Does the State require a degree program to include a specific number of credit hours (e.g. 45, 48 or 60 semester credits)? If so, how many credit hours are required?

Yes, Pennsylvania requires 60 credit hours total, with a minimum of 48 credit hours within the awarded masters degree.

What type of institutional or programmatic accreditation is required?

Pennsylvania requires a degree that meets one of the following standards:

1. A planned program of 60 semester hours of graduate coursework which is closely related to marriage and family therapy, including a master’s degree granted on or before June 30, 2009, in marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution or a master’s degree granted on or before June 30, 2009, in a field determined by the board by regulation to be closely related to the practice of marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution, with graduate level coursework in marriage and family therapy acceptable to the board from an accredited educational institution or from a program recognized by a national accrediting agency, and has met specific course requirements.

An applicant with less than a 48 semester or 72 quarter hours master’s degree may qualify for licensure if the master’s degree was completed on or before June 30, 2009. The additional hours needed to reach the required 60 semester hours in marriage and family therapy or a related field may be completed after the granting of the master’s degree. Please be aware that the master’s degree must be from an accredited educational institution, with graduate level coursework in marriage and family therapy from an accredited institution or from a program recognized by a national accrediting agency.

2. A planned program of 60 semester hours of graduate coursework which is closely related to marriage and family therapy, including a 48-semester-hour master’s degree in marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution or a 48-semester-hour master’s degree in a field determined by the board by regulation to be closely related to the practice of marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution, with graduate level coursework in marriage and family therapy acceptable to the board from an accredited educational institution, with graduate level coursework in marriage and family therapy acceptable to the board from an accredited educational institution or from a program recognized by a national accrediting agency and has met specific course requirements.

3. Holds a doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution or holds a doctoral degree in a field determined by the board by regulation to be closely related to the practice of marriage and family therapy from an accredited educational institution with graduate level coursework in marriage and family therapy acceptable to the board from an accredited educational institution.
institution or from a program recognized by a national accrediting agency and has met specific course requirements.

**Does the State require the program to have COAMFTE or CACREP Accreditation?**

Pennsylvania does not require these accreditations.

**Does the State accept a COAMFTE accredited degree without requiring the applicant to list specific courses on the license application?**

No.

**What courses does the State require an applicant to have taken in order to be have met this educational requirement for licensure?**

The following coursework is required according to Pennsylvania regulations:

1. **Human development** (3 courses minimum- 9 semester or 135 didactic contact hours). (i) Courses in this area shall provide knowledge of individual personality development and its normal abnormal manifestations. (ii) Coursework shall cover human development across the life span, including special issues that affect an individual’s development (that is, culture, gender and human sexuality).

2. **Marriage and family studies** (3 courses minimum- 9 semester or 135 didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall be a fundamental introduction to family systems theory.

3. **Marriage and family therapy** (3 courses minimum- 9 semester or 135 didactic contact hours). (i) Courses in this area shall have a major focus on family systems theory and systemic therapeutic interventions. (ii) This area shall provide a substantive understanding of the major theories of systems change and the applied practices evolving from each theoretical orientation.

4. **Professional studies** (1 course minimum-3 semester or 45 didactic contact hours). (i) Courses in this area shall contribute to the professional development of the therapist. (ii) Areas of study shall include the therapist’s legal responsibilities and liabilities, professional ethics as a marriage and family therapist, professional socialization, and the role of the professional organization, licensure or certification legislation, independent practice and inter-professional cooperation.

5. **Research** (1 course minimum-3 semester or 45 didactic contact hours). Courses in this area shall assist students in understanding and performing research.

6. **Practicum** (minimum 1 year, 300 hours of supervised direct client contact with individuals, couples and families). (1 year is equal to 3 semesters).

**How many client contact hours must a student obtain during practicum, and how many of these must be relational hours?**

A student is required to complete 300 supervised direct client contact hours with individuals, couples, families. Pennsylvania does not require a specific number of relational hours.
How many supervision hours must a student obtain during practicum?

Pennsylvania does not specify the number of required supervision during practicum.

What is the required length of practicum in this State?

Pennsylvania requires a minimum of 1 year practicum (One year is equal to three semesters).
Post-Graduation Requirements

What are the minimum number of years of clinical experience a graduate needs to obtain a license, the minimum number of client contact hours, and how many of these hours must be relational hours?

For an applicant with a masters degree, Pennsylvania requires at least 1,500 hours involve direct client. The supervised clinical experience shall be completed in no less than 2 years and no more than 6 years, except that no less than 500 hours and no more than 1,800 hours may be credited in any 12-month period.

For an applicant with a doctoral degree, Pennsylvania requires the completion of 2400 hours of supervised clinical experience. 1500 hours shall be supervised by a supervisor meeting the required qualifications.

