



D.C. Board of Social Work



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Spring 2011

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YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

Changing your mailing address? Send your name, mailing address, and license number to:

Board of Social Work
Processing Department
Address/Name Change
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

RENEWAL ISSUE



BOARD PRESENTS AWARD TO OUTGOING MEMBER SHARON CASCONE, MSW, LICSW



Former Acting Board Chairperson, The Honorable Arlene L. Robinson (immediately right of center), presents plaque of appreciation to outgoing Board Member Sharon Cascone, MSW, LICSW (center), who served on the Board from Fall 2008 to Summer 2010.

Left to right: Erica Imbert (intern); Board Attorney Carla Williams, Esq.; Supervisory Health Licensing Specialist Gabrielle Schultz; Board Executive Director Bonnie Rampersaud; Ms. Cascone; Judge Robinson; Board Members Willa Day Morris, MSW, LICSW, and Eileen Dombo, PhD, LICSW; and the Board's former Attorney Van Brathwaite, Esq.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- LICENSURE RENEWAL PROCESS
- CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK (STATE & FBI)
- CE AUDIT INFORMATION & AUDIT FORM
- REGULATIONS UPDATE

IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR LICENSE!

All licensees will be able to begin to access renewal forms online beginning in May 1, 2011.

Please remember that only **CEUs obtained in the two years immediately before the renewal date** will be accepted. You are to have completed 40 CEUs at the time of renewal.

CEUs are not required for those who are first-time renewal applicants who were licensed by exam or were enrolled in an approved training program during any part of the two-year period prior to approval.

All licenses expire on July 31, 2011.

The renewal period will end midnight August 31, 2011.

The Board will conduct a random CEU audit immediately following the renewal period.

SOCIAL WORK ONLINE LICENSE RENEWAL A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK IS REQUIRED FOR THIS LICENSE RENEWAL

All District of Columbia Social Work licenses will expire July 31, 2011. However, the renewal period has been extended until August 31, 2011 to accommodate the criminal background check (CBC). All licenses must be properly renewed before **August 31, 2011**. Licensees can renew their social work licenses online at <http://www.hpla.doh.dc.gov>; renewing a social work license online is fast, convenient, and secure. Online renewals are projected to be available starting May 1, 2011. However, all licensees should make sure their renewal is completed and received by the Board office by August 15, 2011 to ensure that it is processed before the end of the renewal period. **Please note that this renewal you will be required to undergo a Criminal Background Check (CBC) as a renewal requirement. The cost of the Criminal Background Check is \$50.00.** You may start the Criminal Background Check process as early as May 1, 2011 so that your renewal will not be delayed.

The renewal fee is \$145 for the biennial period (2011-2013) plus the \$50.00 CBC fee. An application for renewal of a license must be completed online or if a written request is made to the Board prior to August 1, 2011, a paper application shall be sent to the last known address of each licensee requesting a paper application.

All licensees are required to complete their own renewal applications. Please verify your CEUs by checking the box as to whether or not you will have completed your 40 hours of continuing education credit by August 31, 2011.

Per your Regulations

§ 7008.4 Beginning with the renewal period of 2007, an applicant for renewal of a license shall have completed forty (40) hours of approved continuing education credit during the two-year period preceding the date the license expires. **A minimum of six (6) hours of the total continuing education credits shall have been in ethics (online ethics courses are not accepted).**

§ 7009.4 No more than twelve (12) CEUs may be accepted in any renewal period, or for reinstatement or reactivation of a license, for approved independent home studies and distance learning continuing education activities.

Paid Inactive Status

If you intend to retire your license, or if you would like to place your license on Inactive Status, you must explicitly inform the Board of your intention before the renewal date expires. If you fail to pay renewal fees on time, your license is not inactive; it is delinquent (expired). It is unlawful to practice as a Social Worker while your license is delinquent/expired.

LIVE WELL DC!

The Department of Health's (DOH) health initiative, Live Well DC (LWDC), is intended to educate the public, and increase public awareness of the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices. Live Well DC is an interagency effort to create a holistic approach to health and wellness by targeting individual behaviors that result in poor health outcomes. LWDC aims to improve the health of those in our community, and ensure that District residents live longer, more productive lives by encouraging residents to follow 10 Healthy Living Tips.

