

# State Board of Social Work Examiners



consumer**brief**

**Social workers use their training and skills to enhance, protect or restore an individual's capacity for social functioning, when there is an impairment due to physical, environmental or emotional factors.**

## **THE HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE BOARD**

The Social Workers' Licensing Act of 1991 created New Jersey's State Board of Social Work Examiners. The Board protects the consumers of New Jersey by setting the standards for qualification, education, training and experience for those who seek certification or licensure to practice as a social worker in New Jersey.

There are three levels of certification or licensure for social workers: Certified Social Worker (C.S.W.), Licensed Social Worker (L.S.W.) and Licensed Clinical Social Worker (L.C.S.W.).

*A Certified Social Worker* provides social work services, such as assessment, consultation and counseling, planning and community organization, policy and research, administration, and client-centered advocacy.

*Licensed Social Workers* may provide all of the social work services mentioned above, plus clinical social work services (when supervised by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.)

*Licensed Clinical Social Workers* may provide all of the social work and clinical social work services mentioned above, and may engage in clinical supervision of individuals.

*Clinical social work services* include, but are not limited to, clinical assessment, clinical consultation, psychotherapeutic counseling and client-centered advocacy.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION/FILING A COMPLAINT**

The State Board of Social Work Examiners' website, [www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/sw/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/sw/Pages/default.aspx), is a great place to visit to learn more about the Board, its activities and its licensees. If you have the name of a social worker with whom you may want to consult, you can click on the Licensee Information link on the Board's website to enter the person's first and last name to learn if his/her license is current and in good standing, and if any disciplinary action has been taken against that individual.

Consumers have the right to file a complaint about a licensee by downloading the complaint form under the Consumer Information link on the website, filling out the form by hand and submitting it to the Board with photocopies of any relevant documents. The Board's investigation may take several months and, of course, the licensee would be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Board has the power to suspend or revoke, for just cause, any certification or license it has issued. Complaints can be mailed to: State Board of Social Work Examiners, P.O. Box 45003, Newark, NJ 07101.

## **GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:**

- 1) A completed application form and payment of the application fee.
- 2) A signed consent form acknowledging that the Board will conduct a Criminal History Record Background Check.

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## **DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

973-504-6200 ■ 800-242-5846 (toll free within New Jersey)

website: [www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov](http://www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov)



**800-242-5846** ▸ New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs  
[www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov](http://www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov)

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A CERTIFIED SOCIAL WORKER C.S.W. IN NEW JERSEY INCLUDE:**

- 1) An official transcript indicating that the applicant has earned a bachelor's degree in social work from an educational institution accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.), or
- 2) An official transcript indicating that the applicant acquired a bachelor's degree prior to April 6, 1995, from an accredited institution of higher learning in one of the following fields:

Guidance and Counseling, Human Services, Marriage and Family Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, Vocational/Disability Rehabilitation, and Social Work (from institutions not accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the C.S.W.E.), and an affidavit or other form as the Board may require attesting to the applicant having acquired one year of full-time social work experience (1,600 hours in any consecutive 18-month period) prior to April 6, 1995.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER L.S.W. IN NEW JERSEY INCLUDE:**

- 1) An official transcript indicating that the applicant has earned a master's degree in social work from an educational program accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the Council on Social Work Education, or a doctorate in social work from an accredited institution of higher education.
- 2) Documentation that the applicant has successfully completed the master's level examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (A.S.W.B.).

*NOTE:* An applicant who is pursuing a master's degree in social work and who is enrolled in the last semester of an educational program accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the C.S.W.E. is eligible to take the master's level exam.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER IN NEW JERSEY:**

- 1) An official transcript indicating that the applicant has earned a master's degree in social work from an educational program accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the C.S.W.E., or a doctorate in social work from an accredited institution of higher education.
- 2) Documentation that the applicant has completed 12 semester hours of graduate-level course work in methods of social work practice, exclusive of field

placement, from an educational program accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the C.S.W.E. The applicant shall obtain 12 credits in any of the following areas of study: a) human behavior and the social environment; b) diagnosis and assessment in social work practice; c) models of psychotherapy or clinical practice (for example, psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive therapies, task-centered, psychosocial, crisis intervention approaches, etc.); d) clinical supervision and consultation; and/or e) intervention with special populations.

- 3) A supervisor's certification indicating that the applicant has acquired two years of satisfactory full-time clinical social work experience under supervision within a period of not less than two, and not more than three, consecutive years. In the event that the applicant is unable to provide a supervisor's certification, the applicant shall submit to the Board an affidavit explaining the reason(s) why the applicant is unable to obtain the supervisor's certification.

*NOTE:* Two years of full-time clinical social work experience means 1,920 hours of face-to-face client contact under direct supervision within any three-year period subsequent to earning a master's degree in social work.

- 4) Proof that the applicant has successfully completed the master's level exam administered by the A.S.W.B.
- 5) Proof that the applicant was an L.S.W. at the time the two years of full-time clinical social work experience under the direct supervision of an L.C.S.W. was acquired, or proof that the applicant engaged in social work practice in a setting in which licensure is not required (please see the Board's Web site for more details).

### **IN CONCLUSION**

When certificate holders or licensees seek to renew their certificates/licenses biennially, they must show that they have taken the required number of hours of continuing education (continuing education credits are not required after the first biennial period of licensure or certification). C.S.W.'s must complete 20 credit hours, L.S.W.'s must complete 30 credit hours and L.C.S.W.'s must complete 40 credit hours of continuing education before renewal can occur.

To learn more about recent updates to the regulations concerning continuing education for social workers, please go to *N.J.A.C. 13:44G-6.2* and *6.3* which can be found under the link for Laws and Regulations on the Board's website.

