

Social Work Licensing in Indiana

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Objectives

- Increase understanding of NASW/NASW Indiana Chapter and the benefits of membership.
- Overview of SW licensing and the process in Indiana
- Licensing Prep
- Questions



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Introduction

- Active member of NASW since the early 1990's. Served as the NASW-Indiana PACE chair for over 10 years and active in the public policy committee
- Registered lobbyist in Indiana for over 20 years. Worked on behalf of low-income families and individuals at Prevent Child Abuse Indiana and running the Indiana Network for Economic Fairness.
- Served as the Deputy Director of the Division of Family Resources during the O'Bannon and Kernan administration.
- Executive Director NASW Indiana Chapter since April of 2017
- Executive Director of NASW Indiana and NASW Tennessee as of November 2025

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The National Association
of Social Workers



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NASW

- Began in 1955 with the merger of 7 organizations
- NASW and the 55 chapters are *ONE* organization.
- NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards for social workers, and to advance sound social policies.
- Largest organization of professional social workers



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Joining NASW Benefits you Throughout your Career

- Access to news, information and advocacy at the state and federal level.
- Career resources and job opportunities
- Training and education
- Ethics and legal guidance
- Practice resources
- Opportunities to network and build your professional network



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NASW Indiana Chapter

- The Indiana Chapter board includes representatives from each of the 7 Regions, and a BSW and MSW student representative.
- Committees include:
 - Public Policy/Advocacy & LEAD
 - PACE - Political Action and Candidate Education
 - Program Committee which supports monthly programs, special events and our annual conference.
 - Ethics committee
- Interested in getting involved? Please check our website www.naswin.org for information.



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Membership Rates

- **Regular (Full) MSW, DSW and PhD Full Membership Dues:** \$236
- **BSW Full Membership Dues:** \$158
- **BSW and MSW Student Dues:** \$60
- **Transitional Rate for BSW & MSW student members who are continuous members after graduation.**
 - **BSW students** - two years of transitional dues of \$116 each year.
 - **MSW students** - three years of transitional dues of \$116 in years 1 and 2, and dues of \$179 in year 3



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Value of Social Work



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Types of Social Work

- Administration & Management
- Advocacy & Community Organizing
- Aging
- Child Welfare
- Health Care
- Developmental Disabilities
- International Social Work
- School Social Work
- Research
- Public Welfare
- Politics
- Policy & Planning
- Occupational & Employee Assistance
- Justice & Corrections
- Mental Health and Clinical Social Work
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse



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Accomplishments of Social Workers

Civil Rights

Voting Rights

Minimum Wage

Employment Rights

Reproductive Rights

Racial Equity

Immigration

Telehealth

Conversion Therapy Bans

Interstate Licensure Compact

SO much more!!



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LICENSING: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT



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Why Licensing

- Title Protection – you need your LBSW, LSW or LCSW to use the title social worker in Indiana.
- Social Work is regulated the same way that medicine and nursing are.
- Helps to assure that social workers are competent to practice and will interact in an ethical and safe manner.
- Regulation provides a means to address concerns if a social worker steps outside the bounds of ethical and safe practice.



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Licensing Board

- Establishes rules and regulations of the profession and the standard for licensure.
- Issues licenses to social workers who meet the professional standards.
- Sets continuing education requirements.
- Provides oversight and an avenue for the public to seek help if there are concerns about care provided not meeting standards.
- Holds hearings and makes determinations on complaints filed through the Indiana Attorney General.



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Licensure Required to Work

- No such thing as "working under another person's license"
- Must obtain license or temporary permit after graduation in order to work in Indiana.
- IC 25-23.6-4-1 Unlawful practices
 - Sec. 1. An individual may not:
 - profess to be a social worker, licensed social worker, or licensed clinical social worker;
 - use the title:
 - "social worker";
 - "licensed social worker";
 - "licensed clinical social worker";
 - "clinical social worker";
 - "psychiatric social worker";
 - "psychosocial worker";
 - use any other title containing the words "social worker", "licensed social worker", or "licensed clinical social worker";
 - use any other words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia indicating or implying that the individual is a social worker, licensed social worker, or licensed clinical social worker; or
 - practice as a social worker, licensed social worker, or clinical social worker for compensation;
 unless the individual is licensed under this article. As added by P.L.186-1990, SEC.9. Amended by P.L.147-1997, SEC.39; P.L.84-2010, SEC.55.