TEN HEALTHY LIVING TIPS

- Eat Healthy
- Move More
- Don't Smoke
- Love Responsibly
- Reduce Stress
- See Your Doctor
- Wash Your Hands
- Be Prepared
- Make Peace
- Read More

BOARD VACANCIES

Would you like to serve on the Board of Social Work?

If you are a resident of the District of Columbia, have been practicing 3 years and are in good standing with the Board, you may apply to fill one of the vacancies on the Board. Currently, the following positions need to be filled:

- Chairperson
- LGSW or LSWA Member
- Consumer Member

To apply, go online at www.obc.dc.gov and download an application, or call the Office of Boards and Commissions at (202) 727-1372.

THE BOARD HAS RELOCATED

DOH HEALTH PROFESSIONAL
LICENSING ADMINISTRATION
899 North Capitol Street, NE
(formerly 825 North Capitol) First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Renewal Questions
1-877-672-2174

Fax
202-724-5145

Computer/IT Questions
202-724-8930
202-741-7689

Website
www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

Criminal Background Check (CBC) Questions
(202) 724-8102 | (202) 442-9224 | doh.cbcbu@dc.gov

YOU MAY RENEW YOUR LICENSE ONLINE AT WWW.HPLA.DOH.DC.GOV

TO RENEW ONLINE YOU MUST USE **INTERNET EXPLORER 6.0 OR HIGHER** AND PAY BY **MASTERCARD OR VISA**.
OUR SYSTEM IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH MOZILLA FIREFOX, GOOGLE CHROME OR SAFARI.

FOR NEW USERS: You must register to select a User ID and Password. In order to uniquely identify yourself to register to use our online application, you need to have your SSN handy and your last name (as it appears on your application/renewal notice or Weblookup) for an easy and quick registration. For existing users, you need to click on the log-in button and proceed from there with your User ID and Password.

Before you log-on to our website, please have these items available:

- Your Social Security number
- Your Visa or MasterCard, in order to pay your renewal fee of \$145 online.

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO LOG-ON TO OUR WEBSITE:

- Enter www.hpla.doh.dc.gov into the address field of your web browser
 - Click on Online License Renewal
 - Type in your Social Security number and last name and click on "Search" tab
 - At the Registration page, you must create a User ID and Password
 - Type in your newly-created User ID and Password and follow the step-by-step instructions to complete the renewal process.
- Please be sure to print out a copy of the "Confirmation Page" for your records.

AFTER YOU FINISH THE ON-LINE RENEWAL AT OUR WEBSITE, SEND US:

- If you do not currently have a photo on your license, you will need to send TWO (2) 2"x2" photos of yourself (identical passport-size photos; plain background, front-view, fade-proof), and write on the back of the photos your full name and license number or Social Security number.

• IF YOU ANSWER "YES" TO THE QUESTION IN "SECTION 6", PLEASE MAIL THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) TO:

HPLA - ATTN: Social Work Renewal
899 North Capitol Street, NE, First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

- After 24 hours, you may verify your completed renewal at: <http://hpla.doh.dc.gov/weblookup>

NOTE: You are not required to submit proof of having met your CEU credit requirement with your renewal at this time.
CEUs ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR FIRST RENEWAL.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS—RENEWALS

LICENSES WILL NOT BE ISSUED PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF COMPLETED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

CBC INSIDE DC

CBC BY DC METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (DC MPD):

When you log-on www.hpla.doh.dc.gov to renew your license, you can schedule an appointment to go get your Live-Scan Fingerprinting done by DC MPD. You will receive an email notification from the CBC Unit scheduling your appointment. Once we receive confirmation from the DC MPD that you have completed your Live-Scan Fingerprinting, your license will be renewed. The renewal fee is \$145.00, and the CBC fee is \$50 (total \$195).

