SECTION C
RULES AND REGULATIONS SPECIFIC TO MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

I. GENERAL

A. The rules and regulations pertaining to marriage and family therapists include all items in section A and section C of these rules and regulations.

B. The Board may revise the rules and regulations from time to time as the Board deems necessary.

C. Once new or revised rules and regulations are adopted by the Board, the Board and all applicants and licensees must operate under the new rules and regulations. However, persons with completed applications for licensure on file at the time new rules and regulations are adopted by the Board, will be licensed under the rules in effect on the date their completed application was received by the Board.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. "Marriage and Family Therapy" means the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of therapy services to individuals, families, or couples, either singly or in groups.

B. "Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy" means the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy services, whether those services are offered directly to the general public or through organizations, either public or private, for a fee, monetary or otherwise. This involves assessment, diagnosis, identification, evaluation and treatment of emotional problems and conditions, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral, resolving intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, and attempting to change perception, attitudes, and behaviors, all within the context of marital and family systems. Marriage and Family therapy includes, without being limited to, individual, group, couple, sexual, family and divorce therapy. It involves an applied understanding of the dynamics of marriage and family systems, including individual psycho dynamics, the use of assessment instruments that evaluate individuals, couples and family members with regard to marriage and family functioning, and the use of psychotherapy and counseling.

C. "Code of Ethics" means the current Code of Ethics of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

D. "AAMFT" means the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

E. "COAMFTE" means the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

F. "Good Moral Character" means the applicant is held in high regard with reference to personal behavior, professional behavior and professional ethics.

III. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY LICENSES

A. **Type of License:** Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) is the license granted to an individual who has met and maintained all the qualifications necessary for licensure and the renewal of the license.

B. **Status of License**

1. Active or in Good Standing: When the licensee has met and maintained all the qualifications necessary for licensure, has renewed the license before the September 30 expiration date, has paid all fees and administrative costs on time, and there are no disciplinary actions against the licensee.

2. Denied: When the Board determines that the applicant does not meet the requirement for licensure, or the board has substantial evidence that the applicant has violated the standards of conduct of the Code of Ethics or that the applicant is not of good moral character, or the applicant has not corrected the application deficiencies stated to the applicant in writing within the time allowed.

3. Revoked or Suspended: The Board may revoke or suspend a license on grounds set forth in these regulations. The person may not practice marriage and family therapy during the time the license is revoked or suspended unless the licensee qualifies to be excluded from licensure as a marriage and family therapist. The board may, at its option, reinstate the license when the conditions for reinstatement, if any are allowed by the Board, have been met, and the reinstatement process is followed.

4. Lapsed: Licensees who fail to renew their license biennially before or during September of the appropriate year, shall have their licenses lapsed. A licensee may not practice marriage and family therapy during the time their license is lapsed. The license may be reinstated within a two year period by following the reinstatement process. A license that has lapsed for more than two (2) years cannot be renewed or reinstated. The licensee must apply for a new license under the requirements, set forth in the rules and regulations that are in effect at the time the new application is received by the Board.

5. Inactive: Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists may request in writing that their licenses be placed on inactive status. The Board will consider the request and will notify the licensee of its decision within 60 days of receiving the written request for inactive status.

Those granted inactive status shall be excused from paying renewal fees until they notify the Board in writing of the intention to resume active practice. If a licensee fails to return to active status within two years of being placed on inactive status, the licensee may request an extension for an additional two years. If the licensee does not request an extension or no extension has been granted by the Board, the license will be considered as lapsed on the September 30th following the end of the inactive status period, and be subject to the requirements for lapsed licenses.

Disciplinary action will be taken against a licensee on inactive status who performs marriage and family therapy in the state of Mississippi or presents him/herself as a licensed marriage and family therapist.

C. Reinstatement of License

1. General Requirements for Reinstatement

a. All conditions related to the suspension or revocation of the license have been cured, and all requirements or disciplinary actions of the Board have been met or resolved to the satisfaction of the Board.

b. No fact, circumstance, or condition exists which, if the license were reinstated, would justify its revocation, suspension, or disciplinary action by the Board.

c. The former licensee verifies, by submitting to the Board a notarized affidavit, that they have not engaged in the practice of marriage and family therapy in this state or any other state, or used a title denoting marriage and family therapist qualifications since the expiration, suspension or revocation of their license, unless they qualify for exclusion from licensure as a marriage and family therapist, or they hold a valid license issued by another state and their practice was confined to the state which issued the license.

