



NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING
INCLUDING STATEMENT OF NEED & FISCAL IMPACT

CHAPTER 833
MENTAL HEALTH REGULATORY AGENCY
OREGON BOARD OF LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS

FILED

10/28/2025 12:43 PM
ARCHIVES DIVISION
SECRETARY OF STATE

FILING CAPTION: Educational requirements for unaccredited programs.

LAST DAY AND TIME TO OFFER COMMENT TO AGENCY: 11/25/2025 5:00 PM

The Agency requests public comment on whether other options should be considered for achieving the rule's substantive goals while reducing negative economic impact of the rule on business.

A public rulemaking hearing may be requested in writing by 10 or more people, or by a group with 10 or more members, within 21 days following the publication of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Oregon Bulletin or 28 days from the date the Notice was sent to people on the agency mailing list, whichever is later. If sufficient hearing requests are received, the notice of the date and time of the rulemaking hearing must be published in the Oregon Bulletin at least 14 days before the hearing.

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NEED FOR THE RULE(S)

The Board determined that the rules pertaining to unaccredited programs needed updating and clarification to ensure that the requirements conform with the structure of modern rigorous educational programs, apply consistent and equitable standards, promote accessibility, and are clearly articulated so that applicants understand what is needed for licensure. The Board must ensure that degree standards of unaccredited programs are comparable in content and qualify to accredited programs wherein standards have evolved in the years since these rules were reviewed accordingly.

DOCUMENTS RELIED UPON, AND WHERE THEY ARE AVAILABLE

OAR Chapter 833 and ORS Chapter 675 are available on the OBLPCT website at <https://www.oregon.gov/OBLPCT/Pages/LawsRules.aspx>. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation standards can be found at <https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/>. The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) accreditation standards can be found at https://www.coamfte.org/COAMFTE/Resources/COAMFTE_Webinar.aspx.

STATEMENT IDENTIFYING HOW ADOPTION OF RULE(S) WILL AFFECT RACIAL EQUITY IN THIS STATE

This rule amendment may have a positive effect on racial equity in the state because clarifying the rules that set forth the educational requirements for licensure process ensures that requirements are easy for everyone to understand and reduces the likelihood of misinterpretation or exclusion due to vague standards. Allowing programs with accelerated curriculum to qualify promotes accessibility by supporting counselors and therapists that may be in later phases of life, are balancing family obligations, come from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, and/or have alternative learning styles.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT:

None.

COST OF COMPLIANCE:

(1) Identify any state agencies, units of local government, and members of the public likely to be economically affected by the rule(s). (2) Effect on Small Businesses: (a) Estimate the number and type of small businesses subject to the rule(s); (b) Describe the expected reporting, recordkeeping and administrative activities and cost required to comply with the rule(s); (c) Estimate the cost of professional services, equipment supplies, labor and increased administration required to comply with the rule(s).

None. Businesses are not subject to this rule. The Board will absorb any minimal costs required to implement these changes within its current staffing levels and budgeted resources.

DESCRIBE HOW SMALL BUSINESSES WERE INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE RULE(S):

Small businesses were not explicitly involved.

WAS AN ADMINISTRATIVE RULE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONSULTED? NO IF NOT, WHY NOT?

The proposed rule adoption was thoroughly researched and openly discussed during ten public session meetings of the Board's Education / Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee from September 2024 to September 2025, and considered during the October 24, 2025 public session full Board meeting where members of the public were invited to address the Board during a public forum. The rule language and concepts are straightforward. The Board did not determine that an additional committee beyond the eight-member Board and Agency staff were necessary to craft the rulemaking proposal.

RULES PROPOSED:

833-030-0011, 833-040-0011

AMEND: 833-030-0011

RULE SUMMARY: Amends the educational requirements for licensure as a professional counselor that apply to unaccredited programs at regionally accredited institutions. Removes the minimum two-year duration requirement and adds that the graduate degree must be in a mental health counseling or related behavioral science field. Removes provisions for degrees granted prior to October 1, 2014 to have lesser minimum credit hours and supervised experience hours. Makes other clarifications, updates, and conforming language changes.

