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?

An applicant for licensure in Rhode Island must have completed sixty (60) semester hours within their graduate degree program or post-graduate degree program specializing in marital and family therapy.

What type of institutional or programmatic accreditation is required?

Rhode Island requires an applicant for licensure to have completed a graduate degree program specializing in marital and family therapy from a college or university accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, or an equivalent regional accreditation agency; or a master’s degree or certificate in advanced graduate studies or a doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a recognized educational institution, or a graduate degree in an allied field from a recognized educational institution and graduate level course work that is equivalent to a master’s degree in marriage and family therapy. Coursework must include the required components of the core curriculum as defined in Rhode Island rules.

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

Rhode Island does not require these accreditations.

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

No.

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

Rhode Island requires course work in the following content areas:

**Area I: Theoretical Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy:** A minimum of two (2) courses (six [6] semester or equivalent hours) must be taken in Area I. In Area I, students conceptualize and distinguish the critical epistemological issues in marriage and family therapy. Students learn about the historical development, theoretical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of marriage and family therapy. Course content should not be isolated conceptually from clinical concerns; nor is it adequate for students to deal only with practical treatment issues without reference to theoretical literature.

**Area II: Clinical Knowledge:** A minimum of six (6) courses (eighteen [18] semester or equivalent quarter hours) must be taken in Area II. Area II courses will provide students with a comprehensive survey and substantive understanding of the major models and clinical issues of marriage and family therapy. Courses taught in Area II will address the applied aspects of marriage and family therapy practice.
Courses taught in Area II will focus on two (2) major interdependent components: diagnosis/assessment and treatment processes. Within the context of marital and family systems, students will learn to diagnose and treat both dysfunctional relationship patterns and nervous and mental disorders, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral. Major marriage and family therapy assessment methods and instruments will be covered. Marriage and family therapy faculty will teach students to use appropriate major mental health assessment instruments within a systemic context. Courses taught in Area II will emphasize the interface between the interpersonal and the intrapersonal. Courses will expose all students to issues of gender as they relate to marriage and family therapy theory and practice. Course content in this area will include sex discrimination and gender role stereotyping. Courses will also expose all students to issues of sexuality as they relate to marriage and family therapy theory and practice. Course content will include sexual orientation and sexual functioning. Courses will expose all students to issues of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status and culture as they relate to marriage and family therapy and practice. Course content will include social, educational, economic and behavioral factors. Courses taught in Area II will educate students about a wide variety of presenting problems including, but not limited to, sexual abuse, intense stress, problems of life cycle transitions, sexual dysfunctions, substance abuse, suicide, and violence.

**Area III: Human Development and Family Studies:** A minimum of one (1) course (three [3] semester or equivalent quarter hours) will be taken in Area III. In Area III, students learn about the developmental processes within the family context. Students will become conversant with the life cycle of the family and the process and modification of family structures over time (e.g., birth of the first child, adolescent sexual development, leaving home, etc.). Courses taught in Area III will emphasize the interface between the interpersonal and the intrapersonal. Courses will expose all students to issues of gender as they relate to marriage and family therapy theory and practice. Course content in this area will include sex discrimination and gender role stereotyping. Courses will also expose all students to issues of sexuality as they relate to marriage and family therapy theory and practice. Course content will include sexual orientation and sexual functioning. Courses will expose all students to issues of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status and culture as they relate to marriage and family therapy and practice. Course content will include social, educational, economic and behavioral factors.

**Area IV: Ethics and Professional Studies:** A minimum of one (1) course (three [3] semester or equivalent quarter hours) will be taken in Area IV. Area IV contributes to the development of a professional attitude and identity. Studies will include professional socialization and the role of professional organizations, licensure and certification, legal responsibilities and liabilities of clinical practice and research, family law, confidentiality issues, the AAMFT Code of Ethics, and interprofessional cooperation. The content of course work will be specific to the practice and profession of marriage and family therapy. A generic course in ethics is inappropriate for Area IV.

**Area V: Research:** A minimum of one (1) course (three [3] semester or equivalent quarter hours) will be taken in Area V. In Area V, students gain an understanding of research methodology and data analysis, and learn to evaluate research in marriage and family therapy. Course content will include both quantitative and qualitative research.

