SOCIAL WORKERS

CHAPTER 280	LICENSURE O	F SOCIAL WORKERS
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CHAPTER 281 CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

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CHAPTER 280 LICENSURE OF SOCIAL WORKERS

645—280.1(154C) Definitions. For purposes of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:

- "Active license" means a license that is current and has not expired.
- "ASWB" means the Association of Social Work Boards.
- "Board" means the board of social work.
- "Grace period" means the 30-day period following expiration of a license when the license is still considered to be active. In order to renew a license during the grace period, a licensee is required to pay a late fee.
- "Inactive license" means a license that has expired because it was not renewed by the end of the grace period. The category of "inactive license" may include licenses formerly known as lapsed, inactive, delinquent, closed, or retired.
 - "LBSW" means licensed bachelor social worker.
 - "Licensee" means any person licensed to practice as a social worker in the state of Iowa.
 - "License expiration date" means December 31 of even-numbered years.
- "Licensure by endorsement" means the issuance of an Iowa license to practice social work to an applicant who is or has been licensed in another state.
 - "LISW" means licensed independent social worker.
 - "LMSW" means licensed master social worker.
- "Mandatory training" means training on identifying and reporting child abuse or dependent adult abuse required of social workers who are mandatory reporters. The full requirements on mandatory reporting of child abuse and the training requirements are found in Iowa Code section 232.69. The full requirements on mandatory reporting of dependent adult abuse and the training requirements are found in Iowa Code section 235B.16.
- "Reactivate" or "reactivation" means the process as outlined in rule 645—280.14(17A,147,272C) by which an inactive license is restored to active status.
- "Reciprocal license" means the issuance of an Iowa license to practice social work to an applicant who is currently licensed in another state and that state's board of examiners has a mutual written agreement with the Iowa board of social work to license persons who have the same or similar qualifications to those required in Iowa.
- "Reinstatement" means the process as outlined in 645—11.31(272C) by which a licensee who has had a license suspended or revoked or who has voluntarily surrendered a license may apply to have the license reinstated, with or without conditions. Once the license is reinstated, the licensee may apply for active status.
- [ARC 8371B, IAB 12/16/09, effective 1/20/10; ARC 3744C, IAB 4/11/18, effective 5/16/18]
- **645—280.2(154C)** Social work services subject to regulation. Social work services provided to an individual in this state through telephonic, electronic or other means, regardless of the location of the social worker, shall constitute the practice of social work and shall be subject to regulation in Iowa.
- **645—280.3(154C) Requirements for licensure.** The following criteria shall apply to licensure:
- **280.3(1)** The applicant shall complete a board-approved application. Application forms may be obtained from the board's website (www.idph.iowa.gov/licensure) or directly from the board office, or the applicant may complete the application online at ibplicense.iowa.gov. All paper applications shall be

sent to Board of Social Work, Professional Licensure Division, Fifth Floor, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

- **280.3(2)** The applicant shall complete the application form according to the instructions contained in the application. If the application is not completed according to the instructions, the application will not be reviewed by the board.
- **280.3(3)** Each application shall be accompanied by the appropriate fees payable by check or money order to the Board of Social Work. The fees are nonrefundable.
- **280.3(4)** No application shall be considered by the board until official copies of academic transcripts have been received by the board except as provided in 280.4(6).
- **280.3(5)** The applicant shall provide verification of license(s) from every state in which the applicant has been licensed as a social worker, sent directly from the state(s) to the Iowa board of social work office.
 - **280.3(6)** The candidate shall take the examination(s) required by the board pursuant to these rules.
- **280.3(7)** An applicant for a license as an independent social worker shall have met the requirements for supervision pursuant to 645—280.6(154C).
- **280.3(8)** Each social worker who seeks to attain licensure as an independent social worker shall have been granted a master's or doctoral degree in social work and practiced at that level.
 - **280.3(9)** Notification of licensure shall be sent to the licensee by regular mail.
- **280.3(10)** Licensees who were issued their initial licenses within six months prior to the renewal shall not be required to renew their licenses until the renewal date two years later.
- **280.3(11)** Incomplete applications that have been on file in the board office for more than two years shall be:
 - a. Considered invalid and shall be destroyed; or
- b. Maintained upon written request of the candidate. The candidate is responsible for requesting that the file be maintained.
- **280.3(12)** In lieu of the requirements in subrules 280.3(4) and 280.3(5), the board will accept the ASWB Social Work Registry verification of academic transcripts and verification of licensure in other states.

