

## Chapter 265

**(House Bill 291)**

AN ACT concerning

**Health Occupations – Clinical and Graduate Alcohol and Drug Counselors  
– Licensure**

FOR the purpose of altering the educational requirements that individuals must meet to be licensed as clinical or graduate alcohol and drug counselors; and generally relating to clinical and graduate alcohol and drug counselors.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Health Occupations  
Section 17–302 and 17–309  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
Article – Health Occupations  
Section 17–305  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Health Occupations**

17–302.

(a) To qualify for a license to practice clinical alcohol and drug counseling, an applicant shall be an individual who meets the requirements of this section.

(b) The applicant shall be of good moral character.

(c) The applicant shall be at least 18 years old.

(d) [(1)] Except as provided in § 17–305 of this subtitle, the applicant shall [at a minimum]:

[(i)] (1) Hold a master’s or doctoral degree in a [health and human services] **PROFESSIONAL** counseling field from [a regionally] AN accredited educational institution that is approved by the Board; [or] AND

[(ii) Hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited educational institution and have completed a program of studies judged by the Board to be substantially equivalent in subject matter as may be required by the Board in regulation.]

(2) [The applicant shall have] **HAVE** completed any additional educational requirements established by the Board in regulation.

(e) The applicant shall:

(1) Have completed not less than 2 years with a minimum of 2,000 hours of supervised experience in alcohol and drug counseling, which shall have been completed after the award of the master's or doctoral degree; and

(2) Provide documentation as required by the Board evidencing the completion of the postgraduate experience required under item (1) of this subsection.

(f) The applicant shall provide documentation to the Board evidencing the completion of any educational requirements established by the Board in regulation, completed at [a regionally] **AN** accredited educational institution approved by the Board.

(g) Except as otherwise provided in this title, the applicant shall pass:

(1) An examination approved by the Board; and

(2) The law examination on this title administered by the Board.

17-305.

(a) The Board shall waive the requirements for licensure for an applicant to practice clinical alcohol and drug counseling if the applicant:

(1) Holds a license as a clinical alcohol and drug counselor in another state, territory, or jurisdiction that is equivalent to the license the applicant is applying for under this subtitle;

(2) Submits an application to the Board on a form that the Board requires;

(3) Pays to the Board an application fee set by the Board; and

(4) Satisfies any other educational and experience requirements established by the Board.

(b) The Board may waive educational and experience requirements established under subsection (a)(4) of this section:

(1) Under circumstances determined by the Board; and

(2) For applicants who petition the Board for waiver.

(c) The Board shall adopt regulations to implement this section.

17-309.

(a) The Board may adopt regulations to allow an individual to practice under clinical supervision as a licensed graduate alcohol and drug counselor, a licensed graduate marriage and family therapist, a licensed graduate professional counselor, or a licensed graduate professional art therapist.

(b) To qualify to practice as a licensed graduate alcohol and drug counselor, a licensed graduate marriage and family therapist, a licensed graduate professional counselor, or a licensed graduate professional art therapist, an individual shall be:

(1) Of good moral character; and

(2) At least 18 years old.

(c) An individual may practice graduate alcohol and drug counseling under supervision for a limited period of time if the individual has:

(1) [At a minimum, a] **A** master's or doctoral degree in a [health and human services] **PROFESSIONAL** counseling field from [a regionally] **AN** accredited educational institution **THAT MEETS THE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF § 17-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**

[(2) A minimum of 27 semester credit hours or 41 quarter credit hours in alcohol and drug counselor training, including:

(i) A 3 semester credit hour or 5 quarter credit hour course taken at a regionally accredited educational institution in each of the following:

1. Medical aspects of chemical dependency;
2. Addictions treatment delivery;
3. Ethics that includes alcohol and drug counseling issues;
4. Abnormal psychology;
5. Group counseling; and
6. Individual counseling; and

(ii) Any three of the following 3 semester credit hour or 5 quarter credit hour courses taken at a regionally accredited educational institution:

1. Family counseling;
2. Theories of counseling;
3. Human development;
4. Topics in substance-related and addictive disorders; and
5. Treatment of co-occurring disorders; and

(3)] (2) Passed:

(i) A national alcohol and drug counselor examination approved by the Board; and

(ii) The law examination on this title administered by the Board.

(d) An individual may practice graduate marriage and family therapy under supervision for a limited period of time if the individual has:

(1) A master's or doctoral degree in a marriage and family field that meets the educational requirements of § 17-303 of this subtitle; and

(2) Passed the National Marriage and Family Therapy Examination approved by the Board.

(e) An individual may practice graduate professional counseling under supervision for a limited period of time if the individual has:

(1) A master's or doctoral degree in a professional counseling field that meets the educational requirements of § 17-304 of this subtitle; and

(2) Passed the National Professional Counselor Examination approved by the Board.

(f) An individual may practice graduate professional art therapy under supervision for a limited period of time if the individual has a master's or doctoral degree in art therapy that meets the educational requirements of § 17-304.1 of this subtitle.

(g) An individual may not practice without approval by the Board.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2023.

**Approved by the Governor, May 3, 2023.**