

**DISTRICT OF  
COLUMBIA  
MUNICIPAL  
REGULATIONS  
for  
SOCIAL WORK**

## CHAPTER 70      SOCIAL WORK

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### **7000            GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 7000.1        This chapter shall apply to applicants for and holders of a license to practice social work.
- 7000.2        Chapters 40 (Health Occupations: General Rules) and 41 (Health Occupations: Administrative Procedures) of this title shall supplement this chapter.
- 7000.3        [Repealed]

### **7001            TERM OF LICENSE**

- 7001.1        A license issued pursuant to this chapter shall expire on July 31<sup>st</sup> of each odd-numbered year.
- 7001.2        [Repealed]

### **7002            EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

- 7002.1        Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, an applicant shall meet the educational and training requirements for the level of licensure sought in accordance with §§ 801 to 804 of the Act, D.C. Official Code §§ 3-1208.01 to 3-1208.04 (1985).
- 7002.2        The degree program upon which an applicant relies shall appear in the edition of the “List of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs” published by the Council on Social Work Education applicable to the year in which the degree was conferred.

7002.3 [Repealed]

7002.4 [Repealed]

7002.5 [Repealed]

### **7003 APPLICANTS EDUCATED IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

7003.1 The Board may grant a license to practice social work to an applicant who has completed an educational program in a foreign country, which program is not recognized by the Council of Social Work Education, if the applicant meets the following requirements:

- (a) Meets all requirements of the Act and this chapter, except for the requirements of §§ 801 to 804 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1208.01 to 3-1208.04 (2001), that the required degree be from a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education; and
- (b) Demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Board that the applicant's education and training are substantially equivalent to the requirements of this subtitle and the Act by submitting the documentation required by § 7003.2.

7003.2 An applicant under this section shall submit, with the completed application, a certification from the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service of the Council on Social Work Education that the applicant's foreign education is equivalent to the applicable requirements of the Act and this chapter.

7003.3 If a document required by this chapter is in a language other than English, an applicant shall arrange for its translation into English by a translation service acceptable to the Board and shall submit a translation signed by the translator attesting to its accuracy.

### **7004 NATIONAL EXAMINATION**

7004.1 Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, an applicant shall receive a passing score on the required level of the examination sponsored by the Association of Social Work Boards (the "national examination") or on another examination determined by the Board to be equivalent.

7004.2 An applicant who has passed the examination required under § 7004.1 more than five (5) years prior to the application date, shall be required to retake the examination unless the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Board that the applicant has been continuously licensed and practicing as a social worker in the United States since the date the applicant passed the examination.

- 7004.3 The passing score on the Associate (social work associate) level of the national examination shall be seventy-five (75).
- 7004.4 The passing score on the Basic (graduate social worker) level of the national examination shall be seventy-five (75).
- 7004.5 The passing score on the Intermediate (Independent social worker) level of the national examination shall be seventy-five (75).
- 7004.6 The passing score on the Advanced (Independent clinical social worker) level of the national examination shall be seventy-five (75).
- 7004.7 An applicant shall submit the applicant's examination results, which have been certified or validated by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), to the Board with the completed application.
- 7004.8 The Board may require an applicant who fails to pass the examination after two (2) consecutive attempts to complete a review course approved by the Board or any remediation as determined by the Board to be appropriate, prior to retaking the examination.

## **7005 ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE NATIONAL EXAMINATION**

- 7005.1 An individual may be eligible to take the national examination if the individual:
- (a) Has completed a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education; or
  - (b) Is enrolled in his or her final semester or quarter of a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, and is expected to receive the applicable social work degree at the end of the semester or quarter.
- 7005.2 A student in enrolled in his or her final semester or quarter of a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, who is a candidate for a degree in Social Work, may request approval from the Board to sit for the national examination as follows:
- (a) By submitting an application to the Board for a license by examination on the required forms, which includes the following:
    - (1) The applicant's social security number or if the applicant does not have a social security number, a sworn affidavit, under penalty of perjury, stating that he or she does not have a social security number; and

(2) Two (2) recent passport-type photographs of the applicant's face measuring two inches by two inches (2" x 2") which clearly expose the area from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin.

(b) By submitting a written request to the Board for authorization to take the national examination prior to graduation;

(c) By arranging for the education institution to submit to the Board, official evidence under seal of the university or school indicating:

(1) The degree that the student is expected to receive; and

(2) The date that the student is expected to receive the degree.

(d) By meeting any other requirements as set forth by the Board; and

(e) By paying all required fees.

