

# Licensing FAQ

## **How can I get an application for the social work licensing examination?**

The choice is yours! One method is to complete the application process online. This is handled through Alabama Interactive for a processing fee of \$3.50. The applications are also on our website under "[Applications & Forms](#)". These may be printed from the site, completed, and mailed with the application fee (money order or cashier's check).

## **What is required to be considered "License Eligible"?**

For the Board to consider you as "license eligible" you must have an application in our office completed and approved. Being "license eligible" allows you to practice social work for an agency or organization while you are studying and taking the license examination.

## **Can an agency call the Board to verify if someone is license eligible?**

Yes, we can verify if someone is license eligible by telephone, fax, email or mail.

## **How many continuing education hours do I need to renew my license?**

You need thirty (30) hours over a two-year period. Of the 30 hours required, 10 must be classroom. Effective January 1, 2017, three (3) of the hours must be in Ethics. Effective October 2018, LICSWs will need three (3) hours in clinical social work education, and if you provide supervision for another licensee, you will also need three (3) hours in supervision education.

## **How many hours of Supervision do I need?**

If you're an LBSW, you will need 24 months of supervision at a minimum rate of four (4) hours per month. Supervision must be provided by an LMSW or LICSW working within the same agency or a PIP who is certified in the same practice method if coming from outside your agency. If you are an LMSW working towards the qualifications for the LICSW, you will need four (4) hours per month for 24 months. The supervision for the LICSW must come from an LICSW within the agency or a PIP who is certified in the same practice method if coming from outside your agency. For both methods, all supervision must be completed within a 36-month span.

(NOTE: If you fail to complete the 24 months of supervision within the 36-month period, supervision credit will be lost.)

## **I'm an LBSW and will be changing jobs. Will I be required to repeat the 24 months of supervision?**

All LBSW's are required to complete 24 months of supervision. After completing the 24 months of supervision, the LBSW can continue to work without supervision. Should you change positions but remain in the same type of practice as you have already been supervised under, then you would not need to repeat the supervision. However, if you are going into a different type of practice or you will be serving a different type of client population, you will need to repeat six (6) months of supervision. The contract for supervision is on this website under "Applications and Forms". You will need to print out the form and submit it to the Board's office.

## **What kind of degree must I have to become a Social Worker in Alabama?**

Any person applying for an Alabama Social Work License must have a degree in social work from a school accredited through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). You can check which programs are accredited through CSWE by going to their web site at <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation>

**When will my license be ready?**

The Board of Social Work Examiners receives grades about a week after a candidate takes their exam. Once we receive your passing grade, we assign a license number and send both the letter and license to you. This typically takes 10-14 days.

**Do I have a sixty (60) day grace period to renew my license?**

Your license expires the last day of your renewal month, two (2) years after it is issued. However, you have sixty (60) days from the expiration date to renew it before it is expired. The C.E. hours to renew your license must be completed before the license expires. You cannot use the grace period to obtain additional hours to renew your license.

**How long do we have to take the exam?**

You have one year from the date your application is approved by the Board to take the exam. The expiration of your approval will be on your letter sent to you from the Board. Should you fail the exam and wish to retake it, you can complete the re-examination process online. Your exam dates must be at least 90 days apart which can allow you up to four times per year to take the exam.

**How often is the exam given?**

The exam is given five (5) days a week and in some sites six (6) days a week except during the December holidays.

**Can I send a personal check or credit card number to renew my license?**

No. You must pay with a certified check, money order, or business check. A credit card can be used for on-line renewals. There is a processing fee of \$4.00 charged by Alabama Interactive for this service.

**I do not live in Alabama, but I would like to keep my license current. May I do so?**

Yes! You may continue renewing your license even though you live out of state. However, you must submit the continuing education hours required and pay the renewal fee. This applies to all licensees.

**Can I go Inactive?**

Yes! We offer inactive status for your social work license. You are still required to register the license every two (2) years and pay the inactive fee of \$25, however you are not required to report any C.E. hours. If you have been in inactive status and wish to return to social work practice, you will be required to make up the hours at the rate of 15 hours for each year inactive (maximum to make up is 45 hours). The make-up hours must follow a certain percentage of in-classroom and may include some online or self-study. The make-up hours must be at least 35% pre-approved classroom hours -- allowing the other 65% to come from pre-approved online or self-study programs. See the Administrative Code for more details: <http://www.socialwork.alabama.gov/PDF/admincode/850-X-7.pdf>

**May I change my name on my license after it has already been issued?**

Yes! The processing fee is \$10.00 (cashier check, money order or business check). Our office will need a copy of your legal documentation changing your name before we can send your new license.

**I have retired and would like to maintain my social work license. Are there any special provisions for me?**

We offer inactive status for your social work license. You are still required to register the license every two (2) years and pay the inactive status fee, however you are not required to report any C.E. hours. If you have been on inactive status wish to return to social work practice, you will be required to make up the hours at the rate of 15 hours each year inactive with the maximum to make up being 45 hours. The make-up hours must follow a certain percentage in classroom and may include some on-line or self-study. The makeup hours must be at least 35% pre-approved classroom hours allowing the other 65% to come from pre-approved on-line or self-study programs.