

NADD TASK FORCE: UPDATES ON DELIVERABLES (10/15/24)

Short and Long Term Strategies for the Task Force on Licensing

| SHORT TERM GOALS (YEAR 1) | LONG TERM GOALS (YEARS 2-4) |
|---|---|
| <p>Enhance the actions of the Task Force by bringing resources to assist in the administration and organization of Task Force members (i.e. scheduling, minutes, organization of outside participants/organizations; follow up on tasks, etc.).</p> <p>The addition of support through Connie Adams has been immeasurable. She has facilitated meeting set up, minutes, follow up on subcommittee, creation of flyers, reviewing documents/website content.</p> | <p>Build a cross organizational strategy for state by state/national change in collaboration with NASW, CSWE, NABSW, etc.</p> <p>NADD President Voisin is using a collaborative approach to system change and is facilitating these linkages and meetings. The first was at the NADD meeting in April 2024. A second discussion was held at the SW Org meeting in Fall of 2024, with a third meeting in process.</p> |
| <p>Track, document, and disseminate information (i.e., survey) about statewide movement/change on licensure through a repository of information (in partnership with NASW).</p> <p>Sharing of information across states happens at monthly meetings of the Task Force – as well as national conferences. Information is funneled into other venues (website, toolkit, etc.)</p> <p>Members of the Task Force are special editors on a new volume of the journal of social work education that will focus on alternatives to licensure.</p> | <p>Seek funding through philanthropy to fund the implementation of the cross organizational strategy.</p> <p>MI was awarded funding from a local foundation through a partnership between NASW, CMH Bd Association and the Deans/Directors from MSW programs. The funding will look at licensure and alternatives for licensure that will augment workforce shortages within a state. We are using this as a model for other states.</p> <p>This MI group also developed an alternative ‘juris prudence’ exam that will be displayed on the Task Force website.</p> |
| <p>Demonstrate the effects of changes in licensure laws through data collection from states that have modified or eradicated the exam process within licensure.</p> <p>Tracking of changing laws and landscape has been ongoing.</p> | <p>Hire Lobbyist: Guide Consulting worked with social work and health as lobbyists. Cost about \$50k, from a \$100K grant.</p> <p>This is a bigger leap financially and have not had traction nationally (but believe this is needed) – but since change is a state by state process, we are working with local lobbyists/policy makers.</p> |
| <p>Produce two webinars that provide accurate information about the effects of the exam on SW Work Force, and combat the propoganda of ASWB, for legislators, the general public, and new deans and directors on the issues.</p> <p>A subcommittee on dissemination is co-chaired by Judy Postmus (Maryland) and Johanna Thomas (Arkansas). Two different presentations were developed – one to be piloted at CSWE conference.</p> | <p>Develop white paper on alternative pathways to licensure, in partnership between NADD and CSWE. Alternative pathways may include an alternative exam and/or greater use of competencies in the licensure process. Disseminate information on process and outcomes widely across the profession.</p> <p>There is a panel planned at the 2025 BPD meeting in Las Vegas.</p> <p>White paper to be discussed after journal edition is complete (see short term outcomes on dissemination).</p> |
| <p>Complete the advocacy toolkit and formalize a website accessible to deans/directors across the country.</p> | |

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| <p>Draft of the Advocacy Toolkit is available through the website (and attached to this report). Needs to be finalized.</p> | |
| <p>Develop a website and/or augment NADD website with information, toolkit and data.</p> <p>Website developed on socialwork.one. Will work with Vitali to make this a link on the NADD website.</p> | |

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT FOR SOCIAL WORK LICENSING

[Delete this help text before using: PURPOSE: This guide was developed as an outline for individuals exploring advocacy of social work licensure within their state/jurisdiction. Tailoring as denoted is necessary for the most effective use.]

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Prior to use, insert content specific to your state/location within the highlighted sections and delete all help text.]

Why do social workers need to be licensed?