[ARC 8371B, IAB 12/16/09, effective 1/20/10; ARC 3744C, IAB 4/11/18, effective 5/16/18]

645—280.4(154C) Written examination.

280.4(1) The applicant is required to take and pass the ASWB examination at the appropriate level as follows:

- a. Bachelor level social worker—the basic level examination.
- b. Master level social worker—the intermediate level examination.
- c. Independent level social worker—the clinical level examination.
- **280.4(2)** The electronic examination shall be scheduled with ASWB.
- **280.4(3)** Application for any required examination will be denied or deferred by the board if the applicant lacks the required education or practice experience.
- **280.4(4)** The applicant and the board shall be notified of the ASWB examination results, and the applicant may receive the results at the time of the examination. The board will accept only official results from the ASWB examination service that are sent directly from the examination service to the board.
 - **280.4(5)** The ASWB passing score will be utilized as the Iowa passing score.
- **280.4(6)** An applicant may sit for the examination if the applicant meets the requirements stated in 645—280.3(154C). Upon written request of the applicant, the board may authorize a student to sit for the examination prior to the receipt of the official transcript if the student is in the last semester of an approved master of social work program. The student shall submit an application for licensure at the master's level and the fee, and, in lieu of a transcript, the student shall request that the school submit a letter directly to the board office. The letter shall state that the student is currently enrolled in a master of social work program and the student's expected date of graduation. Upon completion of degree requirements, the applicant shall have the transcript showing the date of the degree sent directly

from the school to the board office at the Board of Social Work, Professional Licensure Division, Fifth Floor, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075.

280.4(7) In lieu of the requirements in subrule 280.4(4), the board will accept the ASWB Social Work Registry verification of the ASWB examination results. [ARC 8371B, IAB 12/16/09, effective 1/20/10]

645—280.5(154C) Educational qualifications.

- **280.5(1)** Bachelor level social worker. An applicant for a license as a bachelor level social worker shall present evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant possesses a bachelor's degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education at the time of graduation.
- **280.5(2)** Master level social worker. An applicant for a license as a master level social worker shall present evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:
- a. Possesses a master's degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education at the time of graduation; or
- b. Possesses a doctoral degree in social work from a college or university approved by the board at the time of graduation.
- **280.5(3)** Independent level social worker. An applicant for a license as an independent level social worker shall present evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant:
- a. Possesses a master's degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education at the time of graduation; or
- b. Possesses a doctoral degree in social work from a college or university approved by the board at the time of graduation.

280.5(4) Foreign-trained social workers shall:

- a. Provide an equivalency evaluation of their educational credentials by International Educational Research Foundations, Inc., Credentials Evaluation Service, P.O. Box 3665, Culver City, California 90231-3665, telephone (310)258-9451, website www.ierf.org or email at info@ierf.org; or obtain a certificate of equivalency from the Council on Social Work Education, 1701 Duke Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3457, telephone (703)683-8080, website www.cswe.org. The professional curriculum must be equivalent to that stated in these rules. The candidate shall bear the expense of the curriculum evaluation.
- b. Provide a notarized copy of the certificate or diploma awarded to the applicant from a social work program in the country in which the applicant was educated.
- c. Receive a final determination from the board regarding the application for licensure. [ARC 3744C, IAB 4/11/18, effective 5/16/18]
- **645—280.6(154C) Period of supervised professional practice for LISW.** To qualify for licensure at the independent level, an LMSW shall complete a period of supervised professional practice in accordance with the requirements of this rule.

280.6(1) *Minimum requirements.* The period of supervised professional practice shall:

- a. Not begin prior to licensure at the master's level.
- b. Have a duration of at least two calendar years.
- c. Consist of a minimum of 4,000 hours of social work practice at the master's level.
- d. Include at least 110 hours of direct supervision equitably distributed throughout the period and in compliance with the requirements of subrule 280.6(3).
- *e*. Be done pursuant to one or more written supervision plans that comply with the requirements of subrule 280.6(7).
- **280.6(2)** *Content of supervised professional practice.* The supervisor shall ensure that the period of supervised professional practice includes the following:
- a. Psychosocial assessments, including evaluation of symptoms and behaviors and the effects of the environment on behavior;
- b. Diagnostic practice using the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association;

- c. Treatment, including the establishment of treatment goals, psychosocial therapy, and differential treatment planning;
 - d. Practice management skills;
 - e. Skills required for continued competence;
 - f. Training on ethical standards and legal and regulatory requirements; and
 - g. Development of professional identity.
- **280.6(3)** *Direct supervision.* The required 110 hours of direct supervision may be obtained through individual meetings between the supervisor and supervisee or through group supervision meetings consisting of the supervisor and more than one supervisee.
- a. The first supervision meeting must occur in person. After the first supervision meeting, the remaining supervision may occur through in-person meetings or through electronic meetings using an interactive real-time system that provides for visual and audio interaction between the supervisor and supervisee.
- b. A maximum of 60 hours of direct supervision may be obtained through group supervision meetings. A maximum of six supervisees may participate in any group supervision meeting.

