

This guide is for Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) applicants with a degree earned outside of California. “Out-of-State” means a degree from a school located outside of California, or from an online program that is not designed to meet California’s requirements. “Out-of-Country” means a degree earned from a school located outside of the United States or its territories.

AMFT applicants with an out-of-state or out-of-country degree must meet the educational requirements specified in Business and Professions Code (BPC) sections [4980.74](#), [4980.78](#) and [4980.81](#). This document provides a summary of those requirements.

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1. How will I know if my degree qualifies for registration as an AMFT?

California law requires a degree to meet certain minimum requirements to qualify for AMFT registration. The law allows for some types of coursework to be remediated, and also allows a limited number of units to be remediated. Unfortunately, in some cases an applicant’s degree will not qualify at all, and a new degree would be required. This guide will help you determine whether your degree qualifies.

Note: *If you have been licensed for two or more years in another U.S. state, and hold a valid LMFT license in good standing at the highest level for independent clinical practice in the other state, you may be able to qualify for LMFT licensure under “Path A” regardless of degree qualifications. See the [Guide to LMFT Out-of-State Applicant Requirements](#) for more information (available at www.bbs.ca.gov>Applicant>LMFT>Out-of-State Applicants).*

2. What are the minimum degree requirements for AMFT registration?

If your out-of-state or out-of-country degree does NOT fully contain ALL of the minimum requirements listed below, it will NOT qualify for AMFT registration in California and a new degree would be required in order to qualify.

➔ These are minimums only - see question 4 for ADDITIONAL requirements you must meet prior to approval of your *Application for LMFT Licensure*.

✓ **A master's or doctorate degree obtained from a school that holds a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE), or a school approved by the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE)**

✓ **Degree fully contains a minimum of 48 semester units or 72 quarter units**

✓ **Degree fully contains a minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units in marriage, family and child counseling and systems approaches to treatment**

✓ **Degree fully contains 6 semester units or 9 quarter units of practicum that includes 225 hours of supervised face-to-face counseling experience (up to 75 of those hours may be client-centered advocacy)**

➔ Exception: *If you hold a valid LMFT license in good standing in another state or country at the highest level for independent clinical practice the practicum requirements are waived.*

3. What additional coursework must I take prior to issuance of my AMFT registration?

You must complete a California Law and Ethics course as described below.

➔ **If you completed a 2 semester unit or 3 quarter unit law and ethics course that does NOT contain California content:**

You must complete a 12-hour California Law and Ethics course that contains the content specified in BPC section [4980.78\(b\)\(2\)](#). This course must be taken from an acceptable continuing education provider.

➔ **If you completed a law and ethics course that is LESS THAN 2 semester units or 3 quarter units:**

You must complete a graduate level California law and ethics course to bring your total to 2 semester units or 3 quarter units. This course must be taken from an accredited or approved school (see question 5 for details). **A CE course will not be accepted.**

4. What additional units and coursework must I complete prior to approval of my *Application for LMFT Licensure*?

Prior to approval of your *Application for LMFT Licensure*, you will be required to complete additional units and coursework if any of the following are deficient within your degree:

Overall Units: If you began graduate study on or after August 1, 2012 OR were awarded your degree after December 31, 2018, and your degree contained less than 60 semester units or 90 quarter units, you must take graduate level coursework to bring your total to 60 semester units or 90 quarter units (you may remediate a maximum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units). **CE courses will not be accepted.**

Additional Coursework: You must also complete “Additional Coursework” at the graduate level from an acceptable CE provider as specified in BPC sections [4980.78](#) and [4980.81](#) prior to approval of your *Application for LMFT Licensure*. Certain courses must be California-specific. See the chart beginning on page 5 for a list of courses and required content.

REMEDICATION OF UNITS AND ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK

If you are remediating overall degree units and are deficient in Additional Coursework, you may fulfill both at the same time.

For Example:

You take a course on “Multicultural Counseling Theories and Techniques.”

- ➔ The course provides education about California cultures.
 - ✓ This course may then also count toward fulfilling Additional Coursework Item d) “California Cultures and the Social and Psychological Implications of Socioeconomic Position.”
- ➔ The course also contained content that covers “experiences of race, ethnicity, class, spirituality, sexual orientation, gender, and disability, and their incorporation into the psychotherapeutic process.”
 - ✓ This course may then also count toward fulfilling Additional Coursework item I) “Multicultural Development and Cross-Cultural Interaction.”

