

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Department of Health  
Health Regulation Administration



BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS FOR A LICENSE  
TO SOCIAL WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Your interest in becoming licensed to practice social work in the District of Columbia is welcome. We look forward to providing expedient and professional service. However, the quality of our service is dependent on the completeness of your application. Please read the instructions carefully. All fees are earned when paid, and cannot be transferred or refunded except as specified in these instructions.

This package contains the forms to apply for a social work license in the District of Columbia. Follow the instructions provided below and complete all sections. If you require more space for work experience or need to provide explanations for screening questions, attach typed responses to the form.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Upon submission of the required application documents, the DC Board of Social Work will review your application. The Board of Social Work meets a minimum of once each month. Upon final approval, you will be issued a license to practice in the District of Columbia. All individuals wishing to practice social work in the District of Columbia may receive a license after obtaining the appropriate degree from an approved social work education institution, passing the required exam, and meeting all experiential requirements. To initiate this process, please submit a complete application and required fee to the address below. The District of Columbia has no standing or automatic agreement with any jurisdiction regarding reciprocity. However, the Board may grant licensure by endorsement to applicants meeting the requirements as set forth in 17 DCMR § 7007.

If you submit an application that is incomplete or otherwise deficient, HPLA's staff will notify you of the deficiencies. If the Board has questions or concerns, you will also be notified and you must respond in a timely manner. If all deficient materials are not received by the HPLA office within a 90 day period, applications will be closed.

WHERE TO FILE

Except for the examination registration and examination fee documents should be sent to the following address:

DC Board of Social Work  
P.O. Box 37802  
Washington, D.C. 20013

If you have any questions, call HPLA's Customer Service at 1-877-672-2174 between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST Monday through Friday. Please read these instructions carefully to facilitate prompt processing of your application. Illegible applications and applications submitted without required signatures or with incorrect fees will be returned in their entirety, including fees. Please print or type all information except signatures.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. All applicants for a license to practice social work in the District of Columbia shall meet the following requirements:
1. Applicant must be at least 18 years of age; and
  2. Applicant must not have been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, which bears directly on the applicant's fitness to be licensed.
  3. The following support materials must be submitted with each application:
    - a. A complete, signed application form.
    - b. Please submit two (2) identical, recent passport-size photographs (2x2 inches in size) on a plain background, which are front-view and fade-proof. The photos must be original photos and cannot be computer-generated copies or paper copies. In addition, we will not accept 3x3 or larger Polaroid - type photos. Please be sure to mail in your two photos and write on the back of the photos your full name and either your license number or Social Security Number. Photos will be placed on the pocket license.
    - c. You will also need to submit one (1) clear photocopy of a government issued photo ID, such as your valid driver's license, as proof of identity.
    - d. Three (3) character references in sealed envelopes. A minimum of two of these references must be completed by working professionals.
    - e. An official passing exam score report for the level of the application.
    - f. The license application fee of \$230.
    - g. An official transcript from the educational institution from which the applicant graduated is required for applicants by EXAMINATION. Only the transcript appropriate to the level of the application is required. This is not required for applicants by Endorsement.
  4. LICSW and LISW applicants by Examination must include the following materials with their application (not applicable for applicants by Endorsement):
    - a. Completed Experience Evaluation Forms for only applicants by Examination. This is not required for applicants by Endorsement.
    - b. Completed Supervision Verification Forms, which document all practice under general supervision and one-on-one immediate supervision. The period of verified supervision should be for not less than two (2) years, and not more than four (4) years. These forms are to be completed by licensed supervisors and returned to the applicant in sealed envelopes and submitted with the application for applicants by Examination. This is not required for applicants by Endorsement.

## EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

You must first apply for a Social Work License by Examination in the District of Columbia and be approved to take the National Exam for the District. After you are approved to sit for the examination, you must contact ASWB at 888-579-3926 for information concerning exam and exam reservations. If you have taken your examination outside of the District of Columbia, you will have to transfer your scores to the District. See section 6C of the New License Application for Social Workers for information on how to request the score transfer. Even if you request a score transfer, you should include a copy of your score report with the application.

- A. To qualify for a license, an applicant must receive a score of 75 on the appropriate level of the American Association of State Social Workers Boards (ASWB) examination. The levels are identified below.
- Bachelors, formerly known as Basic Examination for the LSWA
  - Masters, formerly know as Intermediate Examination for the LGSW license
  - Advanced Generalist Test, formerly known as Advanced Examination for the LISW license
  - Clinical Examination for the LICSW license

- B. Applicants who pass the ASWB examination within 5 years of the date of the application will not be required to retake the examination. Applicants who pass the examination more than 5 years prior to the date the application is submitted will not be required to retake the examination if it can be demonstrated (to the satisfaction of the Board) that the applicant has been continuously licensed and practicing as a social worker in the United States since the date of the examination.

**EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL APPLICANTS EDUCATED IN THE UNITED STATES**

- A. All applicants shall furnish proof satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has successfully completed the following education and experience requirements:

NOTE: Educational Experience must be obtained at an institution with a social work program approved by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). These are identified in the AASSWB Candidate Handbook.

License Category	Degree(s)	Experience
License Social Work Associate (LSWA)	BSW	None
Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW)	MSW or DSW	None
Licensed Independent Social Worker (LISW)	MSW or DSW	3,000 Hours Post Masters/Doctoral
Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)	MSW or DSW	3,000 Hours

100 hours must be immediate supervision by a Licensed Independent Social Worker. People who work in the District of Columbia and submit LISW applications must be licensed for two (2) years at the lower level. People applying from another jurisdiction must have licensed experience under a licensed individual at a level equivalent to or above the level for which they are applying. The period of appropriate supervision must be for not less than 2 years licensure or more than 4 years.

100 hours must be immediate supervision by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker. People who work in the District of Columbia and submit LICSW applications must be licensed for two (2) years at the lower level. In addition to these requirements, applicants for licensure in this category must have completed 3000 hours of post masters or post doctoral work experience participating in the diagnosis and treatment of individuals, families and/or groups with psychosocial problems under general supervision (100 hours) of a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker. People applying from another jurisdiction must have experience under a licensed individual at a level equivalent to or above the level for which they are applying. The period of appropriate supervision must be for not less than 2 years licensure or more than 4 years.

## FOREIGN TRAINED APPLICANTS

Applicants educated outside the United States must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that their education and training are substantially equivalent to an educational program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) by submission of the following materials:

- A. A certification from the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service of the CSWE that verifies that the applicant's training and education is equivalent to an education program accredited by the CSWE. To contact the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service, call the CSWE at (703) 683-8080. The fee for this service is approximately \$200 (varies by country) and is collected with the application to the CSWE. Do not include this fee or application with your license application.
  
- B. An official college/university transcript containing information pertaining to the applicant's academic record. If this document is in a language other than English, it is the applicant's responsibility to arrange for translation into English by a translation service acceptable to the Board. (A translated document must be signed by the translator attesting to its accuracy.)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

For information concerning the application process, call (202) 442-9200

For information concerning Social Work Board meetings, call (202) 442-9200

For information concerning Social Work Education Programs call the CSWE at (703) 683-8080

For information concerning examination registration, call the ASWB at (888) 579-3926

Website address for the American Association of State Social Work Boards: [www.aswb.org](http://www.aswb.org)

Website address for the Board of Social Work: [www.hpla.doh.dc.gov](http://www.hpla.doh.dc.gov) click on "Professional Licensing Boards and Registration" and select Social Work.

<p>The D.C. Board of Social Work does not have reciprocity with any jurisdiction. Licensure in the District of Columbia will not be granted based on licensure in another state. Applicants must apply for licensure in the District and meet all of the District's Social Work licensing requirements. Please be advised that the Board of Social Work does not Grandfather or waive any licensure requirements.</p>
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## COMPLETING THE LICENSE APPLICATION

### Section 1. TYPE OF LICENSE

- a. There are four levels of license for which you are applying. Check the box next to the license description. Examination - Applying for license by examination means you have taken your license exam for the District of Columbia or you are not licensed anywhere else at this level.

### Section 2. APPLICANT NAME / DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Enter your legal name exactly as it should appear on the license. The Child Support and Welfare Reform Compliance Act of 2000, Act 13-559, requires that the Department of Health collect and maintain social security numbers for all licensees. Your social security number will not be made available to the public, but if not provided, your application will be returned to you for incompleteness. All applicants must be at least 18 years of age. If your name has changed at any point since you first attended college or university, you must provide a copy of a legal name change document for EACH time that it has changed. Acceptable documents are marriage certificates, divorce decrees or court orders.

### Sections 3A & B. HOME ADDRESS / BUSINESS ADDRESS

Include both your home and business addresses in the sections provided. Even if you have a PO Box, a street address should also be provided.

### Section 3C. PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS

Place an "X" in the appropriate box to indicate your preferred mailing address. This will be the address to which all future licensing documents will be mailed.

