
MANUAL FOR LICENSED SOCIAL WORKERS

WV Board of Social Work

October 2022

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PROFESSIONAL MANUAL FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

WV BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK

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We can accommodate most needs within five business days; however, this may fluctuate dependent on the time of year, so please allow up to ten (10) business days for processing. Please plan the needs of your requests accordingly. We process in order of receipt so please do not ask us to “rush your license,” as there are others ahead of you.

Legal and Regulatory References

The purpose of the Board of Social Work is to protect the public by setting standards of qualification, education, training and experience for those who seek licensure and to promote high standards of professional and ethical performance for those engaged in the profession of social work. All Statute and Legislative rules referenced below are available on the Board web page

- ◆ West Virginia Code §30-30
- ◆ Legislative Rules: Title 25
- ◆ NASW Code of Ethics-www.nasw.org:

General Information

Liability & Malpractice Insurance-The Board has no authority over insurance issues or covered services. Individuals should contact carrier for regulations.

Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB): www.aswb.org. Prepares, administers and regulates the State Board social work examination. Only the WV Board of Social Work can issue exam approval to ASWB.

CSWE: Is the “Council on Social Work Education.” This is the recognized accreditation for Social Work Program in colleges and universities.

Supervision: Effective May 1, 2013, a BSW or MSW with LSW license or above may apply to the Board to become a “provisional candidate licensing supervisor.” For additional information, please see Supervision (for Provisional Licenses) in this manual.

ASWB Examination

Prior Approval: The Board must pre-approve a candidate before he or she can register and take the examination. Candidates should submit a written request for approval that includes the name, license number, mailing address, highest degree earned and the current employment of the candidate making the request. A signed request is acceptable by mail, email or fax.

After you have received notification from the board that you may take the ASWB examination, you must register with ASWB and pay the required exam fee. You may register online or call ASWB at 1-888.579.3926 (toll free)

For social work students who have been issued a **Temporary Social Work Permit**, this approval is sent with the Temporary Permit when issued. Follow the directions on the approval record and seek guidance from ASWB as needed.

Scores and Procedures:

- The candidate will receive his/her score the day of the exam but the Board must wait for the official scores; the Board receives the **official score** *within one to two weeks* after testing.
- Upon receipt of official scores, the score is posted to the individual record.
- **Temporary social work Permit** holders will be notified by email and invoiced for the full two-year license fee
- **Licensed Social Workers with the MSW degree who intend to Upgrade** his/her license can obtain the Level Upgrade application from the Board website.
- **Provisional Licensees** will not be notified. A record is made to confirm passage.
- The Board does not respond to failed score reports. It is up to the licensee to contact the Board to find out what options, if any, may be available and for how long.

Exam & License Levels

- Level A-LSW: Licensed Social Worker: Requires a Baccalaureate degree in social work (BSW) from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (hereinafter **CSWE**) and passage of the ASWB **Bachelor** level examination. *(All provisional licensees shall also take and pass this level exam)*
- Level B-LGSW: Licensed **Graduate** Social Worker: Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW) accredited by the CSWE and passage of the ASWB **Master's** level exam.

- Level C-LCSW: Licensed **Certified** Social Worker: Requires MSW degree accredited by the CSWE; evidence of two (2) year's POST MSW social work practice experience; and passage of the ASWB **Advanced Generalist** examination.
- Level D-LICSW: Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker: Requires no less than two years post-MSW **full time**/3,000 hours part-time supervised direct clinical social work practice in a clinical setting pre-approved by the Board; and must occur WHILE being under the supervision of a qualified and pre-approved WV Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker or Licensed Clinical Social Worker from another jurisdiction. A formal **Supervision Agreement Contract** must be made at the time the candidate and clinical supervisor begin supervision. After completion of supervised clinical practice and supervision the candidate must submit a final application in order to receive authorization to sit for the clinical exam.

Licensing Information and Procedures:

Provisional License to Practice as a Social Worker: This is a restricted license certificate granted to an applicant through alternative education requirements as per WV Code 30-30-16 and legislative rule. A Provisional License is the alternative pathway for individuals desiring to practice social work but who do not have a degree in social work. A Provisional License permits individuals to practice with a Board approved employer under the supervision of a degreed and licensed social worker. Within the four-year period of supervised employment, the individual must complete four core classes in social work from an accredited social work program (either online or at the social work program of choice) and successfully sit for the Bachelor's social work exam.

A provisional social worker is not a licensed social worker and is not eligible to contract, operate a business, enjoin with others in a business, perform fee for service duties, or any other kind of independent social work.

Eligibility: An applicant must have a baccalaureate degree in a field related to social work; related fields include sociology, psychology, counseling, criminal justice or other related fields as determined by the Board.

