
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 563 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY PASHINSKI, GIRAL, ISAACSON, VENKAT, SANCHEZ, HILL-
EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, KHAN, CIRESI, NEILSON, FREEMAN, OTTEN,
KENYATTA, BURGOS, RIVERA, BOROWSKI, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, PARKER,
GREEN, McNEILL, MATZIE, MULLINS, MUNROE, WEBSTER, SOLOMON,
DALEY, CURRY, GUENST, DONAHUE, KULIK, MADDEN, BRIGGS, PROBST,
PIELLI, BELLMON AND SHUSTERMAN, FEBRUARY 12, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE,
FEBRUARY 12, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of July 9, 1987 (P.L.220, No.39), entitled "An
2 act licensing and regulating the practice of social work;
3 providing penalties; and making an appropriation," providing
4 for licensing and regulating the practice of music therapy;
5 and making editorial changes.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. The title and sections 1 and 2 of the act of July
9 9, 1987 (P.L.220, No.39), known as the Social Workers, Marriage
10 and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act, are
11 amended to read:

12 AN ACT

13 Licensing and regulating the practice of social work, marriage
14 and family therapy, professional counseling and professional
15 music therapy; providing penalties; and making an
16 appropriation.

17 Section 1. Short title.

1 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Social
2 Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists [and], Professional
3 Counselors and Professional Music Therapists Act.

4 Section 2. Legislative intent.

5 The practice of social work, marriage and family therapy
6 [and], professional counseling and professional music therapy
7 within this Commonwealth is hereby declared to affect the public
8 safety and welfare and to be subject to regulation and control
9 in the public interest to protect the public from
10 unprofessional, improper, unauthorized and unqualified practice
11 of licensed social work, licensed marriage and family therapy
12 [and], licensed professional counseling and licensed
13 professional music therapy. This act regulates only those who
14 hold themselves out as licensed social workers, licensed
15 clinical social workers, licensed marriage and family therapists
16 [or as], licensed professional counselors or as licensed
17 professional music therapists. Acquisition of a license under
18 this act shall not be made a condition of the employment of a
19 person by the Commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions
20 or by nonprofit agencies.

21 Section 2. The definition of "board" in section 3 of the act
22 is amended and the section is amended by adding definitions to
23 read:

24 Section 3. Definitions.

25 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
26 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
27 context clearly indicates otherwise:

28 * * *

29 "Board." The State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and
30 Family Therapists [and], Professional Counselors and

1 Professional Music Therapists under the Bureau of Professional
2 and Occupational Affairs within the Department of State.

3 * * *

4 "Independent practice of music therapy." The application of
5 professional music therapy knowledge and skills by an
6 individual:

7 (1) who styles oneself as a professional music
8 therapist;

9 (2) who regulates and is responsible for the
10 individual's own practice and treatment procedures; and

11 (3) whose practice is not affiliated with any other
12 practice, health care facility, government agency or
13 government-regulated social service agency.

14 * * *

15 "Licensed professional music therapist." A person who
16 engages in the practice of music therapy and who holds a current
17 license under this act.

18 * * *

19 "Practice of music therapy." As follows:

20 (1) The clinical and evidence-based use of music
21 interventions to accomplish individualized goals for
22 individuals of all ages and ability levels within a
23 therapeutic relationship by a licensed professional music
24 therapist. Professional music therapists develop an
25 individualized music therapy treatment plan for a client or
26 group of clients that identifies the goals, objectives and
27 potential strategies of the music therapy services
28 appropriate for the client or group of clients using music
29 therapy interventions, including, but not limited to, music
30 improvisation, receptive music listening, song-writing, lyric

1 discussion, music and imagery, music performance, learning
2 through music and movement to music.

3 (2) The term includes:

4 (i) Accepting referrals for music therapy services
5 from medical, developmental, mental health or education
6 professionals, family members, clients, caregivers or
7 others involved and authorized with provision of client
8 services.

9 (ii) Conducting a music therapy assessment of a
10 client to determine if treatment is indicated. If
11 treatment is indicated, the licensed professional music
12 therapist collects systematic, comprehensive and accurate
13 information necessary to determine the appropriate type
14 of music therapy services to provide for the client.

