

# Chapter 246-809 WAC

## LICENSURE FOR MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS

### WAC

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246-809-061	Health care institutions. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-061, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.
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246-809-062	Licensed counselor associations or societies. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-062, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.
246-809-063	Health care service contractors and disability insurance carriers. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-063, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.
246-809-064	Professional liability carriers. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-064, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.
246-809-065	Courts. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-065, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.
246-809-066	State and federal agencies. [Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-066, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.] Repealed by 09-15-039, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW.

#### LICENSED COUNSELORS AND ASSOCIATE COUNSELORS—GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**WAC 246-809-010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Associate" means a prelicensure candidate who has a graduate degree in a mental health field under RCW 18.225.090 and is gaining the supervision and supervised experience necessary to become a licensed independent clinical social worker, a licensed advanced social worker, a licensed mental health counselor, or a licensed marriage and family therapist. Associates may not independently provide social work, mental health counseling, or marriage and family therapy for a fee, monetary or otherwise. Associates must work under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

(2) "Independent social work, mental health counseling, or marriage and family therapy" means the practice of these disciplines without being under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

(3) "Licensed counselor" means a licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed mental health counselor, licensed advanced social worker, or licensed independent clinical social worker regulated under chapter 18.225 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-010, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-010, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.]

**WAC 246-809-035 Recordkeeping and retention. (1)** The licensed counselor or associate providing professional

services to a client or providing services billed to a third-party payor, must document services, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section. The documentation includes:

- (a) Client name;
- (b) The fee arrangement and record of payments;
- (c) Dates counseling was received;
- (d) Disclosure form, signed by licensed counselor and client or associate and client;
- (e) The presenting problem(s), purpose or diagnosis;
- (f) Notation and results of formal consults, including information obtained from other persons or agencies through a release of information;
- (g) Progress notes sufficient to support responsible clinical practice for the type of theoretical orientation/therapy the licensed counselor or associate uses. The associate must provide adequate information about their clinical work to the approved supervisor. This can be in the form of progress notes, case discussions/analysis, or reports from collaborating professionals. The approved supervisor must have an understanding of the clinical work that the associate is doing.

(2) If a client requests that no treatment records be kept, and the licensed counselor or associate agrees to the request, the request must be in writing and the licensed counselor or associate must retain only the following documentation:

- (a) Client name;
  - (b) Fee arrangement and record of payments;
  - (c) Dates counseling was received;
  - (d) Disclosure form, signed by licensed counselor or associate and client;
  - (e) Written request that no records be kept.
- (3) The licensed counselor or associate may not agree to the request if maintaining records is required by other state or federal law.

(4) The licensed counselor or associate or the associate's supervisor must keep all records for a period of five years following the last visit. Within this five-year period, all records must be maintained safely, with properly limited access.

(5) The licensed counselor or associate or the associate's supervisor must make provisions for retaining or transferring records in the event of going out of business, death or incapacitation. These provisions may be made in the practitioner's will, an office policy, or by ensuring another licensed counselor is available to review records with a client and recommend a course of action; or other appropriate means as determined by the licensed counselor or associate.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-035, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-035, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.]

**WAC 246-809-040 Reporting of suspected abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult.** As required by chapter 26.44 RCW, all licensed counselors and associates must report abuse or neglect of a child if the counselor has reasonable cause to believe that an incident has occurred.

As required by chapter 74.34 RCW, all licensed counselors and associates must report suspected abandonment, abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult, when there is reasonable cause to believe that abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect has occurred.

The counselor or associate shall report to the local law enforcement agency or to the department of social and health

services at the first opportunity, but no longer than twenty-four hours after deciding there is reasonable cause to believe that the child or vulnerable adult has suffered abandonment, abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation.

The associate will inform their approved supervisor of any report made by the associate.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-040, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-040, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.]

**WAC 246-809-049 Sexual misconduct.** (1) The definitions and prohibitions on sexual misconduct described in chapter 246-16 WAC apply to licensed counselors and associates except WAC 246-16-100 (3) and (4).

(2) A licensed counselor or associate shall never engage, or attempt to engage, in the activities listed in WAC 246-16-100(1) with a former patient, former client or former key party.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-049, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.155.040, 18.19.050, 18.225.040, 18.205.060, 18.130.050. 08-07-090, § 246-809-049, filed 3/19/08, effective 4/19/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-049, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.]

**WAC 246-809-060 Mandatory reporting.** (1) All reports required by this chapter shall be submitted to the department as soon as possible, but no later than twenty days after a determination is made.

