

SENATE BILL 379

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By: **Senators M. Washington, Benson, Lam, and Brooks**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Board of Social Work Examiners – Membership and Examination**
3 **Requirements**

4 FOR the purpose of repealing the examination requirements for bachelor and master social
5 worker licenses; altering the number of consumer members on the State Board of
6 Social Work Examiners; and generally relating to the regulation of social workers.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
8 Article – Health Occupations
9 Section 19–201, 19–301(a), and 19–302(b) and (c)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Health Occupations
14 Section 19–202(a)(1) and (2) and 19–302(a), (d), and (e)
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – Health Occupations**

20 19–201.

21 There is a State Board of Social Work Examiners in the Department.

22 19–202.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(a) (1) The Board consists of [12] 14 members.

(2) Of the [12] 14 Board members:

(i) 10 shall be licensed social workers of whom:

1. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, 1 is a licensed bachelor social worker;

2. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, 1 is a licensed master social worker at the time of appointment;

3. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, at least 1 is:

A. A licensed certified social worker; or

B. A licensed master social worker who is approved for independent practice;

4. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, at least 4 are licensed certified social workers—clinical;

5. 1 is a licensed social worker employed by the Department of Human Services; and

6. Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, 1 is a licensed social worker who is:

A. Primarily engaged in social worker education at a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education; and

B. Nominated from a list of names submitted by the deans and directors of the Maryland Social Work Education Programs; and

(ii) [2] 4 shall be consumer members.

19–301.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, an individual shall be:

(1) Licensed by the Board before the individual may practice social work in this State while representing oneself as a social worker; or

(2) Licensed as a certified social worker—clinical before the individual may practice clinical social work in this State.

19–302.

(a) To obtain a license, an applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that the applicant:

(1) Has submitted a complete written application in the form prescribed by the Board;

(2) Is at least 18 years old;

(3) Is of good moral character;

[(4) Except as otherwise provided in this title, has successfully passed an examination or examinations prescribed by the Board pertinent to the license sought;]

[(5)] (4) Has paid all applicable fees specified by the Board;

[(6)] (5) Has completed a criminal history records check in accordance with § 19–302.2 of this subtitle at the applicant’s expense; and

[(7)] (6) Has submitted to an examination if required under § 19–302.3 of this subtitle.

(b) To obtain a bachelor social worker license, an applicant shall:

(1) Meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this section; and

(2) Have received a baccalaureate degree in social work from a program that is accredited or is a candidate for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education or an equivalent organization approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

(c) To obtain a master social worker license, an applicant shall:

(1) Meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this section; and

(2) Have received a master’s degree from a program that is accredited or is a candidate for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education or an equivalent organization approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

(d) Except as provided in § 19–302.1 of this subtitle, to obtain a certified social worker license, on or before December 31, 2023, an applicant shall:

(1) Meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this section;

(2) Have received a master's degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or an equivalent organization approved by the Council on Social Work Education; [and]

(3) EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS TITLE, HAVE SUCCESSFULLY PASSED AN EXAMINATION OR EXAMINATIONS PRESCRIBED BY THE BOARD PERTINENT TO THE LICENSE SOUGHT; AND

~~[(3)]~~ (4) Provide in a form prescribed by the Board, documentation of having completed 2 years as a licensee with supervised experience of at least 3,000 hours after receiving the master's degree with a minimum of 100 hours of periodic face-to-face supervision in the practice of social work under the terms and conditions that the Board determines by regulation.

(e) Except as provided in § 19-302.1 of this subtitle, to obtain a certified social worker-clinical license, an applicant shall:

(1) Meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this section;

(2) Have received a master's degree in social work and documentation of completion of 12 academic credits in clinical course work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or an equivalent organization approved by the Council on Social Work Education, with a minimum of 6 of the 12 academic credits obtained in a master's degree program; [and]

(3) EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS TITLE, HAVE SUCCESSFULLY PASSED AN EXAMINATION OR EXAMINATIONS PRESCRIBED BY THE BOARD PERTINENT TO THE LICENSE SOUGHT; AND

~~[(3)]~~ (4) Provide in a form prescribed by the Board, documentation of having completed 2 years as a licensee with supervised experience of at least 3,000 hours, of which 1,500 hours are in face-to-face client contact, after receiving the master's degree with a minimum of 100 hours of periodic face-to-face supervision in the assessment, formulation of a diagnostic impression, and treatment of behavioral health disorders and other conditions and the provision of psychotherapy under the terms and conditions that the Board determines by regulation.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.