The American Board of Couple and Family Psychology (ABCFP) is a member board of the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). The ABCFP is responsible for establishing criteria related to the definition, education, training, competencies, and the examination leading to certification as a specialist in Couple and Family psychology. The Board membership includes only members board certified in Couple and Family psychology and representative of the specialty on a national basis.

Couple and Family Psychology
The specialty of Couple and Family psychology is not confined to "Couple and Family therapy", but is a comprehensive application of the science and profession of psychology with families, Couple and Family subsystems, and individual Couple and Family members. Couple and Family psychologists stress the centrality of understanding and constructively changing the Couple and Family unit or subsystems, as well as the individual. Couple and Family psychologists consider the individual, Couple and Family, and human relationships from a perspective that includes systemic interactions and developmental processes over the life span and takes into account the context in which they are embedded.

Certification in Couple and Family Psychology
Board certification assures the public and the profession that the Couple and Family psychologist specialist has successfully completed the educational, training, and experience requirements of the specialty including an examination designed to assess the competencies required to provide quality services in Couple and Family psychology. Specialties, by definition, are advanced levels of practice including doctoral and post-doctoral preparation. A description of the general doctoral degree and licensure requirements for certification follows together with the specific requirements of the Couple and Family psychology specialty.

Requirements for Board Certification Board
Certification assures the public and the profession that the specialist in Couple and Family psychology has met the education, training and experience requirements, as well as demonstrating the advanced competencies required by the specialty through an individualized, peer reviewed examination. The examination encompasses the following interrelated domains of professional competency.

Assessment and Intervention
The assessment and intervention competencies related to the practice of Couple and Family psychology specialty are fundamental aspects of the examination. Two samples of the candidate's practice are submitted and reviewed together with the candidate's pattern of practice through his/her Professional Statement.

Science Base and Application
The science or discipline base of the specialty is the appropriate application of that base to the contemporary practice of Couple and Family psychology, including the applicants awareness of theory and research pertaining to issues of diversity e.g. ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, Couple and Family cultural issues, and Couple and Family cultural issues.

Ethics and Legal Foundations
The awareness and appropriate exercise of ethical and legal standard. This includes the APA Ethical Principles and current statutory provisions and case law precedents applicable for the protection of the interests of families, the profession, and society.

Professional Identification
The Candidate is expected to demonstrate meaningful involvement with the profession in general and the specialty in particular.

Consultation and Supervision
These competency areas have emerged as significant areas of practice for many specialists and are often applicable when the specialist's pattern of practice includes them in an important way.

"I increased my sureness about what in couple and family I was most capable of and what I would like to know more about that I had the potential to learn. I also checked myself to realistically accept that there were other interesting areas in my field in which I might like to involve myself, but had to realize that I really did not fit some of those. The exam process itself helped round out my sense of fitness in some areas and potential limitations in others."

-A. Rodney (Rod) Nurse, PhD, ABPP

Fees
$125 fee for application and credential review to establish candidacy.
$250 fee for the practice sample review and establishment of the oral examination team.
$450 for the oral examination.

These fees are due sequentially over the time span necessary to complete all of the candidacy and examination steps. Upon granting Board certification a yearly fee of $185 is assessed to support the many services of the ABPP and the representation of the organization to the public and the profession.
You’ve all heard the reasons to reach for the gold standard of excellence as a family psychologist including a pay bonus in certain areas of federal service, recognition as an expert, networking with a fun group of like-minded colleagues, etc., but did you also know that ABPP makes licensure mobility much easier in 35 states.

So, don’t delay any further. Go to the detailed instructions page to start the process, and don’t be deterred if you’re uncertain about meeting the requirements – contact me and we’ll assign a mentor to guide you through. If you’re a senior psychologist, you’ll be on the fast track!

Any questions? You can email me at: Allison Waterworth <Allison@DrWaterworth.com>

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**Traditional Track**

*For individuals who completed most of their education and training in CFP after their doctoral program*

A doctoral degree from a program in professional psychology (e.g., clinical, counseling, or school psychology) that meets the ABPP generic requirements.

Substantive clinical, research and/or didactic training in couple and family psychology, as evidenced by some combination of the following experiences:

- An internship with a component of CFP focus
- A postdoc with a CFP emphasis
- Several graduate courses in CFP
- Several hours of didactic CFP training post-graduation
- A period of regular supervision by a Diplomate in CFP
- A period of regular supervision by an expert in CFP (non-diplomate)
- Completion of an APA or CPA accredited internship or an APPIC or CAPIC approved internship;
- Completion of a post-doctoral residency or one year postdoctoral practice (preferably with an emphasis on CFP) supervised by a licensed psychologist.
- A minimum of one hour a week of individual supervision for 48 hours a year is mandatory. Additional supervision or consultation in the specialty is desirable.

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**Senior Track**

The senior track is reserved for psychologists who have made substantial, recognized contributions to the field and demonstrated competence in CFP.

Senior eligibility recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of those who have worked in the field of couple and family psychology for a minimum of 15 years after receiving licensure.

To qualify for application under the senior track, every senior candidate must demonstrate having a professional identity as a couple and family psychologist, in addition to meeting the generic qualifications required by ABPP.

Candidates may demonstrate professional identity in the specialty by submitting a concise summary of evidence, using the illustrative examples provided below as guidance for the type of evidence desired:

- Conceptual competency in systemic epistemology (ability to use systems theory to inform CFP)
- Fellow status in the APA Society for Family Psychology
- Completion of an education or training program in CFP
- Supervised experience in CFP
- Continuing education in CFP
- Membership and service in a CFP organization
- Presentations on CFP at conferences
- Documented systematic and sustained engagement in social policy, programs, and legislation on behalf of CFP

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**Early Entry for Doctoral Students**

*For students who plan to specialize in CFP in their career.*

Students will be in the process of earning a doctoral degree from a program in professional psychology (e.g., clinical, counseling, or school psychology) that meets the ABPP generic requirements, or in the process of earning hours for licensure.

ABPP will help students by allowing them to log and bank their credentials. Students who are in the process of obtaining substantive clinical, research and/or didactic training in couple and family psychology, as evidenced by some combination of the following experiences, are welcome to apply:

- An internship with a component of CFP focus
- Several graduate courses in CFP
- Several hours of didactic CFP training
- A period of regular supervision by a Diplomate in CFP
- A period of regular supervision by an expert in CFP (non-diplomate)
- Will need to obtain an APA or CPA accredited internship or an APPIC or CAPIC approved internship;
- A minimum of one hour a week of individual supervision for 48 hours a year is mandatory. Additional supervision or consultation in the specialty is desirable.