(2) Reports made in accordance with WAC 246-809-061, 246-809-062, 246-809-063, and 246-809-064 should contain the following information if known:

(a) The name, address, and telephone number of the person making the report.

(b) The name, address, and telephone number of the licensed counselor being reported.

(c) The case number of any client or patient whose treatment is a subject of the report.

(d) A brief description or summary of the facts which gave rise to the issuance of the report, including dates of occurrences.

(e) If court action is involved, the name of the court in which the action is filed along with the date of filing and docket number.

(f) Any further information which would aid in the evaluation of the report.

(3) Mandatory reports are exempt from public inspection and copying to the extent permitted under chapter 42.17 RCW.

(4) A person is immune from civil liability, whether direct or derivative, for providing information to the department under RCW 18.130.070.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040, 18.130.050. 06-09-032, § 246-809-060, filed 4/12/06, effective 5/13/06.]

**WAC 246-809-080 AIDS prevention and information education requirements.** Applicants must complete four clock hours of AIDS education as required in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 8.

[Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-080, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS  
AND LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY  
THERAPY ASSOCIATES**

**WAC 246-809-100 One year exemption option.** Persons who submit an application for licensure as a marriage and family therapist by July 1, 2010, and who have held a registered counselor credential issued under chapter 18.19 RCW in good standing for five consecutive years since obtaining their master's degree in an approved field, are deemed to have met the supervised postgraduate experience requirements of WAC 246-809-130. Applicants must meet the education requirements in WAC 246-809-120 and the examination requirements of WAC 246-809-140.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-100, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09.]

**WAC 246-809-110 Definitions.** The following terms apply to the licensure of marriage and family therapists and marriage and family therapist associates.

(1) "Approved educational program" means:

(a) Any college or university accredited by a national or regional accrediting body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or its successor; or

(b) A program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), at the time the applicant completed the required education.

(2) "Approved supervisor" means a licensed marriage and family therapist, or an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner.

(3) "Equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner" means a licensed mental health counselor, licensed clinical social worker, licensed psychologist, licensed physician practicing as a psychiatrist, or licensed psychiatric nurse practitioner, who has completed:

(a) Three hundred clock hours in graduate or postgraduate marriage and family education, or continuing education in marriage and family therapy or supervision by an approved marriage and family therapist supervisor in marriage and family therapy or any combination of these; and

(b) Five years of clinical practice that includes the equivalent of one year of clinical practice working with couples and families.

(4) "Group supervision" means face-to-face supervision with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and no more than six licensure candidates.

(5) "Licensure candidate" means an individual that is accruing supervised clinical experience required for licensure.

(6) "One-on-one supervision" means face-to-face supervision with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and no more than two licensure candidates.

(7) "Supervised experience requirement" means experience that is obtained under an approved supervisor who meets the requirements described in WAC 246-809-134.

(8) "Supervision of supervision" means supervision by an approved supervisor for the purpose of training and qualifying a license holder to act as an approved supervisor for purposes of chapter 18.225 RCW and WAC 246-809-134.

(9/20/11)

(9) "Peer" means a co-worker who is not the licensure candidate's employer or supervisor.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-110, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-110, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

**WAC 246-809-120 Education requirements—Degree equivalents.** (1) To meet the education requirement for full licensure or associate licensure an applicant must have a master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree with equivalent course work from an approved school. An official transcript must be provided as evidence of fulfillment of the course work required.

(2) The following are considered to be equivalent to a master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from an approved school:

(a) A doctoral or master's degree from an approved school in any of the behavioral sciences that shows evidence of fulfillment of the course work requirements set out in WAC 246-809-121; or

(b) A doctoral or master's degree in any of the behavioral sciences from an approved school that shows evidence of partial fulfillment of the equivalent course work requirements set out in WAC 246-809-121, plus supplemental course work from an approved school to satisfy the remaining equivalent course work requirements set out in WAC 246-809-121.

(3) Applicants who held a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree and are completing supplemental course work through an approved school to satisfy any missing program equivalencies may count any postgraduate experience hours acquired concurrently with the additional course work.

(4) Anyone who has obtained American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) clinical membership status is considered to have met the education requirements of this chapter. Verification must be sent directly to the department from the AAMFT.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-120, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-120, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-121 Program equivalency.** Course work equivalent to a master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy must include graduate level courses in marital and family systems, marital and family therapy, individual development psychopathology, human sexuality, research, professional ethics and law, and supervised clinical practice and electives.