Additional Note:

At least one-half of the experience (1,500 hours) shall consist of providing services in one or more of the following areas:

(i) Assessment
(ii) Couples therapy
(iii) Family Therapy
(iv) Other systems interventions (psycho-education)
(v) Consultation
(vi) Individual therapy
(vii) Group therapy

Please note the above 7 experiences should involve direct client contact. The remainder of the clinical experience must be related to work with clients. Example: case documentation and recordkeeping activities; supervision of another marriage and family therapist related to practice; group or peer supervision related to practice; court testimony related to work with client(s); advocacy on behalf of client(s); other activities that involve, support or enhance work with clients. Please be advised that administrative duties cannot be counted towards the 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience. Example: administrative supervision of another individual, completing human resource and/or budget documentation, etc.

What are the minimum number of experience hours required by this State?

Pennsylvania requires an applicant for licensure to obtain 3000 hours of experience after graduating.
What are the minimum number of post-graduate supervision hours required by this State, and how many of these hours must be individual supervision?

Pennsylvania requires that the supervisor, or one to whom supervisory responsibilities have been delegated, shall meet with the supervisee for a minimum of 2 hours for every 40 hours of supervised clinical experience. At least 1 of the 2 hours shall be with the supervisee individually and in person, and 1 of the 2 hours may be with the supervisee in a group setting and in person. A total of 150 hours of supervision must be completed. At least 75 hours must be individual supervision and the other 75 hours may be group supervision. Example: For every 40 hours of clinical experience you must have at least 1 hour of individual supervision and 1 hour may be group supervision. Example: If working 20 hours per week – 1 week you must have 1 hour of individual supervision and the next week you may have one hour of group supervision.

The supervised clinical experience shall be completed in no less than 2 years and no more than 6 years, except that no less than 600 hours and no more than 1,800 hours may be credited in any 12-month period.

Additional Notes:

Supervised work activity will be counted toward satisfying the experience requirement only if it takes place in a single setting for at least 30 hours per week but no more than 50 hours per week during at least a 3 month period or at least 15 hours per week for a period of at least 6 months.

What are the State requirements for an individual to be qualified as a supervisor?

To qualify as a supervisor, an individual shall meet one of the following criteria:

(1) Hold a license as an MFT and have received certification as an approved supervisor or supervisor-in-training by the AAMFT.

(2) Hold a license and have at least a master’s degree in a related field, and have 5 years’ experience within the last 10 years in that field.

Additional Note:

For supervised clinical experience completed after January 1, 2010, 1500 hours must be completed under an individual who holds a current license as a marriage and family therapist and has received certification as an approved supervisor or supervisor-in-training by the AAMFT and the other 1500 hours may be completed under an individual who holds a current license and has at least a master’s degree in a related field and has 5 years of experience within the last 10 years in that field.

Supervised clinical experience completed in another state may be counted towards meeting the Pennsylvania supervised clinical experience requirements as long as the experience meets Pennsylvania requirements.
A supervisor shall supervise no more than 6 supervisees at the same time. If this provision creates an undue hardship on a supervisee, the supervisor and supervisee may request an exception to this provision.

**Does the state require the National Examination offered by the Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB)?**

Yes.

**Does the State have specific training requirements beyond the graduate degree?**

None are noted in Pennsylvania.

**Can an individual with a criminal history request board review before actually having to apply for licensure?**

It is unclear if Pennsylvania will review these requests.

**Additional Note:**

The applicant for licensure in Pennsylvania must not been convicted of a felony, which shall include a judgment, an admission of guilt or a plea of nolo contendere, under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act or of an offense under the laws of another jurisdiction, which, if committed in this Commonwealth, would be a felony under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, unless the following apply:

(i) At least 10 years have elapsed from the date of conviction.

(ii) The applicant satisfactorily demonstrates to the Board that the applicant has made significant progress in personal rehabilitation since the conviction, so that licensure of the applicant would not be expected to create a substantial risk of harm to the health and safety of the applicant’s clients or the public or a substantial risk of further criminal violations.

(3) The applicant has submitted an application for licensure on forms furnished by the Board.

(4) The applicant has submitted the required application licensure fee by check or money order, payable to the “Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.”

(5) The applicant has submitted two certificates of recommendation on forms furnished by the Board.

(6) The applicant has submitted an affirmation signed by the applicant verifying the information on the application.
How can someone contact the Board in this state?

State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors
P.O. Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649
Phone: (717) 783-1389
Fax: (717) 787-7769

Pennsylvania Board Website:
http://www.dos.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_board_of_social_workers%2C_marriage_and_family_therapists_and_professional_counselors/12524

Email: ST-SOCIALWORK@pa.gov

Every state has a "definitions" section of their rules and/or statutes. Are there any definitions that might be important for an applicant to pay attention? (Note: this is not a complete list; please review definitions in your state)

None are noted in Pennsylvania.