

Hi, Everyone,

If you're reading this, **please, please know that I am not the final authority on any of the things you're asking. I'm just reporting what I've found out from various sources. Keep in mind that it's possible I was given incorrect information. Please don't take just my word for any of all this. Please check additional sources.

Information Re: The Most Frequently Asked Questions I've Been Asked:

Question # 1. How do I know if I am exempt from taking the 45 hr. course?

1) Clinicians licensed at the Independent level (LCSW, LPC, LMFT) for at least TEN (10) YEARS before April 26, 2016, shall be grandfathered in and exempt from these requirements if they are and always have been in good standing with the Composite Board.



→ 10 Years From When?

Licensees who have had their independent licenses 10 years or more do not have to meet this new educational criteria. According to a notification from [LPCA-GA](#) (the Licensed Professional Counselors Association of GA- a state chapter of the [American Mental Health Counselors Association](#)) **the 10 years is being measured backward from the date the law went into effect April 26, 2016...so you must have been licensed prior to April 26, 2006** in order to not need to explore whether or not you previously met the now mandated educational requirements.

Question # 2. If I have to take the 45 hr. course, what is the deadline I must complete it by?

The Board says it must be completed by midnight, Dec. 31, 2017.

Question # 3. How do I know if I have to take the course?

The Law says: All licensees regulated by the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, i.e., LAPCs, LPCs, LMSWs, LCSWs, LAMFTs, LMFTs who:

- 1) are “working with people with mental illness, developmental disability, or substance abuse”; and
- 2) received their independent licensure (LCSW, LPC, and/or LMFT) after April 26, 2006 or who have not maintained their independent licensure (LCSW, LPC, LMFT) for at least ten (10) years as of April 26, 2016; and
- 3) have not completed a “curriculum” - three (3) credit graduate level course in “diagnosis” or 45 hour course of approved training in diagnosis / psychopathology.

Question # 4. How do I know if I’ve already taken a course during my graduate program that will meet the requirements of the Board’s new law?

Several suggestions here.

- Get a copy of your transcript. What is the title of the course you’re praying will satisfy the requirement? It’s got to have something about DSM and/or Psychopathology and/or Diagnosis in the title that indicates it covers the things the new law is requiring.
- If you can’t tell from the course title, get a copy of the course catalog you entered your graduate program under and look at the description of the course. Sometimes the content you need is there, but the name of the course doesn’t reflect the content. The course catalog may be on line or you may have to request a hard copy.
- As I understand it, LPCA suggests that you look at what you put on your application in section IX.
- This is hearsay: The Board will not tell you if you meet the requirement. Take it with several grains of salt. I honestly don’t know if this is accurate or not.

Question # 5. Can I take some of the 45 hrs. on-line?

Yes, thank God. You can take UP TO, but no more than 20 hrs. on-line. This applies ONLY to the 45 hr. course. The 'no more than 10 hrs. on-line' rule is about continuing education requirements. If you have to take the 45 hr. course, 10 of the on-line hrs. can be used for renewal per composite board rules. Remember than Ethics cannot be taken on-line, so if you sign up for an on-line course to use toward meeting the 45 hrs. check to be sure Ethics is NOT part of the on-line course hours. If it is, those hrs. won't count toward the Ethics requirement because they are on-line. EX: a module says it's 6 hrs., but 1 hr. is Ethics. If you take this module on-line, you're really getting 5 hrs. because you can't count that Ethics hr. since it was on-line.

Question # 6. Where do I go to read the actual Board rule about the course?

Type this in your browser: rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/135 You'll see 12 Chapters. The 12th chapter is about the new law. Rule 135-5-.02(a)11(IX) is something you may want to pay special attention to.

Question # 7. I heard good old NASWGA is offering a free course, with a few stipulations. Is that still available?

"Registration for the free psychopathology course offered to NASW-GA members has closed." This is on the home page of the NASWGA website.

Question # 8. When did the new rule (Rule 135-12-.02.) become effective?

The rule became effective on 9/21/2017.

Question # 9. What's with all the different deadlines?

The 45 hr. Psycho. course requirement and the 35 hr. licensure renewal are NOT due at the same time. The 45 hr. deadline is Dec. 31, 2017. The licensure renewal deadline is Sept. 30, 2018. It's really important to remember that the 45 hr. Psycho. Course is just that: a course. It is separate from the 35 hrs. we need to renew our licenses, although the Board has said we can use those 45 hrs. to meet the 35 hrs. needed for renewal.

***(The required training pursuant to this rule is NOT a continuing education hours requirement for renewal. If you do obtain these hours you may use them for the September 2018 renewal of your license to satisfy the required continuing education hours required for renewal of a license pursuant to the rule. Please read the rule - specifically 135-12-.02.)**

***This is taken directly from <http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/licensing/plb/43>**

If you have a question that wasn't addressed, please let me know and I'll try to help you find the answer.

Hope this 'Q & A' helps!