A total of forty-five semester credits and sixty quarter credits are required in all nine areas of study. A minimum of twenty-seven semester credits or thirty-six quarter credits are required in the first five areas of study: Marital and family systems, marital and family therapy, individual development psychopathology, human sexuality, and research. Distribution of the course work is as follows:

(1) Marital and family systems.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least two courses in marital and family systems. Course work required is a minimum of six semester credits or eight quarter credits.

(b) Marital and family systems is a fundamental introduction to the systems approach to intervention. The student

should learn to think in systems terms on a number of levels across a wide variety of family structures, and regarding a diverse range of presenting problems. While the most intense focus may be on the nuclear family (in both its traditional and alternative forms), models should be taught which integrate information regarding the marital, sibling, and individual subsystems, as well as the family of origin and external societal influences. Developmental aspects of family functioning should also be considered of the family system; it also provides a theoretical basis for treatment strategy. Some material may be drawn from familiar sources such as family sociology, but it should be integrated with recent clinically oriented systems concepts. Supplemental studies may include family simulation, the observation of well families, and study of the student's family of origin.

(2) Marital and family therapy.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least two courses in marital and family therapy. Course work required is a minimum of six semester credits or eight quarter credits.

(b) Marital and family therapy is intended to provide a substantive understanding of the major theories of systems change and the applied practices evolving from each orientation. Major theoretical approaches to be surveyed might include strategic, structural, experiential, neoanalytical (e.g., object relations), communications, and behavioral. Applied studies should consider the range of technique associated with each orientation, as well as a variety of treatment structures, including individual, concurrent, collaborative, conjoint marital, marital group, transgenerational, and network therapies.

(3) Individual development.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least one course in individual development. Course work required is a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits.

(b) A course in this area is intended to provide a knowledge of individual personality development and its normal and abnormal manifestations. The student should have relevant course work in human development across the life span, and in personality theory. An attempt should be made to integrate this material with systems concepts. Several of the courses in this category may be required as prerequisites for some degree programs.

(4) Psychopathology.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least one course in psychopathology. Course work required is a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits.

(b) Psychopathology is the assessment and diagnosis including familiarity with current diagnostic nomenclature, diagnostic categories and the development of treatment strategies.

(5) Human sexuality.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least one course in human sexuality. Course work required is a minimum of two semester credits or three quarter credits.

(b) Human sexuality includes normal psycho-sexual development, sexual functioning and its physiological aspects and sexual dysfunction and its treatment.

(6) Research.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least one course in research methods. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits or four quarter credits.

(b) The research area is intended to provide assistance to students in becoming informed consumers of research in the marital and family therapy field. Familiarity with substantive findings, together with the ability to make critical judgments as to the adequacy of research reports, is expected.

(7) Professional ethics and law.

(a) An applicant must have taken at least one course in professional ethics and law. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits or four quarter credits.

(b) This area is intended to contribute to the development of a professional attitude and identity. Areas of study will include professional socialization and the role of the professional organization, licensure or certification legislation, legal responsibilities and liabilities, ethics and family law, confidentiality, independent practice and interprofessional cooperation.

(8) Electives.

(a) An individual must take one course in an elective area. Course work required is a minimum of three semester credits and four quarter credits.

(b) This area will vary with different institutions but is intended to provide supplemental and/or specialized supporting areas.

(9) Supervised clinical practice.

(a) An applicant may acquire up to nine semester credits or twelve quarter credits through supervised clinical practice in marriage and family therapy under the supervision of a qualified marriage and family therapist as determined by the school.

(b) If an applicant completed a master's or doctoral degree program in marriage and family therapy, or a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree with equivalent course work, prior to January 1, 1997; and if that degree did not include a supervised clinical practice component, the applicant may substitute the clinical practice component with proof of a minimum of three years postgraduate experience in marriage and family therapy, in addition to the two years supervised postgraduate experience required under section 9(1), chapter 251, Laws of 2001.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW, 09-15-039, § 246-809-121, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-121, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-130 Supervised postgraduate experience.** The experience requirements for the marriage and family therapist applicant's practice area include successful completion of a supervised experience requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of two calendar years of full-time marriage and family therapy. Of the total supervision, one hundred hours must be with a licensed marriage and family therapist with at least five years' clinical experience; the other one hundred hours may be with an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner. Total experience requirements include:

(1) A minimum of three thousand hours of experience, one thousand hours of which must be direct client contact; at least five hundred hours must be gained in diagnosing and treating couples and families; plus

(2) At least two hundred hours of qualified supervision with an approved supervisor. At least one hundred of the two

hundred hours must be one-on-one supervision, and the remaining hours may be in one-on-one or group supervision.