Like other professions (such as nursing, law, medicine, physical therapy, education, etc.) licensing exists to protect the public from unsafe, incompetent, and unethical practice. In short, licensing is designed to protect clients from inadequate or incompetent social workers.

Is social work licensing the same throughout the United States? Are there different types of social work licensure?

Every state/jurisdiction¹ has requirements and procedures for social work licensure. However, as licensing is determined by each state/jurisdiction, master's-level educated social workers may have varied opportunities for licensure depending on the state(s)/jurisdiction(s) in which they practice. There are some common requirements most states/jurisdictions have utilized for licensing, including a standardized test. However, some states have changed requirements omitting a standardized test from one or multiple types of social work licensure.

For social workers to clinically practice – and often to be referred to as social workers – all states require social work licensure, typically obtained in two levels. In addition, some states offer additional opportunities for licensure beyond clinical-related licenses, such as for master's level social workers practicing generalist or macro social work.

Are social workers required to be licensed?

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: This is not accurate for all jurisdictions. Prior to use, verify accuracy of your state/jurisdiction's legislation. Your National Association of Social Workers (NASW) chapter may be able to help clarify.]

As mentioned above, licensing requirements vary between each state and jurisdiction. Boards in each state/jurisdiction establish licensing titles and corresponding requirements for social workers in their state/jurisdiction. Within **insert your state/jurisdiction**, in order for professionals to be referred to as social workers – regardless of their degree – they must be licensed as social workers. This initial social work license is what this guide refers to as the first-level social work license.

¹ This document is drafted for the United States, which includes all 50 states, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Therefore, terminology includes states and jurisdictions to reference every entity which oversees licensure. For all 50 states, licensure is determined by state legislation and overseen at the state level.

Some social workers – regardless of their type of practice – elect to pursue this first level license. Some social workers elect to pursue this first-level license as a step towards achieving their second-level, independent clinical social work license.

While labeled differently, all states/jurisdictions across the United States – including all fifty states from Guam to Puerto Rico – require the licensing of independent clinical social workers at the master’s social work level for clinical practice. In most states, including **insert your state/jurisdiction**, the independent clinical social work license is a second-level license.

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Utilize your state/jurisdiction licensing entity to locate information. Identify the current social work licensing opportunities within your state/jurisdiction. Identify the full name and acronym.]

As the first-level license of master’s level practice is the most sought-after by graduates and most consistent across states/jurisdictions, this document focuses on this first-level master’s level social work licensure. One requirement of this master’s level social work license in **insert your state/jurisdiction** is passing the LMSW exam – which is constructed and administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB).

As referenced above, there is an additional level of master’s level social work licensure, the LCSW (in Rhode Island this is the LICSW), which licenses social workers for clinical, independent, psychotherapy practice. In most states, the first-level, master’s-level practice license must also be obtained prior to obtaining the second-level independent clinical master’s level license (LCSW/LICSW).

Social work licensure across the States prioritizes an exam, despite increasing evidence-based shifts away from standardized testing.

What is the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)?

The Association of Social Work Boards – commonly known as ASWB – is a 501(c)(3) organization that develops, constructs, tests, and administers a number of social work exams, including the LMSW and LCSW exams. While a few states have recently changed social work licensing legislation, most states/jurisdictions (including **insert your state/jurisdiction**) require the passing of an ASWB exam to obtain each level of social work licensure. Currently, ASWB has a monopoly on social work licensure as within all fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and in some Canadian provinces, there is no other existing organization which offers an exam for social workers.

What are the licensing requirements in **insert your state/jurisdiction?**

There are **insert number** types of social work licenses in **insert your state/jurisdiction**, including:

Highlighted Master’s-level Social Work Licensing in **insert your state/jurisdiction:**

Level-one, initial master’s level licensure (which includes a combination of requirements, including ASWB’s LMSW exam): **insert full name of license (insert license acronym)**

*[Delete this help text before using: EXAMPLE OF HIGHLIGHTED TEXT:
Worker (LSW)*

Licensed Social

Level-two, second master's level independent clinical licensure (which includes combination of requirements, including ASWB's LCSW exam): **insert full name of license** (**insert license acronym**)

[Delete this help text before using: EXAMPLE OF HIGHLIGHTED TEXT: Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)]

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Identify the current social work licensing opportunities within your state. If only two (2) licenses are available, delete the third section. If additional licensure is available, add a section.]