7005.3 Approval to take the national examination shall be effective for two (2) examinations or one hundred and twenty (120) days, which ever comes first.

7005.4 After graduation from the social work program, and taking the national examination, the student shall submit to the Board the required documents as set forth under § 7006.2(b)-(e) of this chapter to complete the applicant's application for a license by examination.

7005.5 An application that remains incomplete for one hundred and twenty (120) days or more from the date of submission shall be considered abandoned, and closed by Board. The applicant shall thereafter be required to reapply, comply with the current requirements for licensure, and pay the required fees.

7005.6 A license may not be granted until the Board receives proof of graduation.

## **7006 LICENSE BY EXAMINATION**

7006.1 To qualify for a license by examination, an applicant shall:

(a) Be a graduate of a social work program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education at the time the applicant graduated;

(b) Receive a passing score on the on the required level of the national examination or on another examination determined by the Board to be equivalent;

(c) Meet the training requirements for the level of licensure sought; if any, and

(d) Meet any other requirements as set forth by the Board.

7006.2 To apply for a license by examination, an applicant shall:

(a) Submit a completed application to the Board on the required forms and include:

(1) The applicant's social security number on the application. If the applicant does not have a social security number, the applicant shall submit with the application a sworn affidavit, under penalty of perjury, stating that he or she does not have a social security number; and

(2) Two (2) recent passport-type photographs of the applicant's face measuring two inches by two inches (2" x 2") which clearly expose the area from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin.

(b) Submit to the Board a certified transcript from an education institution which shall appear in the edition of the "List of Colleges and Universities with Accredited Social Work Degree Programs", published by the Council on Social Work Education applicable to the year in which the degree was conferred;

(c) Submit to the Board the applicant's certified or validated national examination results;

(d) Submit to the Board two (2) professional references and one (1) personal reference;

(e) Submit any other required documents; and

(f) Pay all required fees.

7006.3 An applicant for a license as an independent social worker or independent clinical social worker shall submit with the application the following:

(a) Proof satisfactory to the Board that:

(1) The applicant has completed the applicable supervised practice requirements of the Act under the supervision of a qualified supervisor as set forth under § 7013 of this chapter; and

(2) At least one hundred (100) hours of the applicant's three thousand (3000) hours of supervised practice was completed under the immediate face-to-face supervision of a qualified supervisor as set forth under § 7013 of this chapter.

(b) The name(s) of the applicant's supervisor(s);

- (c) A statement detailing the nature and locations of the applicant's experience; and
- (d) A signed statement from each supervisor during the required period of supervised practice on a form approved by the Board, which sets forth the following:
  - (1) The location at which and period of time during which the supervised practice took place;
  - (2) The hours of supervision of the applicant;
  - (3) The hours of immediate supervision of the applicant;
  - (4) The specific nature of and responsibilities included in the applicant's practice;
  - (5) A rating of the applicant's performance; and
  - (6) The qualifications of the supervisor to act as such pursuant to the Act and this chapter.

7006.4 The performance of an applicant subject to § 7006.3 during the required period of supervised practice shall at all times have been rated as satisfactory or better.

7006.5 An applicant for licensure in the District of Columbia who has obtained his or her required three thousand (3000) hours of post-master's or postdoctoral experience outside of the District of Columbia:

- (a) Shall submit proof satisfactory to the Board that the hours were valid or legally recognized in the jurisdiction in which they were obtained; and
- (b) Shall submit proof satisfactory to the board that the applicant's supervisor met one of the following requirements:
  - (1) The supervisor was licensed in good standing in the United States as an independent social worker or independent clinical social worker, as applicable;
  - (2) The supervisor was licensed in good standing in the United States at a level equivalent to that of an District of Columbia independent social worker or independent clinical social worker, as applicable; or

- (3) The supervisor was qualified for licensure, in good standing, as an independent social worker or independent clinical social worker in the District of Columbia, as applicable, regardless of whether or where the supervisor was licensed.

7006.6 If the applicant has obtained less than the required thousand (3000) hours of post-master's or postdoctoral experience, the applicant must obtain the remaining hours in or out of the District of Columbia before he or she will be granted licensure. If the applicant elects to complete the hours in the District of Columbia, the applicant must first obtain licensure under the Act at the next lower level, for which the applicant is qualified, in order to engage in supervised practice within the District.

7006.7 The Board shall recognize the hours validly or legally obtained outside of the District of Columbia toward and apply the hours to the applicant's required total for licensure.