Application: First, the applicant must be formally deemed eligible for licensure by submitting 1) an application to the Board with 2) an official transcript showing the individual has completed a four year academic degree from a recognized academically accredited college-this will need to show the date of graduation, degree conferred and major (transcripts should be sent directly from the university to the Board if sent electronically, or else be on watermarked, security paper or have a raised seal if sent through the mail, although they need not be in a sealed envelope) and 3) three

professional references (form provided within the application). A **Provisional Eligibility Application** may be obtained by contacting the Board of Social Work.

After the individual is deemed eligible for provisional license, the Board will send the individual a **Provisional License Eligibility Agreement Contract**. Once the applicant has secured *employment from an eligible employer and supervision from qualified licensing supervisor*, he/she should send the application with a job description to the Board office. The Board will send an invoice to the applicant within 5-10 business days, but the issue date for the provisional license certificate will be the date the approved agreement is received in the Board office, provided that payment is made within ten days of invoice.

Requirements: The license certificate is issued for a two-year period. If the following provisions and requirements as set forth in WV Code 30-30-15 and legislative rule are met, the provisional licensee will renew his/her license for a final two-year period.

1. Social Work Employment: Complete four continuous years of supervised full-time social work employment with a Board approved WV agency or organization that legally requires a social work license.
2. Licensing Supervision: Attend face to face meetings with the "licensing supervisor" of record at least **once every three months** for four continuous years. When an unavoidable absence occurs, a missed session may be made-up within 30 days after the absence; it is the responsibility of the licensee to contact the supervisor to notify the supervisor that he/she will need to miss a session but also to reschedule a missed session. Multiple meetings in the same month will not waive or reduce the quarterly requirement.
3. Academic Coursework: Complete twelve (12) hours of CSWE accredited social work courses as designed and approved by the Board in addition to other continuing education. All required courses will be available online and are geared to the nontraditional student who has graduated from another field and who is currently practicing. The required 'Foundation' courses-Introduction to Social Work, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Methods and Policy should be taken sequentially; additional course offerings may be available to accommodate individual needs but must be prior approved by the Board.

At least six (6) semester hours should be completed in the first two-year period prior to renewal. The Board will not renew a Provisional Licensee without an unofficial transcript of coursework taken or proof of enrollment.

If a provisional licensee is enrolled in a CSWE accredited Bachelor or Master of Social Work Program, the individual is not subject to the twelve hours of required coursework.

4. Continuing Education: In addition to the requirement course work, the provisional licensee is responsible for earning an additional 20 hours of Board approved continuing education per two-year licensing cycle. Up to ten (10) of the twenty (20) hours may be earned through Board approved online education.
5. License Renewal: Board staff will mail a renewal application three to four months before expiration. Every licensee is required to submit the application, required course evidence and other continuing education, and renewal fee 30-45 days before expiration.
6. Report Changes/Resignation: Every licensee is legally required to submit a written report of change. This includes notice and signatures of a new licensing supervisor; end of employment; change in home residence; termination of employment; or interrupted change in employment, title, work supervisor, and job description. A form is enclosed with the license packet for this purpose.
7. Annual Submission Sworn Statement of Compliance Verification: Each Provisional Licensee is required to submit a sworn statement during **July** of each year of his/her license.
8. Pass Examination: Pass the ASWB Bachelors examination as soon as possible. Early passage of exam will not reduce or waive any of the other provisions that must be met. However, retesting requires a waiting period of at least three months in the event of a failed score so it is advisable not to wait until the end of the second renewal period to take the exam.

Scope of Practice: A provisionally licensed social worker may perform all of the following functions and social work services under supervision:

- (1) Multi-dimensional assessment of client or client system strengths and problems with functioning or psychosocial adaptation, not including formal mental health diagnosis.
- (2) Service planning and contracting with clients or client's systems to outline proposed interventive strategies for clients or client systems in order to restore or enhance social, psychosocial, or biopsychosocial functioning;
- (3) Implementing service plans and problem-solving methodologies to restore or enhance social, psychosocial or biopsychosocial functioning of clients or client systems;
- (4) Supportive and palliative counseling activities, designed to offer comfort and social encouragement to clients or client systems, not including psychotherapy;
- (5) Preventive strategies such as psychoeducation and consciousness raising for at-risk systems or populations, designed to forestall difficulties with functioning and psychosocial adaptation;

- (6) Case management activities designed to assist clients or client systems with gaining access to needed resources and services and to assist with coordination of services in situations where multiple providers may be involved with client care;
- (7) Information and referral services; and
- (8) Personal practice assessment designed to assess and document outcomes and effectiveness of one's practice.

Converting to an LSW License

An application for conversion to full license is mailed *3 to 4 months* before the date of expiration on the renewed certificate.

