

**148E.055 LICENSE REQUIREMENTS.**

Subdivision 1. **License required.** (a) In order to practice social work, an individual must have a social work license under this section or section 148E.060, except when the individual is exempt from licensure according to section 148E.065.

(b) Individuals who teach professional social work knowledge, skills, and values to students and who have a social work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accrediting body designated by the board must have a social work license under this section or section 148E.060, except when the individual is exempt from licensure according to section 148E.065.

(c) Effective July 1, 2016, an individual who is newly employed by a city or state agency or a private nonprofit, nontribal agency previously exempt from licensure under Minnesota Statutes 2010, section 148D.065, subdivision 5, and section 148E.065, subdivision 5, must be licensed if:

(1) the individual is presented to the public by any title incorporating the words "social work" or "social worker"; or

(2) the individual has a baccalaureate or graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accrediting body designated by the board, and the individual provides social work services, including clinical social work services, as those services are defined in section 148E.010, subdivisions 6 and 11.

Subd. 2. **Qualifications for licensure by examination as a licensed social worker.** (a) To be licensed as a licensed social worker, an applicant for licensure by examination must provide evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:

(1) has received a baccalaureate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accreditation body designated by the board, or a doctorate in social work from an accredited university;

(2) has passed the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. Unless an applicant applies for licensure by endorsement according to subdivision 7, an examination is not valid if it was taken and passed eight or more years prior to submitting a completed, signed application form provided by the board. The examination may be taken prior to completing degree requirements;

(3) has submitted a completed, signed application form provided by the board, including the applicable application fee specified in section 148E.180. For applications submitted electronically, a "signed application" means providing an attestation as specified by the board;

(4) has submitted the criminal background check fee and a form provided by the board authorizing a criminal background check according to subdivision 8;

(5) has paid the applicable license fee specified in section 148E.180; and

(6) has not engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice specified in sections 148E.195 to 148E.240. If the applicant has engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(b) An application that is not completed and signed, or that is not accompanied by the correct fee, must be returned to the applicant, along with any fee submitted, and is void.

(c) A licensee granted a license by the board according to paragraph (a) must meet the supervised practice requirements specified in sections 148E.100 to 148E.125. If a licensee does not meet the supervised practice requirements, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(d) By submitting an application for licensure, an applicant authorizes the board to investigate any information provided or requested in the application. The board may request that the applicant provide additional information, verification, or documentation.

(e) Within one year of the time the board receives an application for licensure, the applicant must meet all the requirements specified in paragraph (a) and must provide all of the information requested by the board according to paragraph (d). If within one year the applicant does not meet all the requirements, or does not provide all of the information requested, the applicant is considered ineligible and the application for licensure must be closed.

(f) Except as provided in paragraph (g), an applicant may not take more than three times the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards, or a similar examination body designated by the board. An applicant must receive a passing score on the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board in no more than 18 months after the date the applicant first failed the examination.

(g) Notwithstanding paragraph (f), the board may allow an applicant to take, for a fourth or subsequent time, the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board if the applicant:

(1) meets all requirements specified in paragraphs (a) to (e) other than passing the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board;

(2) provides to the board a description of the efforts the applicant has made to improve the applicant's score and demonstrates to the board's satisfaction that the efforts are likely to improve the score; and

(3) provides to the board letters of recommendation from two licensed social workers attesting to the applicant's ability to practice social work competently and ethically according to professional social work knowledge, skills, and values.

(h) An individual must not practice social work until the individual passes the examination and receives a social work license under this section or section 148E.060. If the board has reason to believe that an applicant may be practicing social work without a license, and the applicant has failed the bachelor's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board, the board may notify the applicant's employer that the applicant is not licensed as a social worker.

