



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR
Marriage & Family Therapy

RE: Bill #6646

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am the current President-Elect of the CT Association for Marital and Family Therapists (CTAMFT). We have asked that bill #6646 be raised for two purposes.

The first purpose is to correct our statute to eliminate duplicate accreditation requirements, as the universities and colleges training MFTs are currently already recognized and accredited by the US Department of Education. Requiring the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) to submit documentation to the US Department of Education (USDE) adds a costly and redundant layer of procedure to their accreditation process, and our National association, (AAMFT), The American Association for Marital and Family Therapists, has asked all divisions to correct this.

The second purpose is to strengthen the postgraduate component of marriage and family therapists training by adding an Associate or interim license (LMFTA) to create accountability for new graduates in our field. This will increase their ability to be hired in professional settings to complete their thousand required hours of supervised postgraduate practice. Currently, there is no license covering this period of their training, which affects new graduate's billable status in the marketplace and their ability to obtain jobs to complete this training. Often they have served as unpaid interns at agencies during their graduate work, and then let go at graduation because they are not yet licensed, which is a qualification for hire.

The lack of interim license also does not allow a Department of Public Health process for monitoring and regulating practice at this level. New graduates often cobble together arrangements that are either unpaid for an additional two years on top of the two plus years unpaid work in graduate school, or insufficiently supervised, as in private practice settings where there is far less structure and training support than in formal non-profits or business settings like hospitals. This license does not at all change the scope of MFT practice, but strengthens the postgraduate accountability for our field. Social workers have passed a bill with a similar interim license in 2010 and are awaiting funding for its implementation. Marriage and Family Therapists are asking for the same ability to regulate this period.

Thank you for your time,

Denise Parent, LMFT
President-Elect
CT Association For Marital and Family Therapy

DRAFT

February 1, 2013

AAC Licensure of Marital and Family Therapists

Sec. 1. Section 20-195a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2011):

For the purposes of this Chapter:

- (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Public Health;
- (2) "Department" means the Department of Public Health;
- (3) (NEW) "Licensed marital and family therapist" means a person who has been licensed as a marital and family therapist pursuant to this chapter;
- (4) (NEW) "Licensed marital and family therapist associate" means a person who has been licensed as marital and family therapy associate pursuant to this chapter;
- (5) "Marital and Family therapy" means the evaluation, assessment, diagnosis, counseling, management and treatment of emotional disorders, whether cognitive, affective or behavioral, within the context of marriage and family systems, through the professional application of individual psychotherapeutic and family-system theories and techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples and families.

Sec. 2. Section 20-195b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2012)

- (a) Except as provided in 20-195f, no person shall practice marital and family therapy unless licensed, or under licensed supervision, in accordance with section 20-195c.
- (b) No person shall use the title "licensed marital and family therapist" unless he is licensed in accordance with the provisions of section 20-195c.
- (c) (NEW) No person shall use the title "licensed marital and family therapist associate" unless he is licensed in accordance with the provisions of section 20-195c.

Sec. 3. Section 20-195c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2012)

- (a) Each applicant for licensure as a marital and family therapist shall present to the department satisfactory evidence that such applicant has: 1) Completed a graduate degree program specializing in marital and family therapy from a regionally accredited college or university or an

accredited postgraduate clinical training program approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family therapy education and recognized by the United States Department of Education; (2) completed a supervised practicum or internship with emphasis in marital and family therapy supervised by the program granting the requisite degree or by an accredited postgraduate clinical training program, approved by the Commission on Accreditation for marriage and Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States Department of Education in which the student received a minimum of twelve months of relevant postgraduate experience, including at least (A) one thousand hours of direct client contact offering marital and family therapy services subsequent to being awarded a master's degree or doctorate or subsequent to the training year specified in subdivision (2) of this subsection, and (B) one hundred hours of post graduate clinical supervision provided by a licensed marital and family therapist; and (4) passed an examination prescribed by the department. The fee shall be three hundred and fifteen dollars for each initial application.

(b) (NEW) Each applicant for licensure as a marital and family therapist associate shall present to the department satisfactory evidence that such applicant has: 1) Completed a graduate degree program specializing in marital and family therapy from a regionally accredited college or university or an accredited postgraduate clinical training program approved by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family therapy education and recognized by the United States Department of Education; and (2) passed an examination prescribed by the department. The fee shall be one hundred and twenty five dollars for each application.

(c) The department may grant licensure without examination, subject to payment of fees with respect to the initial application, to any applicant who is currently licensed or certified as a marital or marriage and family therapist in another state, territory or commonwealth of the United States, provided such state, territory or commonwealth maintains licensure or certification standards which, in the opinion of the department, are equivalent to or high than the standards in this state. No license shall be issued under this section to any applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or who is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

(d) Licenses issued under this section may be renewed annually in accordance with the provisions of section 19a-88. The fee for such renewal shall be three hundred fifteen dollars. Each licensed marital and family therapist applying for license renewal shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having participated in continuing education programs. The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, to (1) define basic requirements for continuing education programs, (2) delineate qualifying programs, (3) establish a system of control and reporting, and (4) provide for waiver of the continuing education requirement for good cause.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, an applicant who is currently licensed or certified as a marital or marriage and family therapist in another state, territory or commonwealth of the United States that does not maintain standards for licensure or certification that are equivalent to or higher than the standards in this state may substitute five years of licensed or certified work experience in practice of marital and family therapy, as defined in section 20-195a, in lieu of the requirements of subdivisions (2) and (3) of subsection (a) of this section.