

**SENATE BILL NO. 2152**

Introduced by

Human Services Committee

(At the request of the Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure Board)

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new subdivision to subsection 2 of section 12-60-24 of  
2 the North Dakota Century Code, relating to criminal history record checks; to amend and  
3 reenact sections 43-53-01, 43-53-05, 43-53-06, 43-53-07, 43-53-08, 43-53-09, 43-53-10, and  
4 43-53-12 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to marriage and family therapy licensure  
5 and practice; and to provide a penalty.

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

7 **SECTION 1.** A new subdivision to subsection 2 of section 12-60-24 of the North Dakota  
8 Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

9 The marriage and family therapy licensure board for applicants, licensees, or  
10 investigations under chapter 43-53, except that criminal history record checks  
11 need not be made unless required by the board.

12 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
13 amended and reenacted as follows:

14 **43-53-01. Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 15 1. "Advertise" includes the issuing or causing to be distributed any card, sign, or  
16 device to any person; the causing, permitting, or allowing any sign or marking in or  
17 on any building, radio, or television; or advertising by any other means designed to  
18 secure public attention.
- 19 2. "Associate marriage and family therapist" means an individual who has completed  
20 the educational requirements for a marriage and family license and who has  
21 successfully passed the licensing examination, but who has not yet successfully  
22 completed the supervised work experience requirement for licensure as a marriage  
23 and family therapist.
- 24 3. "Board" means the North Dakota marriage and family therapy licensure board.

- 1       ~~3.~~ 4. "Licensed marriage and family therapist" means an individual who holds a valid  
2                   license issued under this chapter.
- 3       ~~4.~~ 5. "Marriage and family therapy" means the diagnosis and treatment of mental and  
4                   emotional disorders, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral, within the context  
5                   of marriage and family systems. Marriage and family therapy involves the  
6                   professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and  
7                   techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples, and families for the  
8                   purpose of treating such diagnosed nervous and mental disorders.
- 9       ~~5.~~ 6. "Practice of marriage and family therapy" means the rendering of marriage and  
10                  family therapy services to individuals, couples, and families, singly or in groups,  
11                  whether the services are offered directly to the general public or through  
12                  organizations, either public or private, for a fee, monetary or otherwise.
- 13       ~~6.~~ 7. "Qualified supervision" means the supervision of clinical services, in accordance  
14                  with standards established by the board, by an individual who has been recognized  
15                  by the board as an approved supervisor.
- 16       ~~7.~~ 8. "Recognized educational institution" means any educational institution that grants  
17                  a ~~baccalaureate~~ master's or higher degree that is recognized by the board and by  
18                  a regional accrediting body, or a postgraduate training institute accredited by the  
19                  commission on accreditation for marriage and family therapy education.
- 20       ~~8.~~ 9. "Use a title or description of" means to hold oneself out to the public as having a  
21                  particular status by means of stating on signs, mailboxes, address plates,  
22                  stationery, announcements, calling cards, or other instruments of professional  
23                  identification.

24                **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
25 amended and reenacted as follows:

26                **43-53-05. Board powers and duties.**

- 27                1. The board shall administer and enforce this chapter. The board shall adopt rules  
28                as the board determines necessary.
- 29                2. The board shall examine and pass on the qualifications of all applicants and shall  
30                issue a license to each successful applicant. The board shall adopt a seal which  
31                must be affixed to all licenses issued by the board.

- 1           3. The board may authorize expenditures determined necessary to carry out this
- 2           chapter.
- 3           4. ~~Four~~ Three of the members of the board constitute a quorum. The board may
- 4           employ attorneys, accountants, experts, and other employees as necessary for the
- 5           proper performance of the board's duties.
- 6           5. The board shall adopt a nationally recognized code of ethics for the practice of
- 7           marriage and family therapy.
- 8           6. The board shall establish continuing education requirements for license renewal.
- 9           7. The board shall publish an annual list of the names and addresses of all individuals
- 10          licensed under this chapter.

11           **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
12 amended and reenacted as follows:

13           **43-53-06. Licenses.**

- 14          1. Each individual desiring to obtain a license as a practicing marriage and family
- 15          therapist shall submit an application to the board, upon such form and in such
- 16          manner as the board prescribes. An applicant shall furnish evidence that the
- 17          applicant:
  - 18           a. Is of good moral character;
  - 19           b. Has not engaged in any practice or conduct that would be a ground for
  - 20           ~~revoking a license~~ discipline under this chapter; and
  - 21           c. Is qualified for licensure pursuant to the requirements of this chapter.
- 22          2. ~~Before~~ An individual who was actively practicing marriage and family therapy in  
23          this state before January 1, 2008, an applicant and whose application is received  
24          by the board before January 1, 2010, may be issued a license by the board if the  
25          applicant meets the qualifications set forth in subdivisions a and b of subsection 1  
26          and provides evidence to the board that the applicant meets educational and  
27          experience qualifications as follows:
  - 28           a. An appropriate graduate degree, as defined by the board, from a regionally
  - 29           accredited institution so recognized at the time of granting such degree.

