

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE SOCIAL WORK LICENSING PROCESS FOR MSW STUDENTS

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A LICENSED GRADUATE SOCIAL WORKER?

MOST STATES REQUIRE LICENSURE FOR PERSONS WHOSE PROFESSIONAL TITLE IS SOCIAL WORKER. LICENSURE DECLARES THAT SOCIAL WORK IS A LEARNED PROFESSION THAT AFFECTS PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE, AND, THEREFORE, THE STATE MUST ENSURE THAT ONLY QUALIFIED PERSONS ARE PERMITTED TO PRACTICE AS DEFINED IN STATE LAW. A LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER PROVIDES "A PRACTICE BACKED BY A LEGAL GUARANTEE—THAT SERVICE WILL BE SAFE, COMPETENT, ETHICAL, AND RESPONSIBLE" (ASWB, 2015B).

### WHEN AM I ABLE TO TAKE THE GRADUATE SW LICENSING EXAM?

MOST STATES ALLOW YOU TO TAKE THE EXAM NINETY DAYS BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR MSW GRADUATE PROGRAM.

### CAN I TAKE THE GRADUATE SW EXAM BEFORE I SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FOR LICENSING?

NO. MOST STATES REQUIRE THAT YOU APPLY FOR THE LICENSE BEFORE TAKING THE EXAM.

### WHO ADMINISTERS THE SOCIAL WORK LICENSING EXAMINATION PROCESS?

THE EXAMINATION PROCESS IS ADMINISTERED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK BOARDS (ASWB).

### WHERE CAN I GET COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION ON THE CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GRADUATE SW LICENSING, EXAM AND APPLICATION?

INFORMATION REGARDING THE CRITERIA FOR LICENSING IS AVAILABLE FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK BOARDS', [WWW.ASWB.ORG](http://WWW.ASWB.ORG) AND YOUR STATE SOCIAL WORK LICENSING BOARD.

### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO BECOME A LICENSED GRADUATE SOCIAL WORKER?

THERE ARE 2 SEPARATE COSTS--THE LICENSE APPLICATION FEE AND THE FEE FOR THE EXAMINATION. THE COST VARIES BASED ON THE JURISDICTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, THE LICENSING APPLICATION FEE IS \$230.00 AND THE FEE FOR THE EXAM IS \$230.00. SO, IN DC, THE TOTAL COST TO BECOME LICENSED IS \$460.00.

### DO I NEED A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK WHEN I APPLY FOR THE GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK LICENSE?

MOST STATES REQUIRE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK WHEN APPLYING FOR THE GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK LICENSE. THERE IS USUALLY A SEPARATE FEE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, THE COST IS \$50.00.

### WHAT IF I BECOME LICENSED IN DC AND THEN DECIDE TO MOVE TO ANOTHER STATE?

MOST STATES WILL ACCEPT YOUR PASSING EXAM SCORE; HOWEVER, YOU WOULD NEED TO CONTACT THE SOCIAL WORK LICENSING BOARD IN YOUR NEW STATE TO FIND OUT THE REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA FOR BECOMING A LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER IN THAT STATE.

### WHEN WILL I FIND OUT IF I HAVE PASSED THE LICENSED GRADUATE SOCIAL WORKER EXAM?

YOUR EXAM RESULTS WILL BE AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE EXAM. IN MOST STATES YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR SCORE ALONG WITH YOUR PASS OR FAIL STATUS. IN SOME STATES, YOU WILL KNOW ONLY IF YOU PASSED OR FAILED AND NOT THE SCORE OF YOUR EXAM.

### WHAT SCORE DO I NEED TO PASS THE EXAM?

A SCORE OF 75 IS NEEDED TO PASS THE EXAM. YOU WILL HAVE FOUR HOURS TO COMPLETE 170 QUESTIONS OF WHICH ONLY 150 APPLY TOWARD YOUR SCORE.

### WHAT ARE SOME RESOURCES TO HELP ME PREPARE FOR THE LICENSED GRADUATE SOCIAL WORKER EXAM?

THERE ARE PLENTY OF EXAM PREPARATION RESOURCES THAT YOU CAN FIND BY COMPLETING A SEARCH ONLINE FOR "SOCIAL WORK EXAM PREPARATION SUPPORT." THIS INCLUDES INDIVIDUALS WHO FACILITATE EXAM PREPARATION WORKSHOPS AND WRITTEN STUDY GUIDES. YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO COMMIT AT LEAST 15 MINUTES PER DAY TO STUDYING FOR THE EXAM. HUSSW ALSO OFFERS A STRUCTURED LICENSING PREP COURSE TO PROSPECTIVE GRADUATES.