2. Reinstatement Application Process

a. The former licensee must submit to the Board a completed application for reinstatement on a form obtained from the Board, with all supporting documents attached.

b. The former licensee includes a letter with the application for reinstatement explaining the reasons for applying for reinstatement.

c. The former licensee provides evidence of having obtained acceptable continuing education to meet the requirements for the two (2) year period prior restoration.

d. The former licensee pays the renewal costs due for the lapsed license (***if reinstating a lapsed license***), the reinstatement costs, and any other related costs of the Board.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE AS A MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST

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

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 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;

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

3. Meets all the qualifications required for licensure including, but not limited to, education and experience, 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;

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

5. 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;

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

C. Specific Requirements for Licensure

1. Education: The individual seeking licensure must hold a masters or doctoral degree with a major in marriage and family therapy, from a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting body and a COAMFTE accredited marriage and family therapy program; or holds a masters or doctoral degree from a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting body and a program with candidacy status by COAMFTE which subsequently received COAMFTE accreditation. An official transcript from the educational institution must be sent directly to the Board by the institution.

2. Clinical Experience: The individual 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** under supervision approved by the Board. **An individual seeking status as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who does not have 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 experience must include a minimum of 1,000 client contact hours.*** All documentation of both the clinical experience and the supervision as requested in the application process must be sent by the agency or supervisor directly to the Board.

3. Supervision:

   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. At least 100 of these 200 hours must occur following receipt of the first qualifying graduate degree in marriage and family therapy and the Board's approval of the applicant's supervision plan.

   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.

   c. Up to 100 hours of clinical supervision accumulated during graduate training may be counted toward the required 200 hours of clinical supervision.

   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.*** 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 a minimum of one hour per week or two hours biweekly of face-to-face supervision for 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) 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 purpose of supervision shall be to promote the development of the supervisee's clinical skills. 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 shall mean a maximum of two (2) supervisees meeting with one supervisor.

2. group supervision shall mean a maximum of six (6) supervisees meeting with one supervisor.

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 Qualified 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 be approved by the Board, an individual must have completed a minimum of **two** 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.

b. To be approved as a supervisor by the Board, an individual must have also completed a course in marriage and family therapy supervision with a minimum of thirty (30) contact hours or the equivalent training as approved by the Board. This course must consist of a 15-hour didactic component and a 15-hour interactive component in the study of marriage and family therapy supervision. The interactive component must include a minimum of four persons.

c. An AAMFT Approved Supervisor with current credentials will be automatically recognized as approved by the Board. However, these individuals are still required to be licensed as marriage and family therapists, submit an application for supervisory approval to the Board, provide documentation of current status as an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, and complete two (2) hours of MFT continuing education every two (2) years after their application has been approved by the Board.

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. **All continuing education for supervision credit must be approved by the Board. Supervisor Refresher courses provided by 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 biannually (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. No plan of supervision will be approved if the approved supervisor is supervising more than **eight (8)** postgraduate licensure supervisees pursuing LMFT status.

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. The Board reserves the right to request an explanation from the supervisor if a supervisee scores very high (e.g., all tens) on their evaluation, especially on the first evaluation. Supervisory comments are to be noted in the designated place for each evaluative tool submitted.

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. 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. Any individual having difficulty securing the services of a supervisor approved by the Board may contact the Board to obtain a list of eligible supervisors. 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 a 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 numbers 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 form and processing fees. The applicant may request an application packet from the Board;

    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 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.

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 5 years experience in his/her discipline and training in marriage and family therapy as determined by the Board Discipline Specific Committee. Any supervision initiated with a supervisor 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 may not be licensed without the required examination.

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

2. Frequency of Examinations

An individual seeking LMFT licensure may seek approval from the Board to take the AMFTRB Examination in Marital and Family Therapy prior to submitting their final application for licensure as an LMFT.

Applicants who fail the AMFTRB Examination in Marital and Family Therapy may take the examination as many times as necessary to attain a passing score. However, according to Section 73-54-21 of the 1972 Mississippi Code Annotated, as amended, any applicant who fails the examination shall not be admitted to a subsequent examination for a period of at least six (6) months. An applicant who has failed two (2) successive examinations may not reapply to take the examination for two (2) years from the date of the last examination. In addition, the Board may require the applicant to successfully complete an additional course of study as designated by the Board.