## **7007 LICENSE BY ENDORSEMENT**

7007.1 An applicant is eligible for a license by endorsement if the applicant:

- (a) Obtained initial licensure in the United States by an examination equivalent to the level of licensure for which the applicant is applying; and
- (b) Is currently licensed in good standing as a social work under the laws of a state or territory of the United States pursuant to licensure requirements, which, as determined by Board, were substantially equivalent at the time of licensure to the requirements of this chapter.

7007.2 To apply for a license by endorsement, an applicant shall:

- (a) Submit a completed application to the Board on the required forms and include:
  - (1) The applicant's social security number on the application. If the applicant does not have a social security number, the applicant shall submit a sworn affidavit, under penalty of perjury, with the application stating that he or she does not have a social security number; and
  - (2) Two (2) recent passport-type photographs of the applicant's face measuring two inches by two inches (2" x 2") which clearly expose the area from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin.
- (b) Submit a copy of his or her current license with the application;

- (c) Obtain licensure verification from the original state or territory of licensure that the license is current and in good standing. The licensure verification form must be sent directly to the Board, by the verifying Board;
- (d) Submit the applicant's certified or validated examination results, which shall confirm that the applicant has received a passing score on the required level of the nation examination or on another examination determined by the Board to be equivalent;
- (e) Meet any other requirements as set forth by the Board; and
- (f) Pay all required fees.

7007.3 An application that remains incomplete for ninety (90) days or more from the date of submission shall be considered abandoned, and closed by the Board. The applicant shall thereafter be required to reapply, submit the required documents and completed forms, and pay the required fees.

7007.4 Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Board from utilizing other authorized databases to verify an applicant's current licensure standing in other jurisdictions of the U.S. or to review disciplinary records.

## **7008 CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

7008.1 Except as provided in § 7008.2, this section shall apply to applicants for the renewal, reactivation, or reinstatement of a license.

7008.2 This section shall not apply to applicants for an initial District of Columbia license, nor to applicants for the first renewal of a license granted by examination.

7008.3 Continuing education credits (CEUs) may be granted only for programs or activities approved by the Board.

7008.4 Beginning with the renewal period of 2007, an applicant for renewal of a license shall have completed forty (40) hours of approved continuing education credit during the two-year period preceding the date the license expires. A minimum of six (6) hours of the total continuing education credits shall have been in ethics.

7008.5 To qualify for a license, an applicant in inactive status within the meaning of § 511 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1205.11 (2001), who submits an application to reactivate a license shall submit proof of having completed twenty (20) hours of approved continuing education credit for each year that the applicant was in inactive status.

- 7008.6 To qualify for a license, an applicant for reinstatement of a license shall submit proof of having completed twenty (20) hours of approved continuing education credit for each year that the license was expired.
- 7008.7 An applicant under this section shall submit with the application a completed form approved by the Board for each program for which continuing education credit is claimed, and shall maintain for a period of at least five (5) years the following information with respect to each program:
- (a) The name and address of the sponsor of the program;
  - (b) The name of the program, its location, a description of the subject matter covered, and the names of the instructors;
  - (c) The dates on which the applicant attended the program;
  - (d) The hours of credit claimed; and
  - (e) Verification by the sponsor of completion, by signature or stamp.
- 7008.8 An applicant for renewal of a license who fails to submit proof of having completed continuing education requirements by the date the license expires may renew the license up to sixty (60) days after the expiration by submitting this proof and paying the required additional late fee.
- 7008.9 Upon submission of proof and payment, the applicant shall be deemed to have possessed a valid license during the period between the expiration of the license and the submission of the proof and payment.
- 7008.10 If an applicant for renewal of a license fails to submit proof of completion of continuing education requirements or pay the late fee within sixty (60) days after the expiration of the applicant's license, the license shall be considered to have lapsed on the date of expiration.
- 7008.11 The Board may, in its discretion, grant an extension of the sixty (60) day period to renew after expiration if the applicant's failure to submit proof of completion was for good cause.
- 7008.12 An applicant under this section shall prove completion of continuing education course work which was audited under § 7010.3 by submitting with the application a verification of registration from the office of the registrar of the institution at which the course was audited.

