State Licensure Statutes, Regulations, Forms, and Policies not only change on a regular basis, but may contain contradictory information. It is the responsibility of any individual who may review this document to check with their licensure board regarding all requirements and policies regarding the licensure process. For more information please refer to your state licensing board, click here to find your state licensing board website aamftrc.org

Does the State require a degree program to include a specific number of credit hours (e.g. 45, 48 or 60 semester credits)? If so, how many credit hours are required?

Iowa requires that an applicant for licensure must possess a master's degree in marital and family therapy or mental health counseling, as applicable, consisting of at least sixty semester hours, or its equivalent, from a nationally accredited institution or from a program approved by the board. Applicants who entered a program of study prior to July 1, 2010, must present with the application an official transcript verifying completion of a master's degree of 45 semester hours or the equivalent.

What type of institutional or programmatic accreditation is required?

The applicants for licensure in Iowa must possess a degree that is either master’s degree of 60 semester hours or a doctoral degree in marital and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) or university accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. After March 31, 2009, graduates from non-COAMFTE-accredited marital and family therapy programs are required to provide an equivalency evaluation of their educational credentials completed by the Center for Credentialing and Education, Inc. (CCE), Web site http://cce-global.org. The professional curriculum must be equivalent to that stated in Iowa rules.

Does the State require the program to have COAMFTE or CACREP Accreditation?

No, but COAMFTE accreditation is strongly encouraged in Iowa rules.

Does the State accept a COAMFTE accredited degree without requiring the applicant to list specific courses on the license application?

Yes, but applicants from COAMFTE accredited programs must request that their school submit an official transcript (with the school seal that identifies the date of graduation and degree earned) directly to the Iowa Board of Behavioral Science.

What courses does the State require an applicant to have taken in order to be have met this educational requirement for licensure?

The applicant for licensure in Iowa must complete the required semester credit hours of graduate level coursework in each of the content areas identified in Iowa rules. No course may be used more than once. In addition, applicants from non-COAMFTE programs are required bear the expense of the curriculum evaluation. In order to qualify as a “content-equivalent” degree, a graduate transcript must document the following:
At least 9 semester hours or the equivalent in each of the three areas listed below:

(1) Theoretical foundations of marital and family therapy systems. Any course which deals primarily in areas such as family life cycle; theories of family development; marriage or the family; sociology of the family; families under stress; the contemporary family; family in a social context; the cross-cultural family; youth/adult/aging and the family; family subsystems; individual, interpersonal relationships (marital, parental, sibling).

(2) Assessment and treatment in family and marital therapy. Any course which deals primarily in areas such as family therapy methodology; family assessment; treatment and intervention methods; overview of major clinical theories of marital and family therapy, such as communications, contextual, experiential, object relations, strategic, structural, systemic, transgenerational.

(3) Human development. Any course which deals primarily in areas such as human development; personality theory; human sexuality. One course must be psychopathology.

At least 3 semester hours or the equivalent in each of the two areas listed below:

(1) Ethics and professional studies. Any course which deals primarily in areas such as professional socialization and the role of the professional organization; legal responsibilities and liabilities; independent practice and interprofessional cooperation; ethical issues in marital and family counseling; and family law.

(2) Research. Any course which deals primarily in areas such as research design, methods, statistics; research in marital and family studies and therapy.

If the applicant has taught a graduate-level course as outlined above at a college or university accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education or the Council on Professional Accreditation, that course will be credited toward the course requirements.

**How many client contact hours must a student obtain during practicum, and how many of these must be relational hours?**

Iowa requires a graduate-level clinical practicum in marital and family therapy of at least 300 clock hours for all applicants.

**How many supervision hours must a student obtain during practicum?**

Iowa rules do not specify a minimum number of supervision hours required during practicum.

**What is the required length of practicum in this State?**

Iowa rules do not specify a minimum length of practicum.
Post-Graduation Requirements

What are the minimum number of years of clinical experience a graduate needs to obtain a license, the minimum number of client contact hours, and how many of these hours must be relational hours?

Iowa requires that the supervised clinical experience shall be a minimum of two years or the equivalent of full-time, postgraduate supervised clinical work experience in marital and family therapy following the completion of a practicum, internship, and all graduate coursework, with the exception of the thesis. This shall include the successful completion of at least 1,500 hours of direct client contact.

Additional Notes:
An applicant for licensure in Iowa who has obtained American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) clinical membership is considered to have met the clinical experience requirements outlined in Iowa rules. In these cases, the applicant is required to request that proof of current clinical membership be sent directly from AAMFT to the board.

What are the minimum number of experience hours required by this State?

Iowa requires that applicants for licensure must successfully complete 3,000 hours of marital and family therapy.

What are the minimum number of post-graduate supervision hours required by this State, and how many of these hours must be individual supervision?

Iowa requires 200 hours of clinical supervision. At least 100 of the 200 hours of clinical supervision must be individual supervision. In addition, 50 percent (100 hours) of the clinical supervision must be conducted in person.

Additional Notes:
To meet the requirements of the supervised clinical experience in Iowa, the supervisee must:
(1) Meet with the supervisor for a minimum of four hours per month;
(2) Offer documentation of supervised hours signed by the supervisor;
(3) Compute part-time employment on a prorated basis for the supervised professional experience;
(4) Have the background, training, and experience that is appropriate to the functions performed;
(5) Have supervision that is clearly distinguishable from personal psychotherapy and is contracted in order to serve professional/vocational goals;
(6) Have individual supervision that shall be in person with no more than one supervisor to two supervisees;
(7) Have group supervision that may be completed with up to ten supervisees and a supervisor; and
(8) Not participate in the activities listed in Iowa rules which are deemed unacceptable for clinical supervision.
What are the State requirements for an individual to be qualified as a supervisor?

To be eligible to become a supervisor in Iowa, an individual must:
(1) Be an Iowa-licensed marital and family therapist with a minimum of three years of clinical experience following licensure; or

(2) Be a supervisor or supervisor candidate approved by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Commission on Supervision; or

(3) Be licensed under Iowa Code chapter 147 (psychology, social work, mental health counseling, etc.) and have a minimum of three years of full-time professional work experience, including experience in marital and family therapy, as approved by the board; and

(4) Meet a minimum of four hours per month with the supervisee; and

(5) Provide training that is appropriate to the functions to be performed; and

(6) Ensure that therapeutic work is completed under the professional supervision of a supervisor; and

(7) Not supervise any marital and family therapy or permit the supervisee to engage in any therapy which the supervisor cannot perform competently.

Does the state require the National Examination offered by the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB)?

Yes. A temporary license for the purpose of fulfilling the postgraduate supervised clinical experience requirement is valid for three years and may be renewed at the discretion of the board. If the candidate for temporary licensure has not completed the examination prior to issuance of a temporary license, the candidate must successfully complete the examination before the temporary license expires.

Does the State have specific training requirements beyond the graduate degree?

None are noted in Iowa.

Can an individual with a criminal history request board review before actually having to apply for licensure?

It is unclear if Iowa grants these requests.

How can someone contact the Board in this state?

Iowa Board of Behavioral Science
Bureau of Professional Licensure
Iowa Department of Public Health
Lucas State Office Bldg., 5th Floor
321 East 12th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0075
(515) 281-4422
FAX (515) 281-3121

Every state has a "definitions" section of their rules and/or statutes. Are there any definitions that might be important for an applicant to pay attention? (Note: this is not a complete list, please review definitions in your state)

None are noted in Iowa.