CHANGES TO RULE:

833-030-0011

Educational Requirements for Licensure as a Professional Counselor ¶¶

To qualify for licensure as a professional counselor under ORS 675.715(1)(b), an applicant must hold a graduate degree from one of the following:¶¶

(1) A counseling program ~~approved~~accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) as of the date the degree was conferred;¶¶

(2) A counseling program ~~approved~~accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) as of the date the degree was conferred;¶¶

(3) A program at an institution of higher learning ~~that was accredited by a regional accrediting agency~~ regionally accredited institution that was accredited as of the date the degree was conferred; or¶¶

(4) A foreign program that has been evaluated by a credentialing body recognized by the Board. Submission of foreign degree evaluation and cost of the foreign degree qualification determination are the responsibility of the applicant.¶¶

(5) A graduate degree under sections (1) or (2) must have included at least two semester credit hours or three credit quarter hours of coursework in the diagnosis of mental disorders.¶¶

(6) A graduate degree under sections (3) or (4) must have included all of the following requirements:¶¶

- (a) ~~At least two years in duration, including at least:~~
- ~~(A) 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter hours for graduate degrees granted before October 1, 2014; or~~
 - ~~(B) master's or doctorate degree field in mental health counseling or behavioral science relating to mental health counseling including marriage and family therapy, psychology, social work, or psychiatry.~~
 - ~~(b) A minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours of graduate degrees granted on or after October 1, 2014-level coursework.~~
 - ~~(bc) At least two semester credit hours or three credit-quarter credit hours in each of the following graduate-level coursework:~~
 - ~~(A) Counseling Theory;~~
 - ~~(B) Human Growth and Development;~~
 - ~~(C) Social and Cultural Foundations;~~
 - ~~(D) The Helping Relationship;~~
 - ~~(E) Group Dynamics Processing and Counseling;~~
 - ~~(F) Lifestyle and Career Development;~~
 - ~~(G) Diagnosis of mental disorders;~~
 - ~~(H) Research and Evaluation; and~~
 - ~~(I) Professional Orientation (Ethics) in the clinical mental/behavioral health field.~~
 - ~~(ed) At least 16 semester hours or 24 quarter hours of supporting coursework for specialty areas; and~~
 - ~~(d) A supervised clinical, not including clinical experience (practicum or /internship experience that:~~
 - ~~(A) Included at least 240 direct client contact clock hours for graduate degrees granted before October 1, 2014;)~~
 - ~~or independent research project (e.g. thesis/dissertation) supporting courses.~~
 - ~~(e) A supervised clinical practicum or internship experience that:~~
 - ~~(BA) Included at least 280 direct client contact clock hours for graduate degrees granted on or after October 1, 2014;~~
 - ~~(CB) Had supervisory staff with a minimum of a master's degree in the program emphasis and with pertinent professional health counseling or a behavioral sciences field;~~
 - ~~(DC) Made provision for faculty monitoring of operations;~~
 - ~~(ED) Kept records of student-client contact hours including summary of student progress by the supervisor;~~
 - ~~(FE) Had a written agreement with the program and student specifying learning objectives; and~~
 - ~~(GF) Had a mechanism for program evaluation.~~
 - ~~(ef) Deficiencies in the credit hour requirements of sections (ab), (bc), or (ed) may be remedied by completing graduate-level coursework in the deficient area(s) at a regionally accredited institution.~~
 - ~~(fg) For reciprocity applicants only, three years or more of active licensure to practice professional counseling in another U.S. state may substitute for the requirements of Sections (a) through (de) above.~~
 - ~~(gh) Deficiencies in the supervised experience requirement of section (de) may be remedied by completion of:~~
 - ~~(A) Post-degree clinical experience completed in a Board-approved associate registration pursuant to OAR Chapter 833, Division 50, credited on an hour-for-hour basis for up to the full 280 required hours of direct client contact. This remedial experience is in addition to, and not a substitute for, the experience requirements (clock hours and duration) set forth in OAR 833-030-0021 or OAR 833-050-0071; or~~
 - ~~(B) At least five years of active licensure issued by another state credentialing entity to practice professional counseling.~~

Statutory/Other Authority: ORS 675.715 - 675.835

Statutes/Other Implemented: ORS 675.715 - 675.835

RULE SUMMARY: Amends the educational requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist that apply to unaccredited programs at regionally accredited institutions. Removes the minimum two-year duration requirement and adds that the graduate degree must be in a marriage and family therapy or related behavioral science field. Removes provisions for degrees granted prior to October 1, 2014 to have lesser minimum credit hours and supervised experience hours. Reduces coursework hours requirement for counseling and/or systems approaches supporting coursework by 44%. Makes other clarifications, updates, and conforming language changes.

