

Workgroup for Social Work Licensure Requirements

Date: October 30, 2024 **Time:** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/rso-bhjm-ugc>

Or dial: (US) +1 347-762-8966 PIN: 856 535 732#

Agenda

- I. Administrative Updates - 10:00 am**
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Vote on Meeting Minutes
 - C. Update on Meeting Cadence

- II. Presentation - 10:15 am**

Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners, Karen Richards, LCSW-C, Executive Director

- III. Discussion - 10:35 am**
 - A. Interim Report Submission and Final Report Timeline, Ana Lazarides, MDH
Final Report due December 1, 2024
 - B. Subgroup meeting summaries
 1. Testing Barriers
 2. Universities/Schools/Programs of Social Work
 3. Policy
 4. Recommendations on Testing

- IV. Presentation - 10:40 am**

Alternative Pathways, Dr. Angela Gustus, CMAG & Associates

- V. Public Comment - 11:40 am**

- VI. Closing and Next Steps - 11:55 am**
 - A. Survey Completion - November 6, 2024
 - B. Subgroup meetings

- VII. Upcoming Meetings**
 - A. November 13, 2024
 - B. November 20, 2024
 - C. December 18, 2024



BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS
PRESENTATION
October 30, 2024



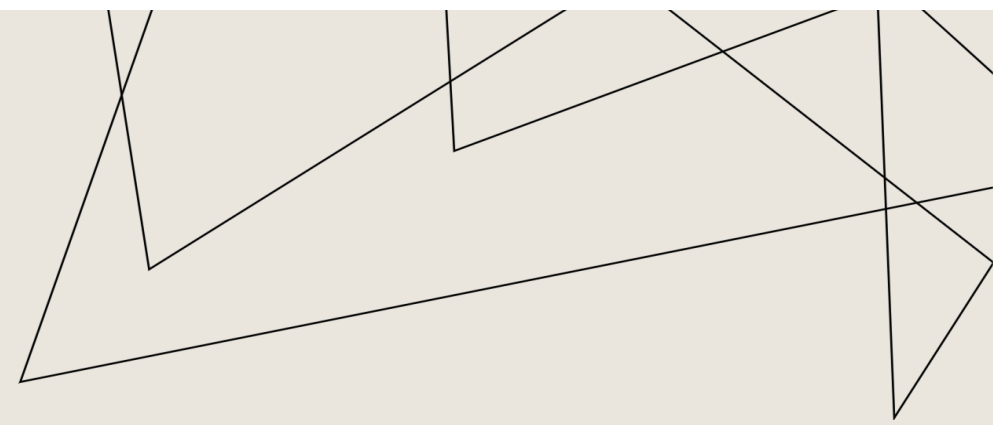
Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

PRESENTATION

Maryland SB 871 - Workgroup on Social Worker Requirements for Licensure



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- Mission of the Board
- Social Work Practice Act
- Brief History of Social Work Act
- Board & Staff Composition
- ASWB Member Association
- Licensing Data
- Complaint Data
- Workforce Issues?

MISSION OF THE BOARD

The Board of Social Work Examiners is one of 20 Health Occupation Boards that are housed under the Department of Health. The boards are self-funded through the licensing fees paid by licensees; while the statutes and regulations for each board differs, their missions are the same.

The mission of the health occupations boards is to protect the citizens of Maryland through the promotion of quality healthcare. This is achieved through maintenance of efficient licensure systems for healthcare professionals; promotion of disciplinary practices that contribute to an overall culture of accountability; education of clients and other stakeholders; and enforcement of applicable laws and statutes.

-from Department of Budget & Management – Managing for Results FY2025



**HEALTH OCCUPATIONS
TITLE 19. SOCIAL WORKERS
SUBTITLE 1 DEFINITIONS;
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

§ 19-102. LEGISLATIVE POLICY

(A) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT THE PROFESSION OF SOCIAL WORK PROFOUNDLY AFFECTS THE LIVES, HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS STATE.

