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](aamftrc.org) to find your state licensing board website.

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?

By law, all applicants for licensure in South Carolina must have a minimum 48 graduate semester hours in marriage and family therapy along with an earned master’s degree, specialist’s degree or doctoral degree.

What type of institutional or programmatic accreditation is required?

South Carolina requires that the course of study may be completed during the qualifying degree program or additional graduate-level coursework may be completed successfully at a college or university accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, one of its transferring regional associations, the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, a post-degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education, or a regionally-accredited institution of higher learning subsequent to receiving the graduate degree, along with evidence of an earned master’s degree, specialist degree, or doctoral degree.

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

No.

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?

South Carolina has the following coursework requirements:

1. Theoretical Foundations (3 courses - 9 semester hours)

   The coursework content in this area must enable students to conceptualize and distinguish the critical epistemological issues in marriage and family therapy. The material in this area must be related conceptually to clinical concerns. One of these courses must be an Introductory Course.

   Introductory Course (3 semester hours) as part of the theoretical foundations, this course must include historical development, theoretical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions in the field of marriage and family therapy.

2. Clinical Practice (5 courses - 15 semester hours total)

   The coursework content in this area must address marriage and family therapy practice and be related conceptually to theory. Coursework in this area must focus on assessment, including marriage and family therapy methods and major mental health assessment methods and instruments, and must provide a comprehensive survey and substantive understanding of the major models of marriage and family therapy, as well as address a wide variety of clinical problems. Coursework must educate students
about appropriate collaboration with related disciplines. Two of these courses must be Psychopathology and Diagnostics of Psychopathology.

Psychopathology (3 semester hours) as part of clinical practice requirement, this course must provide an understanding of morbidity or pathology of the psyche or mind. These courses focus on behavioral manifestations and other dynamics of mental disorders.

Diagnostics of Psychopathology (3 semester hours) also as part of clinical practice requirement, this course must comprise studies that provide an understanding of the diagnosing of morbidity or pathology of the psyche or mind as detailed in the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. These courses focus on differential diagnosis.

3. Individual Development and Family Relations (2 courses - 6 semester hours total)

The coursework content in this area must include significant material on individual development, family development, and family relationships. Coursework must include significant material on issues of sexuality as it relates to marriage and family therapy theory and practice. Sexual dysfunctions and difficulties as well as individual development, gender, multi-cultural and sexual orientation, as related to marriage and family therapy theory and practice must be included.

4. Professional Identity, Legal and Ethical Issues (1 course - 3 semester hours)

The coursework in this area must include information about legal responsibilities and liabilities in the practice of marriage and family therapy. The coursework must include research, family law, confidentiality issues, and codes of ethics.

5. Research (1 course – 3 semester hours)

The coursework content in this area must include significant material on research in marriage and family therapy. This area must focus on research methodology, data analysis and the evaluation of research.

6. Clinical Experience (3 courses - 9 semester hours total)

The coursework content in this area must include client contact and clinical supervision with individuals, couples and families in a clinical setting. The clinical experience must include a minimum of 300 hours of face to face client contact, one-half of which must be relational. A minimum of 50 hours of clinical supervision must be provided by a marriage and family therapy supervisor. Please note: If, as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Intern, an applicant would like to assess and treat the more problems as categorized in standard nomenclature, they must have completed an internship of at least six hundred (600) hours under the supervision of a licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor that included experience assessing and treating clients with the more serious problems as categorized in standard diagnostic nomenclature. This internship can be a component of the practicum.

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

South Carolina requires that the practicum must include client contact and clinical supervision with individuals, couples and families in a clinical setting. The clinical experience must include a minimum of 300 hours of face to face client contact, one-half of which must be relational.

**Please Note:** In order for any person licensed as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Intern to assess and treat serious problems as described in standard diagnostic nomenclature, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Intern must have satisfied the following requirements in addition to the academic course requirements outlined in South Carolina Regulations: (1) Completed a practicum as part of a degree program, as required in South Carolina Regulations, that dealt directly with the assessment and treatment of more serious problems as categorized in standard diagnostic nomenclature; and (2) Completed an internship, as part of a degree program, of at least six hundred (600) hours under the supervision of a licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor that included
experience assessing and treating clients with the more serious problems as categorized in standard diagnostic nomenclature.

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

South Carolina requires that a minimum of 50 hours of clinical supervision must be provided by a marriage and family therapy supervisor.

