

Rules and Regulations

Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors

Part 2201. CHAPTER 4. Licensure Requirements

Rule 4.1: General Requirements

- A. No person shall practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Mississippi except as provided by state statute and these regulations.
- B. An Applicant must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- C. The Applicant is a Mississippi resident, pays income tax in the State of Mississippi, or has an immigration document to verify legal alien work status in the United States. The immigration document must be current and issued by the United States Immigration Bureau.
- D. An Applicant must be of good moral character. The Board may request endorsements attesting to the Applicant's character, professional integrity, and professional competence.
- E. Applicants must pass Board approved examination to be eligible for licensure.
- F. Applicants must meet all education and experience requirements.
- G. The Board must receive a complete application packet, official transcript(s), and criminal background check results prior to the established application deadline for the Applicant to be considered for licensure or candidacy at any Board meeting.
- H. An applicant may not be in violation of any of the provisions of Section 73-30-1 et seq., of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* or any of the rules and regulations adopted by the Board.
- I. The application process for licensure must be completed within 365 days of the Board's receipt of the individual's application packet. "Completed" with respect to this provision means either Board approved for candidacy or Board approved for licensure (as appropriate). As stipulated in Rule 2.3(C), an individual who has not completed the application process within the 365 days' time frame must pay a Reapplication Fee in order to reactivate his/her to continue the application process. As stipulated in Rule 9.1(E) (Application Process), incomplete applications will be kept on file for two (2) years, after which time they will be destroyed.
- J. Periodically, this document, the Rules, Regulations and Application for the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors, is updated and/or revised. The Applicant/Candidate/Licensee must comply with the most current version of this document, and it is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that he/she has the most current

version(s) of application documents accepted by the LPC Board. Additionally, the Applicant/Candidate/Licensee is responsible for all provisions listed in the most current Rules and Regulations and Application Guidelines. The Rules and Regulations may be downloaded from the Board's website www.lpc.ms.gov.

- K. The Board shall require state and national criminal background check, to include consulting sex offender registries, through the Department of Public Safety for each first time Applicant for licensure as well as Licensees seeking renewal, every six years, to be calculated based on the Licensee's initial date of licensure.
1. For purposes of these background checks, "good moral character" shall be established by an absence of felony convictions or convictions for misdemeanors involving moral turpitude.
 2. The background check shall conform to the applicable federal standards and shall include the taking of fingerprints.
 3. The Applicant shall sign a release of information to the Board and shall be responsible for the payment of the fee associated with the criminal background check.
 4. Upon completion of the background check, the Department of Public Safety shall forward to the Board all releasable information obtained concerning the Applicant or Licensee.
 5. No person shall be eligible to receive or hold a license issued by the Board if that person has pled guilty or nolo contendere to or has been found guilty of any felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
 6. Upon receipt of information from the Department of Public Safety that a person has pled guilty or nolo contendere to or found guilty of any felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, the Board shall immediately deny licensure or refuse renewal of license.
 7. The provisions of Rule 4.1(K)(5) and Rule 4.1(K)(6) above may be waived by the Board upon request of the affected applicant for licensure or the person holding a license subject to revocation. The request shall be for a show cause hearing within ten (10) days, which shall be conducted pursuant to the process set out in the Regulations providing for the Board complaints process.
 8. Circumstances for which a waiver may be granted shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. The age at which the crime was committed;
 - b. The circumstances surrounding the crime;
 - c. The length of time since the crime;
 - d. Subsequent work history;

- e. Employment references;
 - f. Character references; and
 - g. Other evidence demonstrating that the applicant does not pose a threat to the health or safety of the public.
9. There will be no waiver opportunities for any conviction involving Child Abuse or Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-9 & 73-30-21 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.2: Education Requirements

The following is a list of education requirements that all applicants must meet in order to be licensed:

- A. Sixty (60) semester hours or ninety (90) quarter hours of graduate study.
For degrees conferred after January 1, 2017, the Board will only accept sixty (60) semester hours or ninety (90) quarter hours master's degree programs, and those programs shall be CACREP degree programs or degree programs with the word counseling in its title, and meet the structure of CACREP as it specifically pertains to the twelve (12) courses specified in Rule 4.2.C, as part of sixty (60) semester hours or ninety (90) quarter hours that are required for completion of the degree or having earned a doctoral or educational specialist degree primarily in a counseling, guidance, or related field, which meets similar standards as specified above.
- B. A graduate program related to counselor education is defined as one that contains course work in all of the following areas. Each applicant must have completed a three (3) hour semester course or its equivalent in each of the following areas:
 - 1. Human Growth and Development - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all levels of development, normal and abnormal human behavior, personality theory, life-span theory, and learning theory within cultural contexts. Emphasis is placed on psychological approaches used to explain, predict, and modify human behavior.
 - 2. Social and Cultural Foundations - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of societal changes and trends in human roles, societal subgroups, social mores, interaction patterns, and multicultural and pluralistic trends in differing lifestyles, and major societal concerns including stress, person abuse, substance abuse, discrimination, and methods for alleviating these concerns.
 - 3. Counseling and Psychotherapy Skills - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of philosophic bases of helping processes, counseling theories and their applications, basic and advanced helping skills, consultation theories and their

application, client and helper self-understanding and self-development, and facilitation of client or consultee change.

