



Access MFTs

INCREASE ACCESS TO LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

[SB 373](#) provides for licensure portability for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) licensed and in good standing in other states seeking licensure in Georgia. SB 373 will increase access to essential mental health services by removing unnecessary obstacles to licensure of qualified professionals seeking to practice in this state.

Georgia has a very serious problem with access to mental health care and a shortage of qualified mental health professionals at a time when demand for services is high and increasing. Georgia is ranked 49th in the country in access to mental health care for 2023.

2023 Studies Recommending Licensure Portability for Qualified Health Professionals:

- [DBHDD Workforce Study by Deloitte](#) recommended adopting out of state license reciprocity to expand the existing mental health workforce that is facing a dire shortage.
- [Senate Study Committee on Expanding Georgia's Workforce](#) recommended moving to universal recognition (reciprocity) of out- of-state licenses.
- [SOS Georgia GA WORKS Licensing Commission](#) recommended streamlining licensing processes to increase opportunities for out of state licensees.
- [Senate Study Committee on Recruiting Rural Medical Personnel](#) recommended amending state law to streamline the licensing process for mental health professionals.

Current Challenges:

The Composite Board's existing "substantially equal" review process for out-of-state MFTs is cumbersome, subjective, and often results in unnecessary barriers, delaying licensure and deterring professionals from moving to Georgia.

National Standards:

All states currently license Marriage and Family Therapists with substantially similar, if not identical, requirements for education, supervision, clinical experience, and examination. The educational curriculum is dictated by a single national body required by almost all states. The national licensing examination is required in every state except California, which uses its own comparable exam. This makes the "substantially equal" review redundant.

SB 373 provides that the Composite Board recognize and accept the license of an MFT to practice in Georgia if they hold a valid and unrestricted license in another state, are in good standing there, satisfy a criminal background check, complete an application for licensure, and pay required fees.

SB 373 will increase access to mental health care by streamlining the licensure application process and reducing unnecessary barriers for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists coming to Georgia while maintaining professional standards and protecting patient safety.

GROUPS SUPPORTING SB 373

Portability for Marriage and Family Therapists Licensure



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