Additional social work licensure opportunities within state (which includes **insert brief list of requirements, specifically use of exam**): **insert full name of license** (**insert license acronym**)

Understanding Progression of Master's-Level and Clinical Social Work Licensing

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Cross-check the requirements of your state/jurisdiction's licensing body. For example, while most require a person graduate from a CSWE-accredited master's social work program, there are exceptions.]

First-Level License

The **insert first-level license name and acronym** license is an entry level license which allows those who earned master's degrees in social work to practice. Within (insert name of state/jurisdiction), regardless of the degree earned, professionals must obtain this license to be referred to as social workers. In addition, this license allows social workers to engage in supervised clinical/direct practice. A/an **insert first-level license name/acronym** cannot practice independently. That is, a/an **insert first-level license name/acronym** may only practice clinical/direct social work, including diagnosis, psychotherapy, and assessment-based treatment planning **under the supervision** of a/an **insert second-level license name/acronym**.

To be licensed as a/an **insert first-level license name/acronym** in **insert your state/jurisdiction**, a person must:

- Graduate from a CSWE-accredited master's social work program,
- pass the ASWB LMSW exam;
- Secure a supervisor with a/an **insert second-level license name/acronym**;
- Complete XXXX hours of practice under the above licensed supervisor; and
- Apply to the **insert name of your state/jurisdiction social work licensing body**.
- *[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Insert additional lines for each requirement to obtain this level of license, including those specific to the exam.]*
- *[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: If may be helpful to include factors which commonly impact obtainment of licensing.]*
 - *[Delete this help text before using: EXAMPLES: The ASWB exam is only accessible in 2 locations throughout the state.]*
 - *[Delete this help text before using: EXAMPLES: Our jurisdiction is XX% Spanish-speaking; however, the ASWB exam is only available in English.]*

Second-Level License

Those who obtained their **insert first-level license name/acronym** may pursue a second level of social work licensure. Social workers who hold the **insert second level license details** can practice independent clinical social work.

The **insert second-level license name/acronym** encompasses the scope of practice of licensed master social work and, in addition, includes:

- Diagnosis of mental, emotional, behavioral, addictive, and developmental disorders and disabilities and of the psychosocial aspects of illness;
- Interpretation of tests and measures of psychosocial functioning;
- Development and implementation of appropriate treatment plans; and
- Provision of crisis-oriented psychotherapy and brief, short-term, and long-term psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic treatment to individuals, couples, families, and groups.

To be licensed as a/an **insert second-level license name/acronym** in **insert your state/jurisdiction**, a person must:

- Hold a/an **insert first-level license name/acronym**;
- Complete a minimum of (insert number) of clinical practice hours;
- Complete a minimum of (insert number) of hours of supervision with a/an **insert second-level license name/acronym**;
- Pass the ASWB LCSW exam; and
- Apply to the **insert name of your state/jurisdiction social work licensing body**.
- *[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: Insert additional lines for each requirement to obtain this level of license, including those specific to the exam.]*
- *[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: If may be helpful to include factors which commonly impact obtainment of licensing.]*
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What does it cost to be licensed in **insert your state/jurisdiction**?

Minimal costs include:

- 1) The **insert your state/jurisdiction** application costs \$**insert cost**.
- 2) The ASWB **insert name of first-level licensure** exam's fee is \$230².

Additional common expenses by individuals to prepare for and/or take exam:

² Content updated April 8, 2024.

- 1) ASWB online practice test \$85³
- 2) Course enrollment costs
- 3) Practice material costs
- 4) Travel costs (e.g., gas, rental car, tolls, hotel, meals, parking fees, etc.) to nearest test center (as some states have limited test locations)
- 5) Time off work to take exam (may require additional time if travel is involved)

If people don't pass the exam, can they retake it?