CBC OUTSIDE DC

CBC FOR APPLICANTS OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA METROPOLITAN AREA:

- Go to your local law enforcement agency and request a State Police Clearance and to be fingerprinted on a FBI Applicant Fingerprint card (FD-258).
- In the “Reason Fingerprinted” block of the FD-258, write in “License, certification or registration, Health Regulation and Licensing Administration, Department of Health, 899 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002.”
- Mail the Fingerprint card (FD-258) to the FBI along with a money order or cashier’s check for \$18.00 made payable to the Treasury of the United States to: FBI CJIS Division – Record Request; 1000 Custer Hollow Road; Clarksburg, WV 26306
- Send confirmation of your state clearance by email, fax or mail to HPLA. Your license will not be renewed until your State Police Clearance is received.
- The FBI will mail the results of the background check to you, the applicant.
- Submit the results of your background check in a sealed envelope to our office at the following address:

CBC Unit/HPLA:	899 North Capitol Street, NE, First Floor Washington, DC 20002
Phone/Fax:	Phone (202) 727-9855 Fax (202) 724-8677
Email:	doh.cbcu@dc.gov

FBI INFO: For more information regarding the criminal background check from the FBI, visit the FBI website at:

http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks/background_checks

IF WE RECEIVE A POSITIVE CBC RESULT FROM THE FBI, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE COURT PAPERS.

- Late Renewal: Applications submitted after August 31st must include \$85.00 late fee.
- CE Requirement: Social Workers must complete forty (40) contact hours of continuing education, including six (6) hours of face-to-face Ethics.

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL LICENSING ADMINISTRATION, DC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:
HPLA/Board of Nursing, 899 North Capitol Street, NE; 1ST Floor, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 1-877-672-2174 * Fax: 202-727-8471
Website: www.hpla.doh.dc.gov
HPLA CBC Issues contact: doh.cbcu@dc.gov

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS—**NEW APPLICANTS**

LICENSES WILL NOT BE ISSUED PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF COMPLETED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

Each applicant applying for Board of Social Work licensure/certification shall obtain a criminal background check (CBC). The CBC requirement is mandated for all health care professionals by the District's "Criminal Background Check Amendment Act of 2006".

**"At A Glance" (see below for detailed instructions)
Renewal Process starts May 1, 2011**

1. Submit your renewal application and fee to Board, and make your CBC appointment
2. Get fingerprinted for FBI and, get fingerprinted for DC or state-of-residence
3. Once Board receives the background reports from the FBI and your state or DC, you will receive your license.
4. If you have an arrest record, the Board will contact you to request more information.

An applicant for licensure/certification by endorsement, reinstatement, reactivation, examination or renewal shall not be issued a license/certification until the background check has been completed. A CBC shall be conducted in accordance with Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)/State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) policies and procedures and in an FBI-approved environment, by means of fingerprint and National Criminal Information Center checks and procedures.

If the MPD/State Police or FBI check reveals any adverse information, that information will be sent to the Board of Social Work (BOSW). The BOSW will ask the applicant to submit additional documentation regarding information revealed by the check. Please be advised that an adverse criminal background report does not automatically disqualify the applicant from obtaining license, registration or certification. The Board will make a decision on each application on a case-by-case basis.

NEW APPLICANTS

EXAM APPLICANTS: Must submit their application, take and pass the appropriate level exam, and complete CBC. **NO LICENSE WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL THE CBC HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND REVIEWED.**

ENDORSEMENT/REINSTATEMENT/REACTIVATION

APPLICANTS: Must submit their application and complete CBC. **NO LICENSE WILL BE ISSUED UNTIL THE CBC HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND REVIEWED.**

APPLICANTS FOR LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT, REINSTATEMENT, REACTIVATION OF LICENSURE

Applicants Completing CBC in the District of Columbia Metropolitan Area

1. Submit the following information to the HPLA Customer Service department in person or by mail:
 - a. Completed application and application fee payable to the DC Treasurer.
 - b. \$50.00 fee payable to the DC Treasurer (check or money order only) to conduct a criminal background check through the DC MPD (not included in licensure fee. May add to payment of application fee).
 - c. Live-Scan Fingerprint Appointment Request Form to schedule an appointment with the DC MPD. Go to <http://hpla.doh.dc.gov/hpla/cwp/view,a,1194,q,501826.asp> to download the Live-Scan Fingerprint Appointment Request Form. Or provide verification of fingerprinting completed by another jurisdiction.
 - d. Once evidence of a completed CBC scan is received, the applicant's licensure status will be placed in Temporary Licensure Status until CBC result is received.

