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# THE EXAMINER

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January 2008

Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers  
and Marriage and Family Therapists Newsletter

Issue XVII

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## **NEW TEST SITES FOR THE ASWB EXAM**

Several years ago, the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) changed the exam site from Sylvan Learning Center in Jackson to the Hinds Community College, Raymond Campus.

Today, we have two additional sites in Mississippi. They are Mississippi Delta Community College, 920 HWY 82 W, Indianola, Mississippi and Meridian Community College, 910 HWY 19 North, Meridian, Mississippi.

ASWB allows you to pick your exam site during the application process. If you live next to the border of another state, you may want to check with ASWB and see if the test sites in that state are closer to your location. It does not matter where you take the exam as long as you chose to have your exam score sent to our Board.

**Executive Director**  
Billy A. Dilworth

*The Examiner* is published by the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, PO Box 4508, Jackson, MS 39296-4508. The opinions and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions or policies of the Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists or any member of the Board unless expressly so stated.

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## **WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS**

For the past several months, the Board has been meeting with the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) to redevelop the Board's website. Our goal is to make it more user friendly for the licensees.

Some things that will be new to the site are license verification, writable forms, disciplinary actions, and online renewal.

The Board plans to have online renewal implemented by the April 2008 renewal period.

One significant difference with online renewal will be that you will have to submit the total required hours of continuing education (Forty (40) social work contact hours or four (4) SWUs for social workers or 35 marriage and family therapists hours for MFTs). It will not accept partial renewals.

The new web address will be [www.swwmft.ms.gov](http://www.swwmft.ms.gov). It should be up and running by the end of January 2008.

**HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR !**

## CONTINUING EDUCATION OFFERINGS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

The following programs have been reviewed and approved by MS Chapter, NASW CE Certification Committee. With this approval, the programs meet Social Work Units (SWUs) requirement of the MS Board of Examiners for Social Workers pursuant to Section IX-E.

For further information about specific programs, please contact the sponsoring organizations at the telephone number provided on this list. This page is offered as a courtesy only, The Board will not be held responsible for any problems that arise from the cancellation or attendance of the following programs.

*Updated as of 01/22/2008*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Sponsored By</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>	<i>SWUS</i>
TBA	New Developments in the Treatment of Child & Adult Trauma	Jackson, MS	Center for Professional Training	601.613.5250	.66 SWU
5/23/2008	The Art of Psychotherapy for Children and Adults*	Jackson, MS	Center for Professional Training	601.613.5250	.72 SWU
4/28-29/2008	First Annual National Conference on Social Work With and For Men	Tuscaloosa, AL	University of Alabama School of Social Work	205.348.7027	CEUs Available
TBA	Parents & Children of Divorce: Evolving Court Changes, Contemporary Expectations, and the Need for New Clinical Strategies*	Jackson, MS	Center for Professional Training	601.613.5250	.72 SWU
4/4/2008	Spring Social Work Institute	Biloxi, MS	Continuing Education Productions, Inc.	877-496-2361	.78 SWU
4/3/2008	Spring Social Work Institute	Ridgeland, MS	Continuing Education Productions, Inc.	877-496-2361	.78 SWU
3/5-9/2008	Assoc. of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors 25 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference	Destin, FL	Assoc. of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors	703-683-8099	CEUs Available
2/29/2008	Louisiana Mental Health and the Law 2008	Lafayette, LA	Health Education	337-235-6111	TBA
2/21/2008	Cutting Edge Information in Long Term Care: Focus on Nutrition	Ridgeland, MS	MS Health Care Assoc.	601-956-34872	.54 SWU
02/15/2008	How to Write Court Reports & Evaluations & How to Successfully Testify in Court	Jackson, MS	Center for Professional Training	601.613.5250	.72 SWU

02/7-8/2008	Sixth Annual Mississippi Child Welfare Institute Conference	Jackson, MS	Jackson State University School of Social Work	601.432.6816	1.0 SWU
01/30/2008	Section 504 in Mississippi: A Closer Look	Jackson, MS	Medical Education Services, Inc	715.836.9900	6.75 CE Clock Hours

## Professional Ethics and Responsibility (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

**Professional ethics** concerns the moral issues that arise because of the specialist knowledge that professionals attain, and how the use of this knowledge should be governed when providing a service to the public.

