



National Association of Social Workers  
California Chapter

## Information for Licensed Clinical Social Workers from Other States

### Reciprocity

California does not have a reciprocity agreement with any state; consequently, any social worker wishing to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in California must meet all state requirements.

### Employment

Every state in the nation has very different requirements and guidelines for employment and licensure and these requirements can be viewed and compared online at <http://www.aswbdata.powerlynxhosting.net/>.

In California, individuals with BSWs and MSWs are employed as social workers without holding a license. However, to perform psychotherapy, California requires the practitioner to have an LCSW. This license requires a person to have an MSW from an Accredited School of Social Work. For specific guidelines and regulations, please read Sections 4496.2 – 4996.17 of the *Laws and Regulations*, which can be found on the Board of Behavioral Sciences website at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov).

NASW-CA also offers a *Job Bulletin* in which employers throughout California advertise social work positions. This document is updated every two weeks and can be found on the NASW-CA Chapter's website at [www.naswca.org](http://www.naswca.org).

### California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) *The regulatory and licensing body in California*

Telephone: (916) 574-7830

Email: [BBSWebMaster@bbs.ca.gov](mailto:BBSWebMaster@bbs.ca.gov)

Web: <http://www.bbs.ca.gov>

### Keep Records

Throughout the process, keep written record of communications with the Board. Be pro-active, visit the BBS web site, read the section on forms and publications, be persistent, and inform the Board of any changes to personal information.

### Know the Licensing Requirements

Read the licensing requirements listed and updated on the BBS website under "*Laws and Regulations*." Applicants can download this document, applications, and forms from the web site at no cost.

It is strongly suggested that applicants read "*The Laws and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling, Licensed Clinical Social Work and Licensed Educational Psychology*" – Article 4 Clinical Social Workers Sections 4996.1 through 4998.6.

### Complete LCSW Application

After becoming familiar with the *Law and Regulations*, download the **LCSW Application and Instructions** from the Board's website at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) under "*Forms and Publications*."

According to the "2006 *Laws and Regulations*" (Experience Gained Outside of California), "A person who qualifies for licensure based on experience gained outside of California may apply for and receive an associate registration to practice clinical social work." This means that a person holding a valid LCSW in another state and wishing to perform psychotherapy in this state before obtaining the California LCSW, must (a) register as an Associate Social Worker (ASW) with the BBS and (b) contract with a licensed professional who agrees to assume legal responsibility for the his or her work until a California LCSW is obtained. The ASW Application and Instructions can also be downloaded from [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) under "*Forms and Publications*."

For more details, please visit <http://www.naswca.org/Licensure.htm>.

## **Obtain Post Graduate Course Work**

Out of state applicants who submit a LCSW application on or after January 1, 2004, must submit proof of meeting the following educational requirements:

**Substance Abuse (15 Hr)** This course can be taken through an educational institution, professional association, or state, county or local department of health or mental health services. Applicants may also fill this requirement with a transcript from MSW program indicating course work specific to topic.

**Human Sexuality (10 Hr)** This course can be taken through an educational institution, professional association, or state, county or local department of health or mental health services. Applicants may also fill this requirement with a transcript from MSW program indicating course work specific to topic.

**Child Abuse Assessment & Reporting (7 Hr)** This course can be taken through an educational institution, professional association, or state, county, or local department of health or mental health services. This course must be taken in California from an approved continuing education provider.

### **Spousal/Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection & Interventions (15 Hr)**

Out of state applicants may fulfill this requirement in two ways. *First* an applicant can submit an official transcript that includes a 15-hour course or a combination of courses that equal at least 15-hours. *Second*, an applicant can complete 15-hours of training or course work and submit a certificate of completion with their application for licensure.

### **Aging and Long-term Care (10 Hr)**

According to the Board of Behavioral Science, out of state applicants are not required to have Aging and Long-term Care before applying as an LCSW. However, the board may revise the regulations in the future.

## **3200 Supervised Clinical Hours**

The Board of Behavioral Sciences recently revised the requirement for those licensed in another state. The requirements are very specific and detailed depending on several factors. Please visit the Board's website at <http://www.bbs.ca.gov/lic-req4.htm> to view the requirements as of January 1, 2007.

## **Be Deemed Eligible**

Once the application is submitted, including all required documentation, the BBS will review the application and determine whether the requirements have been met and the applicant is eligible to sit for exams. The BBS has up to 90-days in which to review the documents and mail a formal eligibility notice. Only when the board has sent a letter indicating eligibility may the applicant make a reservation to sit for the Standard Written Exam.

## **Pass the Standard Written Exam**

The Standard Written Exam is given on a continuous basis at test sites located throughout the state. A list of exam sites and dates are included with the eligibility notice and applicants may choose the most convenient location and date. The applicant will also receive a "Written Examination Candidate Handbook." The BBS has published a "LCSW Written Exam Update", available on its web. Important information regarding both exams and the pass rates can be found at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov).

## **Pass the Written Clinical Vignette Exam**

Effective November 14, 2003, the Oral Exam was eliminated. In its place, the BBS authorized a Written Clinical Vignette Exam. For the latest details about this exam, please visit the BBS web at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) under "Examinations." Also read the *BBS News* Issues found under "Forms & Publications."

## **Pre-license Classes**

NASW-CA is approved to offer all pre-license classes and does through monthly classes offered in Northern and Southern California as well as offering several of the pre-license classes through the online program. To learn more about these programs, please visit the web at [www.naswca.org](http://www.naswca.org).

If you have questions regarding these basic requirements or about the required classes, please contact Lara Beyers at [naswleg@naswca.org](mailto:naswleg@naswca.org) or (916) 442-4565 X 16.

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