(B) THE PURPOSE OF THIS TITLE IS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC BY:

(1) SETTING MINIMUM QUALIFICATION, EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE STANDARDS FOR THE LICENSING OF INDIVIDUALS TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK; AND

(2) PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING HIGH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK.





A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE ACT IN MARYLAND

The Maryland Social Work Act

- The Social Work Statute became effective on July 1, 1975
- Chapter 853, annotated Code of Maryland, Article 43, Subtitle le859-:70
- Fighting for passage of this statute included the work NASW-MD, UM-SSW, and the Director of Social Work at Sinai Hospital
- As with many bills, compromises were made – for example, social workers employed in public agencies were exempt (this was later repealed in 1983)
- The first Board meeting took place on October 1, 1975

Changes to the Act

- In 1983, the exemption for city, county, and state workers to be licensed was lifted during the Act's Sunset Review
- At this time, the "Certified" license was the only advanced practice license –it included full range of social work practice – not just clinical social work
- Some social workers were in private practice and had difficulty being reimbursed by insurance companies
- In response, the Board created a "Vendorship List" which differentiated social workers engaged in clinical social work from other forms of social work practice
- Of the licensed 4718 LCSW's– 1,700 were on the Vendorship list
- As more Social Workers sought to diagnose mental disorders as independent practitioners – the statute changed in 1994 to include a fourth category – the LCSW-C

BOARD & STAFF COMPOSITION

Staff:

- ❖ There are 4 staff units:
- ❖ **Licensing**
 - 3 full time Licensed Social Work staff
 - 3 full time Licensing Coordinators
 - 3 part-time staff: 2 Social Workers - 1 Licensing Coordinator
- ❖ **Compliance**
 - Licensed Social Worker
 - 2 Health Investigators
- ❖ **Continuing Education**
 - Licensed Social Worker
 - Administrative Assistant
- ❖ **Administrative Unit**
 - Executive Director
 - Fiscal Specialist
 - Administrative Assistant
 - Database Specialist

Board Members:

The Board consists of 12 members. Of the 12 Board members:

10 shall be licensed social workers of whom:

- 1 is a licensed bachelor social
- 1 is a licensed master social worker
- at least 1 is a licensed certified social
- 4 are licensed certified social workers—clinical
- 1 is a licensed social worker employed by the Department of Human Services
- 1 is a licensed social worker who is: primarily engaged in social worker education at a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education; and nominated from a list of names submitted by the deans and directors of the Maryland Social Work Education Programs
- 2 shall be consumer members

ASWB MEMBER ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the Association is to provide support and services to the social work regulatory community to advance safe, competent, and ethical social work practices and to strengthen the public protection mission of the social work regulatory community. The Association will:

- Educate and provide leadership to member jurisdictions to build regulatory knowledge that develops and implements competent practices for legally regulating social work practice.
- Collaborate with regulatory jurisdictions in developing compatible standards and cooperative procedures to fulfill statutory, public and ethical obligations in legal regulation and enforcement.
- Promote consistency in regulation, practice mobility and license portability for social workers across jurisdictions.
- Collaborate with other organizations and bodies whose interests coincide with those of the Association to promote safe, competent and ethical practice to protect the public.
- Engage in and promote research on legal regulation.

ASWB SERVICES to BSWE **Member since 1981**

CURRENT BSWE SERVICES

Exam

Continuing Education Auditing

Public Protection Database

ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS FROM ASWB

Board training and support

Regulatory services

Approved Continuing Education Program (ACE)

Exam preapproval processing

License application processing

Path to Licensure

BSWE started using ASWB Exam March 1, 1984

Practice act adopted in 1975 via Health Occupations Title 19 ch. 853 [Archives of Maryland, Volume 0716, Page 3529 - Session Laws, 1975](#)