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IC 25-23.6-4-2 Exemptions for Social Work Only!

Sec. 2. (a) This article may not be construed to limit the social work or clinical social work services performed by a person who does not use a title specified in this article and who is one (1) of the following:

- (1) A licensed health care professional acting within the scope of the person's license.
- (2) A student, an intern, or a trainee pursuing a course of study.... If:
 - (A) the services are performed under qualified supervision and constitute a part of the person's supervised course of study or other level of supervision; and
 - (B) the student or graduate uses a title that contains the term "intern", "student", or "trainee";
- (3) Not a resident of Indiana if the person performed social work in Indiana for not more than five (5) days in any one (1) month or more than fifteen (15) days in any one (1) calendar year and the person is authorized to perform such services under the laws of the state or country in which the person resides.
- (4) A rabbi, priest, Christian Science practitioner, minister, or other member of the clergy.
- (5) An employee or a volunteer for an organization performing charitable, religious, or educational functions, providing pastoral counseling, or other assistance.

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IC 25-23.6-4-2 Exemptions for Social Work Only – DCS related

(8) An individual providing services under a contract with the department of child services who:

- (A) is employed by an organization that is nationally accredited and in good standing by the Joint Commission, Council on Accreditation, or the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities;
- (B) is directly supervised by a licensed individual who is:
 - (i) licensed under IC 25-23.6-2, as a social worker, clinical social worker, mental health counselor, mental health counselor associate, marriage and family therapist, or marriage and family therapist associate, and acting within the scope of the individual's license;
 - (ii) licensed as a psychologist under IC 25-33 and acting within the scope of the individual's license; or
 - (iii) licensed as a physician under IC 25-22.5 who is actively engaged in the practice of psychiatry and acting within the scope of the individual's license; and
- (C) meets any additional requirements established by the department of child services.

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IC 25-23.6-4-2 Exemptions for Social Work Only! DCS related

(9) An individual providing services under a contract with the department of child services who:

- (A) has completed a bachelor's degree in social work from:
 - (i) an eligible postsecondary educational institution that is accredited or approved for candidacy by the Council on Social Work Education or approved by the behavioral health and human services licensing board; or
 - (ii) a foreign school that has a program of study that is approved by the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service of the Council on Social Work Education; and
- (B) is employed in a position for which the department of child services has specified that the job may be filled by individuals who have completed a bachelor-level degree in social work or other human services fields but do not need to be licensed.

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QUESTIONS ON WHY LICENSING IS
 IMPORTANT?
 NEXT SECTION - OVERVIEW OF
 THE LICENSING PROCESS
 IN INDIANA



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Licensing Oversight

The Behavioral Health and Human Services Licensing Board provides oversight for

- Social Work
- Marriage and Family Therapists
- Mental Health Counselors
- Addictions

<https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services/>

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Three Levels of Licensing in Indiana

- 1. LBSW – Licensed Bachelor of Social Work**
Bachelor level license
- 2. LSW – Licensed Social Worker** - Masters level license
- 3. LCSW – Licensed Clinical Social Worker –**
Masters plus experience.



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Pathways to Licensing in Indiana

1. **Start application prior to graduation** – start application prior to graduation and complete after graduation by submitting your conferred official transcripts.

2. **Testing prior to graduation** – complete application prior to graduation and provide letter from program (IC 25-23.6-5-4 Examination; minimum requirements; examination in last term.) Once you have graduated you **MUST** submit your conferred official transcripts

Conferred Official Transcripts are required to be awarded a license or temporary permit.

Temporary Permit – good for 12 months only or until test is passed. There is no extension or renewal. Graduates **MUST** have a license or temporary permit to practice in Indiana.



