

CA LCSW Licensure Info

Following the successful completion of a master's in social work degree, many of our graduates choose to seek a license, thus becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). Although the licensing requirements differ by state, in California, this process is guided by the requirements outlined by the [Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) (BBS).

Licensing is appealing for many reasons

- More job opportunities
- Higher salaries
- Promotional opportunities
- Provides opportunity to participate in post-graduate training and education

An overview of the process

Be sure to check carefully with the [Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) – they are the final authority on all things related to licensure.

- Earn a Master of Social Work from an accredited school
- Complete an application to register as an Associate Clinical Social Worker (ASW), including taking a [DOJ and FBI live scan](#) and passing a criminal background check
- Pass the California Law & Ethics exam
- Complete an additional 3000 hours of supervised clinical experience in a work setting with a qualified supervisor
- Complete the ASWB License Application packet

- Pass ASWB clinical exam
- You're an LCSW!!
- [BBS ASW FAQ](#)

Obtaining an ASW Number

- Complete [ASW application](#) on the BBS website (caution, you do not want to register until you're ready to start collecting hours because there is a 6 year rule to complete your hours once you start)
- Submit Transcripts – degree must be posted
- Live Scan finger printing (*no more than 60 days prior to application submission*)
- Photo (*no more than 60 days prior to application submission*)
- Conviction/Disciplinary Action Documentation
- Application Fee - \$75

Here is a handy YouTube video about how to do this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ya37hZChbFs>

About the Exams

- **California Law & Ethics Exam**
 - CA Law & Ethics exam must be taken PRIOR to the first ASW renewal.
 - If you pass it, then you will continue to renew ASW annually until hours are complete.
 - If you do not pass, you will need to take a 12-hr CA Law & Ethics course in order to renew your ASW #.
 - Can take test every 90 days but at least annually until passed.
 - [BBS Law & Ethics FAQ](#)
 - [Law & Ethics Exam Outline](#)

- **The National Clinical ASWB Exam**
 - It is designed to assess an applicant's knowledge of psychosocial principles and methods in treatment, as well as techniques & methods applicable to practice.
 - Test is 150 item multiple choice over 4 hours.
 - [ASWB Exam Candidate Handbook](#)

Pre-Licensure Coursework

- While the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) lists CSUF with "[No Additional Courses Required](#)," potential licensees are responsible for the pre-licensure content either by taking MSW courses that meet these requirements, or through continuing education courses.
- Additional coursework required
 - Child Abuse Assessment/ Reporting -7 hours
 - Human Sexuality -10 hours
 - Substance Abuse -15 hours
 - Spousal/Partner Abuse -15 hours
 - Aging & Long Term Care -10 hours
 - Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention – 6 hours (If applying on or after January 1, 2021).
- [CSUF courses that fulfill BBS pre-licensure requirements](#)

Accruing Hours

- 3,000 hours for LCSW
- Minimum of 2 years (24 months) after registration, Max. 40 hrs./week
- 104 weeks of supervision required, 52 weeks of it must be individual supervision; the other 52 weeks can be group supervision
- A minimum of 1700 of supervision must be with LCSW

- You cannot begin accruing hours until you have the ASW #
- Hours can be paid work (W-2 employee, not 1099 independent contractor) and/or volunteer
- If your ASW registration lapses or expires, you will not be able to count those hours for the period in which your registration was invalid.

Categories of Hours

- 2000 hours minimum - Clinical Psychosocial Diagnosis, Assessment and Treatment - includes individual or group
 - F2F Individual or Group Psychotherapy (min. 750 hours out of 2000 hrs.)*
- 1000 hours - Client-centered advocacy, consultation, evaluation, research, direct supervisor time, trainings (approved by supervisor), count towards 3000
- [LCSW Breakdown of Required Experience \(PDF\)](#)

Six Year Rule

- BBS cannot accept hours of experience older than six (6) years from the time a person applies for the LCSW license. The law does not allow the board to make exceptions.
- Registrations issued by the Board are valid for a 6-year period (five renewals). Registrants who have not completed all hours of supervised experience within the 6-year life span must apply for a subsequent registration number to continue the path toward licensure.
- Many registrants apply for a second (or third, etc.) registration number to gain additional supervised work experience or for employment purposes.