Yes, graduates can retake the exam as many times as they want and need. However, they must pay ASWB fees each time they retake the exam. ASWB requires candidates to wait 90 days between exam attempts; however, some test-takers, depending on state⁴ and ASWB approval, whose score was within ten (10) correct answers may request a waiver to reduce the wait period.

What happens if someone doesn't pass the exam?

The practice of clinical social work in **insert your state/jurisdiction** is limited to those who hold either the **insert first-level license name/acronym** or **insert second-level license name/acronym**. In some states/jurisdictions and industries, the opportunity for master's-level social work practice is limited to those who possess social work licensure. Therefore, it is not uncommon for graduates of CSWE-accredited master's social work programs to be unable to practice in their field after obtaining their degree (therefore statistically earning less⁵) while simultaneously paying additional costs to pursue licensure (most frequently, fees to retake a required exam, as well as other commonly associated costs as outlined on [page 5](#)).

What is the impact of current licensing requirements?

For over a decade, social workers have suspected that social workers of color – particularly those who identify as Black and Latinx – are failing the licensing exam at disproportionate rates, impacting their ability to obtain social work licensure. Independently, various states began to gather data.

In 2015, the New York State Education Department Office of the Professions released information to the New York master's social work programs that allowed them to conduct a very basic assessment of their graduates: pass/fail rates of the ASWB LMSW and LCSW exams. The results indicated that all social workers of color – but especially Black and Latinx graduates – failed the exam at much higher rates. Over the years, social work master's programs implemented a variety of preparation techniques to increase the exam pass rates of their graduates, but no efforts improved results.

Beginning in 2014, working with the National Association of Social Work Deans and Directors (NADD), the New York State Deans of Social Work began to strongly request that ASWB release data on pass/fail rates by age and race. After eight (8) years, on August 5, 2022, ASWB published a trend analysis of data from 2011-2021.

³ Content updated April 8, 2024. Online practice test can be taken once.

⁴ Waivers are currently unavailable to applications in California, Nevada, and North Dakota.

⁵ According to the Social Work Degree Center, master's level social workers are estimated to make \$20,000 more annually than baccalaureate level social workers.

What did the ASWB data report⁶ show?

In 2022, the Association of Social Work Boards released 2022 ASWB Exam Pass Rate Analysis: Final Report. Highlights are included within this section.

The data showed significant disparities between white graduates, and Black and Latinx graduates.

Data Summary

The following data is representative of national exam test-takers between 2018-2021. The total number of exam-takers (for both LMSW and LCSW exams) per year is unknown, including the division by race and ethnicity. The total number of first-attempt exam-takers is known and provided for the LMSW and LCSW exams. However, for individuals who utilized multiple attempts to eventually pass either exam, the total number of repeat exam-takers for between 2018-2021 is unknown. In addition, as a number of factors are unknown (such as total number of attempts, frequency of attempts, start year of first-attempt, etc.), the total number of exam-takers (for each exam, per year) – inclusive of both first-attempt exam-takers and repeat exam-takers – cannot be inferred. Further, the number of repeat exam-takers and total exam-takers for each race and ethnicity population is also unknown.

ASBW LMSW Exam: First-attempt Pass Rate (2018-2021)

| Race/Ethnicity | First-attempt Pass Rate Percentage | Number of First-attempt Exam-takers |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 85.8% | 44,041 |
| Multiracial | 80.0% | 1,842 |
| Asian | 71.0% | 2,422 |
| Latinx | 63.0% | 8,416 |
| Native American/Indigenous peoples | 64.4% | 453 |
| Black | 44.5% | 13,844 |
| Total | 71,018 ⁷ | |

Above chart in narrative form: Per ASWB (2022):

When considering the Masters exam performance of test-takers by race/ethnicity, first-time pass rates have historically been highest for white test-takers, averaging 85.8 percent during the 2018–2021 time period, followed by multiracial (80 percent), Asian (71 percent), Native American/Indigenous peoples (64.4 percent), Hispanic/Latino (63 percent), and Black (44.5 percent) test-takers.

