4. Graduate Practicum Issues

- May a graduate practicum student provide electronic therapy, under appropriate supervision, and log such hours in meeting MN’s educational requirements for LMFT licensure:

   The MN MFT Practice Act and Minn. Rule 5300 do not mandate in-person clinical contact for graduate practicum hours. Such a requirement may be in place due to COAMFTE accreditation standards and/or graduate program requirements, but MFT educational requirements for licensure do not prohibit electronic therapy. The decision whether to allow a practicum student to provide electronic therapy rests with the graduate program. The Board will accept a practicum experience as meeting educational requirements without regard for whether clinical contact was in-person or electronic.

- May a practicum student’s required LMFT supervision and/or on-site mental health professional supervision be provided electronically?

   The MN MFT Practice Act and Minn. Rule 5300 are silent as to the method of supervision of practicum students. In-person supervision requirements may be in place due to COAMFTE accreditation standards and/or graduate program requirements, but MFT educational requirements for licensure do not prohibit electronic supervision. The decision whether to allow a practicum student to receive electronic supervision rests with the graduate program. The Board will accept a practicum experience as meeting educational requirements for licensure without regard for method of supervision.

- May a practicum student log less than the minimum required practicum hours, due to practice-related restrictions arising from COVID-19, and still be found to meet MN’s educational requirements for LMFT licensure?

   A graduate program may alter its graduation standards/program requirements due to COVID-19-related issues. The Board cannot require any graduate program or accrediting entity (such as COAMFTE) to alter a graduate program standard.

   An individual awarded a COAMFTE-accredited degree is deemed to have met MN educational requirements for LMFT licensure pursuant to Minn. Stat. 148B.33, subd. 5(1). Therefore, the number of practicum hours actually logged is not subject to Board review.

   For degrees where the Board must determine equivalence, the practicum standard is: “at least 300 hours of clinical client contact including assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of individuals, couples, and families. Of the 300 hours, at least 150 hours must be with couples, families, or similar relational groups. This clinical experience must be supervised on site or at the academic institution by a licensed marriage and family therapist or an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy approved supervisor.”
Effective March 27, 2020, the Board will accept a graduate degree as meeting educational requirements for LMFT licensure, where the graduate practicum experience does not meet the minimum required clinical contact hours. At time of filing initial application, the applicant must:

- Submit affidavit of reduced practicum hours from the graduate program reporting total practicum hours completed and confirming that reduced hours were authorized by graduate program due to COVID-19 national state of emergency and/or MN peacetime emergency status; and
- Acknowledge in writing that clinical contact hours necessary to meet minimum practicum requirements (300 hours, at least 150 of which are with couples / families / similar relational groups) will be added to applicant’s post-graduate supervised clinical experience requirements.