

Prior law defined "marriage and family therapy" to mean the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the assessment and treatment of individuals, couples, and families.

New law amends prior law and defines "marriage and family therapy" to mean the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the prevention, diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders in an individual and relational disorders in couples and families.

Prior law defined "practice of marriage and family therapy" to mean the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy services to individuals, couples, and families, singly or in groups, whether such services are offered directly to the general public or through either public or private organizations for a fee, monetary or otherwise.

New law amends prior law and defines "practice of marriage and family therapy" to mean the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy and psychotherapy services, limited to prevention, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental, emotional, behavioral, relational, and addiction disorders to individuals, couples, and families, singly or in groups, whether such services are offered directly to the general public or through either public or private organizations for a fee, monetary or otherwise in accordance with professional training as provided pursuant to prior law and code of ethics/behavior involving the application of principles, methods, or procedures of the marriage and family therapy profession.

Prior law provides for the licensure of marriage and family therapist.

New law, effective Jan 1, 2018, requires any licensed marriage and family therapist who engages in the diagnosis of individuals to furnish satisfactory evidence to the La. Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners ("board") that he has completed the standard training in the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and a minimum of six credit hours in diagnostic psychopathology, where students are taught to systematically collect and analyze data based on one or both of the two standard diagnostic systems employed, International Classification of Diseases, current revision, or the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, current edition. New law provides that licensed marriage and family therapists who have satisfied all other criteria for licensure as required by the board shall be allowed to diagnose individuals upon demonstration of competency through continuing education or other measures as defined by the board.

New law provides that nothing shall be construed to authorize any person licensed under the provisions of prior law to assess, diagnose, or provide treatment to any individual suffering from a serious mental illness, as defined in prior law, when medication may be indicated, except when a licensed marriage and family therapist, in accordance with best practices, consults and collaborates with a practitioner who holds a license or permit with the La. State Board of Medical Examiners or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed by the La. State Board of Nursing who is certified as a psychiatric nurse practitioner.

Effective August 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 37:1103(6) and (9); adds R.S. 37:1116(E) and (F))