



# MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

## **\*\*IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING UNLICENSED PRACTICE\*\***

### For LCADC, LCMFT, LCPAT, and LCPC

The practice of professional counseling and therapy without a valid credential is prohibited.<sup>1</sup>

If you are currently providing professional counseling or therapy services to the public (with or without supervision) and you do not hold an appropriate license or certificate issued by the Board, you must immediately discontinue providing counseling or therapy services and apply to the Board for the appropriate license or certificate.

All Practitioners who do not currently hold a CLINICAL LICENSE issued by the Board, and all Supervisors please be advised of the following:

#### **Internships**

An Internship is part of the graduate curriculum of the college or university in which the student is enrolled. A graduate student participates in an Internship BEFORE the award of the graduate degree. The Internship DOES NOT continue after the award of the degree.

A college graduate, who has earned a graduate degree, is not considered an intern and may not provide counseling or therapy services to the public, with or without a Board approved supervisor.

Authority: H-O § 17-301 (b) (1) A student working under the supervision of a licensed mental health care provider while pursuing a supervised course of study in counseling that the Board approves as qualifying training and experience under this title, may practice without a license issued by the Board.

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#### **Supervised Clinical Experience Hours**

Supervised clinical experience hours obtained after the award of the graduate degree and before the issuance of the appropriate graduate license or certificate, with or without Board supervision, is unlicensed practice, subject to disciplinary action by the Board.

Supervised clinical experience hours obtained AFTER the award of the graduate degree CANNOT be applied toward the remaining hours required for a clinical license UNLESS the individual holds the appropriate graduate license or certificate issued by the Board, i.e., LGADC (or certain alcohol and drug counselor certificates), LGMFT, LGPAT, or LGPC.

In addition to holding the appropriate graduate license or certificate, the supervised clinical experience hours MUST be obtained under a Board approved supervisor.

Authority: H-O § 17-301(a) states, an individual may not practice, attempt to practice, or offer to practice clinical alcohol and drug counseling, clinical marriage and family therapy, clinical professional art therapy, or clinical professional counseling in the State unless licensed by the Board.

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<sup>1</sup> See Title 17 of the Health Occupations (“H-O”) Article, hereinafter, the Maryland Professional Counselors and Therapists Practice Act (the “Practice Act”).

### **Graduate License Issued by the Board is Required**

Practitioners holding a graduate counseling or therapy degree may not practice counseling or therapy as defined in the Practice Act, in the time period after graduation and before clinical licensure UNLESS the appropriate graduate license or certificate IS FIRST issued TO YOU by the Board.

Authority: H-O § 17-309 sets forth the minimum qualifications to qualify for the appropriate graduate license. Section (g) strictly prohibits “practice without approval from the Board.” H-O § 17-602 states that unless an individual has been approved by the Board to practice as a licensed graduate alcohol and drug counselor, a licensed graduate professional counselor, a licensed graduate marriage and family therapist, or a licensed graduate professional art therapist the individual may not: ... (3) Represent to the public that the individual is approved by the Board to practice alcohol and drug counseling, professional counseling, marriage and family therapy, or professional art therapy...

Unlicensed practice includes representing oneself as “pre-licensed”, “pending” license, and any other nomenclature not listed in the Practice Act.

### **Board Approved Supervisors**

Any individual licensed by the Board who provides clinical supervision to an unlicensed individual, outside of an Internship as defined above, may be subject to disciplinary action by the Board.

The Practice Act and COMAR 10.58 set forth the requirements for licensure for the credentials issued by the Board. Each credential requires that an individual obtain a minimum number of hours of supervised clinical experience, under a Board-approved supervisor, before a graduate or clinical license may be issued.<sup>2</sup>

### **Discontinuation of Practice and Applications to the Board**

Apply for the appropriate license/certification immediately.

Applications will be processed as expeditiously as possible.

Make arrangements and referrals for your clients while your application is pending with the Board.

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<sup>2</sup> Please reference the applicable COMAR regulations for the total number of supervised clinical experience hours required for each clinical license.