



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT/THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK/ALBANY, NY 12234

OFFICE OF THE STATE BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORK, 89 Washington Avenue, ALBANY, NY 12234-1000
Tel. (518) 474-3817 Ext. 450 Fax (518) 486-2981 E-mail: swbd@mail.nysed.gov

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TO: Licensure-qualifying graduate social work programs
FR: David Hamilton, Ph.D. LMSW, ACSW Executive Secretary
RE: Requirements for licensure as an LMSW in New York

I am writing to provide you with information about the process by which students may be licensed in the social work professions under New York Law. Please share this information with faculty, field instructors and students, as you see fit, so that students can proceed in a legal manner after graduation.

Effective September 1, 2004 an individual must be licensed, hold a limited permit, or be in an exempt setting (as defined in statute¹) in order to practice licensed master social work or licensed clinical social work in New York. An individual who practices without authorization, such as a permit, even under supervision could face questions about his/her moral character for licensure. A licensed supervisor who delegates activities to an unauthorized person could be charged with unprofessional conduct, under Part 29 of the Regents Rules.

A graduate of an MSW program must be licensed as an LMSW in order to practice the profession, as defined in law. There is no direct route to licensure as an LCSW—in order to legally meet the experience requirements, an individual must first be licensed as an LMSW or hold an LMSW permit and meet all requirements in law.

Applying for LMSW: A student may apply for licensure as an LMSW at any time by submitting the application (Form 1) and fee (\$294). The graduate school must submit Form 2 to verify that the student has met the degree requirements or received the degree. We do not require a transcript from graduates of NYSED-registered or CSWE-accredited programs applying for the LMSW. Every graduate of a registered program has also completed the course work in child abuse identification and does not need to complete this separately.

Master's Examination: When the Department has approved the application for licensure and the graduate education, the student will be eligible to take the ASWB examination. The Department notifies the examination vendor, ASWB, and sends the student a letter with instructions on how to register. An applicant may only take the ASWB Master's examination which demonstrates minimal competence for entry-level practice of the profession. The student must submit the ASWB application and fee to schedule the examination. ASWB provides the examination at sites across New York on a daily basis. The student's score will be reported to the Department by ASWB. Students can access more information about the examination development, content, and scoring on the ASWB website: <http://www.aswb.org/exam-candidates/>.

Moral Character: The Education Law requires an applicant for a limited permit or license to be of good moral character as determined by the Department. The student must report on the application for licensure (Form 1) any criminal arrests or convictions or disciplinary action in another licensed profession. This information will be reviewed to determine if the applicant is of good moral character today and eligible for the permit and/or license.

¹ Nothing in this act shall prohibit or limit the activities or services on the part of any person in the employ of a program or service operated, regulated, funded, or approved by the department of mental hygiene, office of children and family services, office of temporary and disability assistance, department of corrections and community supervision, department of health, state office for the aging, or a local governmental unit as that term is defined in article 41 of the mental hygiene law or a social services district as defined in section 61 of the social services law, provided, however, this section shall not authorize the use of any title authorized pursuant to article 154 of the education law, except as otherwise provided by such articles, except that this section shall be deemed repealed on July 1, 2016.

Limited Permit: In order to practice after graduation, the individual must have a limited permit issued by the Department. The permit authorizes practice under the supervision of an LMSW or LCSW in a setting that is authorized to provide professional services. The supervisor is responsible for all services provided by the permit holder. The permit is valid for one year and may not be renewed. Additional permits may be issued for approved settings and supervisors, upon filing of a new Form 5 but an additional fee is not required. If the permit holder practices under more than one supervisor, all supervisors must be named on the permit.

Licensure: When the applicant has met the examination requirement, the Department may issue a license and three-year registration. A licensee must notify the Department within 30 days of a move or name change. The Department sends a renewal notice every three years and the licensee must be registered to practice the profession. The licensee must practice in accordance with the scope of practice, as defined in the Education Law, and Part 29 of the Regents Rules, which define unprofessional conduct in the professions. The laws, rules and regulations are on our web site: www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw.htm.

Continuing Education: Effective January 1, 2015, every LMSW and LCSW will be required to complete 36 hours of continuing education, acceptable to the Department, in each three-year registration period. An LMSW or LCSW will not have to complete continuing education in the first registration period after initial licensure. The number of required hours will be pro-rated for those LMSWs and LCSWs who next registration period starts after January 1, 2015, but before January 1, 2018. We anticipate the regulations to implement the law will be approved by the Board of Regents in the Spring 2014; additional information will be posted when the regulations are approved.

Clinical Social Work: An LMSW may only practice clinical social work under supervision of an LCSW, licensed psychologist or psychiatrist in a setting authorized to provide professional services including psychotherapy. In order to become an LCSW, the applicant must meet all requirements for licensure in that profession, including an application and fee, clinical MSW degree acceptable to the Department, three-years of post-MSW supervised experience in diagnosis and psychotherapy, acceptable to the Department, acceptable moral character and clinical examination. An individual who is licensed as an LMSW may submit Form 6 to request prior review of the proposed supervisor and setting, to ensure these are appropriate for clinical social work experience.

Applying for LCSW: An LMSW may apply for the LCSW at any time, by submitting LCSW Form 1 and fee (\$294), and having the school submit Form 2 LCSW to verify clinical content in the MSW degree. If the LMSW graduated from a NYS-registered MSW program that leads to the LCSW, a transcript is not required. Individuals who graduated from a NYS school prior to September 2004 or from a school outside of NY must have the school submit Form 2 and transcript for individual evaluation. When the applicant has completed at least 2,000 client contact hours in diagnosis, psychotherapy and assessment-based treatment planning, with at least 100 hours of in-person individual or group supervision, over a period of not less than 36 months and not more than 72 continuous months, verification should be submitted by the qualified supervisor(s) on Form 4B. Experience must be completed in a legal manner, generally, as an LMSW or LMSW Permit Holder; experience in an exempt setting, as defined in law, may be accepted if the supervisor is qualified. When the applicant's clinical education and clinical experience are approved by the Board, the applicant will be eligible for the ASWB Clinical examination. The LMSW must maintain LMSW registration and supervision until licensed. The LMSW may apply for an LCSW permit (Form 5 and \$70 fee) to practice for one year under a qualified supervisor in a setting acceptable to the Board.

Other jurisdictions: The requirements for licensure are established by each jurisdiction and the most accurate and timely information can be accessed through the ASWB web site: <http://www.aswb.org/licensees/>.

Students can access application materials and instructions, as well as practice guidelines developed by the State Board for Social Work, on the web: www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/. If there are changes in the laws, rules and regulations, or the application materials in the future, those would be posted on the web.