Rule 2.1 Types of Licenses

1. Licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) is the license granted to an individual who has met and maintained all the qualifications necessary for licensure to practice independently and the renewal of the license.

2. Licensed marriage and family therapy associate (LMFTA) is the license granted to an individual who has met and maintained all the qualifications necessary for licensure and for the renewal of the license. A licensed marriage and family therapy associate must practice in an agency setting under a “Board Approved” supervision contract.


Rule 2.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE AS A MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

A. Prerequisite to Performance of Services as a Marriage and Family Therapists

All individuals not exempt from licensure are prohibited from performing services for which licensure is required by the State of Mississippi Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Act of 1997, Title 73, Chapter 53 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, as Amended, and these Rules and Regulations. They are also prohibited from holding themselves out to the public by any name, title or description described in the Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Act and these Rules and Regulations. These regulations apply to all traditional and electronic approaches to marriage and family therapy.

B. General Requirements

An individual seeking licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) or a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate (LMFTA) shall submit to the Board, verified under oath, written evidence in form and content satisfactory to the Board, that the individual:

1. Is of good moral character as defined in these Rules and Regulations. Good moral character is a continuing requirement for licensure.

2. Has on file with the Board an acceptable criminal history records check, using fingerprint identification, by appropriate
governmental authorities and an acceptable sex offender check, prescribed by the Board;

3. Has not engaged in any practice or conduct which violates the standards of conduct set forth in these regulations;

4. Meets all the qualifications required for licensure including, but not limited to, education and experience, passing examination scores, physical and mental abilities and has no addiction to or dependency upon alcohol, drugs, or other agent which may endanger the public or impair their ability or professional competence;

5. Has not acquired by deception or fraud, the education, experience, passing examination scores, professional references or any other qualifying factor used as a basis for licensure;

6. Does not have any previous or pending, complaints or disciplinary actions against them by any professional association or state of jurisdiction which have not been resolved to the satisfaction of the Board. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Board if such items exist or have existed, and the Board may delay action on the licensure application until the complaints or disciplinary actions have been resolved and verified in writing to the satisfaction of the Board. If an applicant fails to reveal to the Board knowledge of previous or pending complaints or disciplinary actions, and the Board grants a license, the license will be revoked and the licensee will be disciplined by the Board;

7. Is at least twenty-one (21) years of age;

8. Meet all other requirements outlined in these rules and regulations;

C. Specific Requirements for Licensure as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)

1. **Education:** The individual seeking licensure must hold a masters or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a COAMFTE accredited marriage and family therapy program; or holds a masters or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a college or university program with candidacy status by COAMFTE which subsequently received COAMFTE accreditation. The applicant must have completed a clinical practicum in marriage and family therapy of no less than 12 consecutive months that provided him or her face to face clinical practice with individuals, couples and families and allowed the
To apply classroom learning to actual marriage and family therapy practice situations in the field setting providing for live supervision. The practicum student must have completed a minimum of 500 face to face clinical client contact hours of which no less than 200 must be relational contact hours with couples and/or families and must have received supervision with a ratio of no less than one (1) hour of supervision for each six (6) hours of clinical client contact. The practicum experience must be supervised by an AAMFT approved supervisor or Supervisor Candidate under supervision-of-supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Practicum groups must be limited to a maximum of 8 supervisees per supervisor per group. An official transcript from the educational institution must be sent directly to the Board by the institution.

2. **Post Graduate Clinical Experience:** The individual under an approved supervision plan seeking licensure must complete two years of documented clinical experience following the first qualifying graduate degree in the practice of marriage and family therapy within an agency, institution, or group practice setting. Application for licensure as a marriage and family therapist must occur within two years of completion of post graduate clinical experience. An individual seeking status as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who is not acquiring the documented clinical experience in an agency, institution, or a group practice setting will be practicing outside of Board’s Rules and Regulations, and his or her Plan of Supervision will not be approved by the MFT Discipline Specific Committee or the Board. This post graduate clinical experience must include a minimum of 1,000 documented face-to-face client contact hours. Documentation of compliance with this paragraph must be sent from the agency or person providing the clinical supervision directly to the Board.