CHANGES TO RULE:

833-040-0011

Educational Requirements for Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist ¶

To qualify for licensure as a marriage and family therapist under ORS 675.715(1)(b), an applicant must hold a graduate degree from one of the following:¶

(1) A marriage and family therapy program ~~approved~~ accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) ~~or a marital and family therapy;~~¶

(2) A program fully accredited by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP);¶

~~(2) A program at an institution of higher learning that was accredited by a regional accrediting agency in the marriage, couple, and family counseling specialty area;~~¶

~~(3) A program at a regionally accredited institution that was accredited as of the date the degree was conferred;~~ or¶

~~(34)~~ A foreign program that has been evaluated by a credentialing body recognized by the Board. Submission of foreign degree evaluation and cost of the foreign degree qualification determination are the responsibility of the applicant.¶

~~(45)~~ A graduate degree under sections (1) or (2) must have included at least two semester credit hours or three credit quarter hours of coursework in the diagnosis of mental disorders.¶

~~(56)~~ A graduate degree under sections (23) or (34) must have included all of the following requirements:¶

~~(a) For graduate degrees granted before October 1, 2014:~~¶

~~(A) At least two years in duration, including at least 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours;~~¶

~~(B) At minimum, the following coursework:~~¶

~~(i) Human Development- four semester hours or six quarter hours;~~¶

~~(ii) Marital and Family Theoretical Foundation Studies- A master's or doctorate degree field in marriage and family therapy or behavioral science relating two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(iii) Marital marriage and Family Therapy Diagnosis and Assessment, Treatment, Principles and Techniques Studies- eight semester hours or 12 quarter hours;~~¶

~~(iv) Professional Studies- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(v) Research Methods or Statistics- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(vi) Supporting Coursework Focusing on the Systems Paradigm for Specialty Areas- 16 semester hours or 24 quarter hours; and including mental health counseling, psychology, social work, or psychiatry.~~¶

~~(Cb) A supervised clinical practicum or internship experience of at least 240 direct client contact clock hours.~~¶

~~(b) For graduate degrees granted on or after October 1, 2014:~~¶

~~(A) At least two years in duration, including at least 60 semester minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours of graduate-level credit coursework;~~¶

~~(Bc) At minimum, the following graduate-level core coursework:~~¶

~~(iA) Individual and Family Development- four semester hours or six quarter hours;~~¶

~~(iiB) Couple and Family Theoretical Foundation Studies- six semester hours or nine quarter hours;~~¶

~~(iiiC) Couple and Family Therapy, Treatment, and Techniques Studies- six semester hours or nine quarter hours;~~¶

~~(ivD) Diagnosis of mental disorders- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(vE) Diversity studies that include issues related to diversity, power and privilege- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(viF) Ethical and Professional Studies- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(viiG) Research Methods or Statistics- two semester hours or three quarter hours;~~¶

~~(viii) Sd) At least 20 semester hours or 30 quarter hours of supporting coursework focusing on counseling and/or systems approaches- 36 semester hours or 54 quarter hours; and, not including clinical experience (practicum/internship) or independent research project (e.g. thesis/dissertation) supporting courses.~~¶

~~(C)~~ A supervised clinical practicum or internship experience of that:¶

~~(A)~~ Included at least 280 hours of direct client contact.¶

~~(c)~~ The program's clinical practicum or internship experience must have: clock hours;¶

~~(AB)~~ Had supervisory staff with a minimum of a master's degree in the program emphasis and with pertinent professional marriage and family therapy or a behavioral science field;¶

~~(BC)~~ Made provision for faculty monitoring of operations;¶

~~(CD)~~ Kept records of student-client contact hours including summary of student progress by the supervisor;¶

~~(DE)~~ Had a written agreement with the program and student specifying learning objectives; and¶

~~(EF)~~ Had a mechanism for program evaluation.¶

~~(df)~~ Deficiencies in the credit hour requirements of sections (a), (b), (c), or (d) may be remedied by completing graduate-level coursework in the deficient area(s) at a regionally accredited institution.¶

~~(eg)~~ Deficiencies in the supervised experience requirement of section (e) may be remedied by completion of:¶

(A) Post-degree clinical experience completed in a Board-approved associate registration pursuant to OAR Chapter 833, Division 50, credited on an hour-for-hour basis for up to the full 280 required hours of direct client contact, with at least 40% of the deficient hours working with couples and families in the same session. This remedial experience is in addition to, and not a substitute for, the experience requirements (clock hours and duration) set forth in OAR 833-040-0021 or OAR 833-050-0071; or¶

(B) At least five years of active licensure issued by another state credentialing entity to practice marriage and family therapy.¶

~~(fh)~~ For reciprocity applicants only, three years or more of active licensure to practice marriage and family therapy in another U.S. state may substitute for the requirements of Sections (a) through (e) above.

Statutory/Other Authority: ORS 675.715 - 675.835

Statutes/Other Implemented: ORS 675.715 - 675.835