- 1           b. At least five years of clinical experience in the practice of marriage and family  
2           therapy, and membership or certification by an appropriate professional  
3           organization, as defined by the board.
- 4           3. ~~After December 31, 2007, an~~ An applicant may be issued a license by the board if  
5           the applicant meets the qualifications set forth in subsection 1 and provides  
6           satisfactory evidence to the board that the applicant:
- 7           a. Holds a master's degree or a doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy  
8           from a recognized educational institution, or a graduate degree in an allied  
9           field from a recognized educational institution and graduate level coursework  
10          which is equivalent to a master's degree in marriage and family therapy, as  
11          determined by the board.
- 12          b. Has successfully completed two calendar years of work experience in  
13          marriage and family therapy under qualified supervision following receipt of a  
14          qualifying degree.
- 15          c. Has passed ~~a national~~ the examination administered or adopted by the board.
- 16          4. An applicant may be issued an associate marriage and family therapist license by  
17          the board if the applicant meets the qualifications set forth in subsection 1 and has  
18          provided the board with satisfactory evidence that the applicant meets the  
19          requirements in subdivisions a and c of subsection 3. Associate marriage and  
20          family therapists must practice under the supervision of a board qualified  
21          supervisor and must obey the same laws and rules as a marriage and family  
22          therapist. An associate marriage and family therapist license lasts for one year  
23          and may be renewed for up to four additional years.
- 24          5. The board may adopt rules concerning reinstatement of lapsed licenses, voluntary  
25          termination, or emeritus status.
- 26          6. The board may require an applicant for licensure or a licensee to submit to a  
27          statewide and nationwide criminal history record check. The nationwide criminal  
28          history record check must be conducted in the manner provided by section  
29          12-60-24. All costs associated with obtaining a background check are the  
30          responsibility of the applicant or licensee.

1           **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-07 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
2 amended and reenacted as follows:

3           **43-53-07. Examination.**

- 4           1. The board shall conduct an examination at least once a year at a time and place  
5 designated by the board. Examinations may be written or oral as determined by  
6 the board. The board may create its own examination or adopt a nationally  
7 recognized examination. In any written examination each applicant must be  
8 designated so that the applicant's name is not disclosed to the board until the  
9 examination has been graded. Examinations must include questions in such  
10 theoretical and applied fields as the board determines most suitable to test an  
11 applicant's knowledge and competence to engage in the practice of marriage and  
12 family therapy. An applicant is deemed to have passed an examination upon  
13 affirmative vote of at least four members of the board.
- 14           2. Any applicant who fails an examination conducted by the board may not be  
15 admitted to a subsequent examination for a period of at least six months.

16           **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
17 amended and reenacted as follows:

18           ~~43-53-08. Reciprocal licenses~~ **License by endorsement.** The board shall issue a  
19 license by examination of credentials to any applicant licensed or certified as a marriage and  
20 family therapist in another state for which the requirements for the license or certificate are  
21 equivalent to or exceed the requirements of this state, provided the applicant submits an  
22 application on forms prescribed by the board and pays the original licensure fee prescribed by  
23 this chapter.

24           **SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-09 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
25 amended and reenacted as follows:

26           **43-53-09. Fees.** A fee, as determined by the board, must be paid to the board for  
27 original licensure. A fee may also be established for the licensure examination. A license is  
28 valid for two years and must be renewed biennially, with the renewal fee being determined by  
29 the board. The board may also establish a fee for a duplicate license. Any applicant for  
30 renewal of a license that has expired must be required to pay a ~~registration~~ late fee determined  
31 by the board. The board may also establish a fee for continuing education sponsors. The fees

1 established under this section must be adequate to establish and maintain the operation of the  
2 board. Payment of a late fee is not a defense to a charge of practicing without a license.

3 **SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-10 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
4 amended and reenacted as follows:

5 **43-53-10. Disciplinary proceedings.**

- 6 1. The board may deny, ~~revoke, or suspend~~ an application or institute a disciplinary  
7 proceeding concerning a license granted under this chapter licensee on the  
8 following grounds:
- 9 a. Conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction of an offense that the board  
10 determines to be of such a nature as to render the licensee unfit to practice  
11 marriage and family therapy. The board ~~shall~~ may compile, maintain, and  
12 publish a list of such offenses.
  - 13 b. Violation of ethical standards of such a nature as to render the licensee unfit  
14 to practice marriage and family therapy. The board shall publish such ethical  
15 standards.
  - 16 c. Fraud or misrepresentation in obtaining a license.
  - 17 d. Any just and sufficient cause that renders a licensee unfit to practice marriage  
18 and family therapy.
- 19 2. ~~A license~~ An applicant may be denied a license, and a licensee may be  
20 suspended; or revoked, placed on supervised or unsupervised probation, required  
21 to take corrective action, attend continuing education, or fined up to two hundred  
22 dollars per violation for the reasons set forth in subsection 1. ~~A license~~ licensee  
23 may not be ~~denied, suspended, or revoked~~ disciplined under this section except by  
24 majority vote of the full board, notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter.  
25 The board may also charge the licensee with its expenses and attorney fees for  
26 any disciplinary matter.
- 27 3. Any person may file a complaint with the board seeking ~~denial, suspension, or~~  
28 ~~revocation~~ discipline of a ~~license issued or to be issued by the board~~ licensee.  
29 The complaint must be in a form prescribed by the board and must be verified  
30 under oath by the complainant or a duly authorized officer of a complainant. If the  
31 board determines that a complaint alleges facts that, if true, would require ~~denial,~~

1           ~~revocation, or suspension~~ discipline of a ~~license licensee~~, the board promptly shall  
2           institute a hearing. If the board determines a complaint does not state facts  
3           warranting a hearing, the complaint may be dismissed. The board may institute a  
4           hearing for ~~denial, suspension, or revocation~~ discipline of a ~~license licensee~~ on its  
5           own motion.

6           4. Any person may be permitted to intervene and participate in board hearings on  
7           denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses upon a showing of an interest in such  
8           proceeding.

9           5. Any individual ~~whose license~~ who has been suspended or revoked may not apply  
10          to the board for vacation of the suspension until the time specified in the board's  
11          order is complete or for reinstatement of the license until one year after the board's  
12          order or such other time as specified in the board's order is complete.

13          **SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-53-12 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
14          amended and reenacted as follows:

15          **43-53-12. Penalty.** Any person who ~~violates~~ practices without a license in violation of  
16          this chapter is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.