5. Who is an acceptable course provider?

➔ For Overall Degree Units OR

➔ California Law and Ethics (2 semester units or 3 quarter units) course

Courses must be taken at the graduate level from a school with a regional or national institutional accreditation recognized by the USDE, or from a school approved by the BPPE. **CE courses will not be accepted.**

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5. Who is an acceptable course provider? *(continued)*

➔ **12-hour California Law and Ethics course OR**

➔ **Additional Coursework**

Must be taken at the graduate level from an [accepted continuing education provider](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/Licensees/Continuing%20Education) (available at www.bbs.ca.gov>Licensees>Continuing Education).

6. What if my degree is from a school located outside of the United States?

In addition to meeting the requirements listed in this document, you must obtain an evaluation of your degree by a foreign credential evaluation service to determine equivalency with California's requirements, and submit it with your AMFT application (per BPC section [4980.76](#)). The evaluation service must be a member of the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services](http://www.naces.org) (www.naces.org). You will also be required to submit an official transcript.

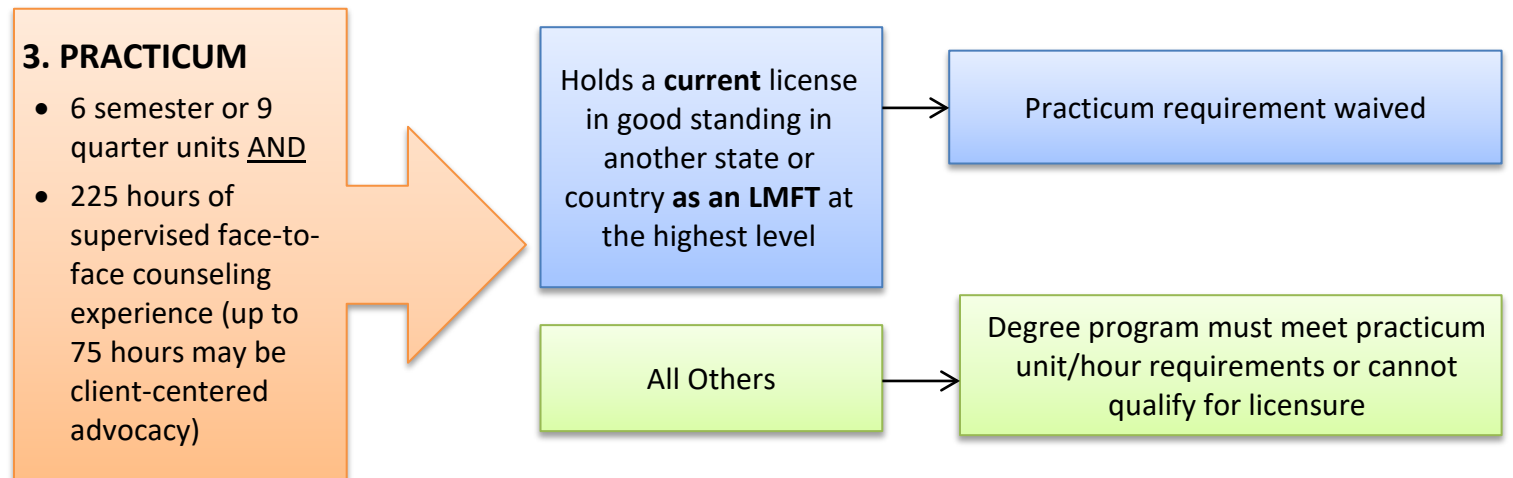
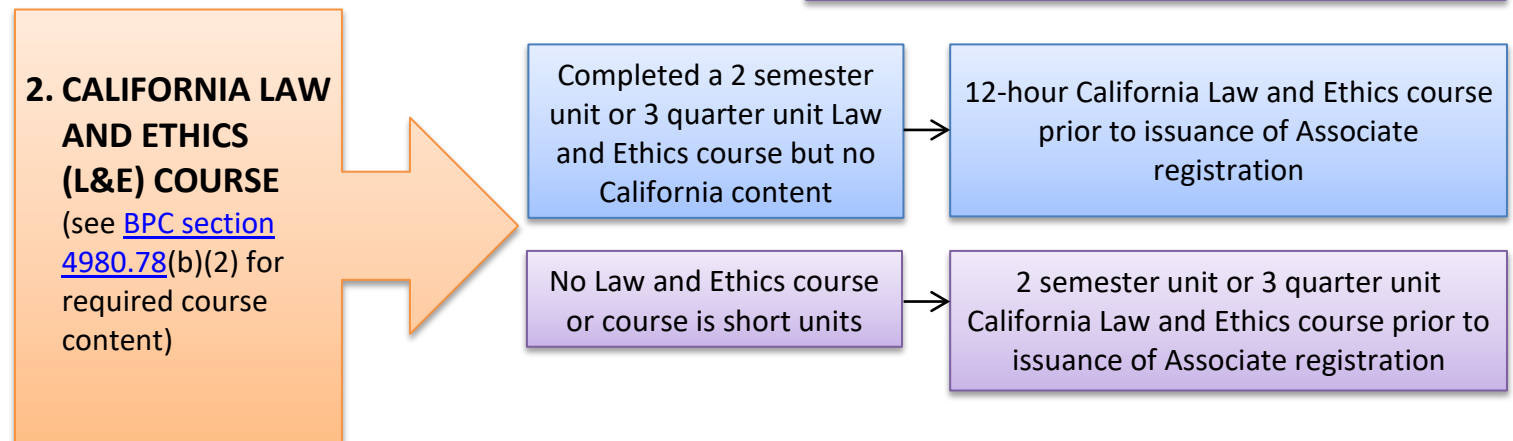
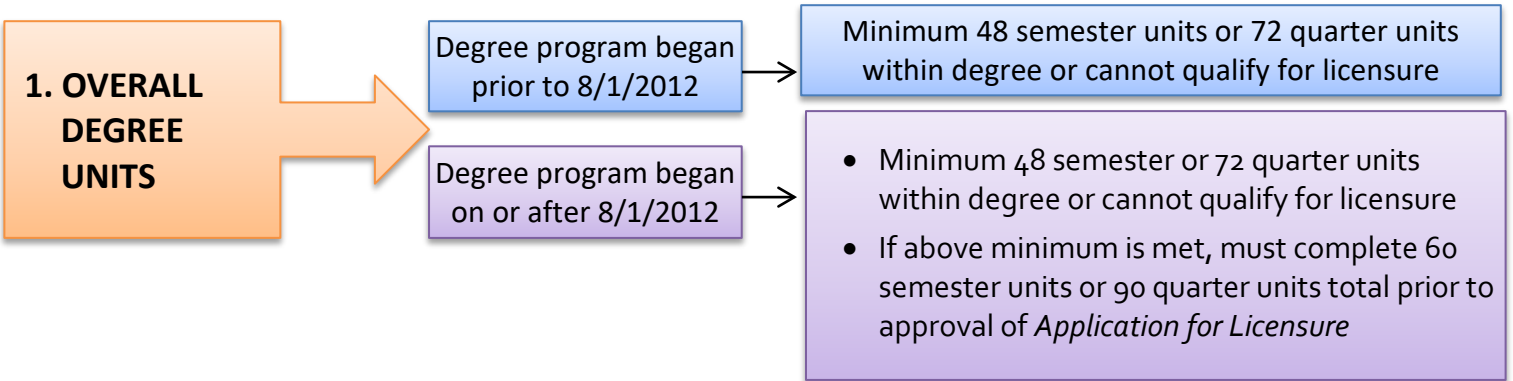
Suggestion: Before paying a credentials evaluation service for an evaluation, compare your degree to California's requirements by using the optional "Out-of-Country Degree Program Worksheet" contained in the *Application for AMFT Registration* to help you determine whether to proceed.

For QUESTIONS about out-of-state or out-of-country requirements, contact:

bbs.amft@dca.ca.gov

For information about EXPERIENCE and EXAMINATION requirements that you must meet prior to licensure:

See **Path B** of the [Guide to LMFT Out-of-State Applicant Requirements](#) (available at www.bbs.ca.gov>Applicant>LMFT>Out of State and Out-of-Country Applicants).



4. MARRIAGE, FAMILY & CHILD COUNSELING & SYSTEMS APPROACH
12 semester units or 18 quarter units within degree or cannot qualify for licensure

5. ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK
Must remediate prior to approval of *Application for Licensure*. Required courses listed on the following pages.

**ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK REQUIRED PRIOR TO LMFT LICENSURE
FOR APPLICANTS WITH AN OUT-OF-STATE OR OUT-OF-COUNTRY DEGREE**

*Note: 1 semester unit = 15 hours; 1 quarter unit = 10 hours
1 semester unit = 1.5 quarter units*

COURSE	LENGTH	CONTENT REQUIRED
a) Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention	6 hours of coursework or applied experience	See BPC section 4980.396 .
b) Mental Health Recovery Oriented Care and Methods of Service Delivery	45 hours or 3 semester units	Instruction must cover principles of mental health recovery-oriented care and methods of service delivery in recovery-oriented practice environments, including structured meetings with various consumers and family members of consumers of mental health services to enhance understanding of their experience of mental illness, treatment and recovery.
c) California Cultures and the Social and Psychological Implications of Socioeconomic Position	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must include an understanding of various California cultures and the social and psychological implications of socioeconomic position.
d) Diagnosis, Assessment, Prognosis and Treatment of Mental Disorders	2 semester units	Must include diagnosis, assessment, prognosis and treatment of mental disorders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe mental disorders • Promising mental health practices • Evidence-based practices
e) Psychological Testing	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must cover psychological testing.
f) Psychopharmacology	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must cover psychopharmacology.

**ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK REQUIRED PRIOR TO LMFT LICENSURE
FOR APPLICANTS WITH AN OUT-OF-STATE OR OUT-OF-COUNTRY DEGREE *(continued)***

COURSE	LENGTH	CONTENT REQUIRED
<p>g) Developmental Issues from Infancy to Old Age</p>	<p>15 hours or 1 semester unit <i>(if deficient in a single topic listed, may remediate by taking 3 hours of instruction in each missing topic)</i></p>	<p>Instruction must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Issues from infancy to old age • The effects of developmental issues on individuals, couples and family relationships. • The psychological, psychotherapeutic, and health implications of developmental issues and their effects. • The understanding of the impact that personal and social insecurity, social stress, low educational levels, inadequate housing and malnutrition have on human development.
<p>h) Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting in California</p>	<p>7 hours</p>	<p>Instruction must include detailed knowledge of the California Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting Act (CANRA). It must also include assessment and methods of reporting of sexual assault, neglect, severe neglect, general neglect, willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment, corporal punishment or injury, and abuse in out-of-home care. The training shall also include physical and behavioral indicators of abuse, crisis counseling techniques, community resources, rights and responsibilities of reporting, consequences of failure to report, caring for a child’s needs after a report is made, sensitivity to previously abused children and adults, and implications and methods of treatment for children and adults. See BPC section 28.</p>
<p>i) Aging, Long Term Care and Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse, End-of-Life and Grief</p>	<p>10 hours</p>	<p>Instruction must cover aging and long-term care, including biological, social, cognitive and psychological aspects of aging, end-of-life, grief, and instruction on the assessment and reporting of, as well as treatment related to, elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect.</p>

ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK REQUIRED PRIOR TO LMFT LICENSURE FOR APPLICANTS WITH AN OUT-OF-STATE OR OUT-OF-COUNTRY DEGREE *(continued)*

COURSE		CONTENT REQUIRED
j) Spousal/Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection and Intervention	15 hours	Instruction must cover spousal and partner abuse assessment, detection, intervention strategies, and same-gender abuse dynamics.
k) Multicultural Development and Cross-Cultural Interaction	15 hours or 1 semester unit	Instruction must include experiences of race, ethnicity, class, spirituality, sexual orientation, gender, and disability, and their incorporation into the psychotherapeutic process.
l) Human Sexuality	10 hours	Instruction must include the study of physiological, psychological, and social-cultural variables associated with sexual behavior, sexual dysfunctions, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender dysphoria. See Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 1807 .
m) Substance Use Disorders	15 hours	See BPC section 4980.81(a)(7) .
n) Co-Occurring Disorders and Addiction	15 hours	See BPC section 4980.81(a)(7) .
o) Miscellaneous Content	No specific number of hours required, but content must be adequately covered within the applicant's coursework	<p>Instruction must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childbirth, child rearing, parenting and step-parenting • Marriage, divorce and blended families • Cultural factors relevant to abuse of partners and family members • Poverty and deprivation • Financial and social stress • Effects of trauma • The psychological, psychotherapeutic, community and health implications of the matters and life events that arise in marriage and family relationships within a variety of California cultures.