License Level	Type	Year Change	Where to Find Changes in Statute
Licensed Bachelor Social Worker	Bachelors	2013	2013 Laws ch. 391
Licensed Master Social Worker	Masters	2017	2017 Laws ch. 548
Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical	Clinical	1992	1992 Laws ch. 388
Licensed Certified Social Worker	Masters advanced generalist / formerly clinical-AG	1975	1975 Laws ch. 853



Licensing Data

Licenses in 1979

- 1,032 Associate Licensees (now LBSW)
- 812 LGSW (now LMSW)
- 2,348 Certified Licensees (LCSW)

Total Licensed Social Workers in Maryland: 4,192

Licenses as of 10/24/2024

- 454 Licensed Bachelor Social Work (LBSW)
- 6031 Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)
- 329 Licensed Certified Social Workers (LCSW)
- 13,003 Licensed Certified Social Worker - Clinical (LCSW-C)

Total Licensed Social Workers in Maryland (as of 10/24/2024) 19,817

An increase of 15,625 in 45 years

Licensure by Endorsement: 1784 in 2023

“Licensure is the way that governments recognize and acknowledge that the profession has a real impact and provides care and services to the public.” - Stanley Weinstein, Ph.D., LCSW-C

LICENSING

This is a breakdown of current licensees along gender and identified race. This data is from February 2024.

	LBSW	LMSW	LCSW	LCSW-C
Active	451	5915	345	12205
Female	414	5186	307	10704
Male	37	729	38	1501
Hispanic	1	54	2	55
Indian/Alaskan	2	10	0	9
Asian	4	165	8	207
Black or Afram	112	2147	89	2599
White	264	2563	204	7401
Other	4	44	2	107
Mix	31	530	14	665
No Answer	33	401	26	1159

TYPES of COMPLAINTS

Complaints Against Social Workers fall into the following general categories:

- Child Custody
 - Criminal Convection while Licensed
 - Deficient Record Keeping
 - Drugs
 - Failed Continuing Education Audit
 - Failed to Report Child Abuse
 - Felony Conviction identified at Application
 - Fraud
 - Inappropriate Relationship with client or others
 - Non-Registered Supervisor
 - Other Supervision Violations
 - Practice w/Lapsed License
 - Practice Beyond License Scope
 - Practicing w/out SW License
 - Sexual Relations
 - Substance Abuse while Licensed
 - Unprofessional Behavior
 - Various Boundary Violations
- The Board has seen an increase in supervision violations - 17 complaints in 2024 vs. 4 in 2023 and 6 in 2022.
 - Supervision violations that would become complaints include forging supervisors name, LMSW working as independent practitioner, or having a supervisor who is not Board approved.
 - Supervision errors that we see regularly that might not rise to a complaint include using incorrect forms, incorrect signatures, and hours that don't add up

COMPLAINT DATA 2022 - 2024

License Level	January 2022 to December 2022	January 2023 to December 2023	January 2024 to May 29, 2024
LBSW	1	2	5
LMSW	28	35	31
LCSW	4	7	2
LCSW-C	152	103	60
Non-Social Workers	13	16	9
TOTALS	198	163	108

For the first half of 2024, these are the types of violations with highest numbers:

Fraud: 19

Other Supervision Violations: 15

Sexual Relations: 11

Unprofessional Behavior: 66

Various Boundary Violations: 7



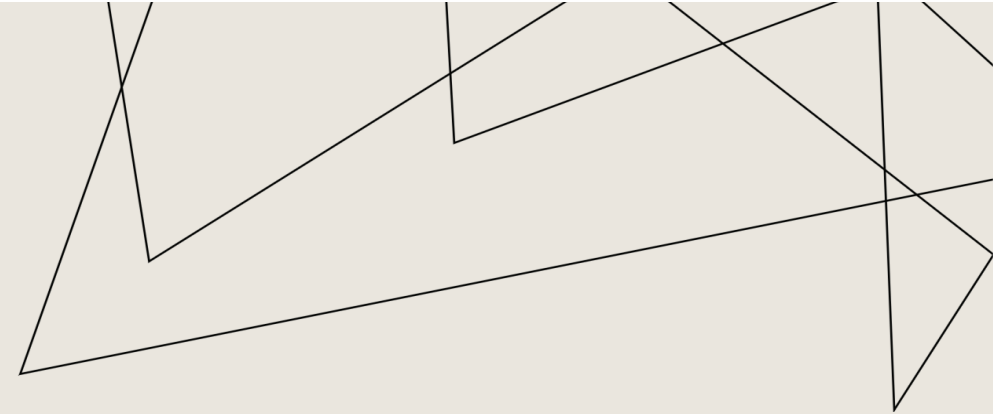
BSWE RESPONSE TO WORKFORCE ISSUES

- It is not the role of the Board to address workforce issues, we can only work to assure those who are eligible to apply for licensure are served
- The Board does not sponsor legislation; however, the Board can take a position on legislation
- For example, the Board took a position in favor of the Compact Legislation bill - HB 34/SB2024
- The Board's position was in line with several advocacy organizations – most notably NASW-MD and The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition - MdCSWC
- The Compact Bill would allow the 12,596 LCSW-C independent social workers to expand their clinical practice outside of Maryland

RESPONSE TO EXAM DATA

Overview of ASWB response

- Sponsored a series of Community Conversations with stakeholders
- Contracted with Fifth Theory: a free of charge program exclusively to test-takers who are unsuccessful in passing exam
- ASWB and PSI are pursuing initiatives designed to support candidates' paths to licensure including funds and support for future test takers – particularly those in historically marginalized communities
- Awarded funding for independent research projects to uncover factors impacting pass rate disparities
- Exploring additional assessment formats, including secure, remote online proctoring and a modularized exam format that would allow unsuccessful test-takers to be retested only on competencies they still need to demonstrate.



BSWE RESPONSE TO EXAM DATA

- The Board invited ASWB to an Open Session meeting on January 13, 2023, for a discussion of the exam data. The link to that meeting can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRk1wbNFm7Y>
- Two representatives on the Licensure Policy Workgroups
- The Board is committed to working with stakeholders to find ways to reduce barriers and burdens for applicants. The Executive Director met with the University of MD School of Social Work Alumni office as they are working on a fund to help pay application fees for new graduates.

Suggestions for Reducing Barriers

- Offer more comprehensive supervision model with more hours for those who fail the exam the first time and do not want to re-test.
- Currently, applicant may re-take exam four times within 1 year or every 3 months. Should the time be shortened?
- Can the Board waive fees for those who fail exam and have to re-test?
- Is it possible to have applicants re-take only the sections that they miss – like CPA exams?

RESOURCES

The Social Work Practice Act: statutes text

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=gho section=19-101 enactments=false>

MD General Assembly: Legislation - SB 2024

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/SB0204>

Social Work Compact

<https://swcompact.org/>

ASWB: A Regulators Tool Kit

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fBed1q5aSG1Nbc0ZKSfMPFswJzA6hN4/view>

ASWB Examination Policy

<https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Section-II-The-Examinations-v1.2022.pdf>

ASWB Public Protection Database

<https://www.aswb.org/licenses/protecting-the-public/public-protection-database/>

A robust licensure system benefits the social work profession—and the public Commentary by Stan Weinstein, Ph.D., LCSWC, in ASWB's Views from the field series

<https://www.aswb.org/a-robust-licensure-system-benefits-the-social-work-profession-and-the-public/>





THANK YOU

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website:

<https://health.maryland.gov/bswe/Pages/default.aspx>



CMAG
& associates

Workgroup on Social Worker
Requirements for Licensure

Alternative Pathways Report

The CMAG & Associates Team



- Established in 2014
- Headquartered in Owings Mills, Maryland
- Approximately 85% of our consulting clients are Behavioral Health Organizations
- Nine consultants with various backgrounds
 - Data Collection & Analysis
 - Clinical Social Work
 - Human Resources
 - Accounting
 - Public Policy
 - Organization Policy & Procedures
 - Behavioral Health Billing & Credentialing
 - Healthcare Informatics
 - Healthcare Administration