4. Group Counseling - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling theories; group leadership styles; basic and advanced group counseling methods and skills; and other group approaches.
5. Lifestyle and Career Development - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of career development theories; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision-making; career development program planning resources and effectiveness evaluation.
6. Testing and Appraisal - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of group and individual educational and psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal, data, and information gathering methods, validity and reliability, psychometric statistics, factors, influencing appraisals, and use of appraisal results in helping process. Additionally, the specific ability to administer and interpret tests and inventories to assess interests and abilities and to identify career options is important.
7. Research and Evaluation - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of different types of research, basic statistics, research-report development, research implementation, program evaluation needs assessment, publication of research information, and legal considerations.
8. Professional Orientation to Counseling or Ethics - Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of professional roles and functions of counselors, professional goals and objectives, professional counseling organizations and associations, professional history and trends, ethical and legal standards, professional standards, and professional credentialing.
9. Theories of Counseling Psychotherapy and Personality – Course work includes studies in basic theories, principles and techniques of counseling, and their application to professional counseling settings.
10. Marriage and/or Family Counseling/Therapy – Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of marriage and family theories and approaches to counseling with families and couples. This includes appraisal of family and couples' systems and the application of these to counseling families and/or couples in pre-marriage, marriage and/or divorce situations.
11. Abnormal Psychology and Psychopathology – Course work includes studies that provide a broad understanding of individuals' current mental/emotional states consistent with accepted classifications such as those provided in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV or DSM-5 or most recent edition), as published by the American Psychiatric Association; and the ICD—10-CM (or most recent edition of ICD) and the development of planned, diagnosed - relevant

interventions, including the goals of counseling, methods of treatment, and means of monitoring progress.

12. Internship – Supervised, planned, practical, advanced experience obtained in a clinical setting observing and applying principles, methods, and techniques learned in training and/or educational settings.

C. Courses completed by applicants that were not part of a counselor education or related counseling graduate program are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine applicability.

D. All applicants must provide official transcripts of all graduate work. Unopened official transcripts shall be submitted in the application packet or submitted to the Board directly from the approved educational institution.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-9 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.3: Experience Requirements

A. Supervision Requirements - An Applicant must document the following supervised experience requirements prior to applying for licensure. The supervisor must be a Board approved Qualified Supervisor (BQS). The art of supervision is defined as assisting the counselor in developing expertise in methods of the professional mental health counseling practice and in developing self-appraisal and professional development strategies.

1. A total of three thousand five hundred (3,500) supervised hours of counseling (approximately 2 years) in a clinical setting post Bachelor's degree (See Rule 1.4(H)) comprised of the following:

a. A maximum of forty (40) supervised hours may be obtained per workweek.

b. Up to one thousand seven hundred fifty (1,750) hours may be obtained while enrolled in a Graduate Degree's program internship or practicum and, although not required, where possible the Board would prefer BQS Supervision during internship or practicum.

c. A minimum of one thousand one hundred sixty-seven (1,167) supervised hours must be in Direct Services with clients and/or psychotherapy service to clients. Direct Services are only face to face counseling including individual counseling, couples/family counseling, group counseling, and testing and assessment.

d. One hundred (100) hours of individual face to face supervision are required. Up to 50 hours may be obtained while enrolled in a Graduate Degree program, including internship/practicum. Supervision meetings should occur at a frequency based upon these ratios: one (1) supervision hour to forty (40) hours of services provided OR one (1) hour of supervision to twenty-five (25) hours of Direct Services. For persons working part-time, supervision should occur no less frequently than every other week.

