

Career Profile

Marriage and Family Therapist

What They Do

Just the Facts

Diagnoses and treats mental and emotional disorders, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral, within the context of marriage and family systems. Applies psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples, and families for the purpose of treating such diagnosed nervous and mental disorders.

This career is part of the [Human Services](#) cluster [Counseling and Mental Health Services](#) pathway.

A person in this career:

- Asks questions that will help clients identify their feelings and behaviors.
- Counsels clients on concerns, such as unsatisfactory relationships, divorce and separation, child rearing, home management, and financial difficulties.
- Encourages individuals and family members to develop and use skills and strategies for confronting their problems in a constructive manner.
- Maintains case files that include activities, progress notes, evaluations, and recommendations.
- Develops and implements individualized treatment plans addressing family relationship problems, destructive patterns of behavior, and other personal issues.
- Collects information about clients, using techniques such as testing, interviewing, discussion, and observation.
- Confers with clients to develop plans for posttreatment activities.
- Confers with other counselors, doctors, and professionals to analyze individual cases and to coordinate counseling services.
- Determines whether clients should be counseled or referred to other specialists in such fields as medicine, psychiatry, and legal aid.
- Follows up on results of counseling programs and clients' adjustments to determine effectiveness of programs.

Insider Info

Dig into the details and check out what people in this job have to say about their work.

- [Insider Info](#)

Related Careers

- [Clergy](#)
- [Healthcare Social Worker](#)
- [Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Worker](#)
- [Mental Health Counselor](#)
- [Parole and Probation Officer](#)
- [Social Worker](#)
- [Social/Community Services Manager](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselor](#)

Multimedia

Watch a one-minute video showing what it's like to work in this career or related careers

Marriage and Family Therapists

[watch video](#)

Working Conditions and Physical Demands

People who do this job report that:

- You would sit most of the time. There's some walking and standing. You may have to lift and carry things like books, papers or tools weighing 10 lbs. or less.
- Exposed to hazardous situations involving possible injury such as cuts, bites, stings, and minor burns more than once a month
- Work in this occupation requires being inside most of the time
-
- Work in this occupation involves sitting more than one-third of the time

Working in this career involves (physical activities):

- Seeing clearly at a distance
- Seeing clearly up close
- Speaking clearly enough to be able to be understood by others
- Identifying and understanding the speech of another person

Work Hours and Travel

- Irregular hours

Specialty and Similar Careers

Careers that are more detailed or close to this career:

- Behavioral Therapist -- Assists in treating mental disorders using techniques to modify behaviors by replacing them with new behaviors.
- Mental Health Therapist -- Works with clients who are dealing with a range of emotional or psychological conditions.
- Psychotherapist -- Works with individuals, couples, families and groups to help them overcome a range of psychological and emotional issues.
- Family Counselor --