CMAG's Charge

- Build on the information provided in the Interim Report
- Support the Workgroup in establishing an Alternative Pathway for clinical licensure
- Provide information related to conducting a Bias Analysis for standardized testing
- Assist in research and collecting data to support the efforts of the Workgroup
- Complete and submit the final report to the Maryland Department of Health by December 1, 2024



Alternative Pathways

What are other states doing?



Overview of Licensure Requirements

Bachelor Level

Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Using a Law Exam
42	37	1	4



Overview of Licensure Requirements

Master Level

Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Using a Law Exam
50	40	1	6



Overview of Licensure Requirements

Clinical License Level

Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Using a Law Exam	Total Number of States or Territories Law Exam for Endorsement Only	Total # of States or Territories Requiring a Law Course
51	51	2	9	2	2



ILLINOIS

Alternative Pathway if unsuccessful with the ASWB

- If an individual is unsuccessful in passing the ASWB exam, they have the option of completing an additional 3,000 hours of clinical experience, which can be supervised by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Licensed Psychiatrist, or Licensed Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurse.
- The exam attempt must have been made since 1/1/2019.
- The exam alternative hours must not be more than 10 years old.



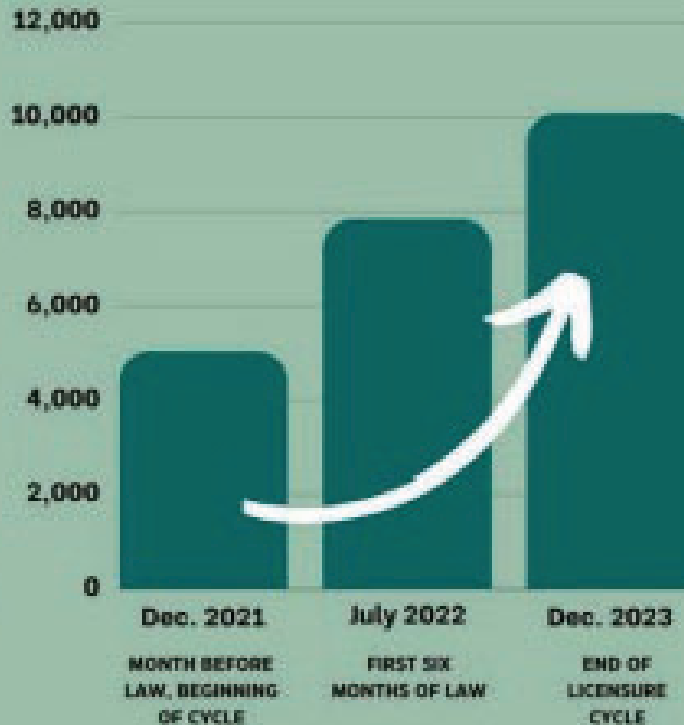
ILLINOIS Sanction Data

- Total number of sanctions per year:
 - 2019 – 4
 - 2020 – NA
 - 2021 – 1
 - 2022 – 2
 - 2023 – 2
 - 2024 – 4
- The average number of years that an individual had been licensed before being sanctioned is 12.85 years.
- The number of sanctions in 2024 is the highest it has been since 2019; however, none of the social workers who received a sanction in 2024 received their license under the Alternative Pathway Model (which was implemented on January 1, 2024).