- **Exam Verification:** The official score report with passing grade should already be on file at the Board office.
- **Supervision:** Anyone that served as a “Licensing Supervisor” for the candidate during the four years shall submit a letter of recommendation for conversion to the Board. The Licensing Supervisor is required to submit the supervisor’s progress & evaluation report that lists each quarterly meeting per calendar year. The final supervision record and meeting report should also be presented to the Board at the same time as the recommendation from the supervisor 30-45 days before expiration of four years.
- **Verification of Continuous Employment:** The licensee must ask the employer to submit a written statement on agency letterhead to confirm the dates of employment prior to the expiration of the renewed provisional license. This is necessary from any employer of record since original issue.
- **Continuing Education:** Evidence of compliance and completion of all provisions for course work must be submitted or be on file.

Failure to complete any or all of the provisions of this license procedure may result in forfeiture of current and future application privileges.

Categories of Licensure for Individuals with a BSW or MSW

Temporary Social Work Permit Classification

Eligibility: 1) A candidate who has earned either an undergraduate or graduate social work degree from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education that has not passed an examination or 2) a candidate enrolled in the final semester leading to graduation.

Application: The purpose of the application for a Temporary Permit is to establish one’s eligibility for examination and primary source verify the social work degree. Additionally, the background is reviewed for criminal and other history. The Board provides a permit

certificate, which enables the individual to seek employment and practice under the supervision of a supervising social worker while preparing to sit for the social work exam commensurate with his/her level of education.

Requirements: The Permit is issued for six (6) Months and is not renewed or extended; however, an additional permit can be issued upon receipt of a failed score report. If a Temporary Permit candidate should fail the exam, he or she may submit another permit fee and copy of failed score report and request a new permit to retest.

Testing: is a requirement of the permit, and no additional permits may be issued unless the candidate attempts to test within the permit period. The former permit candidate *may* request additional time to test with or without an active permit but may not perform social work until licensed by the Board.

A permit candidate should attempt the examination at least six weeks prior to expiration of a permit in order to allow sufficient time to process the exam score and move to the next step; the individual should register for the exam even earlier to ensure a test date is available. Waiting until later may result in loss of employment, as the Board needs time to obtain the official test scores (generally a week after the test date), invoice and issue a license upon payment.

Board staff will email an invoice within ten business days *after* receipt of the official passing score report.

An individual who has had four permits, must make any additional permit requests to the full Board, who shall review and consider the request at their next scheduled meeting. The request should outline what the individual has done to prepare for the exam and any steps he/she plans to take to improve test performance.

Continuing education is not earned, required or accepted under a temporary permit. Upon passage of exam and issuance of full license, the licensee will have two years to satisfy continuing education requirements set forth by law and rules.

Licensed Social Worker

Eligibility: The applicant must have a baccalaureate degree in social work from a program accredited by the CSWE and passed the bachelor level exam from ASWB.

Application: Application should be made on the Regular License Application.

Requirements: Licensure is for a two-year period. The LSW is expected to earn 40 hours of continuing education during the licensing cycle. Additional information on continuing education is referenced in this manual. Additional information on licensee responsibilities is outlined in *General Responsibilities of Licensees* as set forth in Title 25-1-4.

Scope of Practice: A licensed social worker may perform all duties within the scope of practice of a provisional social worker as well as:

- (1) Apply social work theory, knowledge, methods, ethics and the professional use of self in social work practice including assessment, planning, intervention, counseling, evaluation, and case management supervision;
- (2) Provide social advocacy activities, designed to influence social service systems and social policies in the direction of reduced disparities in social and distributive justice, especially for at risk and socially or economically disadvantaged populations;
- (3) Community organization activities, designed to assist client systems at the community level to achieve desirable social or policy change toward goals of enhanced civic functioning and improved environmental responsiveness to client quality of life issues;
- (4) Administration and program development, designed to develop, structure and, oversee social service systems at the organizational level; and
- (5) Training activities, designed to assist clients or client systems with skill development deemed desirable to restore or enhance social functioning or adaptation; or, to assist less experienced social workers with professional skill development.
- (6) A licensed social worker with a baccalaureate degree or master's degree in social work from a program accredited by the council on social work education and two years of experience may supervise a provisionally licensed social worker.

Licensed Graduate Social Worker

Eligibility: Applicant must hold a master's degree in social work (MSW) from a CSWE accredited social work program, have passed the Masters level social work exam, and submitted the appropriate application and fee. If the applicant is, or has ever been licensed in another state as a social worker, verification of licensure in good standing is required from the applicable State Social Work Board(s). There are no experience or supervision requirements for this level of license.

Application: Application should be made on the Regular License Application for individuals seeking a license from another state. Application to upgrade a license should be made on the License Level Upgrade Application after the applicant successfully passes the examination.

Requirements: Licensure is for a two-year period. The LGSW is expected to earn 40 hours of continuing education during the licensing cycle. Additional information on

continuing education is referenced in this manual. Additional information on licensee responsibilities is outlined in *General Responsibilities of Licensees* as set forth in Title 25-1-4.

