

Revised 02/20/13 – Please watch the Board’s website for updates.

Application Process to Apply for Initial Licensure as a Clinical Social Worker

The Rules and Regulations can be located on the Board’s website at www.dos.state.pa.us/social.

These FAQs are not intended to substitute for reading the Rules and Regulations.

- Q: What degree is accepted for licensure as a clinical social worker?
A: Under Section 47.12c(2) of the regulations; an applicant must have received a master’s degree in social work or social welfare or a doctoral degree in social work from a school accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.
- Q: How do I apply for a license?
A: The application is available on the Board’s website at www.dos.state.pa.us/social, then click on “Licensure Information” and then click on “Board Forms” and then click on “Application for a License by Examination to Practice Clinical Social Work”. Follow the instructions for submitting the application form, required documentation and fees. When your application is complete you will receive official notification by mail that you are eligible to register for the appropriate examination (clinical) through ASWB.
- Q: How many hours of supervised clinical experience are required for licensure as a clinical social worker?
A: 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience are required. Under Section 47.12c(b)(9) of the regulations; the supervised clinical experience shall be completed in no less than 2 years and no more than 6 years, except that no less than 500 hours and no more than 1,800 hours may be credited in any 12-month period **OR If you hold current certification from the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW) issued prior to January 1, 2001, by the National Association of Social Workers, a letter will need to be submitted by the National Association of Social Workers (National Headquarters) verifying current ACSW certification. As long as the ACSW certification meets the requirements indicated above, the certification will be accepted in lieu of the 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience.**
- Q: How many hours per week must I work in order for the supervised clinical experience to be accepted?
A: Under Section 47.12c(b)(8) of the regulations; supervised work activity will be counted toward satisfying the experience requirement only if it takes place in a single setting for at least 30 hours per week but no more than 50 hours per week during at least a 3 month period or at least 15 hours per week for a period of at least 6 months.
- Q: What is acceptable as supervised clinical experience?
A: Under Section 47.12c(b)(1) of the regulations: At least one-half of the experience (1,500 hours) shall consist of providing services in one or more of the following areas:
- (i) Assessment
 - (ii) Psychotherapy
 - (iii) Other psychosocial-therapeutic interventions (facilitation of client/peer, mediation, psycho education)
 - (iv) Consultation
 - (v) Family therapy
 - (vi) Group therapy

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Please note the above 6 experiences should involve direct client contact. The remainder of the clinical experience must be related to work with clients. **Example: case documentation and recordkeeping activities; supervision of another social worker related to practice; group or peer supervision related to practice; court testimony related to work with client(s); advocacy on behalf of client(s); other activities that involve, support or enhance work with clients.**

Also, please be advised that administrative duties cannot be counted towards the 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience. Examples: administrative supervision of another individual, completing human resource and/or budget documentation, etc.

Please refer to Section 47.12c(b) of the regulations for the supervised clinical experience requirements.

Q: How long do I have to complete my 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience?

A: Under Section 47.12c(b)(9) of the regulations, the supervised clinical experience shall be completed in no less than 2 years and no more than 6 years, except that no less than 500 hours and no more than 1,800 hours may be credited in any 12-month period.

Q: How many hours per week must I meet with my supervisor?

A: Under Section 47.12c(b)(5) of the regulations; the supervisor, or one to whom supervisory responsibilities have been delegated, shall meet with the supervisee for a minimum of 2 hours for every 40 hours of supervised clinical experience. At least 1 of the 2 hours shall be with the supervisee individually and in person, and 1 of the 2 hours may be with the supervisee in a group setting and in person. A total of 150 hours of supervision is required. At least 75 hours must be individual supervision and the other 75 hours may be group supervision.

Example: For every 40 hours of clinical experience you must have at least 1 hour of individual supervision and 1 hour may be group supervision. Example: If working 20 hours per week – 1 week you must have 1 hour of individual supervision and the next week you may have one hour of group supervision.

Q: What qualifications are required of my supervisor for my supervised clinical experience?

