

GAMFT's Legislative Committee Job Description

GAMFT's Legislative Committee is a volunteer driven effort focused on establishing and maintaining professional standards in marriage and family therapy, as well as representing marriage and family therapy as a core mental health profession to the public and before government bodies in Georgia. We accomplish this work through advocacy, education, and communication activities.

Members of the committee are therapists who want to make a difference, just like you. Some with little knowledge and a commitment to learn. Others have a longer history of working in areas of advocacy and lobbying.

Regardless of where you are in experience, we appreciate your interest in learning more about the responsibilities of committee members. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Chair of the Committee by email them at

Core Purposes:

- Represent Marriage and Family Therapy as a core mental health profession to the public and before government bodies in Georgia. Serve as a watchman to protect the MFT license from negligent or malicious legislation that would adversely affect MFTs, MFTs' practices and clients, Allied Professions, and the Mental Health Care recipient population.
- Provide advice to GAMFT about policy and legislation. Coordinate with GAMFT Board and introduce legislation regarding updates and improvements to licensing laws and regulations.
- Monitor legislation that affects the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy and mental health care in general in Georgia.
- Communicate with GAMFT membership about relevant policy and legislation. Activate GAMFT membership to participate in the legislative process and activities that would advance and protect their license.
- Coordinate with legislators and lobbyists to introduce and pass bills that benefit, advance, and protect the practice and profession of Marriage and Family Therapy.
- Coordinate with and advise The Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists regarding updates and improvements to Board Rules and interpretation of licensing code.

Commitment:

Membership would be a two year-long commitment but actual time commitments would be limited to time of year, availability, and role within the committee.

Legislative Committee Orientation

The following information can be used to orient prospective or new members of the committee.

While each year's legislative agenda carries its unique focus for activities and time commitments, we have attempted to outline a general time commitments for each member. Please know that whatever time you are able to offer is valuable and appreciated.

Possible Duties:

- Stay informed on public policy issues affecting people with regard to MFT as a profession and mental healthcare systems, policies, and legislation in GA.
- Establish and maintain contact with pertinent elected and appointed officials (DBHDD, Composite Board included)
- Develop relationships with State Representatives (Senate and House).
- Develop position papers to help educate and inform various public figures and legislators on policy issues.
- Make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding public policy and other appropriate issues pertaining to public affairs.
- As directed by GAMFT legislative priorities, take coordinated action, when necessary, on legislative issues by educating elected officials on the possible effects of legislation on MFT license and profession.
- Work with Public Relationships and Social Media Chairs to communicate with chapters and members about participating and advocacy as well as relevant policy, legislation, and progress through various avenues of communication including social media, website, email, and video.
- Continued recruiting efforts for legislative committee. Confirm, assist, or participate in enlistment of appropriate volunteer resources needed to successfully implement workshops.
- Schedule, plan, and coordinate educational workshops and seminars. Advise on publicity for workshops and seminars.
- Support Chapter level liaison – responsible for grassroots/chapter level communications

The following is an estimate of an annual time commitments:

- 1 hour zoom meeting monthly
- 4 annual legislative events
 - Lobby day – February, Four hours, in-person at Capitol
 - Two Town Halls – Late Spring and Late Fall, 1.5hrs each
 - Presentation at Spring Conference - ~2hrs
- Additional time commitments based on role, need, and commitment level:

- Monthly-weekly commitment to review legislation, discuss impact and provide responses about impact (Potential for activity throughout the year, but more activity during the approximate 6 months that includes legislative session during the beginning of the year and the few months leading up to it).
- Attendance of Behavioral Health Innovation and Reform Committee (BHIRC) and other legislative hearings or meetings (Two hour Zoom meetings about once per month).
- On-site advocacy at Capital (various time commitments possible based on availability, usually January through April).
- Monthly Licensing Composite Board Attendance (Probably 4 hours once per month via zoom, with relevant summary provided after meeting).

Revisions

May 24, 2022