Scope of Practice: A licensed graduate social worker may perform all duties within the scope of practice of a licensed social worker and provisional social worker as well as:

- (1) Appropriately conduct social work education, formally teaching social work theory and methodology to bachelor's and master's level social work students.
- (2) Conduct clinical or psychotherapeutic services, under the clinical supervision of another experienced and credentialed behavioral health professional, including individual, family and group methodologies.

Licensed Certified Social Worker

Eligibility: Candidates must have 1) obtained a master's degree from a school of social work accredited by the CSWE, 2) practiced social work as a licensed social worker for at least two-years post-master's experience in full-time employment or earned three thousand hours of post-master's social work experience and 3) passed the Advanced Generalist examination administered through ASWB.

Application: Application should be made on the Regular License Application for individuals seeking a license from another state. Application to upgrade a license should be made on the License Level Upgrade Application after the applicant successfully passes the examination.

Requirements: Licensure is for a two-year period. The LSW is expected to earn 40 hours of continuing education during the licensing cycle. Additional information on continuing education is referenced in this manual. Additional information on licensee responsibilities is outlined in *General Responsibilities of Licensees* as set forth in Title 25-1-4.

Scope of Practice: A licensed certified social worker may perform all duties within the scope of practice of a licensed graduate social worker and:

- (1) Apply social work theory and methods to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of psychological dysfunction, disability or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders and developmental disabilities; and
- (2) Determine behavioral health diagnosis, using diagnostic taxonomies commonly accepted across disciplines among behavioral health professionals.

Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker

Eligibility: Candidates must have obtained a master's degree from a school of social work accredited by the CSWE that included a concentration of clinically oriented course work as defined by the board; have completed a supervised clinical field placement at the graduate level, or post-master's clinical training that is found by the board to be equivalent; have practiced clinical social work for at least two years in full-time employment/three thousand hours under the supervision of an independent clinical social worker, or clinical supervision that is found by the board to be equivalent.

Application: Applicants from out of state should request the Clinical Application. Applicants completing their LICSW Candidacy should request the Application for Independent Clinical Social Work. Candidates should allow 30-45 days following receipt of the application for a decision.

Requirements: Licensure is for a two-year period. The LICSW is expected to earn 40 hours of continuing education during the licensing cycle. Additional information on continuing education is referenced in this manual. Additional information on licensee responsibilities is outlined in *General Responsibilities of Licensees* as set forth in Title 25-1-4.

Scope of Practice: A licensed independent clinical social worker may perform all duties within the scope of practice of a licensed certified social worker, licensed graduate social worker, and licensed social worker and may:

- (1) Apply social work theory, methods, assessment, ethics and the professional use of self to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of psychological dysfunction, disability or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders and developmental disabilities.
- (2) Clinical social work practice is based on knowledge of one or more theories of biological, psychological and social development, normal human behavior, psychopathology, the causes and effects of physical illness and disability, unconscious motivation, interpersonal relationships, family dynamics, environmental stress, social systems and cultural diversity with particular attention to the person existing as a combination of biological, psychological and social elements in his or her environment.
- (3) Clinical social work includes interventions directed to interpersonal interactions, intrapsychic dynamics and life-support and management issues.
- (4) Clinical social work services consist of assessment, diagnosis, treatment, including psychotherapy and counseling, client-centered advocacy, consultation and

evaluation. The process of clinical social work is undertaken within the objectives of the social work profession and the principles and values of its code of ethics.

Registration as an Interstate Telehealth Provider

Licensed social workers in other states and who only seek to provide telehealth services to residents of West Virginia may register as an Interstate Telehealth Provider. Practice privileges granted will be commensurate with the level of licensure based on prior exam and in accordance with the level of licensure in WV.

Individuals seeking to register must have a license in good standing in all states in which he/she is currently licensed, and shall not currently be under investigation or subject to an administrative complaint.

Registration must be renewed biennially.

Clinical social work services provided by individuals outside of the state may only be provided by a practitioner licensed at the clinical level.

A social worker who registers to provide telehealth services shall immediately notify the Board of any disciplinary action or restrictions placed on the individual's license to practice in any state or jurisdiction.

Registration as a telehealth provider does not permit individuals to provide social work services from any location within the state.

LICSW Candidacy:

Eligibility: Candidates must have obtained a master's degree from a school of social work accredited by the CSWE that included a concentration of clinically oriented course work as defined by the board and hold either an LGSW or LCSW license; practice should be in a clinical setting providing the applicant the opportunity to practice interventions under supervision commensurate with the scope of clinical practice outlined in WV Code §30-30-9.

