

**Chapter 18.225 RCW**  
**MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**  
**THERAPISTS, SOCIAL WORKERS**

**RCW 18.225.090**

**Issuance of license -- Requirements.**

(1) The secretary shall issue a license to any applicant who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the secretary that the applicant meets the following education and experience requirements for the applicant's practice area.

(a) Licensed social work classifications:

(i) Licensed advanced social worker:

(A) Graduation from a master's or doctorate social work educational program accredited by the council on social work education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards;

(B) Successful completion of an approved examination;

**(C) 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 supervision 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; and**

(D) Successful completion of continuing education requirements of thirty-six hours, with six in professional ethics.

(ii) Licensed independent clinical social worker:

(A) 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;

(B) Successful completion of an approved examination;

**(C) 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 who has been licensed or certified for at least five years and who has had at least one year of experience in supervising the clinical social work practice of others, 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 meeting the qualifications under this subsection (1)(a)(ii)(C); 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; and**

(D) Successful completion of continuing education requirements of thirty-six hours, with six in professional ethics.

(b) Licensed mental health counselor:

(i) Graduation from a master's or doctoral level educational program in mental health counseling or a related discipline from a college or university approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards;

(ii) Successful completion of an approved examination;

**(iii) 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 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, and includes a minimum of one thousand two hundred hours of direct counseling with individuals, couples, families, or groups; and**

(iv) Successful completion of continuing education requirements of thirty-six hours, with six in professional ethics.

**(c) Licensed marriage and family therapist:**

(i) Graduation from a master's degree or doctoral degree educational program in marriage and family therapy or graduation from an educational program in an allied field equivalent to a master's degree or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards;

(ii) Successful passage of an approved examination;

**(iii) 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 :**

(A) 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

(B) At least two hundred hours of qualified supervision with a 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.

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; and

(iv) Successful completion of continuing education requirements of thirty-six hours, with six in professional ethics.

(2) The department shall establish by rule what constitutes adequate proof of meeting the criteria.

(3) In addition, applicants shall be subject to the grounds for denial of a license or issuance of a conditional license under chapter [18.130 RCW](#).