(3) Applicants who have completed a master's program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy may be credited with five hundred hours of direct client contact and one hundred hours of formal meetings with an approved supervisor.

(4) Licensed marriage and family therapist associate applicants are not required to have supervised postgraduate experience prior to becoming an associate.

(5) Licensed marriage and family therapist associate applicants must declare they are working towards full licensure.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-130, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-130, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-130, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-134 Approved supervisor.** (1) The approved supervisor must hold a license without restrictions that has been in good standing for at least two years.

(2) The approved supervisor must not be a blood or legal relative or cohabitant of the licensure candidate, licensure candidate's peer, or someone who has acted as the licensure candidate's therapist within the past two years.

(3) The approved supervisor, prior to the commencement of any supervision, must provide the licensure candidate a declaration, on a form provided by the department, that the supervisor has met the requirements of WAC 246-809-134 and qualify as an approved supervisor.

(4) The approved supervisor must have completed the following:

(a) A minimum of fifteen clock hours of training in clinical supervision obtained through:

- (i) A supervision course; or
- (ii) Continuing education credits on supervision; or
- (iii) Supervision of supervision; or
- (iv) Any combination of these; and

(b) Twenty-five hours of experience in supervision of clinical practice; or

(c) An American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) approved supervisor meets the qualifications above.

(5) The approved supervisor must attest to having thorough knowledge of the supervisee's practice activities including:

- (a) Practice setting;
- (b) Recordkeeping;
- (c) Financial management;
- (d) Ethics of clinical practice; and
- (e) A backup plan for coverage.

(6) Applicants whose supervised postgraduate experience began before September 30, 2006, are exempt from the requirements of subsection (4) of this section.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-134, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-134, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

(9/20/11)

**WAC 246-809-140 Examination.** Examination required. Applicants for full licensure must take and pass the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) examination. The passing score on the examination is established by the testing company in conjunction with the AMFTRB.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-140, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-140, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

## LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS AND LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR ASSOCIATES

**WAC 246-809-200 One year exemption option.** Persons who submit an application for licensure as a mental health counselor by July 1, 2010, and who have held a registered counselor credential issued under chapter 18.19 RCW in good standing for five consecutive years since obtaining their master's degree in an approved field, are deemed to have met the supervised postgraduate experience requirements of WAC 246-809-230. Applicants must meet the education requirements in WAC 246-809-220 and the examination requirements of WAC 246-809-240.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-200, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09.]

**WAC 246-809-210 Definitions.** The following definitions apply to the licensure of mental health counselors and mental health counselor associates.

(1) "Approved educational program" means any college or university accredited by an accreditation body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or its successor, at the time the applicant completed the required education.

(2) "Approved setting" includes facilities, agencies or private practice where an applicant works with individuals, families, couples or groups under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

(3) "Approved supervisor" means a qualified licensed mental health counselor or equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner who has been licensed without restrictions for at least two years.

(4) "Equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner" means a licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed clinical social worker, licensed psychologist, licensed physician practicing as a psychiatrist, or licensed psychiatric nurse practitioner.

(5) "Group supervision" means face-to-face supervision with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and no more than six licensure candidates.

(6) "Immediate supervision" means a meeting with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and no more than two licensure candidates.

(7) "Licensure candidate" means an individual that is accruing supervised clinical experience required for licensure.

(8) "Supervision of supervision" means supervision by an approved supervisor for the purpose of training and qualifying a licensee to act as an approved supervisor for purposes of chapter 18.225 RCW and WAC 246-809-234.

(9) "Peer" means a co-worker who is not the licensure candidate's employer or supervisor.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-210, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-210, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

**WAC 246-809-220 Education requirements.** (1) To meet the education requirement for licensure as a mental health counselor or mental health counselor associate, an applicant must have a master's or doctoral degree in mental health counseling or a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree in a field relating to mental health counseling from an approved school. Fields recognized as relating to mental health counseling include counseling, psychology, social work, nursing, education, pastoral counseling, rehabilitation counseling, or social sciences. Any field of study qualifying as related to mental health counseling must satisfy course work equivalency requirements included in WAC 246-809-221. An official transcript must be provided as evidence of fulfillment of the course work required.

(2) Any supplemental course work required must be from an approved school.

(3) Applicants who held a behavioral science master's or doctoral degree and are completing supplemental course work through an approved school to satisfy any missing program equivalencies may count any postgraduate experience hours acquired concurrently with the additional course work.

