



Board of Behavioral Sciences

# Memo

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**To:** Committee Members

**Date:** January 3, 2024

**From:** Rosanne Helms  
Legislative Manager

**Subject:** Discussion of Potential Exam Alternatives

There has been recent interest among the Board, its stakeholders, and some other states to explore alternatives to a state clinical licensure exam.

There have been a few legislative proposals in other states with varying levels of success, mostly focusing on eliminating licensure exams for licensure at the masters of social worker level (not the clinical level).

The one notable successful legislative effort that created an exam alternative at the clinical level of licensure was in Illinois. That state recently passed [House Bill 2365](#), which became effective January 1, 2024. This bill established an exam alternative for clinical social worker applicants, as follows:

- An applicant must attempt the Clinical Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exam at least once (or have attempted the exam in the past 5 years).
- In lieu of passing the exam, after one exam attempt, the applicant may instead choose to gain at least 3,000 hours of supervised professional experience within the past 10 calendar years. This is in addition to the 3,000 experience hours already required for a license.

### **Recommendation**

Conduct an open discussion of the Illinois legislation creating a pathway to licensure that does not require passage of a clinical licensing exam.

### **References**

**Reference 1:** [Illinois House Bill 2365](#)