

GUIDE TO LMFT OUT-OF-STATE APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

For Applications Submitted on or After
January 1, 2020

Applicant Type

Do you meet ALL of the following requirements?

- I have held a license as a Marriage and Family Therapist in another United States jurisdiction for at least two years.
- The license I hold is current, and has been active and unrestricted for at least two years immediately before the date I submit my application to the Board.
- The license I hold is at the highest level for independent clinical practice in that jurisdiction.
- The degree that qualified me for this license is a master's or doctoral degree obtained from a school holding a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), or a school approved by the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE).

If YES, go to Path A (LICENSURE BY CREDENTIAL)

If NO, → Skip to Path B (LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE)

Path A – LICENSURE BY CREDENTIAL

Applicants who qualify for this path (as specified in Business and Professions Code (BPC) section [4980.72](#)) must meet all of the following requirements. See the [Application for Licensure – Out-of-State](#) for details.

1. **EXAMINATION:** You must pass the California Law and Ethics Examination. You will be eligible to take this exam after your *Application for Licensure* has been approved.
2. **QUALIFYING DEGREE:** The degree that qualified you for licensure in another United States jurisdiction must be a master's or doctoral degree obtained from a school that holds a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the USDE, or a school approved by the BPPE.
3. **COURSEWORK:** You must complete the following California-specific coursework. Courses must be taken from a school that holds a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the USDE, a school approved by the BPPE, or an acceptable [continuing education](#) provider. Undergraduate coursework cannot be accepted.

Path A – LICENSURE BY CREDENTIAL *(continued)*

REQUIRED CALIFORNIA-SPECIFIC COURSEWORK		
Course	Length	Content Required
California Law and Ethics	12 hours	Instruction must include advertising, scope of practice, scope of competence, treatment of minors, confidentiality, dangerous patients, psychotherapist-patient privilege, recordkeeping, patient access to records, state and federal laws relating to confidentiality of patient health information, dual relationships, child abuse, elder and dependent adult abuse, online therapy, insurance reimbursement, civil liability, disciplinary actions and unprofessional conduct, ethics complaints and ethical standards, termination of therapy, standards of care, relevant family law, therapist disclosures to patients, the application of legal and ethical standards in different types of work settings, and licensing law and licensing process. See BPC section 4980.72 .
California Cultures and the Social and Psychological Implications of Socioeconomic Position	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must include an understanding of various California cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position. See BPC section 4980.72 .
Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting in California <i>(In addition to the course provider types listed above, this may be a course sponsored or offered by a professional association or a local, county or state department of health or mental health)</i>	7 hours	Instruction must include detailed knowledge of the California Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting Act (CANRA). It must also include assessment and methods of reporting of sexual assault, neglect, severe neglect, general neglect, willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment, corporal punishment or injury, and abuse in out-of-home care. The training shall also include physical and behavioral indicators of abuse, crisis counseling techniques, community resources, rights and responsibilities of reporting, consequences of failure to report, caring for a child's needs after a report is made, sensitivity to previously abused children and adults, and implications and methods of treatment for children and adults. See BPC sections 28 and 4980.72 .
Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention <i>(Does not need to be California-specific)</i>	6 hours of coursework or applied experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required of those submitting an application for licensure on or after January 1, 2021 <i>(otherwise will be required upon license renewal)</i> • See BPC section 4980.396 for details.

*Note: 1 semester unit = 15 hours; 1 quarter unit = 10 hours
1 semester unit = 1.5 quarter units*

Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Applicants who do not qualify for Path A “Licensure by Credential” must meet the following requirements as specified in Business and Professions Code (BPC) sections [4980.74](#), [4980.78](#) and [4980.81](#). See the [Application for Licensure – Out-of-State](#) for more details.

1. **EXAMINATIONS:** You must pass both of the following exams:
 - California Law and Ethics Exam: You will be eligible to take this exam after issuance of your Associate number or after approval of your *Application for Licensure*.
 - California LMFT Clinical Exam: You will be eligible to take this exam after approval of your *Application for Licensure* and after passing the California Law and Ethics Exam.

2. **SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE:** Your experience must be substantially equivalent to California’s requirements as described below.
 - **If you are licensed as an LMFT in another state or country at the highest level for independent clinical practice:** Your requirements will depend on whether you were licensed at the highest level for independent clinical practice in a jurisdiction of the United States vs. another country. It will also depend on how many hours were required for that license by the other state or country, as described below:
 - If you are licensed in another United States jurisdiction that requires at least 3,000 hours of experience: You do not need to submit verification of your experience.
 - If you are licensed in another country: You must submit verification of 3,000 hours of substantially equivalent experience that includes 104 supervised weeks.
 - If you are licensed in another state or country that requires less than 3,000 hours of experience: You may make up the deficit using time actively licensed in good standing in another state or country at the rate of 100 hours per month licensed at the highest level (up to a maximum of 1,200 hours). You do not need to submit verification of these hours.

If additional hours are needed and will be gained in California, you must first register as an [Associate](#) and comply with all requirements for hours gained in California.