15 (iii) Developing an individualized music therapy
16 treatment plan for a client that is based upon the
17 results of the music therapy assessment.

18 (iv) Carrying out an individualized music therapy
19 treatment plan that is consistent with other medical,
20 developmental, rehabilitative, habilitating, mental
21 health, preventive, wellness care or educational services
22 being provided to a client.

23 (v) Evaluating a client's response to music therapy
24 and the individualized music therapy treatment plan,
25 documenting change and progress and suggesting
26 modifications, as appropriate.

27 (vi) Developing a plan for determining when the
28 provision of music therapy services is no longer needed
29 in collaboration with the client, a physician or other
30 provider of health care or education of the client, the

1 family or caregiver of the client and any other
2 appropriate person upon whom the client relies for
3 support.

4 (vii) Minimizing barriers to ensure a client may
5 receive music therapy services in the least restrictive
6 environment.

7 (viii) Collaborating with and educating the client
8 and the family or caregiver of the client or any other
9 appropriate person about the needs of the client that are
10 being addressed in music therapy and the manner in which
11 the music therapy addresses those needs.

12 (ix) Utilizing appropriate knowledge and skill to
13 improve the practice of music therapy, including the use
14 of research, reasoning and problem-solving skills to
15 determine appropriate actions in the context of each
16 specific clinical setting.

17 (3) The term does not include:

18 (i) The screening, diagnosis or assessment of any
19 physical, mental or communication disorder.

20 (ii) A person whose training and national
21 certification attests to the person's preparation and
22 ability to practice the certified profession or
23 occupation, if the person does not represent that the
24 person is a music therapist.

25 (iii) The practice of music therapy as an integral
26 part of a program of study for a student enrolled in an
27 accredited music therapy program, if the student does not
28 represent that the student is a music therapist.

29 (iv) A person who engages in the practice of music
30 therapy under the supervision of a licensed professional

1 music therapist, if the person does not represent that
2 the person is a music therapist.

3 * * *

4 "Professional music therapist." A person who has acquired
5 the necessary education and qualifications to apply to be a
6 licensed professional music therapist under this act and engage
7 in the practice of music therapy in this Commonwealth.

8 * * *

9 Section 3. Sections 4, 5 heading, (a), (c) and (1) and 6(2)
10 and (3) of the act, amended March 28, 2024 (P.L.11, No.4), are
11 amended to read:

12 Section 4. License required.

13 It shall be unlawful for any person to [hold oneself forth
14 as] represent that the person is a licensed bachelor social
15 worker, licensed social worker, licensed clinical social worker,
16 licensed associate marriage and family therapist, licensed
17 marriage and family therapist, licensed associate professional
18 counselor [or], licensed professional counselor or licensed
19 professional music therapist unless [he or she] the person shall
20 first have obtained a license pursuant to this act.

21 Section 5. State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family
22 Therapists [and], Professional Counselors and
23 Professional Music Therapists.

24 (a) Creation.--There is hereby created the State Board of
25 Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists [and],
26 Professional Counselors and Professional Music Therapists, a
27 departmental administrative board in the Department of State.
28 The board shall consist of [13] 15 members who are citizens of
29 the United States and who have been residents of this
30 Commonwealth for a two-year period, two of whom shall be public

1 members; five of whom shall be licensed social workers, at least
2 one of whom shall be a licensed clinical social worker and at
3 least one of whom shall be a licensed social worker; two of whom
4 shall be licensed marriage and family therapists; two of whom
5 shall be licensed professional counselors; two of whom shall be
6 licensed professional music therapists with a master's degree or
7 higher in music therapy or a related field; one of whom shall be
8 either a licensed marriage and family therapist or a licensed
9 professional counselor whose membership shall rotate between
10 those professions at the expiration of the member's second term;
11 and one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Professional and
12 Occupational Affairs.

