

Senate Bill 373

By: Senators Walker III of the 20th, Anavitarte of the 31st, Kirkpatrick of the 32nd, Strickland of the 17th, Halpern of the 39th and others

**AS PASSED**

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to licensing provisions relative to professional counselors, social workers, and  
3 marriage and family therapists, so as to revise a definition; to change certain education  
4 requirements for licensure as a professional counselor or associate professional counselor;  
5 to provide for the issuance of expedited licenses by endorsement for marriage and family  
6 therapists; to provide a definition; to provide for legislative construction; to provide for  
7 related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 1 of Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
11 licensing provisions relative to professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and  
12 family therapists, is amended by revising paragraph (20) of Code Section 43-10A-3, relating  
13 to definitions, as follows:

14 "(20) 'Supervisor' means a person who meets the licensure and other requirements  
15 established by the standards committee for that specialty which is being supervised ~~and~~  
16 ~~who is either licensed under this article or is a psychiatrist or a psychologist."~~

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**SECTION 2.**

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Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 43-10A-11, relating to requirements for licensure as an associate professional counselor or professional counselor, as follows:

"43-10A-11.

(a) The education, experience, and training requirements for licensure in professional counseling are as follows:

(1) For licensure as an associate professional counselor:

(A) A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of at least 60 semester hours or ~~80~~ 90 quarter hours with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as a part of the degree program; and

(B) Registration with the board of an acceptable contract for obtaining the post-degree experience under direction and supervision that is required for licensure as a professional counselor.

(2) For licensure as a professional counselor:

(A)(i) A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of at least 60 semester hours or ~~80~~ 90 quarter hours with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as a part of the degree program; and

~~(ii)(B) Two years of post-degree experience under direction and supervision in a work setting acceptable to the board; or~~

~~(B) A doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content and requires at least one year of supervised internship in a work setting acceptable to the board.~~

(b) For purposes of subsection (a) of this Code section, work settings acceptable to the board may include, but are not limited to, educational, rehabilitation, career development, mental health, or community organizations.

44 (c) Only a person licensed as an associate professional counselor may use the title  
45 'associate professional counselor' or 'licensed associate professional counselor.' Associate  
46 professional counselors shall practice professional counseling only under direction and  
47 supervision and only for a period not to exceed five years while obtaining the post-degree  
48 experience required for licensure as a professional counselor."

49 **SECTION 3.**

50 Said article is further amended in Code Section 43-10A-13, relating to requirements for  
51 licensure in marriage and family therapy, by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

52 "(d)(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the board shall issue an expedited  
53 license by endorsement to any individual seeking licensure as a marriage and family  
54 therapist who:

55 (A) Completes an application for licensure and pays all applicable fees;

56 (B) Holds a current, valid, and unrestricted license to practice as a marriage and family  
57 therapist issued by another state;

58 (C) Is in good standing in such other state and is not the subject of an investigation or  
59 a disciplinary proceeding being conducted by a professional licensing board in such  
60 other state;

61 (D) Does not have a disqualifying criminal record; and

62 (E) Has been verified to have a lawful presence in the United States pursuant to Code  
63 Section 50-36-1.

64 (2) An expedited license by endorsement provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection  
65 shall be issued no later than 30 days from the date of receipt of an application and  
66 information and documents that show that all of the requirements of paragraph (1) of this  
67 subsection have been met. Such application for an expedited license by endorsement  
68 shall only require such information and documentation necessary to verify that the  
69 applicant meets the requirements set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

70 (3) This subsection shall not be used to grant an expedited license by endorsement to an  
71 associate marriage and family therapist.

72 (4) For purposes of this subsection, the term 'another state' or 'other state' means a state  
73 of the United States other than this state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the  
74 United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the  
75 jurisdiction of the United States."

76 **SECTION 4.**

77 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.