



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Commerce, Community,  
and Economic Development

BOARD OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY

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January 16, 2016

At the last meeting of the Board of Marital Family Therapy, the Board unanimously re-approved their recommendation for statutory changes as outlined below.

- 1) the following amendments in bold are to Alaska Statute (AS) 08.63.100(a)(3)(C):
  - (i) practiced marital and family therapy, including 1,500 supervised clinical contact hours of contact with couples, individuals, and families; and
  - (ii) been supervised concurrently during clinical contact for at least 200 hours, including 100 hours of individual supervision and 100 hours of group supervision approved by the board; and
  - (iii) group supervision conducted by State of Alaska licensed supervisor of Marital and Family Therapists, Social Workers, Professional Counselors, Psychologists, Psychiatric A.N.P.s, or Psychiatrists.
- 2) Marital Family Therapist Licenses must have Liability Insurance with a provision for Regulatory Investigation Fees of at least \$30,000.
- 3) Marital Family Therapist Licenses included in Title 47 under AS 47.07.030.

We appreciate your continued support of our profession and ask for your support of these changes, which will benefit the public and strengthen our profession. One of our Board members may be contacting your office to meet and discuss these items with you and be available to answer any questions you may have about them. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

**Leon T Webber** Digitally signed by Leon T Webber  
Date: 2017.01.18 13:44:08 -0800

Leon Webber, LMFT, Board Chair

Alaska Board Marital and Family Therapy

4/7/2017

Senate Health and Social Services Committee

REGARDING: SB 105

Dear Senators,

The State of Alaska is greatly deficient of mental health providers. We are actively recruiting more providers from outside of the State to fill the need within the State. Last year, SB 74 was to promote an avenue to recognize physicians, psychiatrists, and mental health providers outside of the State via telemedicine / teletherapy because of our significant need. It was my understanding that SB 74 was to avail all providers in the State; however, I have come to my understand that Marital Family Therapists have been excluded due to lack of Statute recognition in Title 47.

As a psychiatrist in Alaska I refer my patients out to capable mental health providers to avail the psychotherapy needed. I have found that Marital Family Therapists are capable and professional mental health providers to provide the necessary psychotherapy for my patients. I have also found that master's level interventions, such as Marital Family Therapists can intercede, mitigate, and collaborate problematic issues with my patients before they become too intrusive. I believe that the full recognition of Marital Family Therapists in the State will result in effective mental health treatment, early and appropriate psychotherapy intervention, and reduction in crisis intervention (e.g. costly Emergency Room, API, or extensive physician visits).

Since 2009 I have worked with Discovery Cove Counseling out of Kodiak and Eagle River for psychiatric and Opiate Treatment. It has been through the innovative outreach and expertise of a Marital Family Therapist, who is the executive director and a clinician, that multiple patients have been helped and are functioning members of our villages. However, Medicaid patients we are not able to fully implement the Medication Assisted Treatment program that involves psycho-social / psychotherapy. SAMSHA recognizes M.A.T. / Psycho-social - psychotherapy as Best Practice / Evidence Based. I will not take on patients in a partial treatment format, as it is proven to be ineffective. I hear that Discovery Cove has well over 100 such patients on a waiting list, who want treatment but cannot afford nor Alaska Medicaid will currently pay for such treatment. Therefore, I encourage and endorse SB 105 so that all Alaskans may be availed treatment opportunity.

I am pleased to share my thoughts with your committee as necessary.

Sincerely,

*Edward Zeff, M.D.*

Edward Zeff, M.D. DLFAPA

Psychiatrist – Discovery Cove & Norton Sound