ASBW LMSW Exam: Eventual Pass Rate (2018-2021)

| Race/Ethnicity | Eventual Pass Rate Percentage |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| White | 90.8% |
| Multiracial | 85.1% |
| Asian | 75.5% |

⁶ Association of Social Work Boards (2022). 2022 ASWB exam pass rate analysis: Final report. <https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-ASWB-Exam-Pass-Rate-Analysis.pdf>

⁷ For between 2018-2021, reported total of 73,409 LMSW exam first-time exam-takers. However, due to altered available options during the time period, individuals who selected *Prefer not to say* or filled in their own identifiers were excluded from analysis (ASWB, 2022).

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Latinx | 71.2% |
| Native American/Indigenous peoples | 72.2% |
| Black | 51.9% |

Above chart in highlighted narrative form: Eventual pass rates also showed disparities; while almost 91% of white graduates eventually passed the exam, only 51.9% of Black graduates and 71.2% of Latinx graduates did.

For graduates of **insert your institution name or state/jurisdiction**, **enter LMSW information from the ASWB report**.

ASBW LCSW Exam: First-attempt Pass Rate (2018-2021)

| Race/Ethnicity | First-attempt Pass Rate Percentage | Number of First-attempt Exam-takers |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| White | 83.9% | 45,303 |
| Multiracial | 79.9% | 1,851 |
| Asian | 72.0% | 2,470 |
| Latinx | 65.1% | 8,508 |
| Native American/Indigenous peoples | 62.9% | 399 |
| Black | 45.0% | 10,046 |
| Total | 68,577 ⁸ | |

Above chart in narrative form: Per ASWB (2022):

When considering the Clinical exam performance of test-takers by race/ethnicity, first-time pass rates have historically been highest for white test-takers, averaging 83.9 percent during the 2018–2021 time period, followed by multiracial (79.9 percent), Asian (72 percent), Hispanic/Latino (65.1 percent), Native American/Indigenous peoples (62.9 percent), and Black (45 percent) test-takers.

ASBW LCSW Exam: Eventual Pass Rate (2018-2021)

| Race/Ethnicity | Eventual Pass Rate Percentage |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| White | 90.7% |
| Multiracial | 86.6% |
| Asian | 79.7% |
| Latinx | 76.6% |
| Native American/Indigenous peoples | 73.5% |
| Black | 57.0% |

Above chart in highlighted narrative form: Eventual pass rates also showed disparities; while almost 91% of white graduates eventually passed the exam, only 57% of Black graduates and 77% of Latinx graduates did.

⁸ Between 2018-2021, reported total of 70,687 LCSW exam first-time exam-takers. However, due to altered available options during the time period, individuals who selected *Prefer not to say* or filled in their own identifiers were excluded from analysis (ASWB, 2022).

For graduates of **insert your institution name or state/jurisdiction**, **enter LCSW information from the ASWB report**.

In addition, only 63% of LMSW exam-takers and 70% of LCSW exam-takers for whom English is not their first language pass the exam (the exam is only offered in English). There are also other populations in which data is publicly unknown, such as social workers of varying abilities as well as by areas (i.e., each separate state/jurisdiction) and population of institution (e.g., by groupings of institutions/programs based upon student representation of race/ethnicity and corresponding pass/fail rates).

Consequently, slightly more than half of Black graduates and only two-thirds of Latinx graduates become licensed master's level social workers.

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: If your advocacy involves additional social work licenses, gather relevant data in a similar format to the above LMSW and LCSW exams and insert here.

[Delete this help text before using: INSTRUCTIONS: If your program or state/jurisdiction has additional data relevant to your state/jurisdiction licensing requirements, insert here.

How does the current exam used for social work licensure compare to other licensed professions?