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Begin application process **PRIOR** to graduation

Create an online account at <https://mylicense.in.gov/eGov/MLIPLA.html>

Plan to test **AFTER** graduation

Complete app online; complete background check; upload any required documents

After graduation request and submit your **conferred** transcripts through the online portal

After review/approval, applicant receives email with information on registering for ASWB exam

Option to apply for Temporary Permit for \$25 which allows legal work until exam passed OR 12 months (non renewable)

Plan to test **BEFORE** graduation

Complete app online; complete background check; upload any required documents, AND a letter of Good Standing from SW program

After review/approval, applicant receives email with information on registering for ASWB exam

After graduation request and submit your conferred transcripts through the online portal

NOTE: If exam not passed, must wait 90 days to retest and must start new application

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What's Needed for a SW License

1. Application
 - Complete online
 - Provide all required information
 - Signature indicates all information is true and accurate
2. Criminal Background Check
 - Completed through Indiana State Police
 - Provide affidavit for any positive responses
3. Conferred social degree from accredited CSWE program
4. ASWB exam

Most delays are caused by incorrect or missing information on applications or "missed"/unanswered emails.

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Step 1
<https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services/>

Indiana Professional Licensing Agency

Behavioral Health and Human Services

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Step 2
<https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services/behavioral-health-and-human-services-licensing-information/>

Indiana Professional Licensing Agency

Behavioral Health and Human Services Licensing Information

- Application Instructions and Requirements
- Renewal & Reinstatement Instructions
- Exams & Testing Agency Contacts
- Continuing Education Providers, Application and Information
- FAQs
- Fee Schedule

Apply Online with MyLicenseOne

You will either need to register for or sign to your Access Indiana account. Please read the below application instructions carefully. If you have held another PL license or have previously submitted an application, you must first link that record before you start a new application in MyLicense One. Just select "Don't see your License?" Click here to Search for it." from the MyLicense One Dashboard.

Apply Now

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Step 3
<https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services-licensing-information/>

Scroll down and click on the license you're applying for to review the:

- Application checklist/requirements
- Detail of the requirements and links for more information

- Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) Reciprocity
- Bachelor Social Worker (LSW)- Bachelor Level
- Bachelor Social Worker (LSW) Reciprocity
- Social Workers (LSW)- Master Level
- Social Worker (LSW) Reciprocity
- Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)- Master level with 2 years experience
- Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Reciprocity

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Licensing in Indiana

1. Submit appropriate application for LBSW, LSW or LCSW.
You will need:
 - Official transcripts from CSWE program showing the degree you earned or a letter of good standing in your last term
 - Complete criminal history check
 - Pay fee
2. Temporary permit LSW & LBSW is good for 12 months or until you pass the test. Only 1 permit allowed its part of application and costs \$25. The LCSW temp permit is available with different rules.



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Licensing Via Test

- Testing for all 3 levels of licensing is through Association of Social Work Boards www.aswb.org
- You can not take the test until your application is approved by the Indiana licensing board.
- You should review information from the ASWB website prior to registering for your test.
- Once you've registered with ASWB to take the test the next step is scheduling your test at Pearson Vue.
- All information is available online at www.aswb.org



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Reciprocity for LBSW, LSW, LCSW

- Have a valid license to practice from another state or jurisdiction;
- Meet Indiana's licensing requirements which includes passing the ASWB exam or a substantially equivalent exam;
- Do NOT have a pending disciplinary action in another state and pass criminal history/background check; and
- Submit your completed application with the \$50 application fee and all required documents.



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Licensing Steps – Reminders

- You must have a license or temporary permit to work legally in Indiana. There are limited exemptions for licensing related to DCS contracts.
- ASWB requires you to wait 90 days between testing attempts; you can request to waive the 90 days through ASWB website.
- ADA Accommodations **must** be requested when you register on the ASWB website.
- Temporary Permits for LBSW & LSW are good for 12 months.