Application: The applicant should request a starter packet from the Board. Supervision must occur under a qualified and pre-approved WV Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker or Licensed Clinical Social Worker from another jurisdiction; a clinical supervisor from another jurisdiction shall provide evidence of having a current, valid clinical social work license in good standing; and

A formal Supervision Agreement Contract must be submitted and approved in writing by the Board prior to the time the candidate and clinical supervisor may begin supervision.

Over the period of an individual's candidacy, he/she is expected to engage in a minimum of 100 hours of face-to-face clinical supervision. This generally equates to about 1 hour

of supervision for every 30 hours of clinical/psychotherapeutic interventions. No more than 50% of supervision shall be in a group setting. Face to face supervision via HIPPA compliant electronic media is acceptable.

Regardless of whether a candidate is engaged in full time or part time practice, it is the Board's expectation that the practice hours will equate to 3000 hours.

When one has completed no less than two years full time employment and the requisite 3000 hours of practice and 100 hours of supervision, he/she should contact the Board and request an Application for Independent Clinical Supervision.

Clinical Supervisors of LICSW Candidates

Eligibility: Have completed no less than two years of clinical practice since the initial issuance of the clinical license; completed a minimum of 6 hours of Board approved clinical supervision training on supervisory practices and methods for clinical social workers. Training may be online or in seat; the supervisor must provide a certificate verifying completion of training.

Application: The Supervisor Candidate should contact the Board for an application to register as a supervisor.

Requirements of the Clinical Supervisor:

1. Submit a clinical supervision contract which identifies the clinical supervisor and the person being supervised and sets forth the respective duties of employment. Clinical supervision shall not be initiated until the contract has been approved by the Board. A clinical supervisor from another jurisdiction shall provide evidence of having a current, valid clinical social work license in good standing; and
2. Maintain records of supervision, initialed by both parties, of each face-to-face session, for 100 hours, over the course of no less than two years of full-time employment or 3,000 hours of full or part time employment. An applicant should have at least one hour of supervision for each thirty (30) hours of supervised practice.
3. Provide notification and reason to the Board when supervision is terminated

General Responsibilities of Individuals with a Social Work License:

- Notify the Board within thirty (30) days of any change of his or her legal name, primary address, telephone number or similar change of location or status, and, if required by the Board, of any change of supervisor or employer.
- Notify the Board within thirty (30) days of witnessing what may constitute, in his or her best judgment, professional misconduct by another licensed social worker

- Abide by the provisions of the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.
- Make application for a license, renewal of a license, or similar service on forms provided by the Board.
- Pay the appropriate fee as a condition of their application for license, renewal or other similar service.
- At the time of renewal of license or provisional license, a licensee shall provide to the Board:
 - ✓ Written evidence of completion of mandatory continuing social work education during the tenure of the license as specified in this rule; and
 - ✓ A sworn statement, on a license renewal application provided by the Board, that the license has not been revoked or suspended by another state licensing agency, or by a licensing agency in another state or territory of the United States, and that he or she has never been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor.
- No license, provisional license, permit or certificate of license granted or issued to an individual by the Board under the provisions of the Code of WV §30-30-1, et. seq. may be assigned to any other individual.
- The license shall be displayed conspicuously in the licensee's principal business location.

Telehealth

"Telehealth services" means the use of synchronous or asynchronous telecommunications technology or audio only telephone calls by a health care practitioner to provide health care services, including, but not limited to, assessment, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, and monitoring of a patient; transfer of medical data; patient and professional health-related education; public health services; and health administration. The term does not include internet questionnaires, e-mail messages, or facsimile transmissions.

A licensee shall only provide telehealth services in accordance with the respective scope of practice commensurate with his/her level of licensure.

Your WV license does not permit you to provide telehealth if the client is located outside the state. You will need to contact the Board of that state to request their rules for providing telehealth.

Prior to providing telehealth, the social worker is responsible for becoming competent in the technology and skills required in telehealth, including methods in which such practice can be safely and appropriately conducted. Maintaining that competence through education and consultation should be an ongoing process.

Also, before providing services, the social worker should follow agency protocols or develop and follow a procedure to:

- Verify the identification and location of the client at the beginning of each session
- Obtain informed consent specific to telehealth services using appropriate language understandable to the client
- Safeguard the client's confidentiality and prevent access to data by unauthorized persons through encryption or other means;
- Notify clients in the event of a data breach
- Establish safety protocols to be used in the case of an emergency, including contact information of emergency services at the client's location
- Obtain or confirm an alternative method of contacting the client in case of a technological failure

Social workers providing telehealth shall abide by the NASW Code of Ethics as if providing in person services but should be particularly attentive to the provisions relating to electronic social work services.

The social worker shall use telehealth **only where it is appropriate for the client**, and decisions regarding the use of telehealth shall be made individually. The client's current mental and emotional status and technological capabilities should be considered during intake to determine the client's appropriateness for telehealth.

