

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT PROPOSED POLICY TO THE
THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,
SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS,
POLICY VIII. GEORGIA LAW EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022 - COUNSELORS
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Policy VIII. Georgia Law Effective July 1, 2022 - Counselors

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter “Board”) proposes a new policy, Policy VIII. Georgia Law Effective July 1, 2022 – Counselors (herein after “proposed policy”).

This notice, an exact copy of the proposed policy, and a synopsis of the proposed policy are being sent to all persons who have requested, in writing, to be included on a notification list. This notice, an exact copy of the proposed policy, and a synopsis of the proposed policy may also be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. The documents will also be available for review on the Board’s website at <https://sos.ga.gov/board-professional-counselors-social-workers-and-marriage-family-therapists>. Copies may also be requested by contacting the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

The public will have an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed new policy at a public hearing to be held at **10:45 a.m., Friday, September 9, 2022** in the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. If the Board office remains closed due to the public health emergency (COVID-19), the hearing will be held via teleconference. Please see Board’s website for information on how to join the meeting via teleconference.

Interested parties affected by the policy may submit written comments to the Board no later than close of business on Friday, September 2, 2022. Written comments must be legible, signed, contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number, email address), and addressed to Gabriel Sterling, Interim Division Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. Written comments may be faxed to (866) 888-7127.

During the public hearing, anyone may present data, make a statement, comment, or offer a viewpoint or argument, whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements will be limited to five (5) minutes per person.

The Board voted to post this Notice of Intent at its meeting on Friday, July 22, 2022. The Board also voted that the formulation and adoption of this policy does not impose an excessive regulatory cost on any licensee, and any cost to comply with the proposed policy amendment cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. 43-10A-5(c) and the need to avoid Constitutional concerns with respect to individuals due process rights. Additionally, the Board voted that it was neither legal nor feasible in meeting the objectives of O.C.G.A. 43-10A-5(c) and the need to avoid Constitutional concerns with respect to individuals due process rights to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(a)(3)(A), (B), (C) and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of Counseling.

According to the Department of Law of the State of Georgia, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists has the authority to adopt proposed Policy VIII pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. 43-10A-5(c) and the need to avoid Constitutional concerns with respect to individuals due process rights.

For further information, contact the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

This notice is given in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4.

This the 8th day of August, 2022.



Gabriel Sterling
Interim Division Director
Professional Licensing Boards Division

Posted: 8/8/2022

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED POLICY OF TO THE
THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS,
SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, POLICY VIII.
GEORGIA LAW EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022 - COUNSELORS**

Purpose: The purpose of the proposed new policy adoption is the need to avoid Constitutional concerns with respect to individuals due process rights.

Policy VIII. Georgia Law Effective July 1, 2022 – Counselors

A. Applications and Licensure received, and date stamped on or before June 30, 2022:

Individuals who submitted an application for initial licensure as an **Associate Professional Counselor or Licensed Professional Counselor (APC/LPC)** which was **received and date stamped** by the Professional Licensing Board division staff **on or before June 30, 2022**, shall be required to meet the prior statutory licensure requirements and Board rules for education and directed work experience in effect prior to July 1, 2022. Specifically, in addition to other requirements, to include those previously outlined in O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-11(a), the following shall be required:

For licensure as an Associate Professional Counselor:

- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content or in a program of applied psychology, which degree includes a supervised internship or practicum as part of the degree program and registration with the board of an acceptable contract for obtaining the post-master's experience under direction and supervision required for licensure as a professional counselor.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (not previously licensed as an APC):

- A doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content and requires at least one-year of a supervised internship in a work setting acceptable to the Board; or
- A specialist degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content with supervised internship or practicum and

two-years of post-master's directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board; or

- A master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or in a program that is primarily counseling in content from a recognized educational institution with supervised internship or practicum and three years of post-masters directed experience providing rehabilitation services in a rehabilitation setting under supervision. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum or internship placement as part of the degree program; or
- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program: or
- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program of applied psychology with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (previously licensed as an APC)

Individuals submitting an application for a **Licensed Professional Counselor license who were previously licensed by the Board as an Associate Professional Counselor based on an application for APC licensure received and date stamped on or before June 30, 2022**, and their educational and directed work experience requirements having already been approved by the Board, shall not be subject to the new statutory provisions for the educational degree or number of years of directed work experience under supervision. Their application for a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) license shall be reviewed and processed pursuant only to the statutory requirements and Board rules in place **on and before June 30, 2022, regardless of their date of application**. Specifically, the statutory requirements to become licensed as a Licensed Professional Counselor, for these referenced individuals, shall include the following:

- A master's degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content or in a program of applied psychology, with supervised internship or practicum and four years of post-masters directed experience under supervision in a setting acceptable to the Board. Up to one year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum placement as part of the degree program.

B. Applications and Licensure received, and date stamped on or after July 1, 2022:

Individuals submitting an application for an initial license as an **Associate Professional Counselor or Licensed Professional Counselor (APC/LPC)** **received and date stamped** by the Professional Licensing Board Division **on or after July 1, 2022** shall be required to meet the new statutory provisions for licensure (and any Board rules promulgated after July 1, 2022). Specifically, these applicants, in addition to other requirements outlined in O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-11(a), must demonstrate the following:

For licensure as an Associate Professional Counselor:

- A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of **at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours** with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program; and
- Registration with the Board of an acceptable contract for obtaining the post-degree experience under direction and supervision that is required for licensure as a professional counselor.

For licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor:

- A minimum of an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited program in clinical counseling or counseling psychology that consists of **at least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours** with an approved supervised internship or practicum that is primarily counseling in content as part of the degree program; and
- **Two years** of post-degree experience under direction and supervision in a work setting acceptable to the Board; or
- A doctoral degree from a recognized educational institution in a program that is primarily counseling in content and requires at least one-year of a supervised internship in a work setting acceptable to the Board.

Authority: O.C.G.A. 43-10A-5(c) and the need to avoid Constitutional concerns with respect to individuals due process rights.