**7009 APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

- 7009.1 The Board shall approve only continuing education programs and activities that contribute to the growth of an applicant in professional competence in the practice of social work and which meet the other requirements of this section.
- 7009.2 The Board may approve the following types of continuing education programs, if the programs meet the requirements of § 7009.6:
- (a) An undergraduate or graduate course given at an accredited college or university;
  - (b) A seminar or workshop; and
  - (d) An educational program given at a conference.
- 7009.3 The Board may approve the following independent home studies and distance learning continuing education activities:
- (a) Serving as an instructor or speaker at a conference, seminar, or workshop;
  - (b) Publication of an article in a professional journal, publication of a book or a chapter in a book, or publication of a book review in a professional journal or bulletin;
  - (c) Internet courses, video courses, telecourses, videoconferences, and teleconferences offered by accredited colleges or universities, or pre-approved by the ASWB; and
  - (d) Independent study programs directly related to social work approved by accredited college or university schools of social work, local or national professional social work organizations, the ASWB, or the Board.
- 7009.4 No more than twelve (12) CEUs may be accepted in any renewal period, or for reinstatement or reactivation of a license, for approved independent home studies and distance learning continuing education activities.
- 7009.5 Independent study programs shall not be used to satisfy the continuing education ethics requirement.
- 7009.6 To qualify for approval by the Board, a continuing education program shall meet the following requirements:
- (a) Be current in its subject matter;

(b) Be developed and taught by qualified individuals in consultation with a licensed social worker; and

(c) Meet one of the following requirements:

(1) Be administered or approved by:

(A) A recognized social work, mental health, or human services organization that is approved by the Board; or

(B) A college or university that is accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation; or

(2) Be submitted by the program sponsors to the Board for review no less than three (3) months prior to the date of the presentation and be approved by the Board.

7009.7 Requests for approval of continuing education programs received by the Board after the continuing education program has already occurred will not be approved or accepted.

7009.8 The Board may issue and update a list of approved continuing education organizations and programs.

7009.9 An applicant shall have the burden of verifying whether a program or activity is approved by the Board pursuant to this section prior to attending the program or engaging in the activity.

**7010 CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS<sup>1</sup>**

7010.1 The Board may grant continuing education credit in whole hours only, with a minimum of fifty (50) minutes constituting one (1) credit hour.

7010.2 For approved undergraduate or graduate courses that are taken for educational credit, each semester hour of credit constitutes twenty (20) hours of continuing education credit, and each quarter hour of credit constitutes fourteen (14) hours of continuing education credit.

7010.3 For approved undergraduate or graduate courses that are audited, each semester hour shall constitute fifteen (15) hours of continuing education credit, and each quarter hour shall constitute ten (10) hours of continuing education credit.

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<sup>1</sup> The references in this section to § 7009.6 are in error and should read § 7009.3. The Board will publish rulemaking to correct this error at a later date.

- 7010.4 The Board may grant a maximum of six (6) continuing education credits per year for completing continuing education activities under § 7009.6.
- 7010.5 The Board may grant credit for preparation and presentation time to an applicant who serves as an instructor or speaker at an approved program under § 7009.6(a) subject to the following restrictions:
- (a) The maximum amount of credit that may be granted for preparation time shall be twice the amount of the associated presentation time, not to exceed six (6) CEU's;
  - (b) If an applicant has previously received a credit in connection with a particular presentation, the Board shall not grant credit for a subsequent presentation unless it involves either a different subject or substantial additional research concerning the same subject; and
  - (c) The presentation shall have been completed during the period for which credit is claimed.
- 7010.6 The Board may grant continuing education credit under § 7009.6(b) only if the applicant proves to the satisfaction of the Board that the work has been published or accepted for publication during the period for which credit is claimed.

## **7011 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

- 7011.1 Any holder of a license under this Chapter or any person authorized to practice social work or to perform social work functions under this Chapter shall comply with the standards of ethical and professional conduct established by the National Association of Social Workers in its publication entitled "Code of Ethics," as it may be amended or republished from time to time.

## **7012 SUPERVISION OF PRACTICE BY STUDENTS, APPLICANTS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

- 7012.1 Only the following persons may practice under supervision:
- (a) Students fulfilling educational requirements in a program which meets the requirements of § 103(c) of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1201.03 and 17 DCMR § 7002.2;
  - (b) An applicant who is applying for his or her first license in the District provided that he or she has submitted all required documents including a

passing test score on an examination approved by the Board;

(c) A licensed social work associate;

(d) A licensed graduate social worker; or

(e) A social worker licensed under the Act, who is obtaining the required three thousand (3000) hours of post-master's or postdoctoral experience pursuant to § 803 or § 804 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1208.03(a) or D.C. Official Code § 3-1208.04(a).

