

Licensure Timeline and Checklist

NOTE: This is a THREE STEP process. You must do these steps in order or it will take more time to get your license.

STEP 1: Apply to take exam.

___ Download the appropriate **exam pre-approval application form** (LSW or LCSW) from the BSWE website.

<http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/social/swlic.htm>

___ Submit notarized application and other required documents to the BSWE with \$75 fee (this will be credited to your license application fee).

___ Request special accommodation, including ESL or ADA needs, to the BSWE if applicable.

___ Receive approval via mail to register with ASWB to take the exam.

STEP 2: Register for and take exam.

___ Call ASWB at **1-888-579-3926** or visit their website at www.aswb.org to register for the appropriate examination (Masters or Clinical). At this time, you must also pay the exam fee and notify the testing representative about any approved special accommodations.

___ Receive an ASWB Authorization Letter and Number to sit for the exam. **You will NOT be admitted to the testing site without this letter!**

___ Call ACT to make an examination appointment. The phone number will be provided on your Authorization Letter or you can visit their website at www.act.org. **Make sure to follow all of the directions on your authorization letter carefully, write down all of the information pertaining to your appointment.**

___ Bring a valid government-issued photo ID and ASWB Authorization Letter to the testing center on the day of your exam.

___ After you complete the exam, you will receive your score immediately. **Keep this document as you will need to send a copy of it to BSWE.**

STEP 3: Apply for State license.

___ Download the appropriate **licensure application** packet from the BSWE website.

<http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/social/swlic.htm>

___ Complete application. Mail in copy of ASWB passing score and "final official transcript" from your school. You will receive information about fingerprinting in the mail after your application has been reviewed. Fingerprinting must be done even if you've been previously fingerprinted for employment purposes. (* There is a fingerprint rescan fee if you were originally fingerprinted for previous Division of Consumer Affairs credential.)

___ Application packets are formally approved by the BSWE during the 4th week of each month.

___ After approval you will receive a letter requesting payment of your licensing fee. Once BSWE has cashed your check, your license will be printed in another government office and sent to you in 2-3 months

Licensure and Certification Eligibility

Certified Social Worker (CSW)

- BSW from a CSWE accredited program or one in candidacy for accreditation.
- If you received a BA degree in a related field prior to April 1995, contact NASW-NJ Licensing Hotline for information.

Licensed Social Worker (LSW)

- MSW from a CSWE accredited program or one in candidacy.
- Passing score on the Master's exam.

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)

- MSW from a CSWE accredited program or one in candidacy.
- Must have LSW or have worked in exempt setting.
- Completed 12 Graduate Clinical Course hours while in school such as:
 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment
 - Diagnosis and Assessment in SW Practice
 - Models of Psychotherapy/Clinical Practice
 - Clinical Supervision and Consultation
 - Intervention with Special Populations
- Certification signed by LCSW Supervisor indicating successful completion of 1,920 clinical contact hours, under LCSW supervision, in no less than 24/no more than 36 consecutive months.
- Passing score on the Clinical exam.
- For out of state licensees please see reverse side.



National Association of Social Workers

New Jersey Chapter

Social Work Licensure/ Certification in New Jersey

What You Need to Know

200 Metroplex Dr., Suite 404
Edison, NJ 08817
(732) 248-1590
Licensing Hotline: ext 42
Email: licensing@naswnj.org
www.naswnj.org

Frequently Asked Questions About New Jersey Social Work Licensure And Certification

Who needs a License/Certification to practice in New Jersey?

You must be licensed/certified in New Jersey as a social worker if you are practicing social work or using the designation of "social worker" EXCEPT in certain areas of practice including:

- School Social Workers, certified by the Department of Education;
- Civil service employees of the state, county, or local government;
- Students enrolled in a program accredited (or in candidacy) by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), as long as they are in a supervised course of study and are designated by the title "social work intern."
- Employees or volunteers in a non-profit organization, **if not doing clinical work**; however, you cannot be called a social worker

PLEASE NOTE: Once you graduate, you **must** have your license in hand to provide clinical services unless you work in an exempt setting; and are **not** doing clinical social work.

Anyone who wants to perform Clinical Social Work, in any setting, **must** have a license in order to practice as a LCSW or as a LSW under the supervision of a LCSW who meets the supervision requirements (see Column 3 for details), **unless the above exemptions apply.**

What are my responsibilities as a licensed/certification holder?

You **must** follow the statutes and regulations of the [Social Workers Licensing Act](#). Included in the regulations are ethical practice requirements, specific content requirements for client records, confidentiality and a description of unlicensed practice.

Do I need to get my LSW first or can I wait until I am eligible for the LCSW to apply?

You cannot qualify for an LCSW without having an LSW first unless you can document experience from an exempt setting.

When are the licensing exams given?

Exams are given by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) at ACT test centers throughout the state. Registered candidates must schedule an appointment with ASWB to take the test after the BSWE issues their authorization. (see reverse).

Can I take the exam before I receive my MSW?

Yes. You may take the exam during your last semester of course work. In order to sit for the exam, you must receive prior approval from the BSWE.

How can I prepare for the exams?

NASW-NJ Chapter sponsors test preparation courses for both the Master's (LSW) and Clinical (LCSW) exams. The course consists of instruction time, as well as a manual. There are other prep courses available through other organizations. A study guide is also available through ASWB.

If I fail the examination, may I take it again?

Yes. ASWB requires that you wait 90 days before taking the exam again. BSWE has set no limitation on the number of times you can take the exam.

How long will the exam take?

You have four hours to complete the exam, which is administered electronically. The test itself consists of 170 multiple-choice questions, 20 of which are "pre-test" items and will not be scored. For more information, visit <http://www.aswb.org>.

How soon after taking the Master's (LSW) exam can I take the Clinical exam (LCSW)?

90 days.

Does NJ accept out of state licenses?

There is no reciprocity between states. If your state's requirements meet or exceed those of NJ, and you have already passed the ASWB Master's or Clinical exam, and are working as a clinician, then you may download an application from BSWE. If you are not currently working as a clinician in your state please write to the BSWE for further instruction on how to obtain a NJ license.

Who can provide the supervision required for the LCSW ?

Since July 2004, clinical supervision of LCSW candidate may only be provided by an LCSW who has a minimum of three-years experience as an LCSW, and has completed 20 hours of approved post-graduate coursework in clinical supervision. The supervision must be weekly for at least an hour, and face-to-face in individual or group setting.

Can I see private clients while under supervision for my LCSW?

Only LCSWs may engage in independent (private) practice. An LSW under LCSW supervision may provide clinical social work services in an agency or setting where he/she is an employee.

What are CEUs and how many do I need?

CSWs, LSWs, and LCSWs are required to complete a number of approved continuing education units (CEUs) each 'biennial (2 year) period' to maintain licensure/certification. The period begins September 1 and ends August 31 of every even year. CSWs are required to complete 20 credits, LSWs 30, and LCSWs 40. **All** social workers must complete 5 of their credits in programs related to ethics and 3 of their credits in the subject area of social and cultural competence. LCSWs must complete half of their credits in clinical practice.

Important Contacts

NJ Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE)

PO Box 45033, Newark, NJ 07101

<http://www.niconsumeraffairs.gov/medical/socialwork.htm>

Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)

Questions: 800-225-6880

Registration: 888-579-EXAM (3926)

<http://www.aswb.org>

ACT Testing Sites

Phone number will be on your letter from ASWB

<http://www.act.org>