Regular License Renewal (two-year):

- **Renewal Applications:** The Board will mail license renewal applications *three to four* months prior to the expiration date to the home address on file.
- It is the responsibility of the licensee to renew or inactivate his or her license in a timely manner. Often licensees fail to notify the Board when there is a change of address and renewals are returned as undeliverable. The licensees should contact the Board office by fax, mail, or phone if an application has not been received from the Board thirty (30) days before expiration.
- Follow the instructions on the renewal application regarding continuing education, questions, fee, and processing times. Fees are payable by money order, business check, bank certified checks, or personal check (if there is no history of a personal check return to the State Treasurer in the past). Individuals may also pay online by debit or credit card; the portal to the WV State Treasurer's E Government Services Program is at <https://wvsocialworkboard.org/Payments>

- A completed, signed, and dated Renewal Application; appropriate fee, and continuing education records should be in the Board office 30 days in advance of the expiration date to avoid loss of employment. The processing time can and usually does require up to **ten** business days. For individuals paying online and using CE Broker to report continuing education, the renewal form must still be returned to the office or staff will not know to put it on the workload.
- **Delinquent Status:** Ref; WV Code §30-20(a) (b) (c) (d) Effective March 18, 2011:
 - (a) Delinquent status automatically occurs if a license renewal has not been received by or before the day of license expiration.
 - (b) The fee shall increase by \$50.00 in the first month and \$25 for each additional month or fraction of month for a **maximum of thirty-six months** (following license expiration);
 - (c) Within thirty-six months of being placed on delinquent status, if a licensee wants to return to active practice of social work, he or she must submit proof of the required continuing education, pay all applicable fees incurred during the delinquent period, and submit acceptable verification/evidence that he or she HAS NOT performed social work or represented his or her self to the public as a social worker since the license expiration date. After legal expiration, only a BSW or MSW can apply for a second license.

A DELINQUENT OR EXPIRED LICENSEE CANNOT PROVIDE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC. TO DO SO IS ILLEGAL AND IN VIOLATION OF ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, LEGISLATIVE RULES, & WV CODE (PUNISHABLE MISDEMEANOR).

Special Status Privileges- Licensed Social Workers

The special status privileges are available to actively licensed social workers in **good standing at the time of making an application**. An expired or delinquent license is not eligible for special status. The application is available by request to the agency staff by email, phone, fax, or mailed request:

1. **Inactive Status License:** Individuals with an active regular license in good standing and who have ceased performing social work in West Virginia are eligible. An application for special status privileges should be submitted with a statement of why one is requesting inactive status. Any continuing education accrued should also be submitted; if individuals have received a renewal form, a minimum of 20 hours must be submitted. Lack of continuing education is not an acceptable reason to request this status. An approval notice will follow in two to three weeks. The Board reserves the right to impose stipulations or refuse an application when there is due cause to suspect abuse of privileges.

A license may remain Inactive as long as desired. A license that has expired as reflected on the license certificate is not eligible to apply for special status.

2. **Activation of License:** A previously approved Inactive License applicant may apply to activate the credential to return to the social work profession. The applicant must follow the Activation instructions on the application and submit with the prescribed license fee for a two-year license. Dependent upon the time the individual has not practiced, attendance to continuing education events at the onset of the licensing cycle is highly desirable.
3. **Retired (Emeritus) License:** Individuals who have officially retired after a minimum of *twenty years* of social work employment and experience may apply. An emeritus status licensee may still perform social work for up to twenty (20) hours per week, will continue to renew at a lower fee, and are exempt from earning continuing social work education to renew.

Employer Information

Employers should make every attempt to hire individuals educated in social work to fill positions where social work skills, knowledge and values are required. However, to ensure an adequate pool of social workers are available to meet the needs of WV while protecting the public, an employer or prospective employer may make application to the Board for approval to hire provisional licensees. The application shall include:

1. Written documentation that a reasonable effort to recruit and hire a licensed social worker, graduate social worker, certified social worker or independent clinical social worker was made prior to submitting an application to employ a provisional licensee and;
2. Written evidence of the critical need to hire the provisional applicant.

The employer is responsible for reporting the resignation or termination of any provisional licensee employee within 30 days.

Licensing Supervisors of Provisional Licenses

An actively licensed social worker with a degree in social work or a Graduate, Certified, or Independent Clinical social worker in good standing and two years post graduate experience may make application to serve as a licensing supervisor for a provisional social work license candidate. The **Licensing Supervisor Application** should be accompanied with three professional references and the applicant's most current resume.

The Licensing Supervisor is not required to be employed at the same agency and is not responsible or liable for the employment performance of a temporary licensee.