A: For the supervised clinical experience hours completed prior to January 1, 2006, 1500 hours must be completed either under an individual who holds a current license as a clinical social worker and has 5 years of clinical experience within the last 10 years as a clinical social worker (Section 47.1a(1)) OR under an individual who practiced as a clinical social worker, had 5 years clinical experience within the last 10 years as a clinical social worker and held a current license to practice as a social worker (47.1a(3)). The other 1500 hours may be completed under an individual who holds a current license and a master’s or doctoral degree in a related field, and have 5 years experience within the last 10 years in that field (Section 47.1a(2)), as per Section 47.12c(b)(2) of the regulations.

For the supervised clinical experience hours completed January 1, 2006 and after, 1,500 hours must be completed under an individual who holds a current license as a clinical social worker and has 5 years of clinical experience within the last 10 years as a clinical social worker (Section 47.1a(1)) and the other 1,500 hours may be completed under an

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individual who holds a current license and a master’s or doctoral degree in a related field, and have 5 years experience within the last 10 years in that field (Section 47.1a(2)), as per Section 47.12c(b)(2) of the regulations.

Supervised clinical experience completed in another state may be counted towards meeting the Pennsylvania supervised clinical experience requirements as long as the experience meets Pennsylvania requirements.

Please also refer to Section 47.12d of the regulations for the Standards for Supervisors.

Q: What documentation am I required to maintain while I am completing my supervised clinical experience?

A: You and your supervisor must maintain records as defined in Section 47.12d (Standards for supervisors). You and your supervisor would devise a form to use to maintain your records. The Board may request these records if it becomes necessary.

Q: What documentation must I submit to verify my supervised clinical experience?

A: There are forms in the licensure application to be completed by the supervisor.

Q: Is there a limit on the number of individuals a supervisor can concurrently supervise toward licensure?

A: Under Section 47.12c(b)(6) of the regulations, a supervisor shall supervise no more than 6 supervisees at the same time. If this provision creates an undue hardship on a supervisee, the supervisor and supervisee may request an exception to this provision. The request shall state, in writing, the reasons why this provision creates a hardship on the supervisee and why the supervisee is not able to obtain a supervisor who meets the requirements of this provision. **Please be advised that the Board may require a personal appearance by the supervisee and supervisor in certain circumstances.**

Q: If I am unable to locate my supervisor or my supervisor is deceased, how do I have my supervised clinical experience verified?

A: If you do not hold a clinical social work license in another state, you can have another individual who can attest to the fact that the supervised clinical experience has occurred, submit the following documentation:

- (1) A notarized statement by the applicant indicating why the supervisor cannot complete the supervised clinical experience forms.
- (2) A notarized statement, by the individual attesting to your supervised clinical experience, indicating how that individual can verify that the supervised clinical experience occurred and indicating why that individual is completing the supervised clinical experience forms instead of your supervisor.
- (3) The supervised clinical experience forms, completed by the individual attesting to your supervised clinical experience, indicating your supervisor’s name and qualifications and all other documentation.

If you hold a clinical social work license in another state, you may request that copies of the supervised clinical experience on file with the other State Board be forwarded to the PA State Board for review.

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Q: I am licensed in another state as a clinical social worker, however, I have not taken the ASWB clinical examination. What is the procedure for licensure?

A: You would first need to complete the licensure application and meet the licensure requirements for the social work license (LSW). Upon receiving the LSW license you may then apply for the clinical social work license (LCSW). The application is available on the Board’s website at www.dos.state.pa.us/social, then click on “Licensure Information” and then click on “Board Forms” and then click on “Application for a License to Practice Social Work and Application for a License by Examination to Practice Clinical Social Work”. Follow the instructions for submitting the application forms, required documentation and fees.

Q: I am licensed in another state as a clinical social worker and have taken and passed the ASWB clinical examination. What is the procedure for licensure?

A: The application is available on the Board’s website at www.dos.state.pa.us/social, then click on “Licensure Information” and then click on “Board Forms” and then click on “Application for a License by Endorsement without Examination to Practice Clinical Social Work”. Follow the instructions for submitting the application form, required documentation and fees.