

Whitney M. Young Jr, School of Social Work

Licensing Requirements for Social Work

Effective July 1, 2024, states located in the US and territories require disclosure that programs meet state guidelines for enrolled students.

Information When Applying for Licensure

What is professional licensure?

All states regulate the title and practice of social workers. Much like other professions (nursing, counselors, psychologists, lawyers), a licensed professional holds a degree, has passed the professional exam, and registers with the states.

Who manages professional licenses?

Individual states regulate social work licenses. For example, in Georgia, the Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage & Family Therapists oversee these licenses. [Georgia Composite Board](#)

Why do I need to be licensed?

While the rules will vary from state to state, often you cannot call yourself a social worker or work in certain positions without a license. It is good practice and good for your career advancement.

Does my degree from Clark Atlanta qualify me for licensure?

The BSW and MSW degrees from Clark Atlanta University are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). This is the first step toward licensure. With your BSW or MSW, you are eligible to sit for the licensing exam. You will need to apply within the state where you plan to practice. The degree and licensing exam are accepted in all 50 states.

What about clinical licensure?

Depending on your degree, each state will have different categories of licensure. This site has a good overview of the levels: <https://www.socialworklicensure.org/articles/social-work-license-requirements/>

The MSW degree clinical program from CAU is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. This program provides the foundational coursework to prepare for clinical licensure. For clinical licensure, you might have to first obtain additional supervised hours of practice before you can apply for a clinical license. In many states, the coursework from the MSW at CAU will provide enough clinical coursework to meet the requirements in those states. For example, in [Florida](#) you must have taken 24 credits in clinical social work, including

psychopathology and complete a clinical practicum. The MSW at CAU requires psychopathology (3 credits), clinical practice courses (6 credits), human behavior (6 credits), and practice with diverse populations (3 credits). The majority of our electives are clinical in focus, also (9 credits of electives are required as part of the MSW degree at CAU).

How do I get licensed?

1. Identify the state in which you plan to work as a social worker. Search the database on [The Association of Social Work Boards](#) for each state's licensing levels and licensing board websites.
2. Review the state's licensure requirements and application materials.
3. Identify if an exam is required and which exam you must pass.
4. If you are required to take an exam, consider taking the exam and applying for licensure during the term you plan to graduate.

What is continuing education?

In order to maintain licensure, professional social workers must complete a minimum number of continuing education hours, including ethics, every 2 years. The state where you obtain licensure will set the requirements for renewal. Check your state licensing board's website for regulations and requirements.

Licensing Resources

- **Association of Social Work Boards (www.aswb.org)**
Creates the social work licensing exams, provides information about each of the state requirements for licensing, offers preparation materials for the licensing exam, and has an online database with licensing information in all states ([found here](#)).
- **Getting licensed in another state:**
<https://www.aswb.org/licenses/how-to-get-a-license/getting-licensed-in-another-state-or-province/>
- **Social Work Examination Services (www.swes.net/)**
Offers licensing exam preparation- books and courses.
- **State Chapters of NASW (www.socialworkers.org)**
The state chapters of NASW often have exam preparation courses throughout the year. Check your state's NASW chapter website.

For more information, please contact Dr. Corrine Warrener, MSW Program Director @ cwarrener@cau.edu