The licensing supervisor agrees to provide supervision to a provisional licensee to assist in the integration of social work skills, values, knowledge, and ethical considerations gained through continuing social work education programs and through the social work practice experience and will evaluate progress towards satisfaction of coursework and other provisions during the four-year period of continuous employment.

A seasoned supervisor may supervise no more than fifteen (15) provisional licensees without a written waiver from the Board.

An LSW licensing supervisor may supervise no more than 5 persons in his/her agency.

Responsibilities of the Licensing Supervisor

- Sign an **Agreement to Supervise** that is provided to the potential licensee by the Board. In doing so the licensing supervisor commits to being aware of all current provisions and mentors the licensee in complying with all provisions during the continuous four-year period. The supervisor and licensee must meet **face to face** once **every three months** or at other times if make-up sessions are required.
- Meet with the supervisee individually or as a group once every three months for the duration of the supervision relationship to evaluate progress towards completion of the conditions of the license, furthering one's education and knowledge of social work practice, methods, skills, and ethics;
- Maintain and submit the individual evaluation and meeting record (provided by the board) for each licensee supervised. This record is due in the Board office annually in January and when the supervisory relationship ends for any reason;
- Encourage the licensee to register early and take the ASWB exam. Using the exam content outline in the "ASWB Candidate Handbook," on-line at aswb.org, assist the licensee in determining what study resources would be most helpful; begin questioning the licensee immediately upon renewal of his or her provisional license as they need to request the approval for testing upon renewal if not earlier;
- Inquire as to his/her progress towards satisfaction of the required course work and continuing education to be completed as set forth by the Board.
- Schedule make-up meetings in a timely manner (preferably 30 days or less following a missed session) to assure the requirements are met for conversion near the end of four years;
- Review the provisional license restrictions, Law Code, rules, and expectations set forth in this manual. This is necessary in order to lead the licensee through the process and have the ability to respond to his/her questions.

- Notify the Board Director in writing when and why supervision ends and indicate any reference to poor progress, unethical conduct, or resignation from social work employment. The Board depends upon employers and supervisors to keep us abreast of what is happening within the work place;
- Following the final supervision meeting, and provided the licensee has fulfilled all provisions of the four-year process, the supervisor shall provide a **letter of recommendation** for conversion to regular license that includes the date supervision began and ended along with the final supervisor evaluation and meeting record; This is to be presented to the Board by the supervisor or by the conversion candidate;
- Frequently review this manual and NASW Code of Ethics during meetings.

• Continuing Education Requirements

Regular licensed individuals must earn a total of forty **(30)** contact hours in each two-year licensing cycle.

1. All licensed social workers must ensure at least 2 of the required 30 contact hours shall be in **mental health conditions specific to veterans and family members of veterans**. Each licensee shall complete these 2 contact hours of continuing education as a prerequisite to license renewal. Training specific to veterans and family members of veteran may include, but not be limited to, inquiring about whether clients are veterans or family members of veterans; screening for conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder; readjustment issues; risk of suicide and prevention of suicide; addiction; military sexual assault; and depression and grief.

These courses must satisfy Category I hours (see other side for definition). There are a number of quality online courses available in addition to more traditional face to face offerings. Additional information and a list of available online courses which will satisfy this 2-hour training requirement is available on the Board web page.

2. At least 1 of the 30 contact hours shall be in **social work ethics**

Licensees have the opportunity to use their own judgement in meeting that requirement-online, face to face, or independent study.

Licensees have a number of options in meeting the required thirty hours of continuing education, which may include online courses or face to face options (Category I) and independent study (Category II). While the social worker may use all thirty hours attending approved conferences or workshops, there are restrictions on the number of hours available for online and independent study.

Approved providers are certified instate providers listed on the Board's web page, the National Association of Social Workers (national or state chapters), the Association of Social Work Boards, another state social work licensing Board or a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education. Any event sponsored by an approved provider will satisfy Category I hours. A certificate or continuing education issued by the provider is required; the certificate must reflect the approved provider or provider number, the course title and the amount of continuing education.

Category I Hours:

At least twenty hours must be presented by a WV Board of Social Work Certified or Individually Approved Provider. These may be face to face or include a portion of online coursework:

1. The Board requires that at least ten hours be **synchronous training**, meaning that the training is led by an instructor and everyone participates in training-for instruction, discussion or activities at the same time. This may be in person "in seat" or it may be virtual via technology such as Zoom.
2. The Board permits individuals to take up to ten hours of approved online coursework/**asynchronous** training (online training that is self-paced) Only ten contact hours need to be in a face-to-face situation from an approved provider in WV. Also, social workers may physically attend a social work program in another state and count those hours if it has been approved by that state's social work board, the National Association of Social Workers, or the Association of Social Work Boards. A certificate of attendance verifying that approval and the amount of continuing education is required in order to count those hours.