280.6(4) Supervisor eligibility requirements.

- *a.* To be eligible to serve as a supervisor for the period of supervised professional practice, a social worker shall:
- (1) Hold an active license to practice social work at the independent level in Iowa. If the supervised professional practice occurs in another state, a social worker licensed in that state may serve as a supervisor if the social worker is licensed at a level equivalent to the independent level. A social worker licensed in another state may provide direct supervision hours if the social worker is licensed at a level equivalent to the independent level.
- (2) Have at least three years of social work practice at the independent level, which must include a minimum of 4,000 hours of practice.
- (3) Complete a six-hour continuing education course pertaining to social work practice supervision or one master's level course in supervision.
- b. Any request for a supervisor who does not meet these requirements must be submitted to the board for approval before supervision begins. The board will only approve an otherwise ineligible supervisor if the supervisee demonstrates that eligible supervisors are unavailable or unwilling to provide supervision. Any practice or supervision hours obtained under an ineligible supervisor prior to board approval cannot be counted toward completion of the period of supervised professional practice.
- **280.6(5)** Supervisor responsibilities. A supervisor shall provide adequate supervision to all supervisees. Failure to provide adequate supervision may be grounds for disciplinary action. A supervisor shall be responsible for:
 - a. Timely submission of the supervision plan;
 - b. Providing supervision in accordance with this rule;
- c. Directing the supervisee to obtain written releases of information from patients when legally required for purposes of providing supervision;
- d. Providing periodic evaluations and feedback regarding the supervisee's performance to the supervisee;
 - e. Answering questions and assisting supervisees as new or difficult issues arise;
 - f. Ensuring the supervisee's caseload is manageable;
 - g. Reporting to the board any violations of board rules by supervisees; and
 - h. Completing a supervision report.
- **280.6(6)** *Supervisee responsibilities.* A supervisee shall comply with all statutes and rules governing the practice of social work. A supervisee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Timely submission of the supervision plan;
 - b. Obtaining supervision in accordance with this rule;
- c. Obtaining written releases of information from patients when legally required for purposes of receiving supervision;

- d. Asking the supervisor to provide periodic evaluations and feedback regarding the supervisee's performance;
- *e.* Asking questions of the supervisor when assistance is needed or when new or difficult issues arise;
 - f. Reporting any issues related to caseload, including volume and difficulty, to the supervisor;
 - g. Reporting to the board any violations of board rules by the supervisor; and
- h. Maintaining a copy of every supervision plan and supervision report until such time as the supervisee is issued a license to practice social work at the independent level.
- **280.6(7)** Supervision plan. A current written supervision plan must be maintained throughout the period of supervised professional practice. Each supervisor who provides practice supervision or direct supervision hours shall be named on a supervision plan.
- a. A written supervision plan must be established and submitted to the board before the period of supervised professional practice begins. The board will perform an initial review of each supervision plan and notify the supervisee of approval or denial of the plan within 45 days of receipt. A supervisee may begin supervised professional practice after submission of the supervision plan but cannot count any practice or supervision hours obtained pursuant to a supervision plan that is ultimately denied by the board.
- b. If a supervisee is changing supervisors or adding an additional supervisor, a revised supervision plan shall be submitted to the board for approval at the time of the change or addition. A supervisee may continue supervised professional practice after submission of a revised supervision plan but cannot count any practice or supervision hours obtained pursuant to a revised supervision plan that is ultimately denied by the board.
- *c*. The board maintains a supervision plan form that may be utilized to write the supervision plan. A supervision plan shall include:
- (1) The name, license number, date of licensure, address, telephone number, and email address of the supervisor;
 - (2) The name, license number, address, telephone number, and email address of the supervisee;
- (3) The name of the agency, institution, or organization providing the period of supervised professional practice:
 - (4) The start date and estimated date of completion of the period of supervised professional practice;
 - (5) The goals and objectives for the period of supervised professional practice;
- (6) The nature, duration, and frequency of direct supervision, including the number of hours of direct supervision per week, the schedule for in-person and electronic supervision meetings, and the use of group supervision; and
 - (7) The signatures of the supervisor and supervisee, and the dates of the signatures.
 - **280.6(8)** Completion of supervised professional practice.
- a. At the conclusion of the period of supervised professional practice, the supervisee shall have any and all supervisors complete a supervision report on the form provided by the board. Each supervision report must be signed and dated by the supervisor and supervisee.
- b. The board will review each supervision report for approval of the hours pertaining to the particular report. The board may deny any practice or supervision hours that were not obtained in compliance with this rule. The board may deny any practice or supervision hours if the supervisor indicates that the supervisee did not adhere to the ethical standards and legal and regulatory requirements governing the practice of social work or if the supervisor does not recommend the supervisee for licensure at the independent level.

