

*Answers to
Most Frequently Asked Questions
Relating to
Associate Clinical Social Workers*



Board of Behavioral Sciences
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Vision

Strong minds, lives, families, and communities.

Mission

Protect Californians by promoting consumer awareness, advocating for improved mental health services, and setting, communicating, and enforcing standards.

Values

The BBS Way:

Be a person of Integrity

Be Professional and Dedicated

Serve with Excellence

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| <p>1. What is the breakdown for the required hours of experience to be a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)?</p> | <p>The Board requires 3,200 hours of professional experience and 104 supervised weeks to qualify for a license as a clinical social worker. Of the 3,200 hours required, 1,700 must be gained under the supervision of an LCSW. Of the 104 supervised weeks required, 52 weeks must be weeks in which the applicant met with an individual supervisor. Of the 52 required individual supervision weeks, 13 weeks must be under an LCSW.</p> <p>A supervised week is a week in which an Associate Clinical Social Worker (ASW) meets with a supervisor for either one (1) hour or individual or two (2) hours of group supervision. An applicant for examination eligibility cannot be approved to sit for the licensing exams without completing both the 3,200 hours of professional experience AND the 104 required supervised weeks. One (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision is mandatory for any week from which the applicant claims experience.</p> <p>No more than 40 hours of experience can be earned in any given week.</p> <p>The Board requires a minimum of 2,000 hours of experience in clinical psychosocial diagnosis, assessment, and treatment, including psychotherapy or counseling. Of these 2,000 a minimum of 750 shall be face-to-face individual or group psychotherapy.*</p> <p>The Board allows for a maximum of 1,200 hours in client-centered advocacy, consultation, evaluation, and research.</p> <p>*The 750 mandatory client-contact hours does not apply to those individuals who registered prior to 1/1/02. For those registered prior to 1/1/99, please contact an LCSW evaluator for questions regarding breakdowns for the required hours of experience.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.21(a)(1)(2)(d); 4996.21(f)(2); 4996.23 (f)</i></p> |
| <p>2. When can my hours begin counting towards the LCSW licensing requirements?</p> | <p>Hours of work experience and supervision can only begin counting after the issuance of an ASW registration number. The law does not allow the Board to grant exceptions.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.18(a); 4996.21(f)(2); 4996.23(f)</i></p> |

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| <p>3. Who is eligible to supervise Associate Clinical Social Workers (ASW)?</p> | <p>Only licensed mental health professionals may supervise ASWs.</p> <p>Licensed mental health professionals include Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT), LCSWs, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, and licensed physicians certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.</p> <p>Additionally, the supervisor must maintain a current valid California license. If the supervisor is an LCSW or MFT, the supervisor must complete a one-time fifteen (15) hour course in supervision. Licensed Clinical Psychologists and physicians certified in psychiatry do not need to take the supervision course. The supervisor also must have practiced psychotherapy or provided direct supervision to ASWs or MFT Interns or Trainees who perform psychotherapy in two (2) of the last five (5) years.</p> <p>If the supervisor is an MFT, Clinical Psychologist, or licensed physician certified in psychiatry, he or she must wait two (2) years after receiving a license before supervising ASWs.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: Title 16, CCR Section 1870; 1874</i></p> |
| <p>4. What is the maximum number of hours of supervision I can gain in a week?</p> | <p>No more than five (5) hours of supervision, whether individual or group, shall be credited during any single week.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code 4996.23 (c)(2)</i></p> |
| <p>5. What is the six-year rule?</p> | <p>The Board cannot accept hours of experience older than six (6) years from the time a person applies for LCSW examination eligibility. The law does not allow the Board to grant exceptions.</p> <p>For example, Applicant A sent in an application for LCSW examination eligibility, and the Board received the application on 4/3/2006. The Board will only accept the experience gained between 4/3/2000 and 4/3/2006 towards the experience requirement.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.20(a); 4996.21(a)(3); 4996.23(a)(4)</i></p> |
| <p>6. How does the ratio of supervision hours to client contact hours work for the required 750 hours of direct psychotherapy or counseling?</p> | <p>Only ASWs registered with the Board after January 1st 2002 need to accumulate 750 hours of direct psychotherapy or counseling work experience.</p> <p>These ASWs will be required to gain one (1) hour of individual</p> |