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Questions About Licensing

At <https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services/> you can find:

- Licensing information for each license;
- Applications instructions;
- FAQ section;
- Statute and rules;
- Information on criminal background checks;
- Continuing education; and
- License Renewal



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Independent (Private) Practice

- Reserved only for LCSW (Clinical license)
- Statute requires anyone with an LSW or LBSW to be supervised by someone with a higher license.
- Anyone with an LSW working towards their LCSW must receive supervision from someone licensed as an LCSW in Indiana. The LCSW must provide 4 hours of supervision each month to the LSW.
- Someone with an LBSW or LSW has to be employed and supervised; therefore they may **NOT** work as a 1099 contractor for an agency/practice providing therapy or other services. 1099 contractor is, by definition, independent, not employment.
- Please note that an LSW or LBSW working as a 1099 contractor is working outside the scope of their license and is working illegally.

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Licensing Reminders

- You must have a license or temporary permit to legally work in Indiana. Make sure you review There are limited exemptions for licensing related to DCS contracts.
- ASWB requires you to wait 90 days between testing attempts, you can request to waive the 90 days through ASWB website.
- ADA Accommodations **must** be requested when you register on the ASWB website.
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QUESTIONS ON LICENSING PROCESS?



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LICENSING PREP OPTIONS



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Resources:

Behavioral Health and Human Services Licensing Board website can provide information on Indiana Statute, rules, criminal background checks and more. Online at: <https://www.in.gov/pla/professions/behavioral-health-and-human-services/>

Association of Social Work Boards <https://www.aswb.org>

NASW Indiana Chapter <https://www.naswin.org>



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Questions/Comments



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Social Work Interstate Licensure Compact

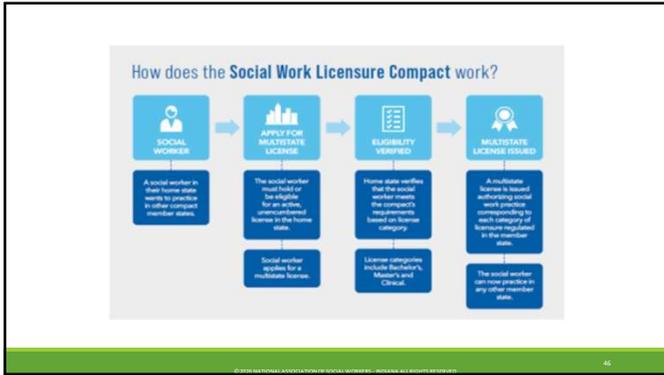
- Interstate compacts are constitutionally authorized, legislatively enacted, legally binding agreements among states.
- The SW Compact will enable regulated social workers with bachelor's, master's, and clinical licenses to serve clients in every state that joins the compact.
- Each compact member state agrees to mutually recognize licenses issued by every other member state.



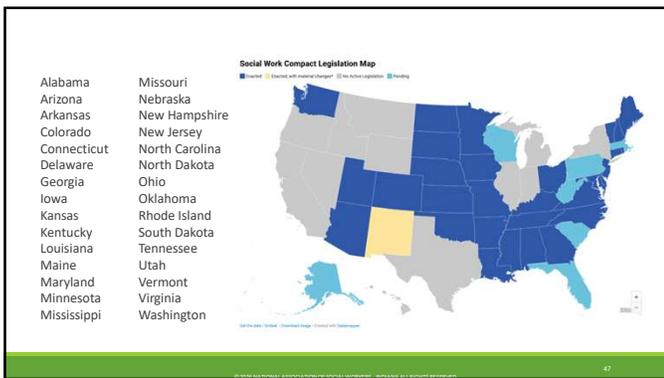
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Compact Resources & Information

SW Compact website – www.swcompact.org

NASW Compact info & Resources
<https://www.socialworkers.org/Advocacy/Interstate-Licensure-Compact-for-Social-Work>

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Where to Find Information - NASW

NASW National website - www.socialworkers.org

- Membership
- Practice area specific information
- Federal advocacy issues & advocacy alerts
- Information on licensing and the Social Work Compact
- Ethics



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For more information on NASW Indiana please visit our website at www.naswin.org

Email us at info.naswin@socialworkers.org

Call us at 317-923-9878

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