13 * * *

14 (c) Initial appointments.--Within 90 days of the effective
15 date of this act, the Governor shall nominate one professional
16 member to serve as a clinical social worker member of the board;
17 three professional members to serve as professional counselor
18 members of the board, one of whom shall serve a two-year term,
19 one of whom shall serve a three-year term and one of whom shall
20 serve a four-year term; two professional members to serve as the
21 marriage and family therapist members of the board, one of whom
22 shall serve a two-year term and one of whom shall serve a four-
23 year term[.]; and two professional members to serve as the
24 licensed professional music therapist members of the board, one
25 of whom shall serve a two-year term and one of whom shall serve
26 a four-year term. The professional members of the board
27 initially appointed pursuant to this subsection need not be
28 licensed by the licensure examination adopted by the board but,
29 at the time of appointment, must have satisfied the education
30 and experience requirements of this act for licensure as a

1 clinical social worker, a marriage and family therapist [or], a
2 professional counselor or a licensed professional music
3 therapist.

4 * * *

5 (1) Operating procedures.--The board shall meet within 30
6 days after the appointment of its new members and set up
7 operating procedures and develop application forms for licensing
8 clinical social workers, associate marriage and family
9 therapists, marriage and family therapists, associate
10 professional counselors [and], professional counselors and
11 professional music therapists. It shall be the responsibility of
12 the board to circulate these forms and educate the public to the
13 requirements of licensing in order to hold oneself out as a
14 licensed bachelor social worker, licensed social worker,
15 licensed associate marriage and family therapist, licensed
16 clinical social worker, licensed marriage and family therapist,
17 licensed associate professional counselor [or], licensed
18 professional counselor or professional music therapist within
19 [the] this Commonwealth.

20 Section 6. Powers and functions of board.

21 The board shall have the following powers:

22 * * *

23 (2) To adopt and, from time to time, revise such rules
24 and regulations as may be necessary to carry into effect the
25 provisions of this act. Such regulations may include, but
26 shall not be limited to, standards of professional practice
27 and conduct for licensed bachelor social workers, licensed
28 social workers, licensed clinical social workers, licensed
29 associate marriage and family therapists, licensed marriage
30 and family therapists, licensed associate professional

1 counselors [and], licensed professional counselors and
2 professional music therapist in Pennsylvania.

3 (3) To examine for, deny, approve, issue, revoke,
4 suspend or renew licenses of bachelor social workers, social
5 workers, clinical social workers, associate marriage and
6 family therapists, marriage and family therapists, associate
7 professional counselors [and], professional counselors and
8 professional music therapist pursuant to this act and to
9 conduct hearings in connection therewith.

10 * * *

11 Section 4. Section 7 of the act is amended by adding a
12 subsection to read:

13 Section 7. Qualifications for license.

14 * * *

15 (h) Professional music therapist license.--An applicant
16 shall be qualified for a license to hold oneself out as a
17 licensed professional music therapist, provided the applicant
18 submits proof satisfactory to the board that:

19 (1) The applicant is of good moral character.

20 (2) The applicant has completed the education and
21 clinical training requirements established by the American
22 Music Therapy Association or any successor organization.

23 (3) The applicant provides proof of passing the
24 examination for board certification offered by the
25 Certification Board for Music Therapists or any successor
26 organization or provides proof of being transitioned into
27 board certification, and provides proof that the applicant is
28 currently a board certified music therapist.

29 (4) The applicant remains actively certified by the
30 Certification Board for Music Therapists.

1 (5) The applicant has submitted an application
2 accompanied by the application fee.

3 (6) The applicant has not been convicted of a felony
4 under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic
5 Act, or of an offense under the laws of another jurisdiction,
6 which, if committed in this Commonwealth, would be a felony
7 under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic
8 Act, unless:

9 (i) at least ten years have elapsed from the date of
10 conviction;

11 (ii) the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates to
12 the board that the applicant has made significant
13 progress in personal rehabilitation since the conviction,
14 such that licensure of the applicant should not be
15 expected to create a substantial risk of harm to the
16 health and safety of the applicant's clients or the
17 public or a substantial risk of further criminal
18 violation; and

19 (iii) the applicant otherwise satisfies the
20 qualifications contained in or authorized by this act.

21 As used in this paragraph, the term "convicted" shall include
22 a judgment, an admission of guilt or a plea of nolo
23 contendere.

24 Section 5. Sections 8(b) and 10(a) of the act, amended March
25 28, 2024 (P.L.11, No.4), are amended to read:

26 Section 8. Procedures for licensing.

27 * * *

28 (b) Issuance of license.--The board shall issue to each
29 person who meets the licensure requirements of this act a
30 certificate setting forth that such person is licensed to [hold

1 oneself out as] represent that the person is a licensed bachelor
2 social worker, a licensed social worker, a licensed clinical
3 social worker, a licensed associate marriage and family
4 therapist, a licensed marriage and family therapist, a licensed
5 associate professional counselor [or], a licensed professional
6 counselor or professional music therapist.