3. **Supervision:** As required by these Rules and Regulations: an individual seeking licensure must:
   a. The individual seeking licensure must complete 200 hours of marriage and family therapy supervision. A minimum of 50 hours of the 200 hours of supervision must be individual supervision. Individual supervision is no more than two (2) marriage and family therapy supervisees or associates in a clinical setting during the supervision hour, which is fifty minutes.
   b. Up to one year of a COAMFTE approved doctoral internship may be counted toward the required two years of
post graduate supervised clinical experience when the doctoral internship involved the provision of clinical marriage and family therapy services in a mental health treatment setting under the supervision of an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or AAMFT Supervisor Candidate under supervision-of-supervision of an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Teaching or other non-clinical internship experiences will not be acceptable for satisfying this requirement.

c. Up to 100 hours of acceptable clinical supervision accumulated during graduate training may be counted toward the required 200 hours of clinical supervision. All 100 of the post graduate supervision hours must be completed with a Board Approved Supervisor.

d. At least 100 hours of the 200 hours of clinical supervision must be completed with an AAMFT approved supervisor.

e. The individual seeking licensure must complete and submit a Plan of Supervision (including the Supervisor’s Statement), the Application to Enter Into Contract for Supervision Toward Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist, and a non-refundable processing fee to the Board for approval. All plans of professional post-masters supervision must be approved by the Board prior to the beginning of said supervision, i.e., no retroactive approval of professional supervision will be granted except as provided in this section. Supervisees will not receive more than four (4) hours credit for supervision completed prior to the Board’s approval of the supervision plan. Supervisees should utilize this four (4) hours of supervision to collaboratively develop their supervision plan with their supervisor. The Board reserves the right to request explanations or plans of correction related to the submitted Plan of Supervision at any point.

f. Some individuals may be required, due to their circumstances, to work with two different supervisors concurrently. This may be permitted as long as a Plan of Supervision has been completed with each individual supervisor and each Plan has been submitted and approved by the Board.

g. Evaluations of the supervisee are to be completed on evaluation forms available from the Board and submitted
by the supervisor to the Board in accordance with the following schedule:

1. First evaluation is to be submitted ten (10) to twelve (12) months following Board approval of the Plan of Supervision.

2. The final evaluation is to be submitted when supervision is complete (twenty-four [24] to thirty-six [36] months following Board approval of the Plan of Supervision), accompanied by the Termination of Supervision Form, and completed Documentation of Supervision forms (all necessary forms are available from Board and at the Board’s website).

h. The supervisory process requires an average of one hour per week or two hours of biweekly meetings of face-to-face supervision throughout a minimum period of twenty-four (24) consecutive months. The period of supervision may not exceed thirty-six (36) months. Under unusual circumstances (e.g., hurricane disaster, documented illness, etc.) a supervisee may apply for an extension of the supervisory process, which may be granted at the discretion of the Board.

i. Supervision means the direct clinical review, for the purposes of training or teaching by a supervisor, of the supervisee’s interaction with a client. The supervision process may include time dedicated to personal and professional growth of the supervisee. Supervision provides guidance in administrative issues in the practice setting continues and expands education in skills, professional competence and understanding of the marriage and family therapy profession, offers emotional support, and provides evaluation for purposes of the supervisee's growth, as well as administrative judgment relative to the supervisee's capacity for autonomous professional function. Supervision occurs through multiple methods, including live supervision, video/audiotape review, and case report. It must be a process clearly distinguishable from personal psychotherapy and is conducted in order to serve professional goals. Acceptable modes of supervision are as follows:

1. individual supervision
2. group supervision

j. The following is not acceptable marriage and family supervision: peer supervision; supervision by current or former family members or any other person with whom the nature of the personal relationship prevents, or makes difficult, the establishment of a professional supervisory relationship; administrative supervision; a primarily didactic process wherein techniques or procedures are taught in a group setting, classroom, workshop seminar, staff development, orientation to a field or program or role-playing of family relationships as a substitute for current clinical practice in an appropriate clinical situation.

