

# Applying for your social work license in Pennsylvania

*There is no pressure to take the licensing exam before you graduate. Some students decide to take it before graduating and others wait until afterward to decide whether to pursue licensure.*

## Applying to take the initial licensing exam

- Your final semester of the MSW Program is the earliest you can take the exam.
- Go to the Pennsylvania State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors [website](#) and Register online. The PA State Board must pre-approve all applicants to take the master's exam. If you are a current master's student and applying for the LSW, you should select the following when prompted: For Board/Commission, select "State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors" For License Type, select "Social Worker".
  - If you have not yet graduated, send the "Verification of Social Work Education" form (the last page of the application) to Stacey Raker. She will complete the form and send it in for you. **\*This cannot be done before the beginning of your final semester.**
  - If you have graduated, order an official copy of your WCU transcript and have it sent to the board. You can order your official transcript from Parchment. Click [here](#) for directions
- Fill out the rest of the application and submit it.
- You can register to take the exam once you receive your notice of eligibility. See the [ASWB website](#) for locations.
- Study for the exam with a study group and/or in a licensure prep course. Check the website for the [National Association of Social Workers - Pennsylvania chapter](#) to see when and where prep courses will be offered. The website for the Association of Social Work Boards has additional [study tools](#) to help prepare you for the exam.
- Other companies offer in-person and online exam preparation courses. **The MSW Program at WCU does not vouch for the quality of these programs.**
- If you haven't already done so, [have your final transcript sent](#) to the board after you graduate. If you graduate in May, the transcript may not be available until early August.

## Receiving a license to practice at the LSW level

- After passing the ASWB Masters Exam, have the ASWB send your test score to the Pennsylvania State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors.
- Once the state board has verified that you have graduated from an MSW program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, and passed the ASWB Masters exam, you will be issued a license at the LSW level.

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## Receiving a license to practice at the clinical (LCSW) level

- You are eligible for clinical licensure after two years of practice at the LSW level. You must have completed 3,000 hours of clinical work. For every 40 hours worked, two hours of supervision must be documented by a qualified professional. Half of the hours worked must be supervised by a licensed clinical social worker. The other half may be supervised by a licensed clinical psychologist or psychiatrist or other qualified mental health professional.
- Download the [Application for a License by Examination to Practice Clinical Social Work](#) from the [state board's website](#). Follow the directions to document your supervised clinical work experience.
- Once you receive word from the state board that your forms were received and documented, you can [register for the clinical-level exam](#). There are study guides and prep courses for the clinical examination available through [ASWB](#) and [NASW-Pennsylvania chapter](#).
- If you have a clinical social work license in another state, you can apply for an LCSW license in Pennsylvania by submitting the [Application for a License by Endorsement without Examination as a Clinical Social Worker](#). This will require an official copy of your WCU transcript. You can order your official transcript from Parchment. Click [here](#) for directions

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