(4) A person who is a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC) or a Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) through the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) is considered to have met the education requirements of this chapter. Verification must be sent directly to the department from NBCC.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-220, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-220, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-221 Behavioral sciences—Program equivalency.** Behavioral science in a field relating to mental health counseling includes a core of study relating to counseling theory and counseling philosophy. Either a counseling practicum, or a counseling internship, or both, must be included in the core of study. Exclusive use of an internship or practicum used for qualification must have incorporated supervised direct client contact. This core of study must include seven content areas from the entire list in subsections (1) through (17) of this section, five of which must be from content areas in subsections (1) through (8) of this subsection:

- (1) Assessment/diagnosis.
- (2) Ethics/law.
- (3) Counseling individuals.
- (4) Counseling groups.
- (5) Counseling couples and families.
- (6) Developmental psychology (may be child, adolescent, adult or life span).
- (7) Psychopathology/abnormal psychology.
- (8) Research and evaluation.
- (9) Career development counseling.
- (10) Multicultural concerns.
- (11) Substance/chemical abuse.

(12) Physiological psychology.

(13) Organizational psychology.

(14) Mental health consultation.

(15) Developmentally disabled persons.

(16) Abusive relationships.

(17) Chronically mentally ill.

[Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-221, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-230 Supervised postgraduate experience.** (1) The experience requirements for the mental health applicant's practice area include successful completion of a supervised experience requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of thirty-six months full-time counseling or three thousand hours of postgraduate mental health counseling under the supervision of a qualified licensed mental health counselor or equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner in an approved setting. The three thousand hours of required experience includes a minimum of one hundred hours spent in immediate supervision with the qualified licensed mental health counselor or equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner, and includes a minimum of one thousand two hundred hours of direct counseling with individuals, couples, families, or groups.

(2) Applicants who have completed a master's or doctoral program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) will be credited with fifty hours of postgraduate supervision and five hundred hours of postgraduate experience.

(3) Applicants for licensed mental health counselor associate are not required to have supervised postgraduate experience prior to becoming an associate.

(4) Licensed mental health counselor associate applicants must declare they are working toward full licensure.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-230, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-230, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-230, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-234 Approved supervisor.** (1) The approved supervisor must hold a license without restrictions that has been in good standing for at least two years.

(2) The approved supervisor must not be a blood or legal relative or cohabitant of the licensure candidate, licensure candidate's peer, or someone who has acted as the licensure candidate's therapist within the past two years.

(3) The approved supervisor, prior to the commencement of any supervision, must provide the licensure candidate a declaration, on a form provided by the department, that the supervisor has met the requirements of WAC 246-809-234 and qualify as an approved supervisor.

(4) The approved supervisor must have completed the following:

(a) A minimum of fifteen clock hours of training in clinical supervision obtained through:

(i) A supervision course; or

(ii) Continuing education credits on supervision; or

(iii) Supervision of supervision; and

(b) Twenty-five hours of experience in supervision of clinical practice.

(5) The approved supervisor shall have full knowledge of the licensure candidate's practice activities including:

- (a) Recordkeeping;
- (b) Financial management;
- (c) Ethics of clinical practice; and

(d) The licensure candidate's backup plan for coverage in times when the licensure candidate is not available to their clients.

(6) Applicants whose supervised postgraduate experience began before September 30, 2006, are exempt from the requirements of subsection (4) of this section.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-234, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-234, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

**WAC 246-809-240 Examination for licensed mental health counselors.** (1) Applicants for licensure as a mental health counselor must pass an examination administered by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC). Applicants who pass the National Certification Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination (NCMHCE), as administered by the NBCC, meet the examination requirements to be licensed as mental health counselors. Each applicant must cause the NBCC to send verification of the applicant's examination passage directly to the department of health before licensure can be granted.

(2) The department of health shall accept the passing score established by the NBCC for licensed mental health counselor examinations.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-240, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and 18.225.090. 08-08-092, § 246-809-240, filed 4/1/08, effective 5/2/08. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-240, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

## LICENSED SOCIAL WORKERS AND LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER ASSOCIATES

**WAC 246-809-300 One year exemption option.** Persons who submit an application for licensure as an advanced social worker or independent clinical social worker by July 1, 2010, and who have held a registered counselor credential issued under chapter 18.19 RCW in good standing for five consecutive years since obtaining their master's degree in an approved field, are deemed to have met the supervised postgraduate experience requirements of WAC 246-809-320. Applicants must meet the education requirements in WAC 246-809-320 and the examination requirements of WAC 246-809-340.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-300, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09.]