[ARC 8371B, IAB 12/16/09, effective 1/20/10; ARC 8586B, IAB 3/10/10, effective 4/14/10; ARC 0093C, IAB 4/18/12, effective 5/23/12; ARC 3744C, IAB 4/11/18, effective 5/16/18]

645—280.7(154C) Licensure by endorsement. An applicant who has been a licensed social worker under the laws of another jurisdiction shall file an application for licensure by endorsement with the board office. The board may receive by endorsement any applicant from the District of Columbia, another state, territory, province or foreign country who:

- 1. Submits to the board a completed application;
- 2. Pays the licensure fee;
- 3. Shows evidence of licensure requirements that are similar to those required in Iowa;
- 4. Provides official copies of the academic transcripts;
- 5. Provides official copies of the appropriate or higher level examination score sent directly from the ASWB; and
- 6. Provides verification of license(s) from every jurisdiction in which the applicant has been licensed, sent directly from the jurisdiction(s) to the board office. Web-based verification may be substituted for verification direct from the jurisdiction's board office if the verification provides:
 - Licensee's name;
 - Date of initial licensure;
 - Current licensure status; and
 - Any disciplinary action taken against the license.

In lieu of the requirements in numbered paragraphs "4," "5," and "6" of this rule, the board will accept the ASWB Social Work Registry verification of academic transcripts, examination scores, and licensure in other states.

[ARC 0093C, IAB 4/18/12, effective 5/23/12]

645—280.8(154C) Licensure by reciprocal agreement. Rescinded IAB 3/10/10, effective 4/14/10.

645—280.9(154C) License renewal.

280.9(1) The biennial license renewal period for a license to practice social work shall begin on January 1 of odd-numbered years and end on December 31 of the next even-numbered year. Every licensee shall renew on a biennial basis. The licensee is responsible for renewing the license prior to its expiration. Failure of the licensee to receive notice does not relieve the licensee of the responsibility for renewing the license.

280.9(2) Renewal procedures.

- a. A licensee seeking renewal shall:
- (1) Meet the continuing education requirements of rule 645—281.2(154C,272C) and the mandatory reporting requirements of subrule 280.9(3). A licensee whose license was reactivated during the current renewal compliance period may use continuing education credit earned during the compliance period for the first renewal following reactivation; and
 - (2) Submit the completed renewal application and renewal fee before the license expiration date.
- b. An individual who was issued a license within six months of the license renewal date will not be required to renew the license until the next renewal two years later.
- c. Those persons licensed for the first time shall not be required to complete continuing education as a prerequisite for the first renewal of their licenses. Continuing education hours acquired anytime from the initial licensing until the second license renewal may be used. The new licensee will be required to complete a minimum of 27 hours of continuing education per biennium for each subsequent license renewal.
- d. Persons licensed to practice social work shall keep their renewal licenses displayed in a conspicuous public place at the primary site of practice.
- e. Failure to receive the notice of renewal shall not relieve the licensee of the responsibility for submitting the required materials and the renewal fee to the board office 30 days before license expiration.
- f. A social worker whose Iowa license is inactive, delinquent, closed, retired, voluntarily surrendered, suspended, or revoked cannot advance to a higher level until the license is again active.

280.9(3) Mandatory reporting of child abuse and dependent adult abuse.

- a. A licensee who regularly examines, attends, counsels or treats children in Iowa shall indicate on the renewal application completion of two hours of training in child abuse identification and reporting in the previous five years or condition(s) for waiver of this requirement as identified in paragraph "f."
- b. A licensee who regularly examines, attends, counsels or treats dependent adults in Iowa shall indicate on the renewal application completion of two hours of training in dependent adult abuse

identification and reporting in the previous five years or condition(s) for waiver of this requirement as identified in paragraph "f."