4. Working with a Board Approved Supervisor: All postgraduate supervision must be received from an individual(s), who, at the time the supervision took place, was approved by the Board as a qualified supervisor and held a license to practice as a Marriage and Family Therapist.

a. To become a Board approved Supervisor, an individual (other than an AAMFT Approved Supervisor) must have completed a minimum of four (4) consecutive years of verifiable practice at the LMFT level, submitted an application for supervisory approval to the Board, and received notice from the Board that the application was approved. AAMFT Supervisor Candidates must have four (4) consecutive years of verifiable practice at the LMFT level and must be under supervision of supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor.

b. An AAMFT Approved Supervisor may be recognized as approved by the Board upon: a) providing proof of licensure as a marriage and family therapist for two (2) years; b) submitting an application for supervisory approval to the Board; and c) providing documentation of current status as an AAMFT Approved Supervisor.

c. To be approved as a supervisor by the Board, an individual must have also completed a course in marriage and family therapy supervision approved by the Board with a minimum of twenty-four (24) contact hours. Supervision trainers (those teaching approved supervision courses) must be LMFTs and AAMFT Approved Supervisors.
d. All supervisors who have been approved by the Board, including supervisors who are AAMFT Approved Supervisors, are required to complete two (2) hours of MFT supervision continuing education every (2) two years. No supervision continuing education hours are required for the first renewal period. All continuing education for supervision credit must be approved by the Board. The Board will not approve self-directed learning projects/activities and/or distance learning/internet (online) learning courses for the supervision CE requirement. **Supervisor Refresher courses provided by AAMFT or any division of the AAMFT are automatically approved as meeting this requirement without Board action.**

e. All supervisors who have been approved by the Board, including supervisors who are AAMFT Approved Supervisors, are required to complete a Supervisor Renewal Form biennially (to be included with their Licensure Renewal Application if licensed in Mississippi) indicating they have met all continuing education requirements.

f. Approved supervisors are required to maintain copies of supervisee’s evaluations and documentation pertaining to the supervisor/supervisee relationship for a period of two calendar years following termination of the supervision contract with a supervisee.

g. Approved supervisors are required to work with the supervisee to complete a **Plan of Supervision** (including the **Supervisor’s Statement**) and submit this to the Board. The Plan of Supervision must be approved by the Board before supervision can commence. Supervisees will not receive more than four (4) hours credit for supervision completed prior to the Board’s approval of the supervision plan. Supervisees should utilize this four (4) hours of supervision to collaboratively develop their supervision plan with their supervisor. No plan of supervision will be approved if the approved supervisor is supervising more than eight (8) postgraduate licensure supervisees pursuing LMFT status in Mississippi at any given time.

h. Evaluations of the supervisee are to be completed by the supervisor during consultative sessions with the supervisee and submitted by the supervisor to the Board.
i. It is the responsibility of the approved supervisor to obtain a supervisor approval renewal form from the Board, to obtain the required continuing education verification, and to see that his or her approval is renewed on time. These forms are available online at the Board’s website. Failure to receive a notice of renewal does not absolve the approved supervisor of his or her responsibility to renew this designation before the expiration date.

j. A list of Board approved supervisors is available online at the Board’s website. Any individual having difficulty securing the services of a supervisor approved by the Board may contact the Board. When an individual wishes to be supervised by someone who is not an approved supervisor, the prospective supervisor will need to be eligible to become approved and will be required to complete the supervisory approval process prior to engaging in supervision.

