

§7053. Qualifications

To be eligible for a license to practice social work at any level, an applicant must be at least 18 years of age and must satisfactorily pass any examination as the board may prescribe by its rules. Each applicant must demonstrate trustworthiness and competence to engage in the practice of social work in such a manner as to safeguard the interests of the public. Applications for licensure must be submitted to the board together with the fee as set under section 7056. [PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. V, §7 (AMD).]

The following shall be considered as minimum evidence satisfactory to the board that an applicant is qualified for licensure under this chapter. [PL 1985, c. 736, §11 (AMD).]

1. Licensed clinical social worker. To be qualified as a licensed clinical social worker, an applicant shall have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the social work profession; shall have successfully completed the examination prescribed by the board; and shall have received either:

A. A master's or doctoral degree in social work or social welfare from an accredited educational institution in a clinical concentration and:

- (1) Shall have subsequently completed 2 years of social work experience with 96 hours of consultation in a clinical setting; or
- (2) Shall have demonstrated 2 years of full-time clinical social work experience or its equivalent and have completed the graduate degree prior to January 1, 1987 and have completed 2 years of subsequent social work experience with 96 hours of consultation in a private setting; or [PL 2013, c. 262, §3 (AMD).]

B. A master's or doctoral degree in social work in a nonclinical concentration from an accredited educational institution and:

- (1) Shall have subsequently completed 4 years of social work experience with 192 hours of consultation in a clinical setting; or
- (2) Shall have demonstrated 2 years of full-time clinical social work experience or its equivalent and have completed the graduate degree prior to January 1, 1987 and have completed 4 years of subsequent social work experience with 192 hours of consultation in a private setting. [PL 2013, c. 262, §3 (AMD).]

The board may waive up to one year of the post-master of social work, clinical experience requirement pursuant to this subsection for those candidates who demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board equivalent clinical experience prior to receiving the master's degree in social work.

The board shall issue rules in accordance with Title 5, chapter 375 defining the clinical experience required for this level of licensure.

Beginning January 1, 2020, an applicant for initial licensure shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board successful completion of a minimum of 12 hours of course work in family or intimate partner violence, including course work in spousal or partner abuse that addresses screening, referral and intervention strategies, including knowledge of community resources, cultural factors, evidence-based risk assessment and same-gender abuse dynamics. An applicant may fulfill this requirement through course work taken in fulfillment of other educational requirements for licensure or through separate course work provided through contact hours, Internet hours or distance learning programs, as evidenced by certification from an accredited educational institution. The board shall accept certification from the accredited educational institution from which the applicant is a graduate that verifies the applicant's satisfaction of this requirement within the applicant's completed course curriculum. An applicant for initial licensure that is unable to demonstrate completion of the requirement of 12 hours of course work at the time the initial application is submitted shall demonstrate to the board that this requirement has been fulfilled upon the applicant's first application for license renewal.

[PL 2013, c. 262, §3 (AMD).]

2. Licensed master social worker.

[PL 2003, c. 211, §1 (AMD); MRSA T. 32 §7053, sub-§2 (RP).]

2-A. Licensed master social worker. As a licensed master social worker, an applicant must have received either a masters or doctoral degree in social work or social welfare from an accredited educational institution, must have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the social work profession and must have successfully completed the examination prescribed by the board. After meeting these qualifications, the applicant must receive a "licensed master social worker" license. In addition, any person wishing to practice social work in a clinical setting must receive a "licensed master social worker, conditional" license.

This subsection takes effect July 1, 2005.

[PL 2003, c. 211, §2 (NEW).]

3. Requirements to be a licensed social worker. To be qualified to be licensed as a social worker an applicant must meet one of the following requirements:

A. The applicant must have received a bachelor's degree or higher in social work or social welfare from an accredited educational institution; demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board adherence to the ethics of the social worker profession; and successfully completed the examination prescribed by the board; or [PL 2009, c. 112, Pt. A, §13 (AMD).]