When pass rates are compared to other professions (education, nursing) that are also licensed, they have much smaller disparities than social work (10-12% compared to social work's 37% disparity). Their national organizations have also done significant work to correct the inequities and diversify their workforce, including proposing alternative pathways, to licensing.

What does this mean for **insert your state/jurisdiction?**

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The impact is on our communities, and often the most vulnerable.

Both first-time and repeat pass rates have historically been highest for white test-takers across the States. Per ASWB's data (2022), **slightly more than half of Black graduates and two-thirds of Latinx graduates become **insert first-level license name/acronym****. As such, representation of social workers of color with **insert first-level license name/acronym** in **insert your state/jurisdiction** is fewer, with the current requirement of the exam.

However, licensure is not about an exam.

There is no evidence that passing a standardized test is an indication of the ability of a social worker.

In addition, there is a bigger and more important context: **insert your state/jurisdiction desperately needs a strong and diverse social work workforce.** It is estimated that most of the clients and communities served by social workers in **insert your state/jurisdiction** are people and communities of color. It is also well documented that social workers who represent the lived experience of the people they serve are more effective in providing services in communities of color. Consequently, not only do the disparities in licensure impact the graduates who have spent time and money getting their degree

(and who often have many years of experience in social services), but **it has harmful effects on the clients and communities that need them.**

In effect, the very principle of licensure – to protect the public by ensuring that social workers are competent to practice – is being undercut by an exam that results in such great racial disparities.

Should every social work graduate should be licensed? Isn't gatekeeping in the profession important?

We support social work licensing. We believe that gatekeeping should exist in our profession.

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There are a number of current elements to gatekeeping which are essential. In particular, schools of social work have a major role to play in gatekeeping because they are required to teach practice skills; review student grades in courses; and most importantly, evaluate how their students perform working with clients in actual agency settings in their internships. We urge schools to review and strengthen their gatekeeping policies. **Insert your state/jurisdiction** also requires **insert your state/jurisdiction's minimum number** post-degree hours completed under supervision in order to obtain **insert first-level license name/acronym**.

In addition, a/an **insert first-level license name/acronym** may only practice clinical social work, including diagnosis, psychotherapy, and assessment-based treatment planning **under the supervision** of a/an **insert second-level license name/acronym**.

While gatekeeping is vital, an exam, especially one with racial disparities demonstrated for over a decade, is a very blunt instrument for assessing competent practice. That is why many standardized exams, including the SAT, are no longer being used as predictors of success. One might argue that successful work history and supervision are a more nuanced approach to measuring competency, at least as an alternative pathway to the exam or until an exam without these disparities is developed.

The **insert second-level license name/acronym exam seems to have even bigger disparities in the exam results. Why not focus on that?**

While both exam results are problematic, we believe it is important to start with the **insert first-level license name/acronym** exam. The entry level license practice with supervision (referred to in this guide as the first-level social work license), making the threat to the public lower than the licensure of independent clinical practitioners.

Where can I find the application for **insert your state/jurisdiction social work license?**

Here is the **insert first-level license name/acronym** application link: **insert hyperlink to your state/jurisdiction's first-level license application**.

What happens when a licensed social worker in one state/jurisdiction wants to work in another state/jurisdiction?

Each state/jurisdiction has its own social work licensing regulations. Though the law changed in some states has removed the ASWB exam from steps to obtain the **insert first-level license name/acronym**, it

has not changed in other states/jurisdictions. This means that – depending on requirements – if someone intends to work in another state/jurisdiction, they may be required to take the ASWB exam to be licensed in that respective state/jurisdiction. For more information on licensing requirements in other states/jurisdictions, please use this [LINK](#).

In addition, there is movement across states to improve reciprocity of licensure which allows one social worker licensed in one state/jurisdiction to then be licensed to practice in another state/jurisdiction. However, many of recently proposed – and even passed – statutes continue to rely on the ASWB exam as a requirement. Therefore, even if a social worker is licensed in one state/jurisdiction and plans to also work in or relocate to another state which allows reciprocity to the state in which they are licensed, they would still be required to take the ASWB exam and potentially additional steps to secure the licensure in the second state/jurisdiction.