ILLINOIS Workforce Increase

LICENSED SOCIAL WORKERS (LSW) IN ILLINOIS



NOTE: CHART DOES NOT INCLUDE
LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS
OR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

NASW
National Association of Social Workers
ILLINOIS CHAPTER

- Workforce increase after removing the exam in 2021
- LSW not LCSW data, but shows the benefit of removing barriers



MINNESOTA

Alternative pathway without having to take the exam

- Academic Degree
- 360 Clinical Clock Hours (360 total hours)
- Criminal Background Check
- Ethical Standards
- Supervised Practice (200 hours of supervision during 4,000-8,000 hours of clinical practice including 1,800 direct clinical contact hours)



TEXAS

Alternative Method of Exam Competency (AMEC)

- AMEC was removed in 2019
- Currently working to reinstate AMEC
- Process includes the following:
 - Complete a professional portfolio
 - Quarterly evaluations from a licensed supervisor
 - 11 papers specific to core content within social work practice
 - Case analysis of work with a client during the period when the individual is completing their competency requirements.
 - Self-evaluation



OREGON

Abolish the exam and do something different

- Established the Oregon Alternative Pathways to Social Work Committee
- Committee Recommends:
 - Abolish the ASWB exam for all licensure levels
 - Establishing a new path to licensure for all levels



MICHIGAN

Contemplating the Jurisprudence Exam

- Nine states currently use a jurisprudence model
- Jurisprudence is an exam that focuses on laws and ethics rather than competency



Nine States Using Jurisprudence Exam (in addition to the ASWB Exam)

California

Colorado

Indiana

Nebraska

New Mexico

Oregon

Texas

Vermont

Wisconsin



SUMMARY

The Five General Alternative Pathways

- Individuals must take the exam once. If unsuccessful, they may complete additional hours or supervised clinical work (Illinois)
- Individuals may choose not to take the exam and apply using an alternative pathway (Minnesota)
- Rather than an “Alternative Pathway,” all individuals will obtain their licensure through a new pathway to be determined (Oregon)
- Implement an Alternative Method of Exam Competency (Texas)
- Remove the ASWB exam and replace it with a jurisprudence exam which focuses on law and ethics (Nine states listed in the previous slide)



NEXT STEPS

- Survey sent out to all workgroup members – October 30, 2024
- Survey due – November 6, 2024
- Survey Results Discussion – November 13, 2024
- Workgroup Meeting – November 20, 2024
- Final Report Submitted to Maryland Department of Health – December 1, 2024



REFERENCES

- Social Work Podcast.** (2023, February). *NASW-IL: Breaking barriers to social work licensure*. Retrieved from <https://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2023/02/NASWIL.html>
- Simmons University, Field Educator.** (n.d.). *Conversations*. Retrieved from <https://fielddeducator.simmons.edu/article-categories/conversations/>
- National Association of Social Workers, Minnesota Chapter.** (n.d.). *Roadmap to becoming a MN licensed social worker*. **Minnesota Board of Social Work.** (n.d.). *Provisional Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker*
- National Association of Social Workers, Texas Chapter.** (n.d.). *Approve alternate path to social work licensure*
- Hirsh, J., DeCarlo, M., Lewis, A., & Walker, C.** (2023). Alternative pathways to social work licensure: A critical review and social equity policy analysis. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/26408066.2023.2284919>
- Farr, P., Wilson, S., Buncan, K., Stone, D., & Dominguez, J.** (n.d.). *The Alternative Pathways to Social Work Licensure Committee: Final report and recommendations to the Oregon Board of Licensed Social Workers on the ASWB examination for licensing and certification of professional social workers*
- Rubin, J. L.** (n.d.). *Breaking down barriers to social work licensure in Illinois*.
- DeCarlo, M.** (2024, October 24). Interview by Angela Gustus. *Saint Joseph's University, School of Education and Human Development*.
- Massey, M.** (2024, October 24). Interview by Angela Gustus. *National Catholic School of Social Service*.