DC METROPOLITAN POLICE:

300 Indiana Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Metro: Red Line - Judiciary Square

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS (continued)

Applicants Completing CBC Outside of the District of Columbia Metropolitan Area

1. To complete the CBC, go to any law enforcement agency and:
 - a. Ask for a State Police Clearance and to be fingerprinted on an FBI Applicant Fingerprint card (FD-258).
 - b. There is an \$18.00 fee for the FBI CBC.
 - c. FBI INFO: For more information regarding the criminal background check from the FBI, visit the FBI website at: <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/background-checks>
2. You must then mail the Fingerprint card (FD-258) to the FBI. In the "Reason Fingerprinted" block of the card, write in "License or certification, HRLA – Board of Social Work, Department of Health, 899 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002."
3. Applicants' licensure status will be placed in "temporary status" once evidence of a CBC scan is received.
4. The FBI will mail the results of the background check to you the applicant.
5. Once the results from the FBI are received, THEY SHOULD NOT BE OPENED BY THE APPLICANT. The FBI CBC results must be mailed in its sealed envelope to our CBC Unit (address at top right of this page).
6. The applicant is responsible for making sure that the CBC results are delivered to the Criminal Background Check Unit (address at top right).

HPLA ADDRESS (Note new address):

HPLA/Board of Social Work
899 North Capitol Street, NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

NEAREST METRO: Red Line - Union Station

HPLA PHONE: 1-877-672-2174

FAX NUMBER: 202-724-5145

EMAIL ADDRESS: cbcu@dc.gov

WALK-IN HOURS: 8:15 am – 4:45 pm Monday-Friday.

HPLA Customer Service

(processing department) is located on the 1st Floor.

TEMPORARY PRACTICE WHILE AWAITING LICENSURE

In lieu of Temporary Practice Letters, Temporary licensure status can be verified using the link: "Online Professional License Search " at www.hpla.doh.dc.gov. Temporary licensure status will not exceed 90 days.

BOARD REVIEW

Positive backgrounds (CBCs indicating arrests or convictions) will be reviewed by the Board prior to issuing a license. If the background check indicates arrests and/or convictions, the applicant will be contacted and asked to provide court documents regarding those arrests/convictions, if not previously submitted. Board staff will review all information and will forward a report to the Board for a decision. The Board may: deny licensure/certification of an applicant; license/certify the applicant with or without probation; or issue charges against the applicant.

FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS & STUDENTS

The Board of Social Work extends an open invitation to Field Placement Supervisors and Students to attend the Open Session of the Board's monthly meetings

- Fourth Monday of the month
- Open Session is at 10:00 am

Hearings on disciplinary matters are also open to the public.

If you would like to attend, please call
Supervisory Health Licensing Specialist
Gabrielle Schultz at (202) 724-8739 or email
gabrielle.schultz@dc.gov.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS*

Open Session at 10:00 am

June 27th

July 25th

August 22nd

September 26th

October 24th

November 28th

*please note any meeting cancellations will be published on the HPLA website.

CE AUDIT RESPONSE FORM

The Board of Social Work has implemented a new audit form for licensees selected during the CE Audit. If you have been selected for Audit, please submit the form below to the Board of Social Work at: DC Board of Social Work, Attn: CE Audit, 899 North Capitol Street NE, First Floor, Washington DC 20002.

Name (please print) _____

License Number _____ Total CE hours completed between August 1, 2009 - August 31, 2011 _____

Please fill out chart below:

NAME OF COURSE & ORGANIZATION that provided the program	Date course was taken	Number of Contact Hours	Was it Live or Distance/Online?	Hours of Live (face-to-face) Ethics
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

IT'S RENEWAL TIME... ARE YOU READY FOR THE CONTINUING EDUCATION AUDIT?

By Carla M. Williams, Esq., Assistant Attorney General & Board Legal Advisor

District of Columbia Social Workers will soon be renewing their social work licenses, which must be renewed on or before July 31, 2011 or else they will expire. In order to be eligible for renewal of licensure, a social worker must have completed forty (40) hours of approved continuing education credit between August 1, 2009 and August 31, 2011¹, six (6) of which must have been in **ethics**.

When calculating your continuing education credits, remember that a minimum of fifty (50) minutes is needed to constitute one (1) credit hour.

At the conclusion of the renewal period, the Board will conduct a random audit to ensure compliance with the continuing education requirements. If you are selected in the audit, you will be notified by letter and provided instructions for submitting your materials. Please be sure to submit all requested materials within thirty (30) days as requested and to keep a copy of your records in case your original submission is lost or misdirected. **DO NOT** send your original certificates to the Board; keep these for your files.