### Sections 4. PREVIOUS NAME

If your name has changed at any point, since you first have taken any exams or attended college or university. You must provide a copy of a legal name change document for EACH time that it has changed. Acceptable documents are marriage certificates, divorce decrees or court orders.

### Section 5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Please indicate the supporting documents you have included with this package or requested to be sent to the Board of Social Work by placing an "X" in the "YES" box for each item. Place an "X" in the "NO" box for each item that does not apply for the license type for which you are applying. Keep a photocopy of all supporting documents for your records.

### Section 6A. SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS ATTENDED

List all colleges and universities from which you obtained your social work degree. You need only to list the degree that applies to the license level for which you are applying.

All applicants: An official transcript from the educational institution from which the applicant graduated. Only the transcript appropriate to the level of the application is required. These requirements are

identified on page 3. Transcripts may be sent directly to the Board or submitted with your application in a support of your application is in a language other than English, you must provide a certified translation. Foreign transcripts need not be in sealed envelopes. Or an official written request to the board from the university or school indicating the degree the student is expected to receive and the date that the student is expected to receive the degree.

### Section 6B. SOCIAL WORK LICENSES IN OTHER STATES / JURISDICTIONS

List all states and jurisdictions in which you have ever held a social work license. You must request verification of licensure for all of these licenses, past and/or present.

### Section 6C. SCORE TRANSFER INFORMATION

This section is for your information only. There is no information for you to fill out. Please contact ASWB for a score transfer if you did not take the ASWB exam in the District of Columbia.

Section 7. SCREENING QUESTIONS

If you answer “no” to question A or “yes” to questions A through J, then please provide a complete explanation on a separate sheet of paper. If more space is required to fully answer questions, attach additional sheets with typed responses. False or misleading statements will be cause for disciplinary action and could be cause for criminal prosecution pursuant to DC Code 22-2514.

Section 8. APPLICANT AFFIDAVIT

By signing the application you are attesting under penalty of perjury that all information and attached documents are true to the best of your knowledge.

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FORMS

If you need additional copies of this application package you may visit HPLA’s website at <http://www.hpla.doh.dc.gov> or call HPLA’s Customer Service number at 1-877-672-2174. The forms that make up this package are:

- Social Work, New License Instructions
- Social Work, New License Application
- Chapter 70 Social Work, Municipal Regulations
- Character Reference Forms (3)
- Applicant Post Graduate Work Experience Form and Supervision Calculation Worksheet
- Supervision Verification Form
- ASWB Candidate Handbook

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following chart shows the application submission requirements for all application methods. The law governing Social Work licensure in the District of Columbia is D. C. Law 6-99, the Health Occupations Revision Act of 1985. The regulations governing social work licensure are included in DC Municipal Regulations Title 17, Chapters 70. Any conflict between these instructions and the law and regulations is inadvertent. The law and the regulations take precedence in the event of any inadvertent conflict. Please contact the Department of Health/Board of Social Work if you have any questions regarding the interpretation of these laws as they pertain to your particular situation.

SUMMARY OF LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR D.C. SOCIAL WORK

License Type	Application Method*	Signed Application for License	Official Transcript or Official letter from school	Two 2" X 2" Photos	Official passing exam score report**	Three Character References	Verification of Licensure	Experience Requirements***	Copy of license	Completed Experience Evaluation Form****	Check or Money Order*****
LSWA	Examination	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	\$230
LSWA	Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	\$230
LSWA	Re-Exam	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	\$85
LSGW	Examination	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	\$230
LSGW	Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	\$230
LSGW	Re-Exam	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	\$85
LISW	Examination	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	\$230
LISW	Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	\$230
LISW	Re-Exam	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	\$85
LICSW	Examination	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	\$230
LICSW	Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	\$230
LICSW	Re-Exam	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	\$85

X = Required  
O = Not required

\* All applicants must pass the appropriate level of the American Association of State Social Workers Boards examination. The DC Board of Social Work does not have reciprocity with any jurisdiction. The DC Board does not waive any requirements.

\*\* An official passing exam score report for the level of application will be forwarded to the Board for applicants by Examination or a score transfer must be requested to be forwarded to the District of Columbia Board of Social Work for applicants by Endorsement. (See page 2.)

\*\*\* Only required for LISW or LICSW (see page 3 under Education / Experience Requirements.) For applicants by Exam

\*\*\*\* Complete Post Graduate Work Experience Form and Supervision Calculation Worksheet. For applicants by Exam

\*\*\*\*\* Check or money order MUST be made payable to DC Treasurer.