3. Cost of Examination

Cost is dependent upon the fees charged by the testing service. The current fee is listed in the application material.

E. Application Requirements for Licensure

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 the clinical experience, the final supervision evaluation (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);

4. Three 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;

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

6. The non-refundable application fee.

F. Licensure by Reciprocity or Endorsement

The Board may issue a license as a licensed marriage and family therapist, without the required examination, to an applicant licensed under the laws of another state if the requirements for licensure in that state are, on the date of licensure, substantially equal to the requirements of the Mississippi Board of Examiners.

Applicants who have complaints pending against them in another state will not be granted a Mississippi license until such complaints are resolved to the satisfaction of the Mississippi Board of Examiners.

1. Requirements for reciprocity or 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(s);

   d. A recent picture of the applicant;

   e. The non-refundable application fee.

V. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Making the Application for Licensure:

1. The applicant may 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.

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 having been submitted 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. The person is now officially licensed.

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 six (6) months from the date the first material was received from the applicant, 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. Once an application for licensure is approved by the Board, the applicant will have 60 days from the date of the notification of approval to pay the initial license fee. If the initial license fee is not received within 60 days, the application will be declared abandoned by the Board.

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. Likewise, the application fee must accompany the application and all other associated costs must be paid.

VI. RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY LICENSE

1. Expiration Date: All licenses expire on September 30 of the second year of the initial license and all future two year renewal terms. All licenses not renewed on or before September 30 of the appropriate year will lapse. The Board will not assume responsibility for late renewal applications delayed or lost in the mail.

2. Renewal Term of Two Years: All renewals will be for a full two year term beginning October 1 and ending September 30.

3. Courtesy Notice of Renewal: The Board will attempt to send a courtesy reminder of renewal and a renewal application to all licensees at the latest address of record on file with the Board. It is the responsibility of the licensee to maintain an accurate address in their file by sending promptly to the Board a signed notice of any change of address.

4. Completed Application for Renewal: The Board cannot act on an application for renewal until it is complete with all the supporting documents, continuing education summary and the renewal fee.

5. Renewal Fee: the renewal fee covers the two year term, and must be paid in full with the renewal application and supporting documentation and no later than the expiration date of the license.

6. Responsibility of License for Renewal: It is the responsibility of the licensee to obtain a renewal application packet from the board, to obtain the required continuing education with verification, and to see that their license is renewed on time. Failure to receive a notice of renewal does not absolve the licensee of their responsibility to renew the license before the expiration date. Practice under an expired license is prohibited. It is, likewise, a misdemeanor punishable by law.

7. Inactive Renewals: Anyone returning from inactive status must meet the continuing education requirements for the immediate two years prior to the application for renewal.

VII. CONTINUING EDUCATION

A. Purpose: The purpose of this section is to establish the continuing education requirements for the renewal of licensure which an LMFT must complete biannually. The

primary objective of continuing education must be to maintain and improve the quality of professional services in marriage and family therapy provided to the public; maintain and improve the therapist's knowledge of current research, techniques, and practice; and provide other resources which will improve skill and competence in marriage and family therapy. Continuing education hours **must be relevant to the practice of marriage and family therapy as determined by the Board**.

B. Requirements: All licensed marriage and family therapists must complete thirty-five(35) hours of continuing education during every two (2) year license period. Four (4) out of the 35 must be in professional ethics. All Board approved supervisors, including those with AAMFT Approved Supervisor standing, must complete two (2) hours of MFT supervision continuing education each renewal period. It is the responsibility of each licensee and supervisor to determine in advance that the continuing education activity meets the criteria set forth in these rules and regulations (see Types of Acceptable Continuing Education and Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities). No continuing education hours are required for the first renewal period.

C. Determination of Clock Hour Credits: The Board shall credit continuing education as follows. Parts of programs which meet the criteria set forth in these rules and regulations (relating to Types of Continuing Education and Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities) shall be credited on a one-for-one basis with one clock-hour credit for each one clock-hour spent in the continuing education activity, unless otherwise designated by the Board or the Board's designee. Time devoted to registration, organizational business, breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, or other refreshments shall not be counted as instructional or continuing education credit time.

