the promulgating agency and any other affected state units, parts, or divisions:

The Kentucky Board of Licensure for Marriage and Family Therapists is the promulgating agency.

(b) Estimate the following for each affected state unit, part, or division identified in (3)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year: There are no expenditures anticipated in the first year.

For subsequent years: There are no expenditures anticipated in subsequent years.

2. Revenues:

For the first year: There are no revenues anticipated for the first year.

For subsequent years: There are no revenues expected for subsequent years.

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year: No cost savings are anticipated in the first year.

For subsequent years: No cost savings are anticipated in subsequent years.

(4)(a) Identify affected local entities (for example: cities, counties, fire departments, school districts):

None anticipated.

(b) Estimate the following for each affected local entity identified in (4)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year: N/A

For subsequent years: N/A

2. Revenues:

For the first year: N/A

For subsequent years: N/A

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year: N/A

For subsequent years: N/A

(5)(a) Identify any affected regulated entities not listed in (3)(a) or (4)(a):

None anticipated.

(b) Estimate the following for each regulated entity identified in (5)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year:N/A

For subsequent years:N/A

2. Revenues:

For the first year:N/A

For subsequent years:N/A

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year:N/A

For subsequent years:N/A

(6) Provide a narrative to explain the following for each entity identified in (3)(a), (4)(a), and (5)(a)

(a) Fiscal impact of this administrative regulation:

There is no fiscal impact of this administrative regulation for any entity identified in (3)(a), (4)(a), and (5)(a).

(b) Methodology and resources used to reach this conclusion:

Methodology and resources used are the fiscal department within the Public Protection Cabinet, Department of Professional Licensing.

(7) Explain, as it relates to the entities identified in (3)(a), (4)(a), and (5)(a):

(a) Whether this administrative regulation will have a "major economic impact", as defined by KRS 13A.010(14):

It is not anticipated that this administrative regulation will have an overall negative or adverse major economic impact to the entities identified.

(b) The methodology and resources used to reach this conclusion:

Methodology and resources used are the fiscal department within the Public Protection Cabinet, Department of Professional Licensing.