**Subd. 3. Qualifications for licensure by examination as licensed graduate social worker.**

(a) To be licensed as a licensed graduate social worker, an applicant for licensure by examination must provide evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:

(1) has received a graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accreditation body designated by the board, or a doctorate in social work from an accredited university;

(2) has passed the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. Unless an applicant applies for licensure by endorsement according to section 148E.055, subdivision 7, an examination is not valid if it was taken and passed eight or more years prior to submitting a completed, signed application form provided by the board. The examination may be taken prior to completing degree requirements;

(3) has submitted a completed, signed application form provided by the board, including the applicable application fee specified in section 148E.180. For applications submitted electronically, a "signed application" means providing an attestation as specified by the board;

(4) has submitted the criminal background check fee and a form provided by the board authorizing a criminal background check according to subdivision 8;

(5) has paid the applicable license fee specified in section 148E.180; and

(6) has not engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice specified in sections 148E.195 to 148E.240. If the applicant has engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(b) An application which is not completed and signed, or which is not accompanied by the correct fee, must be returned to the applicant, along with any fee submitted, and is void.

(c) A licensee granted a license by the board according to paragraph (a) must meet the supervised practice requirements specified in sections 148E.100 to 148E.125. If a licensee does not meet the supervised practice requirements, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(d) By submitting an application for licensure, an applicant authorizes the board to investigate any information provided or requested in the application. The board may request that the applicant provide additional information, verification, or documentation.

(e) Within one year of the time the board receives an application for licensure, the applicant must meet all the requirements specified in paragraph (a) and must provide all of the information requested by the board according to paragraph (d). If within one year the applicant does not meet all the requirements, or does not provide all of the information requested, the applicant is considered ineligible and the application for licensure must be closed.

(f) Except as provided in paragraph (g), an applicant may not take more than three times the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. An applicant must receive a passing score on the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board in no more than 18 months after the date the applicant first failed the examination.

(g) Notwithstanding paragraph (f), the board may allow an applicant to take, for a fourth or subsequent time, the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board if the applicant:

(1) meets all requirements specified in paragraphs (a) to (e) other than passing the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board;

(2) provides to the board a description of the efforts the applicant has made to improve the applicant's score and demonstrates to the board's satisfaction that the efforts are likely to improve the score; and

(3) provides to the board letters of recommendation from two licensed social workers attesting to the applicant's ability to practice social work competently and ethically according to professional social work knowledge, skills, and values.

(h) An individual must not practice social work until the individual passes the examination and receives a social work license under this section or section 148E.060. If the board has reason to believe that an applicant may be practicing social work without a license, and the applicant has failed the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board, the board may notify the applicant's employer that the applicant is not licensed as a social worker.

**Subd. 4. Licensure by examination; licensed independent social worker.** (a) To be licensed as a licensed independent social worker, an applicant for licensure by examination must provide evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:

(1) has received a graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accreditation body designated by the board, or a doctorate in social work from an accredited university;

(2) has practiced social work as defined in section 148E.010, and has met the supervised practice requirements specified in sections 148E.100 to 148E.125;

(3) has passed the advanced generalist or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. Unless an applicant applies for licensure by endorsement according to subdivision 7, an examination is not valid if it was taken and passed eight or more years prior to submitting a completed, signed application form provided by the board;

(4) has submitted a completed, signed application form provided by the board, including the applicable application fee specified in section 148E.180. For applications submitted electronically, a "signed application" means providing an attestation as specified by the board;

(5) has submitted the criminal background check fee and a form provided by the board authorizing a criminal background check according to subdivision 8;

(6) has paid the applicable license fee specified in section 148E.180; and

(7) has not engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice specified in sections 148E.195 to 148E.240. If the applicant has engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(b) An application which is not completed and signed, or which is not accompanied by the correct fee, must be returned to the applicant, along with any fee submitted, and is void.

(c) A licensed independent social worker who practices clinical social work must meet the supervised practice requirements specified in sections 148E.100 to 148E.125. If a licensee does not meet the supervised practice requirements, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(d) By submitting an application for licensure, an applicant authorizes the board to investigate any information provided or requested in the application. The board may request that the applicant provide additional information, verification, or documentation.

(e) Within one year of the time the board receives an application for licensure, the applicant must meet all the requirements specified in paragraph (a) and must provide all of the information requested by the board according to paragraph (d). If within one year the applicant does not meet all the requirements, or does not provide all of the information requested, the applicant is considered ineligible and the application for licensure must be closed.

(f) Except as provided in paragraph (g), an applicant may not take more than three times the advanced generalist or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. An applicant must receive a passing score on the master's or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board in no more than 18 months after the first time the applicant failed the examination.