B. The applicant must have received a conditional license as a licensed social worker in accordance with subsection 3-B; completed the requirements for consultation and contact hours in accordance with subsection 3-C, paragraph B and subsection 3-D; and successfully completed the examination prescribed by the board. [PL 2003, c. 429, §2 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 429, §7 (AFF).]

[PL 2009, c. 112, Pt. A, §13 (AMD).]

3-A. Requirements for licensed social worker after September 30, 2003.

[PL 2003, c. 429, §3 (RP); PL 2003, c. 429, §7 (AFF).]

3-B. Conditional license as a licensed social worker. The board may issue a conditional license as a licensed social worker to an applicant who provides to the board:

A. Documented proof of a bachelor's degree or higher in a field that is sufficiently related to social work or social welfare, as determined by the board; and [PL 2009, c. 112, Pt. A, §14 (AMD).]

B. Any documentation as required by the board, which may include, but is not limited to:

- (1) Evidence of employment in a social service delivery field; and
- (2) Evidence of an arrangement of consultation to be provided in accordance with subsection 3-C, paragraph B. [PL 2013, c. 217, Pt. J, §4 (AMD).]

[PL 2013, c. 217, Pt. J, §4 (AMD).]

3-C. Consultation requirements for licensed social workers and conditionally licensed social workers. A licensed social worker or conditionally licensed social worker must complete the following requirements for consultation.

A. A licensed social worker must complete a minimum of 96 hours of consultation as determined by the board. This consultation must be concurrent with the first 3,200 hours of social work employment occurring in a period of not less than 2 years but not more than 4 years. [PL 2003, c. 429, §4 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 429, §7 (AFF).]

B. A person who receives a conditional license as a licensed social worker on or after January 1, 2004 must complete the following requirements for consultation.

- (1) A person who is not an employee of the Department of Health and Human Services must complete a minimum of 96 hours of consultation as determined by the board. This consultation must be concurrent with the first 3,200 hours of social work employment occurring in a period of not less than 2 years but not more than 4 years. For purposes of fulfilling the requirement of 96 hours of consultation during the first 3,200 hours of social work employment, a licensed social worker who practiced social work and obtained social work consultation hours in a long-term care setting and who held a valid license as of September 13, 2003 may count consultation hours that were obtained prior to August 3, 2004, whether the consultation hours were obtained in individual or group settings, if the consultation was provided by a licensed social worker, regardless of the group size and the eligibility requirements of the consulting licensed social worker.
- (2) A person who is an employee of the Department of Health and Human Services must complete a minimum of 96 hours of consultation with a licensed social worker who has been licensed for at least 4 years or a licensed master social worker. This consultation must be concurrent with the first 3,200 hours of social work employment occurring in a period of not less than 2 years but not more than 4 years. [PL 2005, c. 173, §1 (AMD).]
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3-D. Contact hours for conditionally licensed social workers. A person who receives a conditional license as a licensed social worker on or after January 1, 2004 must complete, within the first 2 years of licensure, contact hours, as that term is defined by the board, in an amount set by the board. Of these contact hours required by the board, 6 hours must be on the subject of social work ethics and 6 hours must be on the subject of psychosocial assessment.

[PL 2003, c. 429, §4 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 429, §7 (AFF).]

4. Associate social worker.

[PL 1985, c. 736, §11 (RP).]

Any person having the necessary qualifications prescribed in this chapter to entitle that person to licensure as a licensed clinical, licensed master or licensed social worker is eligible for that license though that person may not be practicing that person's profession at the time of making the application.
[RR 2013, c. 2, §39 (COR).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1977, c. 673, §3 (NEW). PL 1983, c. 413, §226 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 805, §10 (RPR). PL 1985, c. 736, §11 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 395, §B14 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 735, §69 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 682 (AMD). RR 2001, c. 1, §41 (COR). PL 2001, c. 316, §§2,3 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 542, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 211, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 429, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 429, §7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 689, §B6 (REV). PL 2005, c. 173, §1 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 402, Pt. V, §7 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 112, Pt. A, §§13, 14 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 217, Pt. J, §4 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 262, §3 (AMD). RR 2013, c. 2, §39 (COR).

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