**WAC 246-809-310 Definitions.** The following definitions apply to the licensure of independent clinical and advanced social workers and independent clinical and advanced social work associates.

(1) "Approved educational program" means a master's or doctoral educational program in social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

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(2) "Approved supervisor" means a licensed independent clinical social worker (LICSW), licensed advanced social worker (LASW) (for LASWs only), or an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner.

(3) "Equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner" means a licensed mental health counselor, licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed psychologist, licensed physician practicing as a psychiatrist, or licensed psychiatric nurse practitioner.

(4) "Group supervision" means face-to-face supervision with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and no more than six licensure candidates.

(5) "Licensure candidate" means an individual that is accruing supervised clinical experience required for licensure.

(6) "Nationally recognized standards" means the *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*, revised October 2004 published by the Council on Social Work Education revised October 2004 or any future revisions.

(7) "One-on-one supervision" means face-to-face supervision with an approved supervisor, involving one supervisor and one licensure candidate.

(8) "Supervision of supervision" means supervision by an approved supervisor for the purpose of training and qualifying a licensee to become an approved supervisor for purposes of chapter 18.225 RCW and WAC 246-809-334.

(9) "Peer" means a co-worker who is not the licensure candidate's employer or supervisor.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-310, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-310, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

**WAC 246-809-320 Education requirements and supervised postgraduate experience.** (1) The following are the education requirements for the social worker applicant's practice area:

(a) Licensed advanced social worker or licensed social worker associate-advanced. Graduation from a master's or doctoral social work educational program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

(b) Licensed independent clinical social worker or licensed social worker associate-independent clinical. Graduation from a master's or doctorate level social work educational program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

(2) The following are the supervised postgraduate experience requirements for the social worker applicant's practice area:

(a) Licensed advanced social worker. Successful completion of a supervised experience requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of three thousand two hundred hours with ninety hours of supervision by a licensed independent clinical social worker or a licensed advanced social worker who has been licensed or certified for at least two years. Of those hours, fifty hours must include direct supervision by a licensed advanced social worker or licensed independent clinical social worker; the other forty hours may be with an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner. Forty hours must be in one-to-one super-

vision and fifty hours may be in one-to-one supervision or group supervision. Distance supervision is limited to forty supervision hours. Eight hundred hours must be in direct client contact.

(b) Licensed independent clinical social worker. Successful completion of a supervised experience requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of four thousand hours of experience, of which one thousand hours must be direct client contact, over a three-year period supervised by a licensed independent clinical social worker, with supervision of at least one hundred thirty hours by a licensed mental health practitioner. Of the total supervision, seventy hours must be with an independent clinical social worker; the other sixty hours may be with an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner. Sixty hours must be in one-to-one supervision and seventy hours may be in one-to-one supervision or group supervision. Distance supervision is limited to sixty supervision hours.

(3) Licensed social worker associate-advanced and licensed social worker associate-independent clinical applicants are not required to have supervised postgraduate experience prior to becoming an associate.

(4) Licensed social worker associate-advanced and licensed social worker associate-independent clinical applicants must declare they are working toward full licensure.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-320, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-320, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-320, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-321 Education and experience equivalency.** (1)(a) Persons who obtained the Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work from the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (ABECSW) shall be considered to have met the education and postgraduate experience requirements to be eligible for Washington state licensure examination.

(b) Documentation of ABECSW Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work must be sent directly to the department from the ABECSW.

(2)(a) Persons who obtained the Diplomate in Clinical Social Work (DCSW) or Qualified Clinical Social Work (QCSW) from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) shall be considered to have met the education and postgraduate experience requirements to be eligible for Washington state licensure examination.

(b) Documentation of DCSW or QCSW must be sent directly to the department from NASW.

[Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-321, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

**WAC 246-809-334 Approved supervisor standards and responsibilities.** (1) The approved supervisor must hold a license without restrictions that has been in good standing for at least two years.

(2) The approved supervisor must not be a blood or legal relative or cohabitant of the licensure candidate, licensure candidate's peer, or someone who has acted as the licensure candidate's therapist within the past two years.

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(3) The approved supervisor, prior to the commencement of any supervision, must provide the licensure candidate a declaration, on a form provided by the department, that the supervisor has met the requirements of WAC 246-809-334 and qualify as an approved supervisor.

(4) The approved supervisor must have completed the following:

(a) A minimum of fifteen clock hours of training in clinical supervision obtained through:

(i) A supervision course; or

(ii) Continuing education credits on supervision; or

(iii) Supervision of supervision; and

(b) Twenty-five hours of experience in supervision of clinical practice; and

(c) Has had two years of clinical experience postlicensure.

