135-5-.01 Associate Professional Counselors. Amended.

Pursuant to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated 43-10A-11, the requirements for licensure and the restrictions on practice for Associate Professional Counselors are as follows:

(a) **Definitions.**

1. “**The Practice of Professional Counseling**” means practice in that specialty which utilizes counseling and psychotherapy to evaluate and treat emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, behavioral, or affective. The practice is further defined in O.C.G.A. 43-10A-3(10).

2. “**Direction**” means the ongoing administrative overseeing by an employer or superior of a Professional Counselor’s work by a director. The director shall be responsible for assuring the quality of the services rendered by that practitioner and shall ensure that qualified supervision or intervention occurs in situations, which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner.

3. “**Director**” means the person who provides direction and who is either the employer of the person who receives direction or is the supervisor in the employment chain of command to the person who receives direction. The Director must be located at the same site where the experience is being acquired.

4. “**Supervision**” means the clinical review, for the purpose of training or teaching, by a supervisor of a Professional Counselor’s interaction with their client(s). The purpose of supervision is to promote the development of the practitioner’s clinical skills. Supervision may include, without being limited to, the review of case presentations, audiotapes, videotapes, and direct observation of the practitioner’s clinical skills. Supervision does not require the supervisor to be on-site with the supervisee. Supervision may be provided pro bono or for a fee.

   (i) **Individual Supervision** means one supervisor meeting with a maximum of two supervisees.

   (ii) **Group Supervision** means one supervisor meeting with a maximum of six supervisees.

5. “**Supervisor**” means a licensed Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist who complies with the ethical standards of practice of their profession with particular attention being paid to prohibited dual relationships. In addition,

   (i) a supervisor who holds a masters degree must have three (3) years of post-licensure experience; and

   (ii) a supervisor who holds a specialist degree must have two (2) years of post-licensure experience; and

   (iii) a supervisor who holds a doctoral degree must have one (1) year of post-licensure experience.

   (iv) however, the Board in its discretion may approve a supervisor whose experience is substantially similar to those stated herein.

   (v) in a supervised practicum or internship which is part of the graduate degree program, either the course instructor of record or the on-site clinical instructor must be a qualified supervisor OR, in the education of rehabilitation counselors, may be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor OR, in an applied psychology program before January 1, 2004,
may be a person with a master's degree from an accredited educational institution in a program of applied psychology.

6. "Directed Experience" means time spent under direction engaging in the practice of Professional Counseling as defined in 135-5-.02(a).

7. “Directed Experience Under Supervision Contract” is a document, obtained from the Board, that defines the employment relationship for the purposes of obtaining the required post-masters directed experience under supervision.

8. “Program Primarily Counseling in Content” and “Program in Applied Psychology” means a course of study at an accredited educational institution consisting of a master’s degree which includes, either as part of the degree program or as additional course work completed prior to, during or after the degree program, the following graduate level courses. An individual course may not be used to fulfill the requirement in more than one content area.

(i) Counseling/Psychotherapy Theory, which includes the principles, concepts, and practice of counseling/psychotherapy and the major models of counseling/psychotherapy.

(ii) A Counseling or Applied Psychology Practicum or Internship as part of the graduate degree program.

(iii) Courses in six (6) of the following nine (9) content areas:

(I) Human Growth and Development, which includes an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels, personality theory, and learning theory, and which may provide a comprehensive overview of the factors, determinants, and stages that pertain to physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development and adaptation from infantile to geriatric stages.

(II) Social and Cultural Foundations, which includes an understanding of societal changes and trends, human roles, societal subgroups, social mores and interaction patterns, and differing lifestyles; OR Core Foundations, a course in one of the following categories: Social, Motivational and Personality Psychology; Learning and Cognition; History of Psychology; Biological Psychology; Indus- trial/Organizational Psychology; Cultural Diversity; or Humanistic/ Phenomenological Psychology.

(III) The Helping Relationship, which includes an understanding of the philosophic bases of helping processes, helper self-understanding and self-development, and the facilitation of client change; OR Advanced Psychotherapy/Intervention Theory, which includes the in-depth study of the major theories, principles, methods and techniques of psychotherapy with individuals, groups or families, focusing on the treatment or prevention of behavior disorders, adjustment problems, psychopathology, or other psychological disturbance.

(IV) Group Dynamics and Group Counseling/Psychotherapy, which includes an understanding of group development, dynamics, and counseling/psychotherapy theories; group leadership styles; group counseling/psychotherapy methods and skills; and other group approaches.

(V) Lifestyle and Career Development, which includes an understanding of career development theories; occupational educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance and education; lifestyle and career decision making; and career development program planning, resources, and evaluation.

(VI) Appraisal/Assessment of Individuals, which includes an understanding of psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal/ assessment; validity and reliability;
psychometric statistics; the selection, administration, scoring and interpretation of various assessment instruments; and the use of appraisal/assessment results in the counseling/psychotherapy process.

(VII) Research Methods and Evaluation, which includes an understanding of types of research, statistics, research report development, research implementation, program evaluation, needs assessment, and ethical and legal considerations in research; OR Research Statistics, which includes an understanding of the theory, analysis and interpretation of manual or computer generated statistical measures.

(VIII) Professional Orientation, which includes an understanding of professional roles, responsibilities, and functions; professional goals and objectives; professional organizations and associations; professional history and trends; ethical and legal standards; professional preparation standards; and professional credentialing.

(IX) Psychopathology, which includes theories, research, descriptive characteristics, categories, dynamics, and etiology of mental, behavioral, cognitive and personality disorders.

(b) Requirements for Licensure.

1. Education. The applicant must have earned a master’s degree in a program primarily counseling in content or in a program of applied psychology, which degree includes a supervised practicum or internship of at least 300 hours which was part of the degree program, from an institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. The applicant must document graduate level coursework from such an accredited institution in order to demonstrate that the degree program is either primarily counseling in content or a program of applied psychology.

2. Registration of a contract for obtaining post-master’s directed experience under supervision. The applicant shall register with the Board an acceptable contract, the Directed Experience Under Supervision Contract, for obtaining the post-master’s experience required for licensure as a Professional Counselor. The applicant is responsible for notifying the Board of any changes in the contract, by submitting a new contract within fourteen (14) days of the change.

(c) Restrictions on Practice.

1. A person who holds a license as an Associate Professional Counselor may only use the title “Associate Professional Counselor.”

2. A person who holds a license as an Associate Professional Counselor may engage in the practice of Professional Counseling, but only under direction and supervision, and only for a period not to exceed five years while obtaining the post-master’s experience and supervision required for licensure as a Professional Counselor.