5. **How to Change Supervisors:** Should it become necessary for an individual to change supervisors, the following steps must be followed to ensure continuity:

a. All relevant evaluation forms, including a Termination of Supervision Form, must be completed and submitted to the Board. The Termination of Supervision form must specify the number of hours of supervision completed, the period of supervision, and the reason for the dissolution of the supervisor/supervisee relationship. In cases where the supervisor is unable to complete this form (e.g., death) the supervisee must complete the termination of supervision form and provide such documentation as the Board deems necessary in support of the information contained on said form.

b. If supervision is to be continued with another approved supervisor, a new application (Application to Enter into Contract for Supervision toward Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist) and Plan of Supervision must be submitted to the Board for approval. Only after receipt of correspondence acknowledging that approval has been granted by the Board may the new supervisory process commence. The Board reserves the right to request explanations or plans of correction related to the Plan of Supervision at any point. No processing fee is required for this change.
6. **Application Process for Approval of Postgraduate Supervision:** It is the responsibility of the applicant for licensure to see that all forms, supporting documents, transcripts, etc., are completed, signed and notarized as required and sent to the Board in a timely manner. The Board will not consider an application as having been submitted until all the required items have been received by the Board. Applicants must submit to the Board, or ensure that the Board receives, the following items:

   a. The original signed, notarized and completed Application to Enter into Contract for Supervision toward Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist or a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate form and processing fees. Application materials are available online at the Board’s website. The Board does not accept personal checks for payment of fees;

   b. A Supervisor’s Statement form completed and signed by the approved supervisor

   c. A written, detailed Plan of Supervision; In this written, detailed plan of supervision, all points must be covered in sufficient detail for review and approval by the MFT Discipline Specific Committee; Specific topics to be addressed in the plan of supervision include, but are not limited to, the following:

   1. The supervisee’s and supervisor’s orientation in this relationship, specifically addressing the purpose and goals of the supervisee and the frequency of supervision meetings for this particular supervision relationship;

   2. The professional development of the supervisee, addressing issues related to the knowledge, skills, and values of the supervisee; and,

   3. Issues related to supervisee’s practice as a marriage and family therapist, including, but not limited to, the application of theories and models; the responsibilities of the supervisee to himself or herself, his or her clients, and the community; and the supervisee’s commitment to continued learning and service.
4. This plan must be signed by both the supervisor and supervisee.

d. Official transcripts of graduate education mailed directly to the Board by the institution(s);

e. Recent picture of the applicant; and

f. The required processing fee.

7. For post graduate supervision begun with a supervisor prior to May 1, 2007, the individual providing clinical supervision must have been, at the time the supervision took place, a licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed psychologist, licensed certified social worker, licensed professional counselor, clinical nurse specialist, or psychiatrist with five (5) years’ experience in his/her discipline and training in marriage and family therapy as determined by the Board Discipline Specific Committee. These individuals must have completed the application process for licensure by September 30, 2010. After September 30, 2010 these applicants must meet current standards prescribed below in Part 1903, Chapter 2, Rule 2.2, C below.

8. Supervision for licensure initiated after May 1, 2007 must be approved by the Board.

D. Examinations

The examination for licensing marriage and family therapist shall be the American Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) Examination in Marital and Family Therapy.

1. Application Process

   a. An applicant for examination shall file an application, on forms supplied by the Board, at least 30 days prior to an examination date. An applicant is not eligible to take the examination until approved by the Board.

   b. An applicant currently enrolled in a COAMFTE accredited graduate program may sit for the exam 90 days prior to graduation with the written approval of their program director.
c. An applicant may not be licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate or a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist without passing the required examination.

d. The passing score on the examination shall be the passing score of the Board approved testing entity.

2. Frequency of Examinations

Applicants seeking to retake the examination are required to follow AMFTRB guidelines regarding examination administration.

3. Cost of Examination: The cost of the examination is dependent upon the fees charged by the testing service and is the responsibility of the applicant.

4. Release of Examination Scores to COAMFTE Accredited Programs: The Board will release examination scores for all accredited program graduates taking the examination to the accredited program director only if the candidate taking the examination has provided written permission for the Board to release said scores to the accredited program.

