

Senate Bill 119

By: Senators Walker of the 22nd and Hill of the 4th

AS PASSED

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the
 2 "Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists Licensing
 3 Law," so as to provide for changes in the definitions of professional counseling and marriage
 4 and family therapy; to provide for licensure of master's in psychology graduates as
 5 professional counselors; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
 6 other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Chapter 10A of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Professional
 10 Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists Licensing Law," is
 11 amended by striking paragraphs (8) and (10) of Code Section 43-10A-3, relating to
 12 definitions, and inserting in their respective places the following:

13 "(8) 'Marriage and family therapy' means that specialty which evaluates and treats
 14 emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, affective, or
 15 behavioral, resolves intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, and changes perception,
 16 attitudes, and behavior; all within the context of marital and family systems. Marriage
 17 and family therapy includes, without being limited to, individual, group, couple, sexual,
 18 family, and divorce therapy. Marriage and family therapy involves an applied
 19 understanding of the dynamics of marital and family systems, including individual
 20 psychodynamics, the use of assessment instruments that evaluate marital and family
 21 functioning, designing and recommending a course of treatment, and the use of
 22 psychotherapy and counseling."

23 "(10) 'Professional counseling' means that specialty which utilizes counseling techniques
 24 based on principles, methods, and procedures of counseling that assist people in
 25 identifying and resolving personal, social, vocational, intrapersonal and interpersonal
 26 concerns; utilizes counseling and psychotherapy to evaluate, ~~and treat,~~ and recommend
 27 a course of treatment for emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether

1 cognitive, behavioral, or affective, provided that the counselor shall have training and
 2 experience working with people with mental illness, mental retardation, or substance
 3 abuse; administers and interprets educational and vocational assessment instruments and
 4 other tests which the professional counselor is qualified to employ by virtue of education,
 5 training, and experience; utilizes information, and community resources, and goal setting
 6 for personal, social, or vocational development; utilizes individual and group techniques
 7 for facilitating problem solving, decision making, and behavior change; utilizes
 8 functional assessment and vocational planning and guidance for persons requesting
 9 assistance in adjustment to a disability or disabling condition; utilizes referral for persons
 10 who request counseling services; performs service planning; and utilizes and interprets
 11 counseling research."

12 SECTION 2.

13 Said chapter is further amended by striking paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section
 14 43-10A-11, relating to requirements for licensure in professional counseling, and inserting
 15 in its place the following:

16 "(1) For licensure as an associate professional counselor, a master's degree from a
 17 recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content or
 18 in a program of applied psychology, which degree includes a supervised internship or
 19 practicum as part of the degree program and registration with the board of an acceptable
 20 contract for obtaining the post-master's experience under direction and supervision
 21 required for licensure as a professional counselor; and".

22 SECTION 3.

23 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 43-10A-11, relating to requirements for
 24 licensure for professional counseling, by striking the period at the end of subparagraph
 25 (a)(2)(D) and inserting in its place "; or" and by adding a new subparagraph (a)(2)(E) to read
 26 as follows:

27 "(E) A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program of
 28 applied psychology with supervised internship or practicum and four years of
 29 post-master's directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the board.
 30 Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement
 31 as part of the degree program. Supervision of the practicum or internship and the
 32 post-master's directed experience shall be provided by a supervisor, as defined in
 33 paragraph (16) of Code Section 43-10A-3, except that such supervision may be
 34 provided all or in part by a psychologist or, before January 1, 2004, by a person with

1 a master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program of applied
2 psychology."

3 **SECTION 4.**

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