The professional carries additional moral responsibilities to those held by the population in general. This is because professionals are capable of making and acting on an informed decision in situations that the general public cannot, because they have not received the relevant training. For example, a layman member of the public could not be held responsible for failing to act to save a car crash victim because they could not give an emergency tracheotomy. This is because they do not have the relevant knowledge. In contrast, a fully trained doctor (with the correct equipment) would be capable of making the correct diagnosis and carrying out the procedure and we would think it wrong if they stood by and failed to help in this situation. You cannot be held accountable for failing to do something that you do not have the ability to do. This additional knowledge also comes with authority and power. The client places trust in the professional on the basis that the service provided will be of benefit to them. It would be quite possible for the professional to use his authority to exploit the client. An obvious example is that of the dentist who carries out unneeded dental work on his patients in order to gain more money. It is likely that the patient will not have sufficient knowledge to question what is being done, and so will undergo and pay for the treatment.

### SOME HELPFUL LICENSE RENEWAL TIPS:

- Mail payment with renewal forms.
- **If you want your renewal to be processed quicker, send a money order** instead of a personal check.
- Due to a growing number of returned checks, we have to wait for the check to clear your account before we can process your renewal. **Returned Check Fee is \$40.00**
- **Keep your address current. Do not depend on the Post Office to forward your mail.**
- Social Workers need 4 SWUs or 40 contact hours to renew every two years.
- Marriage and Family Therapists need 35 hours ( 4 of these hours must be in Ethics) to renew their license every two years.
- Use the continuing education report. Do not send CE certificates unless the Board audits you. **20% of MFT's will be audited and 10% of the Social Workers.**
- **Submit you renewals 30 days before the expiration of your license to prevent a lapse in licensure. For example, If your expiration date is April 30<sup>th</sup>, Submit your renewal to the Board on March 30<sup>th</sup> . If your license expires on September 30<sup>th</sup>, get your renewal in by August 1<sup>st</sup> (at least four (4) weeks before the deadline).**
- Renewal forms and continuing education information can be obtained from our website at [www.msboeswmft.com](http://www.msboeswmft.com)

### Continuing Education Message:

Pursuant to the rules and regulations, license renewals for social workers and marriage and family therapists will be audited each year. It is very important that both social workers and marriage and family therapists pay close attention and make certain that the hours that he/she receives for continuing education is approved by the authorized organization.

Any certificate received as proof of attendance at a continuing education offering for social work training must state that the program was sponsored/co-sponsored by MS Chapter, National Association of Social Workers , or approved by a designed provider of MS Chapter, National Association of Social Workers, or approved by the MS Chapter, National Association of Social Workers.

Marriage and family therapists should make certain that any certificate received as proof of attendance for a continuing education offering in marriage and family therapy is approved by American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and any if it's divisions, including the MS Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. There is a list of designated providers for marriage and family therapy. They are listed in your rules and regulations.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION OFFERINGS FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**

The following programs have been reviewed and approved by the Mississippi Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (MAMFT) CE Certification Committee. With this approval, the programs meet continuing education requirements for renewal of your MFT license as required by the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists.

This list is provided as a courtesy to licensees and may be updated on this website once monthly. If you have any questions or concerns about a program, please contact that sponsoring organization at the number provided on this list.

Various Dates	Marital Therapy: A Research Based Approach(Video Workshop)	Jackson, MS	Samaritan Counseling Services	601-292-4627	14
1/17/08	Self Mutilation: The Biological, Psychological & Social Aspects of Treatment and Recovery	Jackson, MS	Cross Country Education	615-331-4422	6
1/25/08	Mississippi Mental Health And Law 2008	Jackson, MS	Health ED	800-839-4584	6
2/7-8/08	Dyslexia and Related Disorders	Hattiesburg, MS	DuBard School for Language Disorders	601-266-5689	5
2/21/08	Spiritual Matters In Therapeutic Work	Little Rock, AR	Health ED	800-839-4584	6
2/22/08	Spiritual Matters In Therapeutic Work	Memphis, TN	Health ED	800-839-4584	6
4/3/08	Spring Social Work Institute	Ridgeland, MS	Continuing Education Productions	877-496-2361	6.5
4/4/08	Spring Social Work Institute	Biloxi, MS	Continuing Education Productions	877-496-2361	6.5



## Understanding the Difference Between State Regulatory Boards and Professional Associations

By

W. Jeff Hinton, Ph.D. and Charles West, Ph.D.

Historically, the regulation of the profession of marriage and family therapy was the responsibility of professional associations, primarily the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), which safeguarded the public through self-regulation and self-monitoring (Sturkie & Bergen, 2001). Today, as the number of state regulatory boards has grown and the Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB) has emerged, there has been a marked transfer of responsibilities to regulate the profession from the AAMFT to formal governmental state regulatory boards and the AMFTRB (West, Hinton, Grames, & Adams, In Press). Our experiences as MFT educators, supervisors and regulatory board members indicates that many marriage and family therapists still do not understand the implications of this change. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to clarify how this change impacts marriage and family therapists.