E. Application Requirements for Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate (LMFTA)

The Board must have satisfactory evidence of the applicant successfully passing the AMFTRB Examination in Marital and Family Therapy before it will consider the application. In addition, applicants for licensure must submit to the Board, or ensure the Board receives, the following items:

1. The original signed, notarized and completed application form;

2. Official transcripts of graduate education mailed directly to the Board by the institution(s) if most current transcripts have not been previously submitted to the Board;
3. Documentation of a completed clinical practicum in marriage and family therapy of no less than 12 consecutive months that provided him or her face to face clinical practice with individuals, couples and families and allowed the applicant to apply classroom learning to actual marriage and family therapy practice situations in the field setting providing for live supervision. The practicum student must have completed a minimum of 500 face to face clinical client contact hours of which no less than 200 must be relational contact hours with couples and/or families and must have received supervision with a ratio of no less than one (1) hour of supervision for each six (6) hours of clinical client contact. The practicum experience must be supervised by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate under supervision-of-supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Practicum groups must be limited to a maximum of 8 supervisees per supervisor per group.

4. Documentation of a passing score on the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy prescribed by the Association for Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards.

5. Documentation of an acceptable supervision plan that has been approved by the Board.

6. Three acceptable letters of professional reference from licensed mental health professionals who have known the applicant for at least one year, sent directly to the Board by the professional.

7. Recent picture of the applicant.

8. The applicant must have completed a statewide and nationwide, using fingerprint identification, criminal history and background check and must have received a criminal background clearance within one-hundred eighty (180) days of the completed application. This criminal history record information must be received by the Board directly from the appropriate governmental authority or authorities, not from the applicant;

F. Application Requirements for Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. The Board must have evidence of the applicant successfully passing the AMFTRB Examination in Marital and
Family Therapy before it will consider the application. In addition, applicants for licensure must submit to the Board, or ensure the Board receives, the following items:

1. The original signed, notarized and completed application form;

2. Official transcripts of graduate education mailed directly to the Board by the institution(s) if up to date transcripts have not been previously submitted to the Board;

3. Documentation of a completed clinical practicum of no less than twelve (12) consecutive months that provided him or her face to face clinical practice with individuals, couples and families and allowed the applicant to apply classroom learning to actual marriage and family therapy practice situations in the field setting providing for live supervision. The practicum student must have completed a minimum of 500 face to face clinical client contact hours of which no less than 200 must be relational contact hours with couples and/or families and must have received supervision with a ratio of no less than one (1) hour of supervision for each six (6) hours of clinical client contact. The practicum experience must be supervised by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor or Supervisor Candidate under supervision-of-supervision by an AAMFT Approved Supervisor. Practicum groups must be limited to a maximum of 8 supervisees per supervisor per group.

4. Documentation of a passing score on the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy prescribed by the Association for Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards.

5. Documentation of clinical experience acceptable to the Board, a final supervision evaluation acceptable to the Board (the first evaluation must have already been submitted to the Board by the supervisor), and all necessary Termination of Supervision Forms must be submitted directly to the Board by the appropriate agency and/or supervisor(s);

6. Three acceptable letters of professional reference from licensed mental health professionals who have known the applicant for at least one year, sent directly to the Board by the professional. The persons documenting the clinical
experience and supervision may NOT be used for the letters of professional reference;

7. Recent picture of the applicant, if a picture has not been previously submitted to the Board;

8. An acceptable criminal history records check, finger print and an acceptable sex offender check, by appropriate governmental authorities as prescribed by the Board. The applicant must have completed a statewide and nationwide, using fingerprint identification, criminal history and background check and must have received criminal background clearance within one hundred eighty (180) days immediately before the completed application is filed with the Board. This criminal history record information must be received by the Board directly from the appropriate governmental authority or authorities, not from the applicant;

9. The non-refundable application fee

G. Licensure by Endorsement

1. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Associate

The Board does not license Marriage and Family Therapy Associates by endorsement. Applicants seeking state licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapy Associate must meet all current Board requirements.

2. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

An applicant who is currently licensed for independent practice as a marriage and family therapist in another jurisdiction (LCMFT in the states of Kansas and Ohio) of the United States The Board may issue a license to applicants from another jurisdiction if the applicant has been licensed as a marriage and family therapist in the other state, which currently has in the opinion of the Board, regulatory standards and qualifications substantially equivalent to those required for marriage and family therapists in Mississippi. In addition the applicant must have been licensed as a marriage and family therapist in good standing in the other state for five (5) consecutive years immediately prior to the date his or her completed application is filed with the Board, has no record of
disciplinary actions, has no pending disciplinary action, has passed the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy in accordance with AMFTRB standards and satisfies the requirements listed below:

1. Requirements for endorsement
   a. The original signed, notarized and completed application form;
   b. Licensure verification form(s) mailed directly to the Board from the state or jurisdiction in which the current license(s) is/are held;
   c. Official transcripts of graduate education mailed directly to the Board by the Institution;
   d. Documentation of a passing score on the National Examination in Marital and Family Therapy prescribed by the Association for Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards;
   e. A recent picture of the applicant;
   f. The applicant must have completed a statewide and nationwide, using fingerprint identification, criminal history and background check and must have received criminal background clearance within ninety (90) days immediately before the completed application is filed with the Board. This criminal history record information check must be received by the Board directly from the appropriate governmental authority or authorities, not from the applicant;
   g. The non-refundable application fee.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§73-53-11(1)(c), (d), (e), (g), (k), (l), (n), (o) and (u), 73-53-15, 73-54-7, 73-54-11, 73-54-13, 73-54-17, 73-54-19, 73-54-23, 73-54-27(4) and 73-54-29(4)(Supp. 2011).

Rule 2.3 THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Making the Application for Licensure
1. The current rules and regulations regarding licensure, as well as all application forms, are available online at the Board website, http://www.swmft.ms.gov/swmft. The applicant may also request an official application packet for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, and a copy of the current rules and regulations regarding licensure from the Board for a fee as prescribed in Part 1903, Chapter 5, Rule 5.2.

2. Additional copies of the required forms may be made as needed.

3. It is the responsibility of the applicant to see that all forms, supporting documents, references, fees, transcripts, etc. are completed, signed and notarized as required and sent to the Board in a timely manner.

4. The Board will not consider an application as complete until all forms, documentation, references, fees, transcripts, etc. have been received by the Board.

5. Inaccurate information or misrepresentation of facts on any form submitted to the board may result in a denial of licensure or revocation of the license at a later date.

B. Board Consideration of Licensure Applications

1. The Board will consider all applications under the rules and regulations for licensure that are in effect on the date the application was received by the Board.

2. The Board will consider the applications when all related items are in the file. If the Board approves the application, the applicant will be notified in writing. If the application is not approved, the applicant will be notified in writing of the reason(s).

3. If the application is approved, the board will notify the applicant of the amount of the initial license fee that is due, depending on the time during the year when the application was approved. The license fee must be paid in full before the license is issued.

4. Once the license fee is paid in full, the Board will assign a license number and issue the applicant an official certificate.
C. Disposition of Incomplete or Deficient Applications

1. Removal of Deficiencies:

If a preliminary review of the application by the Board reveals that the application is incomplete or has a minor deficiency, the applicant will be notified in writing. The applicant will be given six (6) months from the date of the first notice to remedy the problem while the application is held on active status by the Board. Applicants may, at the discretion of the Board, be granted one additional extension, not to exceed six (6) months, for unusual extenuating circumstances upon a written request, with full explanation of circumstances, submitted to the Board before the expiration of the initial six months extension.

2. Abandoned Applications:

Incomplete application on file for more than thirty-six (36) months from the date the Plan of Supervision was approved by the Board or applications that have not been completed or made sufficient during the extended time granted by the board, will be declared abandoned by the Board and will be given no further consideration.

   a. Any incomplete or missing information, documentation or fees shall render the application incomplete. No license shall be issued unless all application requirements have been met. Incomplete applications will be considered abandoned after sixty (60) days from the date of the approval by the Board, to pay the initial license fee. Any fees paid shall not be refunded

   b. Submission of New Application: Once an application has been declared abandoned by the Board, the applicant may submit a completely new application for licensure under the rules and regulations in effect at the time the new application is submitted.