This report, prepared by the CMAG & Associates LLC consultant team, comprehensively analyzes alternative pathways for clinical social workers' licensure. Contracted by the Maryland Department of Health for the Maryland State Workgroup on Social Work Licensure Regulations, the research aims to explore flexible and equitable licensure models that address workforce challenges while maintaining high professional competency standards. This work directly responds to findings from the ASWB report on exam pass rates, highlighting disparities in licensure outcomes and underscoring the need for alternative pathways. Through a review of best practices, stakeholder input, and national trends, this report offers recommendations designed to improve access to licensure, support workforce diversity, and enhance service delivery in Maryland's behavioral health system.

This report will examine the alternative licensure pathways established by Illinois and Minnesota, which have implemented models to address barriers to licensure and promote workforce inclusivity. In addition to these case studies, the report will summarize the current licensure pathways utilized across the United States, highlighting emerging trends and policy shifts. The primary objective is to identify viable options tailored to meet Maryland's specific needs while ensuring the integrity of clinical social work practice. By evaluating these pathways, the report aims to equip the Maryland State Workgroup with actionable insights to inform the development of more accessible, equitable licensure regulations.

Overview of Alternative Pathways Used By Other States

The table below provides a general overview of the licensure requirements throughout the United States.

Overview of Licensure Requirements						
Bachelor Level						
Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Using a Law Exam			
42	37	1	4			
Master Level						
Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Using a Law Exam			
50	40	1	6			
Clinical License Level						
Total # of States or Territories with this licensure level	Total # of States or Territories Requiring the ASWB Exam	Total # of States or Territories with an Alt Pathway	Total # of States or Territories Requiring a Law Exam	Total Number of States or Territories Law Exam for Endorsement Only	Total # of States or Territories Requiring a Law Course	
51	51	2	9	2	2	

The next section of the report will outline the efforts and initiatives undertaken by other states in developing alternative pathways for social work licensure. While numerous states are currently addressing this effort since the ASWB Pass Rate Report, it appears that Illinois and Minnesota have implemented an alternative pathway; however, in this section, additional states with published plans are also included as well.

Illinois

Through the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR), Illinois has established an alternative pathway for individuals who have failed the ASWB exam and choose to take an alternative path. The alternative path details listed below are in addition to the clinical hours required to take the exam initially.

- If an individual fails the ASWB exam, they have the option of completing an additional 3,000 hours of clinical experience, which can be supervised by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Licensed Psychiatrist, or Licensed Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurse.
- The exam attempt must have been made since 1/1/2019
- The exam alternative hours must not be more than 10 years old.

In addition to the information about the alternative pathways, Illinois publishes data showing the model's impact related to disciplinary action and the workforce.

Social Worker Initials	Year of Initial Licensure	Year of Sanction	Years Licensed Prior to Sanction
CD	2009	2019	10
SY	1992	2019	27
CS	1991	2019	28
CL	1991	2019	28
DC	1991	2021	30
KB	2020	2022	2
JG	2015	2022	7
PD	2014	2023	9
AW	2017	2023	6
ER	2017	2024	7
QC	2022	2024	2
BC	2015	2024	9
LM-N	2022	2024	2

- Total number of sanctions per year:
 - 2019 – 4
 - 2020 – NA
 - 2021 – 1



- 2022 – 2
- 2023 – 2
- 2024 – 4
- Average number of years that an individual had been licensed before being sanctioned is 12.85 years.
- The number of sanctions in 2024 is the highest it has been since 2019; however, none of the social workers who received a sanction in 2024 received their license under the Alternative Pathway Model (which was implemented on January 1, 2024)

While the information does not directly relate to the clinical level of licensure, the graphic below shows the increase in the LSW workforce since the removal of the ASWB exam. This information can be used to predict the increase in clinical social workers.



Minnesota

Minnesota has established a Provisional Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). This process went into effect as of October 1, 2024. Individuals are not required to take the ASWB exam if they complete the process identified below.

- Academic Degree: Complete a master’s degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work.