- No more than 50 hours of individual supervision received during a Graduate Degree Program will be accepted.
- e. Group supervision will be acceptable for not more than fifty (50) hours of the required one hundred (100) hours of individual supervision. This is based on two (2) hours of group supervision being equivalent to one (1) hour of individual supervision. Total hours of group supervision should be reported in full and will then be divided by two (2) by the Board at review time.
 - f. Individual supervision provided by multiple supervisors regarding the same direct client service hours at the same site during the same time frame will not be accepted.
2. In order to receive supervision by a BQS with the LPC-S credential and obtain required experience for licensure, Applicants who have completed the education requirements for licensure may practice in a clinical setting that is governed by federal, State, county or municipality. Where this is not the case, the Applicant may practice under the employment of a Licensed Professional Counselor with a LPC-S on site.
 3. Individual and Group Supervision provided by a BQS with the LPC-S credential to Applicants who have completed the educational requirements for licensure may be provided by way of Distance Professional Services under the following criteria only:
 - a. The LPC-S must hold a Distance Credentialed Counselor credential from the Center for Credentialing and Education. The credential must be on file with the LPC Board office prior to initiating supervision through distance means.
 - b. Distance supervision sessions must be provided by means of synchronous video conferencing only. Supervision by telephone, email, chat, or other forms of communication must be reserved to only emergency communications.
 - c. The Supervision Agreement submitted to the LPC Board must include information explaining the use and limits of distance supervision, specify the qualifications of the LPC-S to provide distance supervision, and establish procedures for managing the failure of the video communication system.
- B. Effective July 1, 2015, Applicants shall present supervised experience obtained within the last seven (7) years.
- C. Supervision Verification forms must be submitted in sealed, signed envelopes in the application packet or through the online process available.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-9 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.4: Mississippi Qualified Supervisor Requirements

- A. A Board Qualified Supervisor shall meet the following requirements:

1. Be a current LPC. The supervisor must hold a Mississippi license as an LPC.
2. The supervisor must have been practicing mental health counseling in their setting (i.e., school, agency, private practice) for at least five years. Two of the five years experience must be post-licensing experience.
3. Have documentation/verification of Supervision training [Course work or minimum of 30 hour workshop]. Supervisors must have successfully completed either options a or b or c below.
 - a. Graduate-Level Academic Training. At least one graduate-level academic course in counseling supervision. The course must have included at least 45 clock hours (equivalent to a three-credit hour semester course) of supervision training.
 - b. Professional Training. A Board approved professional training program in supervision. The training program must be a minimum of 30 clock hours with the trainers and meet presentation standards established by the Board.
 - c. Show completion of Approved Clinical Supervisor Credential from NBCC.
4. Have current resume/Vitae on file with the Board. Supervisor will submit to the Board a resume either in electronic or print form. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to keep the information current.
5. Submit a Philosophy of Supervision. The Supervisor will have their own philosophy of supervision and the models that are used. They will be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the philosophy and be able to discuss the model and demonstrate familiarity with the model.
6. Complete a minimum of one (1) hour of supervision continuing education per year; a minimum of two (2) hours per renewal period. Renewal will occur simultaneously with LPC renewal. The Board Qualified Supervisor will continually be aware of the need to increase knowledge of supervision and how it relates to the counseling environment. They will strive to obtain continuing education in supervision.
7. Have documented membership in a professional counseling organization.
8. Shall follow the most recent ACA (American Counseling Association) *Code of Ethics*.
9. Have no disciplinary sanctions against license
10. Provide a background check, if requested.
11. Shall be approved by the Board; applications will be reviewed at any Board meeting.

12. At the beginning of a supervision relationship, supervisors must submit to the Board a signed contract and agreement between each active supervisee and supervisor that states requirements of each party. Academic supervisors are exempt from the requirement.

- B. A supervisor may not be a relative of the counselor intern. Relative of the counselor applicant is defined as spouse, parent, child, sibling of the whole- or half-blood, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, one who is or has been related by marriage or has any other dual relationship.
- C. Limitations of Supervision Practice. No Qualified Supervisor may exceed a total of ten (10) active supervisees.
- D. No person shall serve as a supervisor if their license is expired or subject to probation, suspension, or revocation

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-9 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.5: Supervision Criteria shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A. Professional relationships
- B. Supervision roles
- C. Professional ethics
- D. Self-evaluation
- E. Continued professional learning
- F. Etiology and diagnosis
- G. Therapist-client relationships
- H. Oral communication
- I. Written communication

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-9 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.6: Examination Requirements

- A. Prior to licensure, all applicants must pass the National Counselor Examination or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination for Licensure or Certification (NCE or NCMHCE) published by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), Inc. After July 1, 2015, the Board will only approve Applicants to sit for the NCMHCE.
 - 1. Individuals making initial application for licensure must meet all education and experience requirements in order to be approved by the Board as a candidate.

