

## POLICY STATEMENT ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

A Professional Counselor, Marital and Family Therapist or a Clinical Pastoral Therapist licensed in Tennessee is required to complete ten (10) clock hours of continuing education each calendar year. Those who hold two (2) certificates or licenses regulated by this Board shall complete fifteen (15) clock hours of continuing education each calendar year. Those who hold three (3) certificates or licenses regulated by this Board shall complete twenty (20) clock hours of continuing education each calendar year. In each case, at least five (5) clock hours shall be directly related to the practice of each profession for which the person is licensed or certified.

The Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, Marital and Family Therapists, and Clinical Pastoral Therapists realizes that an individual may unintentionally fail to obtain Continuing Education in a timely manner. However, statute prohibits an individual from working as a licensed professional counselor, licensed marital and family therapist, or licensed clinical pastoral therapist unless he/she has obtained appropriate Continuing Education. Acknowledgement is given to the fact that this problem exists; however, the Board cannot overlook an individual failing to obtain Continuing Education. With this in mind, the Board has adopted the following procedures for discipline:

1. When it is discovered by Board or its staff that a licensee has failed to obtain Continuing Education credits in a timely manner, the Board will issue an Advisory Censure. This is an informal disciplinary action. The licensee shall have ninety (90) days from the date the letter is sent to make up any deficient hours and to demonstrate to the Board compliance with all lawful requirements for retention of the license.
2. Should the licensee fail to make up the deficient hours and to demonstrate compliance with the rules to the Board within ninety (90) days, the Board will issue a deficiency letter and an Agreed Citation for two hundred dollars (\$200.00). The licensee has one hundred eighty (180) days from the date the deficiency letter is sent to complete the deficient hours and to demonstrate to the Board compliance with all lawful requirements for the retention of the license. The Agreed Citation is an offer of settlement for a two hundred dollar (\$200) civil penalty. The licensee will have the option to accept the Agreed Citation, waiving the right to appear before the Board, or the licensee shall have the right to a contested case before the Board. The two hundred dollar (\$200.00) civil penalty constitutes formal discipline against a practitioner's license, and as such it is reportable on the Department's Disciplinary Action Report ("DAR") and will be noted on the practitioner's licensure profile.
3. Should the licensee fail to pay both the two hundred dollar (\$200.00) civil penalty and obtain the appropriate number of continuing education hours within the one hundred and eighty (180) day period, the Tennessee Department of Health, Office of General Counsel will file a formal disciplinary action against the licensee which will give the right to the licensee to appear before the Board and could result in additional penalties, costs, and disciplinary action against the license, up to, and including revocation.

\*A licensee is exempt from the continuing education requirements for the calendar year that he/she is licensed. Please refer to Rules 0450-1-.12, 0450-2-.12 or 0450-3-.12 for continuing education requirements.

This Policy Statement was adopted by the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, Marital and Family Therapists, and Clinical Pastoral Therapists on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2011.

This Policy Statement was amended by the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, Marital and Family Therapists, and Clinical Pastoral Therapists on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.