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

South Carolina requires a minimum of 3 courses that equal 9 semester hours total.
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?

South Carolina requires an applicant for licensure to accrue a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1500) hours of supervised clinical experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy performed over a period of not less than two (2) years under the supervision of a licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor or other qualified licensed mental health practitioner as approved by the Board. The experience must include a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1500) hours of direct client contact with individuals, couples, families, or groups of which a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) hours are to be spent in immediate supervision with the licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor, including one hundred (100) hours of individual supervision and fifty (50) hours of either individual or group supervision.

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

South Carolina requires a minimum of 1500 hours of experience. An applicant for licensure is allowed three (3) years from receipt of their initial application to complete all requirements (to include passage of the exam) and obtain licensure.

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

South Carolina requires a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) hours are to be spent in immediate supervision with the licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor, including one hundred (100) hours of individual supervision and fifty (50) hours of either individual or group supervision.

Additional Notes:

South Carolina defines "group supervision" as a regularly scheduled meeting of not more than four (4) supervisees, and an approved supervisor, for a minimum of one and one half (1 1/2 ) hours. South Carolina defines individual supervision" as a meeting of one (1) or two (2) supervisees with a supervisor for a period of at least a one (1) hour session. South Carolina defines "supervision" to mean face-to-face contact between a supervisor and an intern or other person requiring supervision by South Carolina regulations during which time the person supervised apprises the supervisor of the diagnosis and treatment of each client, during the supervisory process.

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

An applicant for licensure as a marriage and family therapy supervisor in South Carolina must:

(1) submit an application on forms approved by the Board, along with the required fee;
(2) hold a current, active, and unrestricted South Carolina Marriage and Family Therapy License;
(3) submit evidence acceptable to the Board of at least five (5) years of continuous clinical experience immediately preceding the application. Two years of the five years must be clinical supervision under a licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor;
(4) submit evidence of a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours of individual supervision by a Board licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor of the applicant's supervision of at least two (2) marriage and family therapy interns; and
(5) submit evidence of a minimum of three (3) semester hours of graduate study in supervision or training from an accredited body approved by the Board.
Does the state require the National Examination offered by the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB)?

Yes. Candidates for initial licensure must make application and are first qualified for licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist Intern (LMFT/I) after review and approval of past educational experience and achieving a passing score on an approved marriage and family therapy examination.

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

None are noted in South Carolina.

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

It is unclear if South Carolina has a process that allows this. However, according to Section 40 1 140 - Effect of prior criminal convictions, a person may not be refused an authorization to practice, pursue, or engage in a regulated profession or occupation solely because of a prior criminal conviction unless the criminal conviction directly relates to the profession or occupation for which the authorization to practice is sought. However, a board may refuse an authorization to practice if, based upon all information available, including the applicant's record of prior convictions, it finds that the applicant is unfit or unsuited to engage in the profession or occupation.

How can someone contact the Board in this state?

South Carolina Board Examiners for Licensure of PC, MFT and Psych-Educ Sp
P.O. Box 11329
Columbia, SC 29211-1329
Phone: (803) 896-4658
Fax: (803) 896-4719
Email: glennp@llr.sc.gov
Website: www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/counselors

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)

In order for any person licensed as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist to assess and treat serious problems as described in standard diagnostic nomenclature, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist must have satisfied the following requirements:

1. Completed a minimum of three (3) graduate semester hours in Psychopathology in academic training from a college or university approved by the Board. This course must provide the practitioner with an understanding of psychopathology, abnormal psychology, abnormal behavior, etiology dynamics, and treatment of abnormal behavior; and

2. Completed a minimum of three (3) graduate semester hours in Diagnostics in academic training from a college or university approved by the Board. This course must provide the practitioner with an understanding of the diagnostics of psychopathology; and

3. Completed a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1500) hours of post-degree supervised clinical experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy performed over a period of not less than two years with an emphasis in the treatment of serious problems as categorized in standard diagnostic nomenclature, under the supervision of a licensed marriage and family therapy supervisor approved by the Board. The experience must include a minimum of one thousand five hundred (1500) hours of direct client contact with individuals, couples, families, or groups of which a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) hours are to be spent in immediate supervision with the licensed marriage and family therapist supervisor, including one hundred (100) hours of individual supervision and fifty (50) hours of individual or group supervision.