(g) Notwithstanding paragraph (f), the board may allow an applicant to take, for a fourth or subsequent time, the advanced generalist or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board if the applicant:

(1) meets all requirements specified in paragraphs (a) to (e) other than passing the advanced generalist or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board;

(2) provides to the board a description of the efforts the applicant has made to improve the applicant's score and demonstrates to the board's satisfaction that the efforts are likely to improve the score; and

(3) provides to the board letters of recommendation from two licensed social workers attesting to the applicant's ability to practice social work competently and ethically according to professional social work knowledge, skills, and values.

(h) An individual must not practice social work until the individual passes the examination and receives a social work license under this section or section 148E.060. If the board has reason to believe that an applicant may be practicing social work without a license, except as provided in section 148E.065, and the applicant has failed the advanced generalist or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board, the board may notify the applicant's employer that the applicant is not licensed as a social worker.

**Subd. 5. Licensure by examination; licensed independent clinical social worker.** (a) To be licensed as a licensed independent clinical social worker, an applicant for licensure by examination must provide evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:

(1) has received a graduate degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accreditation body designated by the board, or a doctorate in social work from an accredited university;

(2) has completed 360 clock hours (one semester credit hour = 15 clock hours) in the following clinical knowledge areas:

(i) 108 clock hours (30 percent) in differential diagnosis and biopsychosocial assessment, including normative development and psychopathology across the life span;

(ii) 36 clock hours (ten percent) in assessment-based clinical treatment planning with measurable goals;

(iii) 108 clock hours (30 percent) in clinical intervention methods informed by research and current standards of practice;

(iv) 18 clock hours (five percent) in evaluation methodologies;

(v) 72 clock hours (20 percent) in social work values and ethics, including cultural context, diversity, and social policy; and

(vi) 18 clock hours (five percent) in culturally specific clinical assessment and intervention;

(3) has practiced clinical social work as defined in section 148E.010, including both diagnosis and treatment, and has met the supervised practice requirements specified in sections 148E.100 to 148E.125;

(4) has passed the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. Unless an applicant applies for licensure by endorsement according to subdivision 7, an examination is not valid if it was taken and passed eight or more years prior to submitting a completed, signed application form provided by the board;

(5) has submitted a completed, signed application form provided by the board, including the applicable application fee specified in section 148E.180. For applications submitted electronically, a "signed application" means providing an attestation as specified by the board;

(6) has submitted the criminal background check fee and a form provided by the board authorizing a criminal background check according to subdivision 8;

(7) has paid the license fee specified in section 148E.180; and

(8) has not engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice specified in sections 148E.195 to 148E.240. If the applicant has engaged in conduct that was or would be in violation of the standards of practice, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

(b) The requirement in paragraph (a), clause (2), may be satisfied through: (1) a graduate degree program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar accreditation body designated by the board; or a doctorate in social work from an accredited university; (2) graduate coursework from an accredited institution of higher learning; or (3) up to 90 continuing education hours, not to exceed 20 hours of independent study as specified in section 148E.130, subdivision 5. The continuing education must have a course description available for public review and must include a posttest.

Compliance with this requirement must be documented on a form provided by the board. The board may conduct audits of the information submitted in order to determine compliance with the requirements of this section.

(c) An application which is not completed and signed, or which is not accompanied by the correct fee, must be returned to the applicant, along with any fee submitted, and is void.

(d) By submitting an application for licensure, an applicant authorizes the board to investigate any information provided or requested in the application. The board may request that the applicant provide additional information, verification, or documentation.

(e) Within one year of the time the board receives an application for licensure, the applicant must meet all the requirements specified in paragraph (a) and must provide all of the information requested by the board according to paragraph (d). If within one year the applicant does not meet all the requirements, or does not provide all of the information requested, the applicant is considered ineligible and the application for licensure must be closed.

(f) Except as provided in paragraph (g), an applicant may not take more than three times the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board. An applicant must receive a passing score on the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board no later than 18 months after the first time the applicant failed the examination.

