State Licensure Statutes, Regulations, Forms, and Policies not only change on a regular basis, but may contain contradictory information. It is the responsibility of any individual who may review this document to check with their licensure board regarding all requirements and policies regarding the licensure process.

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, Virginia requires 60 credit hours of graduate study in counseling, to include a graduate degree in marriage & family therapy, or a discipline related to marriage & family therapy from a regionally accredited college or university.

What type of institutional or programmatic accreditation is required?

Virginia requires a degree that meets one of the following standards:
Programs that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), or by the Commission of Accreditation for Marriage & Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE), are recognized as meeting the definition of graduate degree programs that prepare individuals to practice marriage & family therapy or a discipline related to the practice of marriage & family therapy.

The requirements for non-CACREP and non-COAMFTE accredited programs are:
1. There must be a sequence of academic study with the expressed intent to prepare students to practice marriage and family therapy as documented by the institution;
2. There must be an identifiable marriage and family therapy training faculty and an identifiable body of students who complete that sequence of academic study; and
3. The academic unit must have clear authority and primary responsibility for the core and specialty areas.

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

While Virginia does encourage these accreditations, they do not require these accreditations.

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

Yes.

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

Virginia requires the following course content areas. One course may count for one content area only:
1. Marriage & Family Studies (6 credit hours minimum)
2. Marriage & Family Therapy (6 credit hours minimum)
3. Human Development (3 credit hours minimum)
4. Professional Identity, Function and Ethics (3 credit hours minimum)
5. Research (3 credit hours minimum)
6. Assessment & Treatment (3 credit hours minimum)

7. Supervised internship of 600 hours to include 240 hours of direct client contact. Three hundred of the internship hours and 120 of the direct client contact hours shall be with couples and families.

** All coursework reviews conducted during the application for licensure process are based on the regulations that were in effect for applicants at the time they began their first supervision. It is the applicant’s responsibility to stay aware of regulatory changes that may affect the results of the review.

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

Virginia requires that a student document 600 supervised internship hours to include 240 direct client contact hours. Three hundred (300) of the internship hours and 120 of the direct client contact hours shall be with couples and families.

** How many supervision hours must a student obtain during practicum?**

Virginia does not specify the number of supervision hours required during practicum/internship.

** What is the required length of practicum in this State?**

Virginia does not specify a required length of practicum.
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?

Virginia requires 2,000 hours of direct client contact to be documented within the required 4,000 hour residency with 1,000 hours of the required 2,000 hours being with couples, families or both.

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

Virginia requires an applicant for licensure to obtain 4000 hours supervised residency in the practice of marriage & family therapy after graduating. This period is called a "residency".

What are the minimum number of post-graduate supervision hours required by this State, and how many of these hours must be individual supervision?

Virginia requires at least 200 hours of individual supervision with the supervisor in the practice of marriage & family therapy. A minimum of 100 hours of the supervision shall be rendered by a Marriage and Family Therapist.

Additional Notes:

Individuals in residency shall receive a minimum of one hour and a maximum of four hours of supervision for every 40 hours of supervised work experience. No more than 100 hours of the supervision may be acquired through group supervision, with the group consisting of no more than six residents. One hour of group supervision is equivalent to one hour of individual supervision.

Residents in all practice settings MUST register their supervisor prior to beginning supervision. Lost supervisory hours due to not registering a supervisor will not be the responsibility of the Board.

Graduate internship hours may count toward the residency requirements (maximum of 900 hours for CACREP or COAMFTE and a maximum of 600 hours for other programs) as long as the clinical or faculty supervisor meets the Virginia requirements for supervisors, and there were 20 hours of individual on-site supervision and 20 hours of individual or group off-site supervision. If an individual wishes to have their internship hours considered toward residency they must have the Verification of Internship Hours Towards the Residency Form completed by an Internship supervisor who holds a qualifying license.

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

Virginia requires that supervision must be conducted by an individual who has two (2) years post-licensure clinical experience and has received professional training in supervision, consisting of three credit hours or 4.0 quarter hours in graduate-level coursework in supervision or at least 20 hours of continuing education in supervision offered by a provider approved under Virginia rules and regulations. The supervisor must be licensed as a professional counselor, marriage and family therapist, clinical psychologist, clinical social worker or psychiatrist in the jurisdiction where the supervision is being provided.
Additional Notes:

The supervisor shall complete Quarterly Evaluations to be given to the resident at the end of each three-month period. These forms will be held by the resident and will be submitted with the licensure application.

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

Yes. Applicants who fail the examination twice in succession shall document completion of 45 clock hours of additional education or training acceptable to the Board addressing the areas of deficiency as reported in the examination results prior to obtaining board approval to sit for re-examination.

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

None are noted in Virginia.

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

It is unclear if Virginia has a process to pre-approve applications.

How can someone contact the Board in this state?

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Virginia Board of Counseling

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Website: https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Counseling/default.htm

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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 Virginia.