For Mississippi marriage and family therapists, the state division of AAMFT, the Mississippi Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (MAMFT) serves as the predominant state professional organization and the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (MBOESWMFT) serves as the state regulatory board. It is imperative that MFTs understand the differing functions of professional associations and the state regulatory board. The following chart outlines the very different mandates for these two organizations.

<b>Mandate of AAMFT (MAMFT)</b>	<b>Mandate of State Regulatory Boards (MBOESWMFT)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To promote the profession                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-to provide a coherent unified set of standards for the marriage and family therapy profession</li> <li>-lobbying efforts for the profession</li> </ul> </li>   <li>-To establish and promote the highest standards of professional practice, promoting competence                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-education and training</li> <li>-supervision and supervision training</li> <li>-ethical guidelines (establishes ethical practice standards)</li> </ul> </li>   <li>- Elected leadership by the professionals</li>   <li>- Evolving standards and practices, emphasis of new knowledge and trends</li>   <li>-Credentials professionals (professional privilege to practice)</li>   <li>- Membership is voluntary</li>   <li>- Promotes diversity within the profession</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To protect the public                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To regulate profession standards within each individual state to ensure minimal competencies in the delivery of mental health services</li> </ul> </li>   <li>-To establish the minimal standards for competence to practice, preventing incompetent individuals from practicing                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-education and continuing education</li> <li>-supervision</li> <li>-legal guidelines (looks to ethical guidelines and legal precedent)</li> </ul> </li>   <li>-Appointed leadership by government officials</li>   <li>-Codified standards based on historical traditions</li>   <li>-Licenses professionals (legal status granted to practice)</li>   <li>-Licensure is required to practice</li>   <li>-No mandate to ensure diversity</li> </ul>

While it is the responsibility of a professional association to advocate for the profession and its members, state boards have been established by state legislatures to safeguard consumers (Sturkie & Bergen, 2001). Another important difference in the functions of volunteer associations and state regulatory boards is related to how practice standards are viewed. Because of the mandate to protect the public, state regulatory boards work to establish “the *minimum standards* of practice” (Sturkie & Bergen, 2001, p. 15), which stands in stark contrast to professional association efforts to promote the profession as distinct and valuable and, therefore, seek to “promote the *highest standards* of practice” (Sturkie & Bergen, 2001, p. 12). In other words, while professional associations aim to inspire excellence in member provided services, state regulatory boards are concerned with issues of minimal competence. This is an important difference in emphasis that cannot be overstated, with each providing a valuable service to the profession.

As family therapists, we should be well equipped to understand that, while change can be difficult, change itself is neither good or bad, only different. Furthermore, we understand that the anxiety experienced related to change can be greatly reduced by knowledge of the essence and potential impact of change. As noted by Sturkie and Bergen (2001), licensure laws create “...a mechanism of social control and consumer protection that is more powerful and coercive than that exerted by voluntary professional associations” (p. 14). Huber has suggested that state regulation may engender some resentment from the professional associations because regulatory boards “take precedence over professional associations” (Sturkie & Bergen, 2001, p. 14), encroaching on responsibilities that once belonged to the association. Adapting to the changes of state regulation of the profession of marriage and family therapy will likely be difficult at times, but knowledge of the impact of this change will greatly reduce resistance and promote the likelihood of professional success in the licensure era of the profession.

In summary, it is crucial that MFTs in the state understand the differing functions of the MAMFT and the MBOESWMFT and educate themselves regarding the policies, procedures and responsibilities of both organizations. The following websites contain a wealth of useful information for MFTs. We strongly encourage you to utilize them.

- AAMFT      [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org)
- MAMFT      [www.mamft.com](http://www.mamft.com)
- AMFTRB     [www.amftrb.org](http://www.amftrb.org)
- MBOESWMFT [www.mboeswmft.com](http://www.mboeswmft.com) OR [www.swmft.ms.gov](http://www.swmft.ms.gov)

## References

Sturkie, K., & Bergen, L. P. (2001). *Professional Regulation in Marital and Family Therapy*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

West, C., Hinton, W.J., Grames, H., & Adams, M.A. (In Press). Marriage and family therapy: Examining the impact of licensure on an evolving profession. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*.

## Numbers of Active LMFTs: How Do We Compare

The following chart compares the current number of licensed marriage and family therapists in Mississippi to surrounding states.

<u>STATE</u>	<u>Number of LMFTs</u>
Alabama	176
Arkansas	104
Louisiana	940
Mississippi	257
Tennessee	291

## Mississippi

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