D. Types of Acceptable Continuing Education: Credit will be given only for continuing education programs or activities approved by the Board or its designee. The Board or its designee must pre-approve continuing education activities and/or must approve continuing education sponsors (a list is available from the Board). To be acceptable to the Board, continuing education offerings for LMFTs must conform to at least one of the seven content areas specified below under Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities. A qualified presenter is someone found by the Board to be a professional in marriage and family therapy, another mental health discipline, or another profession with information, knowledge, and skills relevant to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

The following types of continuing education activities are acceptable **provided that the standards set forth below under Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities have been met**:

1. continuing education activities offered by the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) and any of it's divisions, including the Mississippi Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (MAMFT);

2. continuing education activities relevant to marriage and family therapy offered by any of the following designated provider groups:

Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists
Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards
Regionally accredited Universities and Colleges and departments thereof
National Association of Social Workers and any state chapters thereof
American Psychiatric Association and state associations thereof
American Psychological Association and state associations thereof
American Counseling Association
American Association of Pastoral Counselors
Mississippi Department of Mental Health

3. continuing education activities relevant to marriage and family therapy offered by Board approved continuing education sponsors(this list will be available at the Board's office);

4. local seminars relevant to marriage and family therapy (Any continuing activity in this category must be pre-approved by the Board or its designee OR offered by a Board approved continuing education sponsor);

5. successful completion (grade B or better), from a regionally accredited college/ university, of a graduate course related to the practice of marriage and family therapy. One (1) academic semester hour will be equivalent to 5 hours of continuing education hours;

6. teaching in a graduate school of marriage and family therapy. Credit will be applied at the rate of three (3) hours for every credit hour taught; teaching may count for no more than ten hours of the biannual continuing education requirement;

7. presenting workshops, seminars, or lectures relevant to marriage and family therapy (if the same offering is presented multiple times during the two year renewal period, the continuing education credit hours may only be counted the first time the offering was presented);

8. correspondence courses, satellite or distance learning courses, and/or audio-video courses relevant to marriage and family therapy. No more than 17 hours of the 35 required hours may be earned in this manner during each two year renewal period. Ethics continuing education credits may ***NOT*** be obtained this way; (Any continuing education activity in these formats must be pre-approved by the Board or its designee OR offered by a Board approved continuing education sponsor);

9. continuing education credit may be earned by Board approved supervisors for clinical supervision of marriage and family therapy interns. Supervision may

count for no more than ten hours of the biannual continuing education requirement; and,

10. an author of a book or peer reviewed article which enhances a marriage and family therapist's knowledge or skill may be granted continuing education credit not to exceed one-half of the biannual continuing education requirement.

E. Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities: Continuing education hours must be relevant to the practice of marriage and family therapy as determined by the Board or the Board's designee and must generally evolve from **at least one** of the following seven areas:

1. Theoretical Knowledge of Marriage and Family Therapy. Examples of acceptable offering content in this area include, but are not limited to, the historical development, theoretical and empirical foundations, and contemporary conceptual directions of the field of marriage and family therapy;

2. Clinical Knowledge of Marriage and Family Therapy. Examples of acceptable offering content in this area include, but are not limited to:
    a. couple and family therapy practice related conceptually to theory;
    b. contemporary issues, which include but are not limited to gender, violence, addictions, and abuse, in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families from a relational/systemic perspective;
    c. a wide variety of presenting clinical problems;
    d. issues of gender and sexual functioning, sexual orientation, and sex therapy as they relate to couple, marriage and family therapy theory and practice;
    e. diversity and discrimination as it relates to couple and family therapy theory and practice.

3. Assessment and Treatment in Marriage and Family Therapy. Acceptable offering content in this area incorporates a relational/systemic perspective on topics such as, but not limited to, psychopharmacology, physical health and illness, traditional psychodiagnostic categories, and the assessment and treatment of major mental health issues.

4. Individual, Couple, and Family Development. Acceptable offering content in this area focuses on individual, couple, and/or family development across the lifespan.