Please take note that the random selections are generated by computer. This means that an individual can be selected in back-to-back consecutive audits. If you are selected, you must submit proof of completion of the required continuing education courses whether or not you were selected in a previous audit.

Here are a few tips to help ensure you meet your continuing education requirements:

1. Make sure that you have completed **all** forty (40) continuing education credits between **August 1, 2009 and August 31, 2011**. You will not receive credit for continuing education courses that were taken before August 1, 2009 or after August 31, 2011. Even if the course was taken one day after the deadline, it is still too late to receive credit and you will be fined if you are selected in the random audit.
2. If the continuing education certificate does not clearly include the word "ethics" in the title, you will need to submit the course materials, syllabus, or other documentation to demonstrate that the course subject matter included ethics and the number of credit hours which were devoted to ethics.
3. Please be aware that in the District of Columbia, you **cannot** complete ethics courses online or through self study courses. All ethics courses must have been obtained through live, face-to-face continuing education courses.
4. No more than twelve (12) continuing education hours may be accepted in any renewal period, or for reinstatement or reactivation of a license, for approved independent home studies and distance learning continuing education activities.

For example, if during the audit, you submit proof of completing forty (40) continuing education credits, but all forty (40) were done online, this would be counted as follows: Zero (0) ethics, and a total of twelve (12) continuing education credits. You would then be fined and ordered to complete the outstanding twenty-eight (28) continuing education units, six (6) of which must be in ethics, within a time period specified by the Board (i.e. thirty (30) days) or else face possible formal disciplinary action.
5. Finally, please take note that you must have already completed all forty (40) continuing education hours **at the time you renew your license or by midnight August 31, 2011**. If you will not complete all forty (40) hours, including six (6) in ethics by August 31, 2011, do not renew your license until you do have the hours. If you fail to complete all of the continuing education requirements by August 31, 2011 and you are subsequently audited, you will face disciplinary action. Good intentions are not enough.
6. If you have any questions regarding whether your continuing education courses are approved for credit, please contact Ms. Gabrielle Schultz, Supervisory Health Licensing Specialist for the DC Board of Social Work at 202-724-8739 or 202-724-8800, to be sure, before you re-new your license.

**PLEASE NOTE:
A MAXIMUM
OF 12 HOURS
OF DISTANCE
LEARNING
IS PERMITTED**

**FIFTY (50)
MINUTES
IS NEEDED TO
CONSTITUTE
ONE (1)
CREDIT HOUR.**

**IF A CERTIFICATE
DOES NOT
INCLUDE 'ETHICS'
IN THE TITLE,
YOU WILL NEED
TO SUBMIT
COURSE MATERIALS.**

¹Due to the new criminal back-ground check requirement for licensed healthcare professionals, the renewal period has been extended this cycle by an additional thirty (30) days.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

How many hours of continuing education credit do I need to complete for the renewal cycle of my license?

In order to renew your social work license on a biannual basis, you must have completed 40 hours of continuing education which must include 6 hours of face-to-face Ethics (online courses not accepted).

If this is the first renewal of my social work license, am I required to complete the continuing education requirement?

No, ALL first time renewals (of both graduate and clinical licensure) are exempt from the continuing education requirement. You will still need to renew the license online; however there is an exemption for the required CE. The following renewal you will be required to have the 40 hours of continuing education for the 2 year licensure cycle.

A course I took was not approved by the District of Columbia Board of Social Work, but it was approved by the Maryland Board of Social Work. Is this course accepted by the DC Board?

Yes, we will accept approval from other licensing boards/associations as long as the course is related to social work. In addition, any course approved by ASWB or NASW is accepted by the DC Board of Social Work.

What are the requirements for becoming a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)?

To apply for clinical licensure in the District of Columbia, you must show proof of at least two years of experience at the LGSW licensure level. The experience must consist of 3,000 hours of clinical experience including at least 100 hours of supervised practice completed under the immediate face-to-face supervision of a qualified supervisor. All supervision for the LICSW licensure must be completed under a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in the jurisdiction that the social work practice occurred. Lastly, the applicant must complete the Clinical level exam through the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) once approved by the Board.

How often are the exams offered through ASWB?

The examinations are offered on a daily basis by the Associations of Social Work Boards—a national organization which sponsors the exam for most licensing jurisdictions. Prior to scheduling the examination you must submit an application to the Board for approval.