7 Section 10. Reciprocity.

8 (a) General rule.--The board shall have the power to grant a
9 reciprocal license to an applicant who is licensed or certified
10 as a bachelor social worker, social worker, clinical social
11 worker, associate marriage and family therapist, marriage and
12 family therapist, associate professional counselor [or],
13 professional counselor or professional music therapist in
14 another state and has demonstrated qualifications which equal or
15 exceed those required pursuant to this act in the determination
16 of the board, provided that no license shall be granted under
17 this section to an applicant unless the state in which the
18 applicant is licensed affords reciprocal treatment to persons
19 who are residents of this Commonwealth and who are licensed
20 pursuant to this act.

21 * * *

22 Section 6. Section 10.1 of the act is amended by adding a
23 subsection to read:

24 Section 10.1. Endorsement of out-of-State licenses.

25 * * *

26 (d) Professional music therapist license.--The board may
27 issue a professional music therapist license without examination
28 to an applicant holding a professional music therapist license
29 in another state who submits proof satisfactory to the board of
30 all of the following:

1 (1) The applicant is of good moral character.

2 (2) The applicant meets the educational requirements,
3 including clinical training as specified in section 7(h).

4 (3) The applicant holds a music therapy license that is
5 in good standing from another state.

6 (4) The applicant has, at a minimum, been actively
7 engaged in the practice of music therapy for five of the last
8 seven years immediately preceding the filing of the
9 application for licensure by endorsement with the board.

10 (5) The applicant has submitted an application
11 accompanied by the application fee.

12 (6) The applicant has not been convicted of a felony
13 under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic
14 Act, or of an offense under the laws of another jurisdiction,
15 which, if committed in this Commonwealth, would be a felony
16 under The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic
17 Act, unless:

18 (i) at least ten years have elapsed from the date of
19 conviction;

20 (ii) the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates to
21 the board that the applicant has made significant
22 progress in personal rehabilitation since the conviction,
23 such that licensure of the applicant should not be
24 expected to create a substantial risk of harm to the
25 health and safety of the applicant's clients or the
26 public or a substantial risk of further criminal
27 violation; and

28 (iii) the applicant otherwise satisfies the
29 qualifications contained in or authorized by this act.

30 As used in this paragraph, the term "convicted" shall include

1 a judgment, an admission of guilt or a plea of nolo
2 contendere.

3 Section 7. Section 12 of the act, amended March 28, 2024
4 (P.L.11, No.4), is amended to read:

5 Section 12. Reinstatement of license.

6 Unless ordered to do so by Commonwealth Court or an appeal
7 therefrom, the board shall not reinstate the license of a person
8 to practice as a bachelor social worker, social worker, clinical
9 social worker, associate marriage and family therapist, marriage
10 and family therapist, associate professional counselor [or],
11 professional counselor pursuant or professional music therapist
12 to this act, which has been revoked. Any person whose license
13 has been revoked may apply for reinstatement, after a period of
14 at least five years, but must meet all of the licensing
15 qualifications of this act, including the examination
16 requirement, if [he or she] the person desires to practice as a
17 bachelor social worker, social worker, clinical social worker,
18 marriage and family therapist [or], professional counselor or
19 professional music therapist pursuant to this act at any time
20 after such revocation.

21 Section 8. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

22 Section 16.7. Practice of music therapy and restrictions on use
23 of title "Licensed Professional Music Therapist."

24 (a) Before treatment.--

25 (1) Before providing music therapy services to a client
26 for an identified clinical or developmental need, the
27 licensed professional music therapist shall review with the
28 health care provider involved in the client's care the
29 client's diagnosis, treatment needs and treatment plan.

30 (2) Before providing music therapy services to an

1 individual for an identified educational need, the licensed
2 professional music therapist shall review with the
3 individualized family service plan team or individualized
4 education program team the individual's diagnosis, treatment
5 needs and treatment plan.