- **All other applicants:** You must submit verification of substantially equivalent supervised experience totaling 3,000 hours as described below:

Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE *(continued)*

- Experience must have been supervised by a licensed mental health professional.
- Experience must have been gained within the six (6) years prior to the Board's receipt of your California application.
- Up to 1,300 hours may have been gained prior to the issuance of your qualifying degree.
- If you are not licensed in another state or country at the highest level for independent clinical practice, you must have 104 weeks of supervision.
- If any experience will be obtained in California, you must first register as an [Associate](#) and comply with all requirements for hours gained in California.

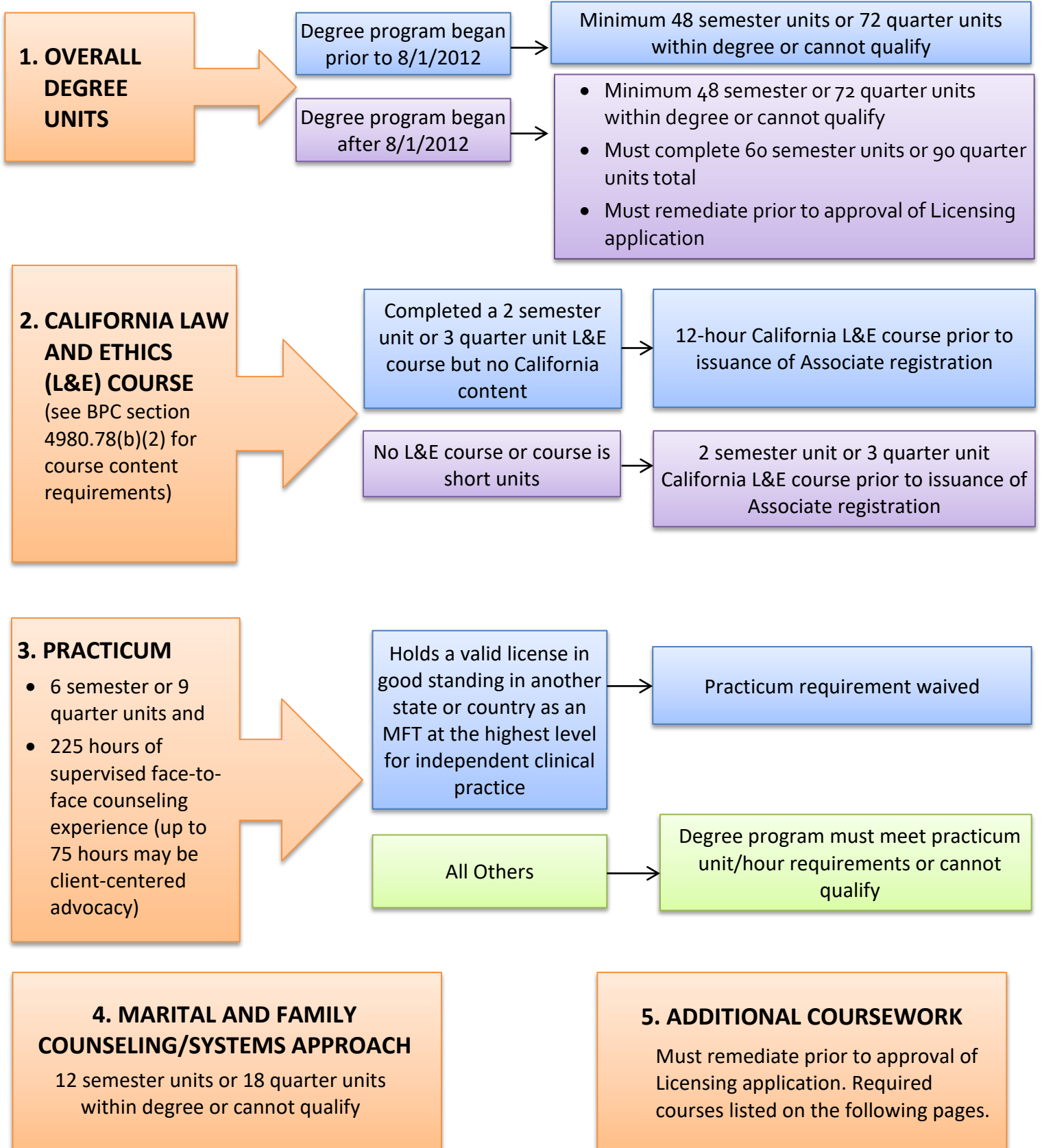
For questions about supervised **experience** requirements, contact: bbs.lmft@dca.ca.gov

3. **QUALIFYING DEGREE:** Your degree must be a master's or doctoral degree obtained from a school that holds a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the USDE, or a school approved by the BPPE. If your degree was obtained outside of the United States, you must obtain a degree evaluation in accordance with [BPC section 4980.76](#). See *Summary of LMFT Out-of-State Education Requirements* on the next page for other minimum degree requirements.
4. **DEGREE REMEDIATION:** You must remediate any deficiencies in your degree program where allowed as specified in [BPC section 4980.78](#). See the chart on the next page for a summary, and the *Application for Licensure* for details.
5. **ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK:** You must complete coursework in accordance with BPC sections [4980.78 and 4980.81](#), some of which must be California-specific. See the chart beginning on page 6 for details. Courses may be taken from a school that holds a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the USDE, a school approved by the BPPE, or an acceptable continuing education provider. Undergraduate coursework cannot be accepted. If it will take you a significant amount of time to complete your coursework, you may want to consider registering as an [Associate](#) while you are taking the courses as it will allow you to work as a therapist in California under supervision.