- 7012.2 A person who has been denied a license or disciplined, or who is the subject of a pending denial or disciplinary action, in the District or other jurisdiction shall not practice pursuant to this section unless authorized by the Board in writing to do so.
- 7012.3 Only a supervisor, meeting the qualifications as set forth in § 7013 of this chapter, shall be authorized to supervise the practice of social work in the District of Columbia.
- 7012.4 A supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that the individual(s) under his or her supervision is authorized to practice under supervision and may be subject to disciplinary action for supervising unlicensed or unauthorized personnel.
- 7012.5 A student, applicant, or social worker shall practice social work under supervision only in accordance with the Act and this chapter.
- 7012.6 All supervised practice shall take place under supervision.
- 7012.7 Supervision shall include personal observation, evaluation, oversight, review, and correction of services provided by the supervisee.
- 7012.8 The supervisor shall have sufficient knowledge of all social work contacts of the supervisee's social work practice, including face to face contact with the client when necessary, to develop and to monitor effective service delivery procedures and the supervisee's treatment or service plan.
- 7012.9 All decisions by a supervisee which require the special skill, knowledge, or training of a social worker shall be made in collaboration with and with the approval of the supervisor. Such decisions may include, but are not limited to: type, duration, effectiveness, and method of services provided; fees and billing procedures; and approval of cases.
- 7012.10 At least one (1) hour of every thirty-two (32) hours of supervised practice shall be under immediate supervision.

- 7012.11 A supervisor shall be fully responsible for supervised practice by a student, applicant, or social worker during the period of supervision, and is subject to disciplinary action for any violation of the Act or this chapter by the person being supervised.
- 7012.12 A student or applicant shall identify himself or herself as such before practicing as a social worker.
- 7012.13 A student or applicant shall not receive compensation of any nature, directly or indirectly, from a patient, except for a salary based on hours worked under supervision.
- 7012.14 A student or applicant shall be subject to all applicable provisions of the Act and this subtitle. The Board may deny an application for a license by, or take other disciplinary action against, a student or applicant who is found to have violated the Act or this subtitle, in accordance with Chapter 41 of this title.
- 7012.15 If the Board finds that a student or applicant has violated the Act or this title, the Board may, in addition to any other disciplinary actions permitted by the Act, revoke, suspend, or restrict the privilege of the student or applicant to practice.

### **7013 SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS**

- 7013.1 Only an independent social worker or independent clinical social worker licensed under the Act, in good standing, who is an appointed faculty member of the accredited school, college, or university, shall be authorized to supervise the practice of a student.
- 7013.2 Only an independent social worker or independent clinical social worker licensed under the Act, in good standing, shall be authorized to supervise the practice of:
- (a) A licensed social work associate;
  - (b) A licensed graduate social worker;
  - (c) An applicant pending licensure in the District as a social work associate, graduate social worker, or independent social worker; or
  - (d) A social worker licensed under the Act, who is obtaining the required three thousand (3000) hours of post-master's or postdoctoral experience pursuant to § 803 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1208.03(a).
- 7013.3 Only an independent clinical social worker licensed under the Act, in good standing, shall be authorized to supervise the practice of:

- (a) An applicant pending licensure in the District as an independent clinical social worker; or
- (b) A social worker licensed under the Act, who is obtaining the required three thousand (3000) hours of post-master's or postdoctoral experience pursuant to § 804 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1208.04(a).

## 7099 DEFINITIONS

7099.1 When used in this chapter, the following terms and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed:

**Applicant** – a person applying under this chapter for a license as a social work associate, graduate social worker, independent social worker, or independent clinical social worker, as the context requires.

**Board** – the Board of Social Work, established by § 212 of the Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1202.12 (2001).

**Good Cause** – serious illness of the applicant; the death or serious illness of a member of the applicant's immediate family; or other cause sufficient to the Board.

**Immediate Supervision** – one-to-one supervision in which the supervisor is with the supervisee and either discussing or observing the supervisee's practice.

**National Examination**- the social work licensing examination sponsored by the Association of Social Work Boards.

**Social Worker** – a person licensed under the Act to practice social work.

**Supervisee** – a student, applicant, or social worker authorized to engage in supervised practice under § 7012.

**Supervision**- A formalized professional relationship between a supervisor and supervisee in which the supervisor directs, monitors, and evaluates the supervisee's social work practice while promoting development of the supervisee's knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide social work services in an ethical and competent manner.

**Supervisor** – a social worker licensed under the Act, or a qualified supervisor under § 7013, as the context requires, who is responsible for the supervision of a supervisee.

7099.2 The definitions in § 4009 of Chapter 40 of this title are incorporated by reference into and apply to this chapter.