6 (b) During treatment.--

7 (1) When providing music therapy services to a client,
8 the licensed professional music therapist shall collaborate,
9 as applicable, with the client's treatment team, including
10 physician, psychologist, licensed social worker or other
11 mental health professional.

12 (2) When providing music therapy services to a client
13 with a communication disorder, the licensed professional
14 music therapist shall collaborate and discuss the music
15 therapy treatment plan with the client's audiologist or
16 speech-language pathologist. When providing educational or
17 health care services, a licensed professional music therapist
18 may not replace the services provided by an audiologist or a
19 speech-language pathologist. Unless authorized to practice
20 speech-language pathology, music therapists may not evaluate,
21 examine, instruct or counsel on speech, language,
22 communication and swallowing disorders and conditions.

23 (c) Use of title.--Only individuals who have received
24 licenses as licensed professional music therapists under this
25 act may style themselves as licensed professional music
26 therapists and use the letters "L.P.M.T." in connection with
27 their names. It shall be unlawful for an individual to style
28 oneself as a licensed professional music therapist, a music
29 therapist or use any words or symbols indicating or tending to
30 indicate that the individual is a licensed professional music

1 therapist or a music therapist without holding a license in good
2 standing under this act.

3 (d) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
4 construed to prohibit a person who is licensed or certified to
5 practice a profession by a Commonwealth agency or board from
6 practicing within the scope of that license or certificate or as
7 otherwise authorized by law so long as the person does not
8 represent themselves as a music therapist.

9 (e) Communication disorders.--A licensed professional music
10 therapist may not represent to the public that the licensed
11 professional music therapist is authorized to treat a
12 communication disorder. This does not prohibit a licensed
13 professional music therapist from representing to the public
14 that the licensed professional music therapist works with
15 clients who have a communication disorder and addresses
16 communication skills.

17 Section 9. Section 17(b) of the act is amended to read:
18 Section 17. Penalties.

19 * * *

20 (b) Civil penalty.--In addition to any other civil remedy or
21 criminal penalty provided for in this act, the board, by a vote
22 of the majority of the maximum number of the authorized
23 membership of the board as provided by law, or by a vote of the
24 majority of the duly qualified and confirmed membership or a
25 minimum of three members, whichever is greater, may levy a civil
26 penalty of up to \$10,000 on any current licensee who violates
27 any provision of this act, on any person who engages in the
28 independent practice of clinical social work, the independent
29 practice of marriage and family therapy [or], the independent
30 practice of professional counseling or the independent practice

1 of music therapy without being licensed pursuant to this act or
2 on any person who [holds himself or herself out as] represents
3 that the person is a licensed bachelor social worker, licensed
4 social worker, licensed clinical social worker, licensed
5 marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor
6 [or], marriage and family therapist or licensed professional
7 music therapist without being so licensed pursuant to this act.
8 The board shall levy this penalty only after affording the
9 accused party the opportunity for a hearing, as provided in
10 Title 2 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (relating to
11 administrative law and procedure).

12 * * *

13 Section 10. Sections 18(b) and 20(a) of the act, amended
14 March 28, 2024 (P.L.11, No.4), are amended to read:

15 Section 18. License renewal; records and fees.

16 * * *

17 (b) Records.--A record of all persons licensed to practice
18 as bachelor social workers, social workers, clinical social
19 workers, associate marriage and family therapists, marriage and
20 family therapists, associate professional counselors [and],
21 professional counselors and music therapists in Pennsylvania
22 shall be kept in the office of the board and shall be open to
23 public inspection and copying upon payment of a nominal fee for
24 copying the record.

25 * * *

26 Section 20. Unlawful practice.

27 (a) Unlawful practice prohibited.--It shall be unlawful for
28 any person to engage in the independent practice of clinical
29 social work, the independent practice of marriage and family
30 therapy [or], the independent practice of professional

1 counseling or the independent practice of music therapy or [hold
2 oneself out as] represent that the person is a licensed bachelor
3 social worker, licensed social worker, licensed clinical social
4 worker, licensed associate marriage and family therapist,
5 licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed associate
6 professional counselor [and], licensed professional counselor
7 and licensed professional music therapist without possessing a
8 valid, unexpired, unrevoked and unsuspended license issued under
9 this act.

10 * * *

11 Section 11. This act shall take effect in 60 days.