

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 333

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a chemical dependency counselor or counselor intern.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 504.001, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Subdivision (3-a) to read as follows:

(3-a) "Counselor intern" means a person registered with the commission in accordance with Section 504.1515.

SECTION 2. The heading to Subchapter D, Chapter 504, Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. LICENSE AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

SECTION 3. Subchapter D, Chapter 504, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Section 504.1515 to read as follows:

Sec. 504.1515. COUNSELOR INTERNS. (a) A person seeking a license as a chemical dependency counselor shall register with the commission as a counselor intern by submitting, in a form acceptable to the commission, the following:

(1) an application fee and a background investigation fee;

(2) a completed, signed, dated, and notarized application on a form prescribed by the commission;

(3) a recent full-face wallet-sized photograph of the applicant;

(4) two sets of fingerprints completed in accordance with commission instructions on cards issued by the commission;

1           (5) documentation verifying the applicant  
2 successfully completed:

3           (A) 270 total hours of approved curricula  
4 described by Section 504.152(3)(A); and

5           (B) 300 hours of approved supervised field work  
6 practicum described by Section 504.152(3)(C); and

7           (6) documentation verifying the applicant received a  
8 high school diploma or its equivalent.

9           (b) The commission may obtain criminal history record  
10 information relating to a counselor intern or an applicant for  
11 registration as a counselor intern from the Department of Public  
12 Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

13           SECTION 4. Section 504.152, Occupations Code, is amended to  
14 read as follows:

15           Sec. 504.152. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS. To be eligible for  
16 a license under this chapter, a person must:

17           (1) be at least 18 years of age;

18           (2) hold an associate degree or a more advanced degree  
19 [have a high school diploma or its equivalent];

20           (3) have completed:

21           (A) 135 hours, or nine semester hours, specific  
22 to substance abuse disorders and treatment and an additional 135  
23 hours, or nine semester hours, specific or related to chemical  
24 dependency counseling [270 classroom hours of approved curricula];

25           (B) 4,000 hours of approved supervised  
26 experience working with chemically dependent persons; and

27           (C) 300 hours of approved supervised field work

1 practicum;

2 (4) provide two letters of reference from chemical  
3 dependency counselors;

4 (5) pass a written examination approved by the  
5 commission;

6 (6) submit a case presentation to the test  
7 administrator;

8 (7) pass an oral examination approved by the  
9 commission;

10 (8) be determined by the commission to be worthy of the  
11 public trust and confidence;

12 (9) successfully complete the chemical dependency  
13 counselor examination under Section 504.156; and

14 (10) sign a written agreement to comply with the  
15 standards of ethics approved by the commission.

16 SECTION 5. Subsection (a), Section 504.153, Occupations  
17 Code, is amended to read as follows:

18 (a) An applicant is exempt from the requirements of Sections  
19 504.152(3)(A) and (C) if the applicant holds a baccalaureate degree  
20 or a more advanced degree in:

21 (1) chemical dependency counseling; or

22 (2) psychology, sociology, or any other related  
23 program approved by the commission.

24 SECTION 6. Section 504.057, Occupations Code, is repealed.

25 SECTION 7. (a) A person who holds a license as a chemical  
26 dependency counselor before the effective date of this Act may  
27 continue to renew that license without complying with the changes

1 in law made by this Act.

2 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (c) of this section,  
3 the changes in law made by this Act apply only to an initial  
4 application made to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
5 for a chemical dependency counseling license issued as provided by  
6 Chapter 504, Occupations Code, as amended by this Act, on or after  
7 the effective date of this Act. An application for a chemical  
8 dependency counseling license made to the Texas Commission on  
9 Alcohol and Drug Abuse before the effective date of this Act is  
10 governed by the law as it existed before that date, and that law is  
11 continued in effect for that purpose.

12 (c) The changes in law made by this Act do not apply to a  
13 person who has completed the requirements for intern registration  
14 and submitted an application for registration as a counselor intern  
15 as described by Section 504.1515, Occupations Code, as added by  
16 this Act, with the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse before  
17 the effective date of this Act.

18 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect September 1, 2004.