(5) The approved supervisor must attest to having thorough knowledge of the licensure candidate's practice activities including:

(a) Specific practice setting;

(b) Recordkeeping;

(c) Financial management;

(d) Ethics of clinical practice; and

(e) The licensure candidate's backup plan for coverage in times when he/she is not available to their clients.

(6) Licensure candidates whose supervised postgraduate experience began before September 30, 2006, are exempt from the requirements of subsection (4) of this section.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-334, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040 and [18.225.]090. 06-18-043, § 246-809-334, filed 8/30/06, effective 9/30/06.]

**WAC 246-809-340 Examination required.** (1) Either the American Association of State Social Work Board's advanced or clinical examination is approved for use as the state examination for licensure of social workers.

(2) The passing score established by the testing company is the passing score accepted by the department of health.

[Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-340, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

**WAC 246-809-600 Who is required to have continuing education?** Licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed mental health counselors, and licensed social workers are required to have continuing education.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-600, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-600, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-610 What courses are acceptable?** The continuing education (CE) program or course must be relevant to licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed mental health counselors and licensed social workers and must contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional competence of the licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed mental health counselor and/or licensed social worker. Courses or workshops primarily designed to increase practice income or office efficiency are not eligible for CE credit.

(9/20/11)

(1) Acceptable CE courses (including distance learning), seminars, workshops and postgraduate institutes are those which are:

(a) Programs having a featured instructor, speaker(s) or panel approved by an industry-recognized local, state, national, international organization or institution of higher learning; or

(b) Distance learning programs, approved by an industry-recognized local, state, national or international organization or institution of higher learning. These programs must require tests of comprehension upon completion. Distance learning programs are limited to twenty-six hours per reporting period.

(2) Training programs sponsored by the agency where a counselor is employed are acceptable if:

(a) The experience can be shown to contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional competence of the licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed mental health counselor and/or the licensed social worker; and

(b) The training programs are limited to twenty-six hours per reporting period.

(3) Other learning experience, such as serving on a panel, board or council, community service, research, peer consultation, or publishing articles for professional publications are acceptable if:

(a) The experience can be shown to contribute to the advancement, extension and enhancement of the professional competence of the licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed mental health counselor and/or the licensed social worker; and

(b) The experience is limited to six hours per reporting period.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-010, § 246-809-610, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-610, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-620 What are industry-recognized local, state, national, international organizations or institutions of higher learning?** Recognized organizations or institutions include, but are not limited to, the following organizations:

(1) Washington Association for Marriage and Family Therapy;

(2) Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work;

(3) Washington Chapter of the National Association of Social Work;

(4) American Mental Health Counselors Association;

(5) American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy;

(6) Clinical Social Work Federation;

(7) National Association of Social Workers;

(8) Washington Mental Health Counselors Association;

(9) National Board for Certified Counselors;

(10) Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care;

or  
(11) Institutions of higher learning that are accredited by a national or regional accrediting body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation.

(9/20/11)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-010, § 246-809-620, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-620, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-630 How many hours do I need and in what time period?** Licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed mental health counselors and licensed social workers must complete thirty-six hours of continuing education every two years. At least six of the thirty-six hours must be in professional ethics and law, which may include topics under RCW 18.130.180.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-010, § 246-809-630, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-630, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-640 How are credit hours determined for preparation and presentation of a lecture or an educational course?** The license holder who prepares and presents lectures or education that contributes to the professional competence of a licensed counselor may accumulate the same number of hours obtained for continuing education purposes by attendees as required in WAC 246-12-220. The hours for presenting a specific topic lecture or education may only be used for continuing education credit once during each reporting period.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-640, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-650 How do I document my courses?** Acceptable documentation shall include transcripts, letters from course instructors, certificate of completion, or other formal certification, as required in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 7.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.19 RCW. 02-11-108, § 246-809-650, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-809-700 Client disclosure information.** Licensees must provide disclosure information to each client in accordance with chapter 18.225 RCW prior to implementation of a treatment plan. The disclosure information must be specific to the type of treatment service offered; in a language that can be easily understood by the client; and contain sufficient detail to enable the client to make an informed decision whether or not to accept treatment from the disclosing licensee.

Firms, agencies, or businesses having more than one licensee involved in a client's treatment, may provide disclosure information general to that agency. In these cases, the licensee would not be required to duplicate the information disclosed by the agency.

The disclosure information may be printed in a format of the licensee's choosing, but must include all required disclosure information per WAC 246-809-710.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-011, § 246-809-700, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04.]

