

HB353

Marital & Family Therapist Licensure & Services

Representative Ivy Spohnholz

District 16

What is marital & family therapy (MFT) and why is this important?

- MFTs treat serious clinical issues including depression, marital obstacles, anxiety, individual psychological problems, and child-parent difficulties.
- MFTS are mental health professionals trained in psychotherapy and family systems, and are licensed to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of marriage, couples, and family systems.
- Source: [American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy](#), 2018.

HB353 – What does this bill do?

1. It requires 1,500 hours of supervision for marital and family therapists (MFTs). 100 hours of individual supervision, and 100 hours of group supervision may be conducted by one or more supervisors.

HB353 – What does this bill do?

2. It specifies that a qualified supervisor for individual supervision must have 5 years of experience in marital and family therapy and a license to practice. Or, that a qualified group supervisor can be licensed as another professional mental health clinician (LPC, LMFT, LCSW, Psy.D, M.D., or ANP).

HB353 – What does this bill do?

3. It defines:

- Direct supervision – one or more psychiatrists on-site a mental health physician clinic 30 percent of the time the clinic is open.
- Mental health physician clinic – operated by one or more psychiatrists and primarily provides mental health services.
- Psychiatrist – a person licensed to practice as a physician under AS 08.64 and is licensed by the State Medical Board as a psychiatrist.

HB353 – What does this bill do?

4. Lastly, it allows the Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS) to reimburse a mental health clinic for services performed by mental health clinicians who are under the direct supervision of a psychiatrist.

Sectional Analysis: 30-LS1425\A

Section 1. AS 08.63.100(a)

The 1,500 hours of clinical contact must be supervised.

100 must be individual supervision and 100 must be group supervision.

The 200 hours can be supervised by more than one supervisor.

Section 2. AS 08.63.120(b)

- A supervisor who supervises during individual supervision must have a license and have practiced marital and family therapy for 5 years.
- OR
- A supervisor who supervises during group supervision can have a license as:
 - A professional counselor (LPC)
 - A marital and family therapist (LMFT)
 - A Psychiatrist (M.D.)
 - An Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)
 - A psychologist (Psy.D)
 - A clinical social worker (LCSW)

Section 3. AS 47.07.030(b)

Marital and family therapists' services has been added to the list of services that DHSS may offer for Medicaid recipients.

Section 4. AS 47.07.030(g)

■ New language!

- Direct supervision means that one or more psychiatrists have to be on-site for at least 30 percent of the time that they are open.
- Mental health physician clinic means a clinic operated by more than one psychiatrist and provides mental health services.
- A psychiatrist is someone licensed under AS 08.64 by the State Medical Board.

Section 5. AS 47.07.030(h)

- **New language!**
 - DHSS may reimburse a mental health physician clinic for services performed by a psychiatrist or a mental health clinician licensed as an LPC, LMFT, M.D., ANP, or LCSW who is under the direct supervision of a psychiatrist.

Section 6.

- DHSS and the Board of Marital and Family Therapists may adopt regulations necessary to implement the changes brought forth in this bill.

Section 7.

- Section 6 of this bill will take effect immediately.

Section 8.

- The effective date of HB 353 is January 1, 2019.

Suggestions from Stakeholders

- Defining “direct supervision” as:
 - One or more psychiatrists on-site at a **mental health clinic** 30 % of the time, OR
 - Available by a **communication device** to provide general oversight.
- Allowing advanced nurse practitioners authorized by the Board of Nursing to practice as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner to provide direct supervision.
- Changing “mental health physician clinic” to simply, “mental health clinic.”



Questions?

- Jon Sazada, Alaska Primary Care Association
- Alaska Board of Marital & Family Therapy
- Department of Health & Social Services
 - Randall Burns, Director, Division of Behavioral Health
 - Rick Calcote, Division of Behavioral Health