If you are unsure whether your degree or coursework qualifies (or is deficient), submit your [Associate Marriage and Family Therapist Registration Application](#) or *Application for Licensure* and fee, and we will provide you with the results of the evaluation.

For questions about **educational** requirements, contact: bbs.amft@dca.ca.gov

Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE



5. ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK
LMFT Out-of-State Applicants
Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Note: 1 semester unit = 15 hours; 1 quarter unit = 10 hours
1 semester unit = 1.5 quarter units

Course	Length	Content Required
a) Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention	6 hours of coursework or applied experience	All applicants submitting an application on or after January 1, 2021 (otherwise will be required upon license renewal). See BPC section 4980.396
b) Mental Health Recovery Oriented Care and Methods of Service Delivery	45 hours or 3 semester units	Instruction must cover principles of mental health recovery-oriented care and methods of service delivery in recovery-oriented practice environments, including structured meetings with various consumers and family members of consumers of mental health services to enhance understanding of their experience of mental illness, treatment and recovery. See BPC section 4980.81 .
c) California Cultures and the Social and Psychological Implications of Socioeconomic Position	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must include an understanding of various California cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position. See BPC section 4980.81 .
d) Diagnosis, Assessment, Prognosis and Treatment of Mental Disorders	2 semester units	Must include diagnosis, assessment, prognosis and treatment of mental disorders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe mental disorders • Promising mental health practices • Evidence-based practices See BPC section 4980.81 .
e) Psychological Testing	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must cover psychological testing. See BPC section 4980.81 .
f) Psychopharmacology	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must cover psychopharmacology. See BPC section 4980.81 .

5. ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK *(continued)*

LMFT Out-of-State Applicants

Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Course		Content Required
g) Developmental Issues from Infancy to Old Age	15 hours or 1 semester unit <i>(if deficient in a single topic listed, may remediate by taking 3 hours of instruction on each missing topic)</i>	Instruction must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Issues from infancy to old age • The effects of developmental issues on individuals, couples and family relationships. • The psychological, psychotherapeutic, and health implications of developmental issues and their effects. • The understanding of the impact that personal and social insecurity, social stress, low educational levels, inadequate housing and malnutrition have on human development. See BPC section 4980.81 .
h) Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting in California	7 hours	Instruction must include detailed knowledge of the California Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting Act (CANRA). It must also include assessment and methods of reporting of sexual assault, neglect, severe neglect, general neglect, willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment, corporal punishment or injury, and abuse in out-of-home care. The training shall also include physical and behavioral indicators of abuse, crisis counseling techniques, community resources, rights and responsibilities of reporting, consequences of failure to report, caring for a child's needs after a report is made, sensitivity to previously abused children and adults, and implications and methods of treatment for children and adults. See BPC sections 28 and 4980.81 and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 1807.2
i) Aging, Long Term Care and Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse, End-of-Life and Grief	10 hours	Instruction must cover aging and long-term care, including biological, social, cognitive and psychological aspects of aging, end-of-life, grief, and instruction on the assessment and reporting of, as well as treatment related to, elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect. See BPC section 4980.81 .
j) Spousal/Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection and Intervention	15 hours	Instruction must cover spousal and partner abuse assessment, detection, intervention strategies, and same-gender abuse dynamics. See BPC section 4980.81 .

5. ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK *(continued)*

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Path B – LICENSURE BY EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Course		Content Required
k) Multicultural Development and Cross-Cultural Interaction	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must include experiences of race, ethnicity, class, spirituality, sexual orientation, gender, and disability, and their incorporation into the psychotherapeutic process. See BPC section 4980.81 .
l) Human Sexuality	10 hours	Instruction must include the study of the physiological, psychological, and social cultural variables associated with sexual behavior, gender identity, and the assessment and treatment of psychosexual dysfunction. See BPC sections 25 and 4980.81 and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 1807
m) Substance Use Disorders	15 hours	See BPC section 4980.81 .
n) Co-Occurring Disorders and Addiction	15 hours	See BPC section 4980.81 .
o) Miscellaneous Content	No specific number of hours required, but content must be adequately covered within the applicant's coursework	<p>Instruction must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childbirth, child rearing, parenting and step-parenting • Marriage, divorce and blended families • Cultural factors relevant to abuse of partners and family members • Poverty and deprivation • Financial and social stress • Effects of trauma • The psychological, psychotherapeutic, community and health implications of the matters and life events that arise in marriage and family relationships within a variety of California cultures <p>See BPC section 4980.81.</p>