

ACT 185

S.B. NO. 2647

A Bill for an Act Relating to Mental Health Counselors.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the current educational requirements for application for licensure as a mental health counselor are overly specific, which has prevented some otherwise qualified individuals from gaining licensure.

The purpose of this Act is to amend the practicum experience qualifications for licensure as a mental health counselor to accommodate different coursework structures, while ensuring the overall educational requirements remain at an appropriate level.

SECTION 2. Section 453D-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) An applicant shall be issued a license by the department if the applicant provides satisfactory evidence to the department that the applicant is qualified for licensure pursuant to the requirements of this chapter and meets the following qualifications:

- (1) A master’s degree or doctoral degree from an accredited educational institution in counseling or in an allied field related to the practice of mental health counseling that includes or is supplemented by

graduate level course work in counseling comprising a minimum of forty-eight semester hours or seventy-two quarter hours in the following course areas, with a minimum of three semester hours or five quarter hours in each course area as indicated below:

- (A) Human growth and development, including but not limited to the study of life span development, strategies to facilitate that development and transitions, theories of learning and personality development, and human behavior to include crisis, disabilities, addictive behavior, and environmental factors;
  - (B) Social and cultural foundations, including but not limited to the study of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society, including characteristics of diverse groups that may include but are not limited to age, race, religious or sexual preference, physical disability, ethnicity and culture, gender, socioeconomics, intellectual ability, and individual, family, and group strategies with diverse populations;
  - (C) Counseling theories and applications, including but not limited to counseling and consultation, including both individual and systems perspectives, interviewing, assessment, and counseling skills, as well as applying principles, methods, and theories of counseling, treatment and counseling of mental and emotional disorders, and educational techniques aimed at preventing such disorders with individuals and families;
  - (D) Group theory and practice, including but not limited to principles of group dynamics, group process, group leadership styles, theories and methods of group counseling, and the application of theory to the group processes;
  - (E) Career and lifestyle development, including but not limited to the study of vocational development theories and decision-making models, assessment instruments, and techniques, types, sources, and uses of occupational and educational information systems, career development applications, and career counseling processes, techniques, and resources;
  - (F) Appraisal of human behavior, including but not limited to assessment and diagnosis of disorders with an emphasis on DSM-IV categories, and an understanding of these disorders relative to the counseling context;
  - (G) Tests and measurements, including but not limited to theoretical and historical bases for assessment techniques, assessment methods, including analysis of various types of tests to select, administer, interpret, and use assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques in counseling;
  - (H) Research and program evaluation, including but not limited to research design and methods, statistical analysis, principles, practices, and application of needs assessment, and program evaluation; and
  - (I) Professional orientation and ethics, including but not limited to the history of the helping profession, professional roles and functions, ethical standards, confidentiality, professional organizations, and the public policy process, including advocacy on behalf of the profession and its clientele;
- (2) At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least ~~three~~ six semester hours or ~~five~~ ten quarter hours ~~[per academic term]~~ in a mental

- health counseling setting with three hundred hours of supervised client contact; the practicum experience shall be completed under the clinical supervision of a person who is licensed as a mental health counselor, psychologist, clinical social worker, advanced practice registered nurse with a specialty in mental health, marriage and family therapist, or physician with a specialty in psychiatry;
- (3) Completion of not less than three thousand hours of post-graduate experience in the practice of mental health counseling with one hundred hours of face-to-face clinical supervision that shall be completed in no less than two years and in no more than four years, under the clinical supervision of a person who is a licensed mental health counselor, psychologist, clinical social worker, advanced practice registered nurse with a specialty in mental health, marriage and family therapist, or physician with a specialty in psychiatry; and
  - (4) Passed the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification.”

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.

(Approved July 10, 2018.)