**Area VI: Graduate Elective:** A minimum of one (1) course (three [3] semester or equivalent quarter hours) will be taken in Area VI. Additional elective courses will augment students’ specialized interest and background in marriage and family therapy. Additional courses may be chosen from coursework offered in a variety of disciplines.
Area VII: Supervised Clinical Practice: Students are required to spend a minimum of five hundred (500) face-to-face hours with clients. Programs will document a student’s satisfactory completion of the five hundred (500) hour requirement before awarding a degree. A minimum of one hundred (100) hours of supervision is required in the supervised clinical practicum. A minimum twelve (12) successive months of supervised clinical practice is required. Although students may treat individual clients, at least 250 hours (fifty percent [50%] of the 500 direct client contact hours) must be completed with couples or families physically present in the room. Preparation for clinical practice includes any necessary remediation for previous clinical deficiencies. Clinical training will integrate didactic with clinical material. A practicum is a part-time clinical experience completed concurrently with didactic coursework. A practicum typically results in 5-10 direct client hours per week. It also includes such activities as supervision, staff meetings, community relations, and record keeping. Direct client contact is defined as face-to-face (therapist and client) therapeutic meetings. Activities such as brief telephone contact, case planning, observation of therapy, record keeping, travel, administrative activities, consultation with community members or professionals, or supervision, are not considered direct client contact. Assessments may be counted as direct client contact if they are face-to-face processes that are more than clerical in nature and focus. Both individual or dyadic and group supervision of the student’s clinical practice are required. Individual or dyadic supervision will occur at least once (1) per week over a period of one (1) or more years.

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

Rhode Island requires students to spend a minimum of five hundred (500) face-to-face hours with clients. Programs will document a student’s satisfactory completion of the five hundred (500) hour requirement before awarding a degree. Although students may treat individual clients, at least 250 hours (fifty percent [50%] of the 500 direct client contact hours) must be completed with couples or families physically present in the room.

How many supervision hours must a student obtain during practicum?

Rhode Island requires a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of supervision in the clinical practicum.

What is the required length of practicum in this State?

Rhode Island requires a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours of supervised practicum and a one (1) calendar year of supervised internship consisting of twenty (20) hours per week or its equivalent with emphasis in marriage and family therapy supervised by the department within the college or university granting the requisite degree or by an accredited postgraduate clinical training program, approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States Department of Education or education and/or experience which is deemed equivalent by the Board.
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?

Rhode Island requires applicants for licensure to obtain a minimum of two (2) years of relevant postgraduate experience, including at least two thousand (2,000) hours of direct client contact offering clinical or counseling or therapy services with emphasis in marriage and family therapy subsequent to being awarded a master's degree or doctorate with a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of post-degree supervised case work spread over two (2) years.

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

Rhode Island does not specify a minimum number of experience hours.

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

Rhode Island requires a minimum of 100 hours of Post-Graduate Supervised Casework.

What are the State requirements for an individual to be qualified as a supervisor?

Rhode Island requires that supervision must be provided by a person who, at the time of rendering said supervision, was recognized by the Board as an approved supervisor. A person shall be an “approved supervisor” of marriage and family therapy post-graduates in Rhode Island if she/he is:

A) duly certified as a supervisor by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT); OR

B) is a licensed marriage and family therapist who has been licensed in good standing for at least five (5) years and has at least five (5) years of clinical experience as a licensee; AND 1. has successfully completed one graduate-level course in MFT supervision; OR 2. has successfully completed one MFT supervision course taken through the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)/Rhode Island Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (RIAMFT).

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

Yes.

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

None are noted in Rhode Island.

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

It is unclear if Rhode Island accepts these requests.
How can someone contact the Board in this state?

Rhode Island Board Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists
Division of Health Services Regulation Health Professions
3 Capitol Hill, Room 104
Providence, RI 02908-5097
Website: www.health.ri.gov/hsr/professions/mf_counsel.php
Contact Person: Rosemary Sheets
Phone: (401) 222-3425
Email: Rosemary.Sheets@health.ri.gov
Office Phone: 401-222-2828
TTY: 711
Fax: 401-222-1272
E-Mail: charles.alexandre@health.ri.gov

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 Rhode Island.