§ 8403. Marriage and family therapy. 1. Definition of the practice of marriage and family therapy. The practice of the profession of marriage and family therapy is defined as:

(a) the assessment and treatment of nervous and mental disorders, whether affective, cognitive or behavioral, which results in dysfunctional interpersonal family relationships including, but not limited to familial relationships, marital/couple relationships, parent-child relationships, pre-marital and other personal relationships;

(b) the use of mental health counseling, psychotherapy and therapeutic techniques to evaluate and treat marital, relational, and family systems, and individuals in relationship to these systems;

(c) the use of mental health counseling and psychotherapeutic techniques to treat mental, emotional and behavioral disorders and ailments within the context of marital, relational and family systems to prevent and ameliorate dysfunction; and

(d) the use of assessment instruments and mental health counseling and psychotherapy to identify and evaluate dysfunctions and disorders for purposes of providing appropriate marriage and family therapy services.

2. Practice of marriage and family therapy and use of the titles "marriage and family therapist" and "licensed marriage and family therapist". Only a person licensed or exempt under this article shall practice marriage and family therapy or use the title "marriage and family therapist". Only a person licensed under this article shall use the titles "licensed marriage and family therapist", "licensed marriage therapist", "licensed family therapist" or any other designation tending to imply that the person is licensed to practice marriage and family therapy.

3. Requirements for a professional license. To qualify for a license as a "licensed marriage and family therapist", an applicant shall fulfill the following requirements:

(a) Application: File an application with the department;

(b) Education: Have received a master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a program registered by the department, or determined by the department to be the substantial equivalent, in

accordance with the commissioner's regulations or a graduate degree in an allied field from a program registered by the department and graduate level coursework determined to be equivalent to that required in a program registered by the department. This coursework shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) the study of human development, including individual, child and family development;

(ii) psychopathology;

(iii) marital and family therapy;

(iv) family law;

(v) research;

(vi) professional ethics; and

(vii) a practicum of at least three hundred client contact hours;

(c) Experience: The completion of at least one thousand five hundred client contact hours of supervised clinical experience, by persons holding a degree from a master's or doctoral program, or the substantial equivalent, in accordance with the commissioner's regulations or the completion of at least one thousand five hundred client hours of supervised post-master's clinical experience in marriage and family therapy satisfactory to the department in accordance with the commissioner's regulations. Satisfactory experience obtained in an entity operating under a waiver issued by the department pursuant to section sixty-five hundred three-a of this title may be accepted by the department, notwithstanding that such experience may have been obtained prior to the effective date of such section sixty-five hundred three-a and/or prior to the entity having obtained a waiver. The department may, for good cause shown, accept satisfactory experience that was obtained in a setting that would have been eligible for a waiver but which has not obtained a waiver from the department or experience that was obtained in good faith by the applicant under the belief that appropriate authorization had been obtained for the experience, provided that such experience meets all other requirements for acceptable experience;

(d) Examination: Pass an examination satisfactory to the board and in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;

(e) Age: Be at least twenty-one years of age;

(f) Character: Be of good moral character as determined by the

department; and

(g) Fees: Pay a fee of one hundred seventy-five dollars for an initial license and a fee of one hundred seventy dollars for each triennial registration period.