Category II Hours

Individual Professional Activities hours do not require prior approval. Course content must relate to social work or improving your practice and may include:

- Attendance at workshops that are not provided by an approved CE provider
- Reading or writing of papers, journals, articles, or books with relevant social work objectives and content
- Preparation time when serving as a presenter at a social work program;
- Internet research into specific areas of social work methods and practice, issues, etc.;
- Online courses in excess of the approved ten hours
- Viewing videos of prevalent and problematic social, health, family issues (*however, the primary goal of the video should be to educate and not entertain*)

The choices are fairly broad, and at our licensees' discretion, but the Board does require that the activities either relate to social work or enhance your area of social work practice. Some topics may be required by an individual's employer-such as Defensive Driving or your agency's Compliance policy, but would not fit those aforementioned guidelines. Of course, if an individual is uncertain about a particular topic or activity and wants clarification, we are available to questions either by phone or email.

Please note that, while service is appreciated, volunteer hours no longer count as continuing education.

Carry-Over Rule: License Renewal CE Earnings:

Excess earned hours from WV approved/Certified providers **may** apply if attended on or after forty-five days *prior to license expiration*. Carry-over records are not to be submitted to the Board until *after* the renewed license is in hand. This privilege does not apply to Individual Professional Activities (Category II).

Exempt from Continuing Education:

- 1) Actively licensed **Emeritus** licensees are exempt from earning continuing education.
- 2) **Inactive regular** social workers do not earn continuing education and cannot apply earned continuing education to a future activated license.
- 3) **Temporary Social Work Permit** (BSW and MSW): Cannot apply continuing education earned under a Permit towards a **future** license.

Documenting and Reporting Continuing Education Earned

- Use the Provider issued certificate or CE record when possible. For Category II hours, a Board report form should be used for each separate conference or course of study
- Licensees may only claim the number of hours of actual attendance for any program.
- At least every six months, submit by fax or mail continuing education forms for all events you are claiming. Provisional Licensees cannot claim continuing education for any coursework taken *prior* to the date on your license.
- **Retaining Records:** The licensee should keep a copy of all continuing education submitted to the Board as the Board does not maintain copies of certificates after the information is entered into the electronic record.

CE Broker: CE Broker is a free continuing education tracking system available to all WV licensed social workers. Using CE Broker:

- eliminates paper clutter for you and the board
- reduces or eliminates mailing costs,
- ensures the licensee always has a record online and access to certificates, and

- allows for faster processing, meaning the licensee receives his/her license sooner.

When the licensee uses CE Broker, it is not necessary he/she sends any log of your continuing education as Board staff can access it directly.

Activating the free Basic Account is a simple 3-step process and can be accessed at: www.cebroke.com/wv/plans

Complaints/Disciplinary Action

Information on Complaints, Investigations, Due Process and Grounds for Disciplinary Action may be found in WV Code 30-30-26. Procedures for Hearing and Right of Appeal and Judicial Appeal are outlined in 30-30-27 and 30-30-28.

In the majority of case, when the Board receives a complaint, a copy of the complaint is sent by certified mail to the licensee, who has 30 calendar days to respond to the complaint. A thorough and factual response with attention to detail is helpful. The Board's Disciplinary Action Committee then reviews the complaint and the respondent's response, and makes recommendation to the Board on what steps should be taken. The Board will then decide what next steps should be implemented in resolving this matter, which may include dismissal, assignment to a Board investigator or a determination of probable cause and disciplinary action.

The Board attempts to resolve all complaints in a timely manner, although individual circumstances may require a longer period for resolution. If a resolution is not reached within six months, the complainant will receive a status report as per the requirements of WV Code §30-1-5. c.

If the Board finds probable cause-meaning they have sufficient evidence to move forward, and the licensee refuses to consent to discipline (referred to as an Order of Consent), a hearing is the next course of action. The licensee will have the opportunity to be represented by counsel, call witnesses and cross examine the Board's witnesses. Generally, the complainant also provides testimony on his/her knowledge of the case in addition to others that may be discovered during investigation. An administrative law judge presides over the hearing, and a court reporter will compile the transcript of record. In instances such as these, it can take longer to resolve but the law requires that a final disposition be reached within 18 months unless the complainant agrees to an extension.

Disciplinary action may include any of the following as determined by the Board

- Refuse to renew a license;
- Suspend an existing license for a set period of time and/or impose requirements for reinstatement or renewal of a license;
- Revoke an existing license;
- Issue a public reprimand;
- Impose a period of probation and requirements for the lifting of probation, including meeting continuing education requirements, mandatory supervision by a licensed social worker, peer or professional counseling, a medical, psychological or clinical social work evaluation, or other reasonable requirement, singly or in combination, that the Board considers sufficient to protect the public;
- Levy fines not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per day per offense; and,
- Assess fees to recover administrative costs incurred by the Board for disciplinary actions taken.