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| | <p>supervision or two (2) hours of group to cover their first 10 hours of face-to-face psychotherapy and all other applicable categories of experience in a given week. If the ASW accumulates more than 10 hours of direct psychotherapy in a given week, he or she will need to obtain an additional hour of individual supervision or two (2) hours of group supervision to cover the direct face-to-face psychotherapy time over 10 hours for the week.</p> <p>For example, Applicant B accumulates 16 hours of direct psychotherapy in a week. Usually, this applicant receives only one (1) hour of individual supervision, but for this week, the applicant needs to obtain an additional hour of individual supervision or two (2) hours of group supervision to cover the extra 6 hours of direct psychotherapy time.</p> <p>However, Applicant C accumulates only 8 hours of direct psychotherapy in the same week. This applicant will not be required to gain additional supervision for the week over the minimum one (1) hour of individual or two (2) hours of group supervision. The one (1) hour of individual supervision this applicant receives for the week covers up to the first 10 hours of psychotherapy and all other applicable work experience for the week.</p> <p>For additional questions regarding this requirement, please contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.23(c)(2)</i></p> |
| <p>7. When do I need to send in supervisory forms?</p> | <p>All supervisory forms (Responsibility Statements, Supervisory Plans, and Experience Verification forms) are to be submitted with an Associate's application for LCSW examination eligibility.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.21(e); 4996.23(c)(1)(d); Title 16, CCR Section 1870(a); 1870.1</i></p> |
| <p>8. What pre-licensure coursework do I need to take prior to submitting an application for licensure?</p> | <p>In addition to possessing a Masters in Social Work from an accredited school of social work, an applicant must complete specific pre-licensure required courses prior to submitting an application for LCSW examination eligibility.</p> <p>These courses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting (7 hrs) • Human Sexuality (10 hrs) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcoholism and Chemical Substance Abuse Dependency (15 hrs) • Spousal/Partner Abuse (no hour requirement for those prior to 12/31/2003; must be 15 hours for those after 1/1/2004) • Aging and Long Term Care (10 hrs for those after 1/1/2004) <p>Note: The dates above refer to when a person enters his or her degree program.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.2(e)(f)(g)(h); 4496.25; Title 16, CCR Section 1807; 1807.2; 1810</i></p> |
| <p>9. Do I need to have the pre-licensure coursework requirement complete prior to applying for ASW registration?</p> | <p>No. All pre-licensure coursework needs to be submitted at the time a person applies for LCSW examination eligibility. Associates can complete the required pre-licensure courses while gaining hours.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.2(e)(f)(g)(h); 4996.25; Title 16, CCR Section 1807; 1807.2; 1810</i></p> |
| <p>10. Do I need to take my pre-licensure required coursework at a university?</p> | <p>No. Pre-licensure required coursework may be completed through an accredited college or university, continuing education provider approved by the Board, or a county or governmental entity. The Board does accept web based approved continuing education providers. A list of web based providers is on the BBS website: (http://www.bbs.ca.gov/bbsforms.htm)</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.2(e)(f)(g)(h); 4496.25; Title 16, CCR Section 1807; 1807.2; 1810</i></p> |
| <p>11. Do I need to send in originals of my W-2s or most recent pay stub with my application for licensure?</p> | <p>Photocopies of W-2s are acceptable. These are to be sent with the LCSW examination eligibility application. For the current tax year, applicants are to include a photocopy of their most recent pay stub. W-2s are required for all prior tax years from which the applicant claims experience.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.21(f)(6); 4996.23(j)</i></p> |
| <p>12. Can I be paid on a 1099 basis as an Associate?</p> | <p>No. All ASWs must be paid on W-2s from the employer or be a volunteer. Associates cannot bill clients directly.</p> <p><i>Statutes and Regulations cited: B&P Code Section 4996.20(c)(2); 4996.21(h)(1); 4996.23(l)(1)</i></p> |

13. Do I need to resubmit my fingerprints when I apply for LCSW examination eligibility?

LCSW applicants who still possess a current ASW registration number at the time the Board receives the LCSW application for examination eligibility do not need to resubmit fingerprints.

The information provided in this publication is supplemental and intended to serve as a quick answer guide for common questions. The *Statutes and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy, Licensed Clinical Social Work, and Licensed Educational Psychology* contains the official legal code sections and language.

The BBS encourages you to thoroughly read the *Statutes and Regulations* and refer to it in cases that require official legal authority or language.