How long after I submit my application for social work licensure by Examination will I expect to receive my eligibility letter to test?

Once your complete application package is submitted to the Board (including transcript, reference letters, supervision documentation, etc.) you should receive your eligibility letter within 7-10 business days. Once received, you are then eligible to contact ASWB to schedule your examination date.

Does the District of Columbia have licensure by Endorsement?

Yes. In order to receive licensure by endorsement you must meet the following requirements:

1. Possess a current (non-expired) license in another jurisdiction.
2. Taken the appropriate ASWB examination and submit proof of a passing score on the exam.
3. A verification of licensure from each state in which you have been licensed.
4. Three completed reference forms
5. A completed Endorsement application including the fee and passport photos.

Can I reinstate my expired social work license in the District of Columbia?

Yes, provided that your license has not been expired for more than five years. You must complete the required continuing education credits for reinstatement and submit the appropriate application.

Can I practice independently if I have an LGSW?

No. In order to practice independently, or as a self-employed individual, one must have an LICSW license. If one has an LICSW license, one may provide

services only as an employee of another individual, agency or institution, under the supervision of an LICSW. You must receive immediate supervision for one (1) hour for every thirty-two (32) hours of work.

May I maintain my license if I am not working as a social worker or not living in the District of Columbia?

Employment in a social work position or residence in the District of Columbia is not required to hold an active license. However, paid inactive status is available if you are not currently practicing in the District of Columbia or living outside of the DC area. Paid inactive status can be requested at the time of licensure renewal. This status is for an indefinite period of time however the applicant must show the required continuing education requirements if they wish to reactive the license.

How do I request a letter of verification from the District of Columbia Board if I am applying to another jurisdiction?

Submit a written request to the Board including your name, license number and the address to which you would like the verification sent. Also include any form that needs to be completed by our agency. Include a check or money order for \$34.00 made payable to the DC Treasurer. Once your request is received, verification will be processed within 5-7 business days.

I will be graduating with my MSW. Can I submit my application to take the examination prior to graduation?

Yes. You can be approved to sit for the ASWB Examination prior to graduating from your master's program. In place of an official transcript, you will need to submit a letter from your social work program indicating your expected graduation date. With the letter and the completed application for the LGSW you will be approved. After passing the examination, your license will not be issued until we receive an official transcript from your college or university. It is your responsibility to ensure that an official transcript is mailed directly to the Board after graduation, to complete the licensure application process.

Counsel's Column

REGULATION UPDATE

By Ruey C. Ju, PharmD, JD Candidate, 2012
Legal Intern

PROPOSED REGULATIONS

In the spirit of keeping the social work community well-informed, the Board of Social Work ("Board") is considering proposed regulatory changes to Chapter 70 of Title 17 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR). The purpose of the amendments is as follows:

- To clarify the continuing education requirements and approved continuing education activities
- To clarify that holders of expired licenses must reinstate the license as opposed to applying for a new license if the license is still eligible for reinstatement
- To clarify the supervised practice requirements
- To limit the time period in which the Board will accept supervised practice hours

Once the Board approves the content of the proposed rules, a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking will be published in the D.C. register for 30 days, during which the proposed rules will be open for public comment. (You may find a copy of the proposed rules at: <http://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Default.aspx>) The Board invites and welcomes public comment and feedback on the proposed rules. At the end of the 30-day period, the Board will consider any comments received before the Rules are finalized. Publications on the D.C. register occur every Friday, so please check the website regularly.

IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

In almost every jurisdiction that issues social work licenses, continuing education (CE) courses are required for renewal.¹ These continuing education requirements vary from one jurisdiction to another in the number of hours required to the types of requisite courses allowed.² Invariably, the goal behind continuing education is to ensure that clients receive the best care and guidance possible.³

It is important that social workers are committed to lifelong learning as a professional responsibility in order to help clients with the most up-to-date ideas and intervention approaches.⁴ The cost of neglecting continuing education is ultimately shouldered by the clients, and eventually the society at large. Furthermore, continuing professional development allows social workers to maintain, improve, and broaden their knowledge and skills required in their professional lives.⁵

Continuing education is a self-directed process and compliance with CE requirements is the responsibility of the individual social worker. It is crucial that licensed social workers within the District of Columbia understand the CE requirements, and keep current on any rule changes. Pursuant to DCMR § 7008.4, an applicant for renewal of a license must complete forty (40) hours of approved continuing education credits during the two-year period preceding the date the license expires. A minimum of six (6) hours of the total continuing education credits must be in ethics. If there are any questions, please refer to the DC Municipal Regulations for Social Work or contact us at (877) 672-2174.

IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The primary mission of the social work profession is to "enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people."⁶ In an effort to promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients, social workers will inevitably face ethical issues regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.⁷ Therefore, ethical awareness is a fundamental part of the social worker's practice, and it is imperative that social workers have a set of values, principles, and standards at their disposal when ethical issues arise.⁸ In addition, pursuant to DCMR § 7008.4, an applicant for renewal of a license must complete a minimum of six (6) hours of the total continuing education credits in ethics. The renewal requirement is a further exclamation on the importance of ethics as part of a social worker's arsenal.

¹"Continuing Education." *Association of Social Work Boards*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011. <http://www.aswb.org/SWL/conteducation.asp>.

²*Id.*

³"NASW Standards for Continuing Professional Education." *National Association of Social Workers*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011. http://www.naswdc.org/practice/standards/cont_professional_ed.asp#intro.

⁴*Id.*

⁵*Id.*

⁶"Code of Ethics." *National Association of Social Workers*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011. <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>.

⁷*Id.*

⁸*Id.*

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY: REPORTING DWIs, DUIs, AND OWIs

by Melissa Musiker, MPP, RD, LD

According to a 2009 National Highway Transportation Safety Administration report, in 2008, an estimated 11,773 people died in drunk driving crashes involving a driver with an illegal (0.08 or greater) Blood Alcohol Content (BAC). These deaths constitute 31.6 percent of the 37,261 total traffic fatalities in 2008. There are increasing reports of people who think “driving while buzzed” is not as dangerous as driving while intoxicated. This is not the case. In Washington, DC any amount of drinking and driving can be cause for legal action.

Washington, DC has three different types of “drunk driving” violations:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>1. Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) is the act of operating or being in physical control of a motor vehicle with a blood alcohol level of 0.08 or higher.</p> | <p>2. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) is the act of operating or being in physical control of a motor vehicle “under the influence of alcohol” and this can mean a blood alcohol level as low as 0.05 or if you show that you are impaired by alcohol to an “appreciable degree.”</p> | <p>3. Operating While Impaired (OWI) is the act of operating or being in physical control of a motor vehicle while you are so affected by the consumption of alcohol that it impairs</p> | <p>your ability to operate a motor vehicle in the same way a reasonably careful and prudent driver, not so impaired, would operate a vehicle in similar circumstances.</p> |
|--|--|---|--|

Most people are probably familiar with DWI and DUI, however they may not be aware of the OWI law in DC. One need not have an illegal BAC or fail a field sobriety test to be convicted of an OWI. OWI is the easiest of the three types of “drunk driving” violations for a prosecutor to prove and as a result the penalties for an OWI conviction are lighter than those for a DUI or DWI.

Question 7b on the application for licensure asks if you have ever been convicted or investigated of a crime or misdemeanor (other than minor traffic violations). Despite the low threshold for proof, an OWI conviction or investigation must be reported on your application for licensure. The Board takes an OWI conviction just as seriously as we would a conviction for a DWI or DUI. Answering “yes” to question 7b is not cause for automatic exclusion from licensure. Each application for licensure that has a “yes” to question 7b is reviewed individually. As always, honesty is the best policy.

IMPAIRED OPERATION OF A VEHICLE
PLEASE NOTE THAT, IN ADDITION TO ALCOHOL, IMPAIRMENT CAN ALSO BE CAUSED BY LEGALLY-OBTAINED MEDICATIONS OR ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES.

PAID INACTIVE STATUS

If you intend to retire your license, or if you would like to place your license on Inactive Status, you must explicitly inform the Board of your intention before the renewal date expires. If you fail to pay renewal fees on time, your license is not inactive; it is delinquent (expired). It is unlawful to practice as a Social Worker while your license is delinquent/expired.

PAID INACTIVE FEE:	\$179 (one-time fee)
TIME LIMITATION:	UNLIMITED
FEE TO REACTIVATE YOUR LICENSE:	\$ 34

Licenses on Paid Inactive status must continue to meet the continuing education requirements; CEUs must be presented to the Board when applying for licensure reactivation. Contact HPLA Customer Service at 1 (877) 672-2174, or Ms. Gabrielle Schultz at (202) 724-8739 for further information.

