



H.B. 445

126th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Webster, Kilbane

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires that an independent marriage and family therapist who diagnoses and treats clients for mental and emotional disorders do so under the supervision of a psychologist, psychiatrist, professional clinical counselor, or independent social worker.
- Eliminates the authority of independent marriage and family therapists to supervise marriage and family therapists who diagnose and treat clients for mental and emotional disorders.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background--marriage and family therapists vs. independent marriage and family therapists

(R.C. 4757.30(A) and (C))

Ohio law provides for the licensure of "marriage and family therapists" and "independent marriage and family therapists." The licensure requirements to be an independent marriage and family therapist are more extensive than those to be a marriage and family therapist: an applicant must not only meet all of the requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, but must also, after completing the educational requirements necessary for licensure as a marriage and family therapist, complete at least two calendar years of work experience in marriage and family therapy, including 1,000 hours of documented client contact in marriage and family therapy.¹

¹ A person who desires licensure as a "marriage and family therapist" needs to complete only a practicum that includes at least 300 hours of client contact (R.C. 4757.30(A)(5)).

Diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders

(R.C. 4757.30(F))

Current law

Currently, a marriage and family therapist licensed by the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board may diagnose² and treat clients for mental and emotional disorders, but only under the supervision of one of the following professionals: a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a professional clinical counselor, an independent social worker, or an independent marriage and family therapist.

An independent marriage and family therapist may diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders without supervision.

The bill

The bill subjects independent marriage and family therapists to the same supervision requirements as marriage and family therapists with respect to the diagnosis and treatment of clients for mental and emotional disorders. Thus, under the bill, an independent marriage and family therapist who diagnoses and treats clients for mental and emotional disorders can do so only under the supervision of a psychologist, psychiatrist, professional clinical counselor, or independent social worker.

In addition, the bill provides that a marriage and family therapist may no longer diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders under the supervision of an independent marriage and family therapist. Therefore, under the bill, only a psychologist, psychiatrist, professional clinical counselor, or independent social worker can supervise marriage and family therapists who diagnose and treat clients for mental or emotional disorders.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	12-13-05

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² The term "diagnose" is not defined in statute of administrative rule governing marriage and family therapists.