What are other resources where I can learn more?

- Explore the NADD Task Force to Reform Licensure website for more information, including groundbreaking research links and recent news postings: socialwork.one
- The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is an important resource for the social work profession, including around the topic of social work licensure. Materials are available on the website for the general public as well: socialworkers.org
- States and regions have NASW chapters with a pulse on licensure as it relates to their local. Locate your chapter online and review materials on their website.
- Social Workers for Justice is a group of New York State social workers and key stakeholders addressing equity in their state social work licensing legislation. Their website includes excellent information and resources: socialworkersforjustice.org
- Illinois and Rhode Island were at the forefront of state licensure reformation. For information regarding current legislation and related information, visit:
 - Illinois: naswil.org/licensure
 - Rhode Island: <https://naswri.socialworkers.org/Professional-Development/Licensing>

NADD TASK FORCE ON REFORMING LICENSURE

The NADD Task Force on Reforming Licensure (TFRL) strongly supports social work licensure.

We believe in protecting the integrity of our profession and supporting our students, graduates, and the communities in which they serve. As such, we advocate for licensure reform to promote a strong and diverse workforce.

While long suspected, in 2022, ASWB released a ten-year analysis of exam data demonstrating significant disparities among test-takers, particularly for our Black and Latinx graduates. There is a costly impact for our graduates and the communities which they are unable to serve. In reality, licensure is more than an exam; there is no evidence that passing an exam is an indication of one's ability to practice social work. As such, we are opposed to the use of current exams which have limited and inadequate empirical evidence. We see positive change in some states, but this is a collective responsibility. TFRL is focused on connecting stakeholders, developing resources and tools, and advocating for rapid action. ***This is a pivotal moment for our profession and we need you.***

JOIN NADD TFRL.

Become involved! NADD TFRL has multiple types of opportunities for involvement. Join us! See reverse page for details of opportunities and membership structure.



INVITE A COLLEAGUE.

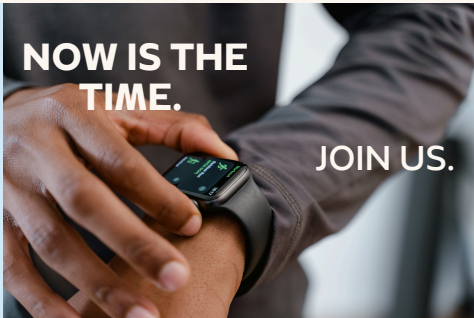
TFRL is expanding membership, even beyond deans, directors, and chairs. If you know someone who may be interested and complement this work, encourage them to reach out.

EDUCATE YOURSELF.

·Visit the TFRL website (socialwork.one), review the content, and add yourself to the newsletter list.

NOW IS THE TIME.

JOIN US.



EDUCATE OTHERS.

After you have educated yourself, share the resource with at least ONE colleague, student, or fellow social worker, and encourage them to do the same!

SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE.

Have you engaged in advocacy for social work licensure reform? Are you willing to share your expertise and experience? Will you connect others to TFRL? TFRL would like to learn from those who have direct involvement with advocacy and integrate these experiences into resources, including test-takers who have been impacted by the current exam.



**The country needs a strong and diverse workforce.
Social work licensure reform is one critical step.**



Visit: socialwork.one
Email: onesocialwork@gmail.com

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

TFRL Membership Structure

TFRL now has multi-pronged membership! Individuals may serve within one or multiple threads based upon their expertise and interest, current and past roles, and evolving TFRL needs. Subcommittees are composed of all threads.

- **Thread 1: Task Force Executive Group (TEG)** comprises current & past deans, directors, & chairs of NADD social work programs. Responsible for all policy and implementation decisions.
- **Thread 2: Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)** are faculty, staff, and members of the practice/policy community who collate, curate, and disseminate TFRL licensure-related materials to the general public.
- **Thread 3: Stakeholder Allies** are individuals and organizations collaborating with TFRL and serving as ambassadors toward meaningful change in the licensure process, adhering to the goals set by TFRL.