**WAC 246-809-710 Required disclosure information.**  
(1) The following information shall be provided to each client or patient at the commencement of any program of treatment:

(a) Name of firm, agency, business, or licensee's practice;

(b) Licensee's business address and telephone number;

(c) Washington state license number;

(d) The licensee's name;

(e) The methods or treatment modality and therapeutic orientation the licensee uses;

(f) The licensee's education, and training;

(g) The course of treatment, when known;

(h) Billing information, including:

(i) Client's cost per each treatment session; and

(ii) Billing practices, including any advance payments and refunds;

(i) Clients are to be informed that they as individuals have the right to refuse treatment and the right to choose a practitioner and treatment modality which best suits their needs;

(j) This subsection does not grant (clients) new rights and is not intended to supersede state or federal laws and regulations, or professional standards;

(k) The licensee must provide department of health contact information to the client so the client may obtain a list of or copy of the acts of unprofessional conduct listed under RCW 18.130.180. Department of health contact information must include the name, address, and telephone number for the health professions complaint process.

(2) Associates must provide each client or patient, during the first professional contact, with a disclosure form disclosing that he or she is an associate under the supervision of an approved supervisor. Associates may not independently provide clinical social work, mental health counseling, or marriage and family therapy for a fee, monetary or otherwise.

(3) Signatures are required of both the licensee providing the disclosure information and the client following a statement that the client had been provided a copy of the required disclosure information and the client has read and understands the information provided. The date of signature by each party is to be included at the time of signing.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-710, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-011, § 246-809-710, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04.]

**WAC 246-809-720 Failure to provide client disclosure information.** Failure to provide the client disclosure information required under WAC 246-809-700 and 246-809-710, and required under RCW 18.225.100, constitutes an act of unprofessional conduct as defined in RCW 18.130.180(7).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.225.040. 04-06-011, § 246-809-720, filed 2/20/04, effective 3/22/04.]

**WAC 246-809-990 Licensed counselor, and associate—Fees and renewal cycle.** (1) Licenses must be renewed every year on the practitioner's birthday as provided in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 2.

(2) Associate licenses are valid for one year and must be renewed every year on the date of issuance. The associate license may be renewed no more than four times.

Title	Fee
(3) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed marriage and family therapist:	
Application	\$150.00
Initial license	75.00
Renewal	140.00
Late renewal penalty	70.00
Expired license reissuance	85.00
Duplicate license	10.00
Certification of license	10.00
UW on-line access fee (HEAL-WA)	25.00
(4) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed mental health counselor:	
Application	140.00
Initial license	125.00
Renewal	138.00
Late renewal penalty	60.00
Expired license reissuance	65.00
Duplicate license	10.00
Certification of license	10.00
UW on-line access fee (HEAL-WA)	25.00
(5) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed advanced social worker and licensed independent clinical social worker:	
Application	125.00
Initial license	125.00
Renewal	126.00
Late renewal penalty	63.00
Expired license reissuance	72.50
Duplicate license	10.00
Certification of license	10.00
UW on-line access fee (HEAL-WA)	25.00
(6) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed marriage and family therapy associates:	
Application	50.00
Renewal	40.00
Late renewal penalty	40.00
Expired license reissuance	40.00
Duplicate license	15.00
Certification of license	15.00
(7) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed mental health counselor associates:	
Application	50.00
Renewal	40.00
Late renewal penalty	40.00
Expired license reissuance	40.00
Duplicate license	15.00
Certification of license	15.00
(8) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for licensed advanced social worker associates and licensed independent clinical social worker associates:	
Application	50.00
Renewal	40.00
Late renewal penalty	40.00
Expired license reissuance	40.00
Duplicate license	15.00
Certification of license	15.00

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.110 and 43.70.112. 11-19-098, § 246-809-990, filed 9/20/11, effective 1/1/12. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.110, 43.70.250, and 2010 c 37. 10-19-071, § 246-809-990, filed 9/16/10, effective 10/15/10. Statutory Authority: Chapter 18.225 RCW. 09-15-039, § 246-809-990, filed 7/8/09, effective 7/8/09. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.110, 43.70.250 and 2008 c 329. 08-16-008, § 246-809-990, filed 7/24/08, effective 7/25/08. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.250, [43.70.]280 and 43.70.110. 05-12-012, § 246-809-990, filed 5/20/05, effective 7/1/05. Statutory Authority: 2001 c 251, RCW 43.70.250. 01-17-113, § 246-809-990, filed 8/22/01, effective 9/22/01.]