- a. The Board will notify NBCC of each candidate approved for administration of the examination.
 - b. The Board will notify all candidates of approval to sit for the examination.
 - c. The Board will provide examination registration to those approved to sit.
2. The examination will be administered by the NBCC.
 3. Individuals making initial application for licensure who have already taken the NCE, prior to July 1, 2015, or the NCMHCE must include in their application packet an official VERIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION AND EXAMINATION SCORES report from the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc., or directly from another state's appropriate licensing board, indicating a passing score. These individuals will be considered for licensure without retaking the NCE or NCMHCE.

B. Examination Time Limits

A Candidate will be granted 12 months from the date that the application is received in the LPC office to successfully complete the application process, receive Board approval, and sit for the examination. If the candidate has not taken the examination by the end of the prescribed 365 day period, the Candidate will not be authorized to take the examination until:

1. A reapplication fee, which reactivates the Candidate's application file for an additional one year, is paid; and,
2. The Board approves the individual to take the examination.
3. A Candidate must take and pass the examination by the four-year anniversary date of receipt of application to take the examination. Otherwise, the Candidate's application file becomes null; the application file is destroyed, and he/she must reapply for licensure.

C. Reexamination Requirements

1. General:
 - a. Reexamination will be required if the examination is failed and the candidate wishes to continue the licensure process.
 - b. Candidates wishing to be reexamined need to refer to the specific scenario below, which addresses his/her particular situation (i.e. "First Failure"; "Second or Subsequent Failure").
2. First Failure: A candidate may be reexamined within one (1) year from the date of the Board's initial approval to take the examination without paying a reapplication fee and without presenting evidence of additional education and/or experience. To be reexamined, the candidate must notify the Board in writing.

- a. Any candidate not reexamined within one (1) year from the date of the Board’s initial approval will not be authorized to retake the examination until:
 - i. A Reapplication Fee, which reactivates the candidate’s application file for an additional one year, is paid; and,
 - ii. The Board approves the candidate to retake the examination. If the Board approves the Candidate to retake the examination, then the Candidate must also pay a reexamination fee.
3. Second or Subsequent Failure:
- a. Second failure: A Candidate who fails the examination two (2) times and who wishes to continue the licensure process shall reapply for licensure by paying the reapplication fee and must notify the Board in writing.
 - i. The Board shall review each individual’s written request and make a determination whether additional requirements are necessary.
 - ii. If additional requirements are deemed necessary by the Board, official documentation must be submitted to the Board upon completion of all additional requirements.
 - iii. The Board may approve the Applicant to sit for the examination a third time or deny licensure. If the Board approves the Candidate to sit for the examination, then the Candidate will be notified and the Board will notify NBCC of Candidate’s approval to sit a third time. The Candidate must schedule reexamination and pay appropriate fees to NBCC.
4. Third failure: An individual who fails the examination three (3) or more times and wishes to continue the licensure process must notify the Board in writing. The individual will be subject to reevaluation as determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 (6) & 73-30-7 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.7: Agreement of Reciprocity

- A. The Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors does not presently have an agreement of reciprocity with any other state.
- B. An individual interested in providing counseling services in Mississippi must obtain licensure through the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors’ application process.
- C. Licensure criteria met by the applicant in other states may be honored by the Mississippi State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors if he/she substantially meets

the requirements for licensure in the State of Mississippi. Each criterion will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 & 73-30-15 (Rev. 2008)

Rule 4.8: Licensure by Comity

Applicants for licensure by comity shall present:

- 1) Evidence of a valid license from another State is required for licensure by comity. The applicant requesting licensure by comity must be in good standing with the State in which that person holds his/her current license as a Licensed Professional Counselor or its equivalent independent counseling license.
- 2) The Board may require an examination related specifically to the practice of Licensed Professional Counseling in Mississippi.
- 3) Applicants for licensure by comity shall demonstrate that he/she currently holds a license with at least five (5) years of professional work experience as a counselor since the date of their initial licensure, that licensure was maintained continuously during those five (5) years and that no substantiated complaints or disciplinary action(s) have ever been taken against the licensee. Applicants shall submit a Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) along with three (3) work references.
- 4) The Board reserves the right to accept an application for licensure by comity, to request additional information from the applicant, or reject an application for cause as governed by Mississippi laws and/or rules.
- 6) The applicant seeking licensure shall direct the State in which she/he is currently licensed and cause to have certified copies of the contents of his/her licensure file sent directly to the Board's office at his/her expense.
- 7) The Board will inform other boards of any disciplinary action(s) taken against any Licensed Professional Counselor that is licensed by comity.
- 8) The Board will develop and maintain documentation of the individuals that are approved for licensure by comity and will make this information publicly available.

Source: *Miss Code Ann.* § 73-30-7 & 73-30-15 (Rev. 2008)