ALTERNATIVE LICENSURE PATHWAYS SUB-COMMITTEE

- Explores options to achieve a diverse, licensed workforce that meets competencies of the profession while prioritizing equity and fairness.
- Sub-committee co-chairs: Joan Blakey (MN) and Goutham Menon (IL)

TOOLKIT FOR ADVOCACY SUB-COMMITTEE

- Maintains a resource website (socialwork.one) with toolkits and supports to help advocates and states exploring alternative approaches through the legislative process.
- Sub-committee co-chairs: Jackie Mondros (NY) and Jayashree Nimmagadda (RI)

DISSEMINATION SUB-COMMITTEE

- Designs and produces training and educational tutorial and video materials to engage those learning about social work licensure and/or interested in pursuing advocacy within their state to promote equitable and inclusive licensing legislation.
- Sub-committee co-chairs: Judy Postmus (MD) and Johanna Thomas (AR)

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National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD)
Taskforce to Reform Licensure

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Social Work Workforce
Just, Fair, & Equitable

Take action to change the status quo!

FAQ

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Our Initiatives

Learn about legislative changes to licensure laws! Meet with us on alternative pathways to credentialing!

[Read More](#)

FAQ

Our details provide answers to many questions. If you do not have an answer, please contact us.

[Read More](#)

Recent News

Change is difficult... But a number of states have coalitions of stakeholders committed to equity within social work licensure! Several have seen success within legislation. Check this section for all the latest news and developments!

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indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC)] students struggle with the test. Social work is not about a test, it is about how you are with people and the test is written in a way that seems to privilege a certain type of middle class white people.”

J.M.

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National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work

CONTACT US

We welcome all stakeholders working towards supporting our profession's workforce!

National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work

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TFLR MEMBERSHIP

| Name | Institution | Employment Position | State | TFRL Role | Subcommittee |
|----------------------|---|---|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Goutham Menon | Loyola University Chicago | Former Dean; Professor, School of Social Work | IL | TFRL co-chair | Toolkit for Advocacy |
| Melissa Begg | Columbia University | Dean, School of Social Work | NY | Member | no subcommittee role |
| Judy Postmus | The University of Maryland | Dean, School of Social Work | MD | Subcommittee co-chair | Dissemination |
| Jayashree | | | | | |
| Nimmagadda | Rhode Island College | Professor, School of Social Work | RI | Member | Toolkit for Advocacy |
| Catherine Gayle | Savannah State University | Chair, Department of Social Work | GA | Member | |
| Kristi Lohmeier | St. Ambrose University | Director, School of Social Work | IA | Member | |
| Sheryl Kubiak | Wayne State University | Dean, School of Social Work | MN | TFRL co-chair | |
| Sara (Sally) Bachman | University of Pennsylvania | Dean, School of Social Policy & Practice | PA | Member | |
| Johanna Thomas | University of Arkansas | Director, School of Social Work | AR | Subcommittee co-chair | Dissemination |
| | | | | | |
| Luis Torres-Hostos | The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley | Dean, School of Social Work | TX | TFRL co-chair | |
| | | | | | |
| Jackie Mondros | Stony Brook University | Dean and Professor Assistant Vice President for Social Determinants of Health; School of Social Welfare | NY | Member | |
| Tonya Ricklefs | Washburn University | Chair, Department of Social Work | KS | Member | |
| | | | | | |
| Joan Blakely | University of Minnesota (Twin Cities) | Director, School of Social Work | MN | Member | No subcommittee role |
| Dexter Voisin | Case Western Reserve University | Dean, Applied Social Sciences | OH | Ex officio; NADD President | N/A |
| Connie Adams | | Project Manager | IN | Ex officio; TFRL Project Manager | N/A |