FILING A COMPLAINT WITH THE BOARD

To file a complaint against a licensed Social Worker, simply write a letter that describes your complaint. The letter must be signed, and you should attach copies of any pertinent documents that you may have. The letter must also include your address, so we may contact you as necessary and notify you of any findings.

You should mail the complaint to:

DC Board of Social Work
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

You can also fax the complaint to the Board at (202) 724-8677.

If your complaint alleges unlicensed activity, you should address your complaint to:

Supervisory Investigator
899 North Capitol Street NE
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20002

You can also fax your complaint about unlicensed activity to (202) 724-8677.

PLEASE NOTE:

You can print a complaint form from our website at www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

Please be advised that the health professional licensing boards do not have jurisdiction over fee disputes, except for billing for services that were not provided. If you have a fee dispute with a health professional, you can seek redress through the civil courts.

BOARD ORDERS

2011

Denied

Shandler, Melvin (03/24/2011) Applicant was denied reinstatement of his social work license. This applicant was convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, committed fraud or made false claims, and practiced social work without a license.

2010

Fined

Ebini, Patience (11/15/2010) This licensee was fined \$500.00 as a result of a failed Continuing Education Audit.

Patterson, Lisa (10/14/2010) This licensee was fined \$500.00 and required to complete five (5) continuing education credit hours in ethics as a result of a failed Continuing Education Audit.

Verification of Licensure

Licensing authorities and some health facilities often require a letter of verification of the licenses you currently hold or have held in the past. These letters of verification are sometimes called "letters of good standing," even though your DC license may have expired.

If the jurisdiction or institution to which you wish the letter sent gave you a form, simply forward the form, with a check or money order payable to "DC Treasurer" in the amount of thirty-four dollars (\$34.00) to:

DC Board of Social Work
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Be sure to include your name and the address where the form is to be sent on the form.

If the jurisdiction or institution that you wish the letter sent to did not give you a form, send the payment referenced above and a short note requesting a letter of verification. The note should include your name, and the name and address of where you want the letter of verification sent.

EXPEDITE YOUR LICENSE

- Make sure to have your entire application filled out and signed.
- Provide official court documents of final case dispositions for any felonies or misdemeanors that you incurred.
- Case dispositions should include a case number, jurisdiction, year, all the defendant names, all plaintiff names, a brief summary of the case, and final disposition, such as judgment dollar amount, dismissed with or without prejudice, or settlement dollar amount—this information must be sent with your application.

WHEN YOU MOVE OR CHANGE YOUR NAME PLEASE INFORM THE BOARD

The law requires that all name and address changes be submitted in writing to our office **within 30 days of the change**. Please include your name, address, Social Security number, and license number if you know it.

If you have a name change, you must also enclose a copy of your certificate of marriage, divorce decree, or court order that authorizes the change.

Fax your request to (202) 724-5145 or mail your name and address change to:

DC Board of Social Work
Address/Name Change
899 North Capitol St. NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

CMS Funds CBC Program for All Prospective Employees of LTC Facilities

The Department of Health was awarded a \$2.7 million grant by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to participate in the National Background Check Program for prospective employees in Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities. This move is aimed at combating abuse and neglect in the nation's LTC facilities. LTC care providers covered under the program include skilled nursing facilities/nursing facilities, LTC hospitals/hospitals with swing beds, intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICFs/MR), home health agencies, home-and-community-based service (HBCS), group homes over 8 beds, personal care agencies – Medicaid State Plan. Since the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act passed in 1987, LTC patient abuse, neglect and misappropriation of funds have been identified as a widespread problem for millions of Americans receiving LTC services. The grant funds CBC program for prospective employees who have access, or are likely to have access, to the patient.



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Health Professional
Licensing Administration

Address

DC Board of Social Work
899 North Capitol Street NE
First Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Phone

(202) 724-8739

Fax

(202) 724-8677

Webpage

www.hpla.doh.dc.gov

DC Government website

www.dc.gov

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Eileen A. Dombo, PhD, LICSW,
Board Member

Director, Department of Health
Mohammad N. Akhter, MD, MPH

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Carla M. Williams

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Mark Donatelli

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Nancy Kofie