5. Professional Identity and Ethics in Marriage and Family Therapy. **Generic education in ethics does not meet this standard.** Therefore, examples of acceptable offering content in this area include, but are not limited to:
    a. professional identity of the marriage and family therapist, including professional socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure and certification;

b. ethical issues related to the profession of marriage and family therapy and the practice of individual, couple and family therapy;
c. the AAMFT Code of Ethics, confidentiality issues, the legal responsibilities and liabilities of clinical practice and research, family law, record keeping, reimbursement, and the business aspects of practice;
d. the interface between therapist responsibility and the professional, social, and political context of treatment.

6. Research in Marriage and Family Therapy. Examples of acceptable offering content in this area includes significant material on research in couple and family therapy; focus on content such as research methodology, data analysis and the evaluation of research, and include quantitative and qualitative research.

7. Supervision in Marriage and Family Therapy: Examples of acceptable offering content in this area include studies in theory and techniques of supervision as well as ethical and legal issues, case management, and topics relative to the specific supervised training.

F. Application Procedure to Become a Board Approved Continuing Education Sponsor: Any organization or individual seeking to become an approved continuing education sponsor must complete the necessary application and submit it to the Board or the Board's designee and pay any associated fees required by the Board. The Board or the Board's designee will evaluate the application and notify the applicant regarding the approval of that application.

The Board or it's designee may grant a **one-year approval** to organizations or individuals that provide continuing education units for the marriage and family therapy courses, seminars and conferences meeting requirements specified in the section Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities.

Approved continuing education sponsors must submit to the Board annually a list of their seminars, workshops, and courses offered for Mississippi LMFT continuing education credit with the names of the presenters (including their qualifications) and participants, along with documentation of the number of continuing education hours earned by each eligible participant. The Board reserves the right reject continuing education credits for offerings that do not meet the requirements outlined in the section governing the Criteria for Approval of Continuing Education Activities.

G. Approval Procedure for any organization or individual that in not
a Board approved sponsors or designated provider: Any organization or individual that is not a Board approved continuing education sponsor or a designated provider must submit an application for each continuing education offering prior to the date of the offering. The applications must be made, in writing, to the Board or the Board's designee, which reviews and pre-approves continuing education. **NO RETROACTIVE APPROVALS WILL BE MADE.** Applications for or questions about said approval should be sent to the following address:

Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Work and
Marriage and Family Therapy
MFT Continuing Education Committee
P.O. Box 4508
Jackson, MS 39296-4508
601-987-6806
1-888-895-3482 - Instate Only

The Board's office may be contacted for application forms or questions about the procedure.

H. Documenting and Reporting:

1. Record Keeping: The licensee shall maintain for four (4) years their own records and official verification of the continuing education they have completed. The Board will not maintain continuing education files for the licensees.

2. Reporting Continuing Education: The continuing education hours will be reported once every two years as part of the license renewal process. No continuing education hours are required for the first renewal period.

3. Sponsor Responsibility: It is the responsibility of each organization or sponsor of continuing education to provide the attendee with a written statement, verification, or certificate of attendance or CEU certificate which verifies completion of the offering. This verification must include:

   a. Name of attendee
   b. Name of offering
   c. Date of offering
   d. Designated provider name as approved by the Board
   e. Signature of organizer/sponsor or designee
   f. Amount of continuing education hours/CEUs awarded

4. Licensee Responsibility: It is the responsibility of the licensee to obtain a certificate, transcript or other official document from the approved provider showing the appropriate information. If a certificate is not provided by the sponsor, a licensee may use a form, to be provided by the Board, to verify attendance provided it is submitted with all required supporting documents. The supporting documentation verifying the continuing education must be kept by the licensee and not sent to the Board unless the Board makes a request in writing for the documentation as a part of the audit process.

I. Random Audit of Continuing Education Documents

1. The Board may randomly audit a fixed percentage of the continuing education reports accompanying the renewal applications. Licensees whose reports are audited

will be required to provided a copy of the official documentation of their continuing education activities. If a licensee fails to provide the Board in a timely manner (not to exceed thirty {30} days following the time they are notified of the audit) with official documentation of the total hours listed on their renewal application, the renewal application will not be approved and the license will lapse.

2. If, during the audit, the Board disqualifies any of the documented continuing education hours and the licensee does not have sufficient acceptable hours remaining for that renewal period, the Board, at its discretion, may renew the license under the conditions that the continuing education hours will be obtained within six (6) months of the notice of deficiency. Continuing education hours acquired to meet the deficiency may not be applied to any other renewal period. If the licensee does not rectify the deficiency within that six (6) month period, the license will be subject to revocation for failure to comply with the continuing education requirements.