- 360 Clinical Clock Hours: Individuals must have completed courses from an institution of higher learning in the following areas (totaling 360 total hours of course work)
 - Differential Diagnosis and biopsychosocial assessment, including normative development and psychopathology across the life span (108 hours)
 - Assessment-based clinical treatment planning with measurable goals (36 hours)
 - Clinical intervention methods informed by research and current standards or practice (108 hours)
 - Evaluation Methodologies (18 hours)
 - Social work values and ethics, including cultural context, diversity, and social policy (72 hours)
 - Culturally specific clinical assessment and intervention (18 hours)
- Criminal Background Check
- Ethical Standards: Individuals must not have engaged in conduct in violation of the board's ethical standards of practice.
- Supervised practice: Individuals must submit documentation of the following
 - 200 hours of supervision over 4,000 to 8,000 hours of clinical practice
 - Hours must include 1,800 direct clinical contact hours
- Fees: Individuals must pay a total of \$108.25 for the provisional application

Texas

Texas is currently working to reinstate the statute, which provides an alternative pathway using the Alternative Method of Exam Competency (AMEC) Requirements. This alternative pathway was in place but removed in 2019 during a transition of the Texas Board of Social Worker Examiners to the Behavioral Health Executive Council. The AMEC process is in place for individuals who have failed the ASWB exam. This process includes the following:

- Complete professional portfolio
- Quarterly evaluations from a licensed supervisor
- 11 papers specific to core content within social work practice
- Case analysis of work with a client during this period
- Self-evaluation

Oregon

In April of 2024, the Oregon Board of Licensed Social Workers (OBLSW) established the Oregon Alternative Pathways to Social Work Committee. The recommendations made to the OBLSW are as follows:

- Abolish the use of the ASWB exam for all licensure levels.

- Rather than establishing an “alternative pathway,” they have recommended that a new path be established that does not involve the use of taking a standardized test at all.

No other publications have been found that identify any additional information about the status of the recommendations or the specific plans for the new pathway to licensure in Oregon.

Michigan

Michigan is looking to join the 9 states that decided to replace the ASWB exam with a Juris Prudence exam to test for law and ethics.

Virginia

Virginia’s legislators have removed “ASWB Exam” from the language related to the licensure process and simply replaced it with “Exam” which opens the door for the state to explore other potential options; however, no other information has been found indicating any other changes in the states’ licensure process.

Nine states using the jurisprudence exam

The nine states listed below use the jurisprudence exam and the ASWB exam. Some of the states are currently discussing removing the ASWB exam and solely using the jurisprudence exam.

California	Colorado	Indiana
Nebraska	New Mexico	Oregon
Texas	Vermont	Wisconsin

Conclusion and Next Steps

Overall, there are five general approaches that other states have taken as an Alternative Pathway toward clinical licensure for social workers:

- Individuals must take the exam once. If unsuccessful, they may complete additional hours or supervised clinical work (Illinois)
- Individuals may choose not to take the exam and apply using an alternative pathway (Minnesota)
- Rather than an “Alternative Pathway,” all individuals will obtain their licensure through a new pathway to be determined (Oregon)
- Implement an Alternative Method of Exam Competency (Texas)
- Remove the ASWB exam and replace with a jurisprudence exam which focuses on law and ethics (Nine states listed above)



The next steps in the workgroup's process will involve each member completing a survey provided by CMAG & Associates LLC, offering the opportunity to evaluate and choose which alternative pathway(s) they believe will best serve Maryland and why. The survey link will be distributed on October 30, 2024, and must be submitted no later than 5 PM on November 6, 2024. The results will be reviewed during a special workgroup meeting scheduled for November 13, 2024, providing a platform for in-depth discussion and alignment on the preferred options. A final vote will take place on November 20, 2024, in preparation for submitting the workgroup's recommendations to the Maryland State General Assembly by December 1, 2024. It is important to note that the final recommendations will acknowledge that additional topics related to the implementation of these pathways will need to be addressed. The workgroup's responsibilities will not conclude with the submission of the report; they will continue developing a detailed implementation plan, ensuring a smooth transition and effective adoption of the new licensure pathways.

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