(g) Notwithstanding paragraph (f), the board may allow an applicant to take, for a fourth or subsequent time, the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board if the applicant:

(1) meets all requirements specified in paragraphs (a) to (e) other than passing the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board;

(2) provides to the board a description of the efforts the applicant has made to improve the applicant's score and demonstrates to the board's satisfaction that the efforts are likely to improve the score; and

(3) provides to the board letters of recommendation from two licensed social workers attesting to the applicant's ability to practice social work competently and ethically according to professional social work knowledge, skills, and values.

(h) An individual must not practice social work until the individual passes the examination and receives a social work license under this section or section 148E.060. If the board has reason to believe that an applicant may be practicing social work without a license, and the applicant has failed the clinical or equivalent examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board, the board may notify the applicant's employer that the applicant is not licensed as a social worker.

**Subd. 6. Degrees from outside United States or Canada.** If an applicant receives a degree from a program outside the United States or Canada that is not accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work, or a similar examination body designated by the board, the degree does not fulfill the requirements specified in subdivision 2, paragraph (a), clause (1); 3, paragraph (a), clause (1); 4, paragraph (a), clause (1); or 5, paragraph (a), clause (1), unless the Council on Social Work Education or a similar

accreditation body designated by the board has determined through the council's international equivalency determination service that the degree earned is equivalent to the degree required.

**Subd. 7. Licensure by endorsement.** (a) An applicant for licensure by endorsement must hold a current license or credential to practice social work in another jurisdiction.

(b) An applicant for licensure by endorsement who meets the qualifications of paragraph (a) and who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the board that the applicant passed the examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards or a similar examination body designated by the board for the applicable license in Minnesota is not required to retake the licensing examination.

(c) An application for licensure by endorsement must meet the applicable license requirements specified in subdivisions 1 to 6, except as provided in paragraph (d), and submit the licensure by endorsement application fee specified in section 148E.180.

(d) The following requirements apply:

(1) An applicant for licensure by endorsement who is applying for licensure as a licensed social worker must meet the requirements specified in subdivision 2.

(2) An applicant for licensure by endorsement who is applying for licensure as a licensed graduate social worker must meet the requirements specified in subdivision 3.

(3) An applicant for licensure by endorsement who is applying for licensure as a licensed independent social worker is not required to demonstrate that the applicant has obtained 100 hours of supervision as specified in section 148E.110, subdivision 1, provided that the applicant has engaged in authorized social work practice for a minimum of 4,000 hours in another jurisdiction.

(4) An applicant for licensure by endorsement as a licensed independent clinical social worker (i) is not required to meet the license requirements specified in subdivision 5, paragraph (a), clause (2), and (ii) is not required to demonstrate that the applicant has obtained 200 hours of supervision as specified in section 148E.115, subdivision 1, provided that the applicant has engaged in authorized clinical social work practice for a minimum of 4,000 hours in another jurisdiction.

**Subd. 8. Criminal background checks.** (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), an initial license application must be accompanied by:

(1) a form provided by the board authorizing the board to complete a criminal background check; and

(2) the criminal background check fee specified by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Criminal background check fees collected by the board must be used to reimburse the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension for the criminal background checks.

(b) An applicant who has previously submitted a license application authorizing the board to complete a criminal background check is exempt from the requirement specified in paragraph (a).

(c) If a criminal background check indicates that an applicant has engaged in criminal behavior, the board may take action according to sections 148E.255 to 148E.270.

**Subd. 9. Effective date.** The effective date of an initial license is the day on which the board receives the applicable license fee from an applicant approved for licensure.

Subd. 10. **Expiration date.** The expiration date of an initial license is the last day of the licensee's birth month in the second calendar year following the effective date of the initial license.

Subd. 11. **Change in license.** (a) A licensee who changes from a licensed social worker to a licensed graduate social worker, or from a licensed graduate social worker to a licensed independent social worker, or from a licensed graduate social worker or licensed independent social worker to a licensed independent clinical social worker, must pay the prorated share of the fee for the new license.

(b) The effective date of the new license is the day on which the board receives the applicable license fee from an applicant approved for the new license.

(c) The expiration date of the new license is the same date as the expiration date of the license held by the licensee prior to the change in the license.

**History:** 2007 c 123 s 73,138; 2009 c 157 art 3 s 8,49; 2012 c 197 art 1 s 1