J. Waiver of Continuing Education:

The Board may grant a waiver for up to one-half of the thirty-five (35) hours of continuing education required for any two year renewal period, if it can be shown to the Board that the ability to comply was beyond the capabilities of the licensee, i.e., severe illness, disability, residence abroad or other reasonable cause. The licensee must state in a written request for waiver that they did not practice marriage and family therapy during the portion of the renewal period for which the waiver is requested. Such request for waiver must be accompanied by written documentation acceptable by the Board.

VIII. PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION AS A MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST

A. Titles and Abbreviations: Persons licensed to practice marriage and family therapy in Mississippi may use the title "Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist" and they may use the letters LMFT as a professional identification following their name as it appears on the license.

B. Display of License: The certificate of licensure issued by the Board and the current verification of renewal shall be displayed at all times in the licensee's place of practice. Official duplicates of the license may be obtained from the board if more than one copy is needed.

C. Change in Name: It is the responsibility of the licensee to notify the Board promptly, no later than 30 days following the change of name, of any change in their name and to request a new certificate of licensure showing the appropriate name. All requests for a name changed must be made in writing, signed and notarized, and accompanied by a certified copy of the legal document which hanged the name, and the appropriate fee or administrative cost. Licensees will be in violation of the standards of practice if they

practice using a name different from the one appearing on their license certificate, and will be subject to disciplinary action by the Board.

IX. FEES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS FOR LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS

A. Philosophy: The Board receives no financial appropriation from the State to underwrite the costs of providing the licensure services. The Board is very sensitive to controlling costs, but fees and administrative costs are necessary for licensure to exist.

B. The Fee Schedule is as follows:

1. Application for licensure fee, non-refundable ..... $ 100.00
2. Initial license fee, covers two (2) years ..... $ 200.00
   (May be prorated for first year, see below)
3. Renewal fee, for two years ..... $ 200.00
4. The Board may charge administrative/processing costs as follows:

a. Duplicate license ..... $ 25.00
b. Replace lost license ..... $ 25.00
c. Reinstatement (plus renewal cost) ..... $ 35.00
d. Label-ready licensee address lists ..... $ 30.00
e. Licensee address lists on diskette ..... $ 15.00
f. Copying fee (not more than $1.00 per page)
g. Postgraduate Supervision Plan Approval Fee. $100.00
h. Application for Continuing Education Sponsor Status.....$125.00

C. General Rules Regarding Fees and Administrative Costs:

1. Fees and administrative costs are payable by check or money order, or, credit cards accepted by the Board, made payable to the Board of Examiners for SW/MFT.

2. Invalid or returned checks may result in the denial or suspension of the license.

3. The Board will not issue or renew a license until all outstanding fees and administrative costs have been paid.

4. The application fee must accompany the completed application, and is non-refundable.

5. When the Board notifies an applicant that their license application has been approved, the initial license fee (prorated for the first year, if applicable) must be paid in full before the license can be issued.

6. The renewal fee must be paid on or before September 30 of the second year the license is in effect (the expiration date). The full renewal fee for two years must accompany the renewal application.

D. Proration of the First Year Portion of Initial License Fee:

Since all licenses have an expiration date of September 30, the initial license period may be less than two (2) full years, depending on the date the application was approved by the Board. The first years portion of the initial two (2) year fee may be prorated and billed in the following manner:

1. License applications approved between October 1 and March 31 will require the full initial license fee for the first two years.

2. For license applications approved between April 1 and September 30, the first years portion of the initial two (2) years will be reduced by one half, for a total initial license fee of (currently) $150.00.

E. Responsibility of the Applicant or Licensee:

It is the responsibility of the applicant or licensee to see that their license fees and renewal fees are paid in a timely manner. Failure to receive a notice of renewal or payment due from the board does not relieve the person of their responsibility to pay the fees before the deadline. The Board assumes no responsibility for fees that are lost in the mail, arrive late or otherwise do not reach the Board on time.

F. Adjustment of Fee Scale:

The Board may increase the fees at the discretion of the Board, within the limits provided by State Statute.

Amended: ~~July 12, 2002~~ Effective: January 1, 2007