- c. A licensee who regularly examines, attends, counsels or treats both dependent adults and children in Iowa shall indicate on the renewal application completion of training in abuse identification and reporting in dependent adults and children or condition(s) for waiver of this requirement as identified in paragraph "f."
- d. Training may be completed through separate courses as identified in paragraphs "a" and "b" or in one combined two-hour course that includes curricula for identifying and reporting child abuse and dependent adult abuse.
- e. The licensee shall maintain written documentation for five years after mandatory training as identified in paragraphs "a" to "c," including program date(s), content, duration, and proof of participation.
- f. The requirement for mandatory training for identifying and reporting child and dependent adult abuse shall be suspended if the board determines that suspension is in the public interest or that a person at the time of license renewal:
 - (1) Is engaged in active duty in the military service of this state or the United States.
- (2) Holds a current waiver by the board based on evidence of significant hardship in complying with training requirements, including waiver of continuing education requirements or extension of time in which to fulfill requirements due to a physical or mental disability or illness as identified in 645—Chapter 281.
- g. The board may select licensees for audit of compliance with the requirements in paragraphs "a" to "e."
- **280.9(4)** Late renewal. To renew a late license, the licensee shall complete the renewal requirements and submit the late fee within the grace period.
- **280.9(5)** Inactive license. A licensee who fails to renew the license by the end of the grace period has an inactive license. A licensee whose license is inactive continues to hold the privilege of licensure in Iowa, but may not practice as a social worker in Iowa until the license is reactivated. A licensee who practices as a social worker in the state of Iowa with an inactive license may be subject to disciplinary action by the board, injunctive action pursuant to Iowa Code section 147.83, criminal sanctions pursuant to Iowa Code section 147.86, and other available legal remedies.
- **280.9(6)** Upon receiving the information required by this rule and the required fee, board staff shall administratively issue a two-year license and shall send the licensee a wallet card by regular mail. In the event the board receives adverse information on the renewal application, the board shall issue the renewal license but may refer the adverse information for further consideration or disciplinary investigation. [ARC 8371B, IAB 12/16/09, effective 1/20/10; ARC 9934B, IAB 12/28/11, effective 2/1/12; ARC 3744C, IAB 4/11/18, effective 5/16/18]
- **645—280.10(272C)** Exemptions for inactive practitioners. Rescinded IAB 8/31/05, effective 10/5/05.
- **645—280.11(272C)** Lapsed licenses. Rescinded IAB 8/31/05, effective 10/5/05.
- **645—280.12(272C)** Duplicate certificate or wallet card. Rescinded IAB 3/10/10, effective 4/14/10.
- **645—280.13(17A,147,272C)** License denial. Rescinded IAB 3/10/10, effective 4/14/10.
- **645—280.14(17A,147,272C)** License reactivation. To apply for reactivation of an inactive license, a licensee shall:
 - **280.14(1)** Submit a reactivation application on a form provided by the board.
 - **280.14(2)** Pay the reactivation fee that is due as specified in 645—Chapter 284.
- **280.14(3)** Provide verification of current competence to practice social work by satisfying one of the following criteria:
- a. If the license has been on inactive status for five years or less, an applicant must provide the following:

- (1) Verification of the license(s) from every jurisdiction in which the applicant is or has been licensed and is or has been practicing during the time period the Iowa license was inactive, sent directly from the jurisdiction(s) to the board office. Web-based verification may be substituted for verification from a jurisdiction's board office if the verification includes:
 - 1. Licensee's name:
 - 2. Date of initial licensure:
 - 3. Current licensure status; and
 - 4. Any disciplinary action taken against the license; and
- (2) Verification of completion of 27 hours of continuing education within two years of application for reactivation.
- b. If the license has been on inactive status for more than five years, an applicant must provide the verifications in both subparagraphs (1) and (2) below plus the verification in either subparagraphs (3) or (4) below.
- (1) Verification of the license(s) from every jurisdiction in which the applicant is or has been licensed and is or has been practicing during the time period the Iowa license was inactive, sent directly from the jurisdiction(s) to the board office. Web-based verification may be substituted for verification from a jurisdiction's board office if the verification includes:
 - 1. Licensee's name;
 - 2. Date of initial licensure;
 - 3. Current licensure status; and
 - 4. Any disciplinary action taken against the license; and
- (2) Verification of completion of 27 hours of continuing education within two years of application for reactivation; and
- (3) Verification of passing the ASWB examination within the last five years at the appropriate or higher level as follows:
 - 1. Bachelor level social worker the bachelor's level examination; or
 - 2. Master level social worker the master's level examination; or
 - 3. Independent level social worker the clinical level examination; or
- (4) Verification of continued social work practice at the appropriate or higher level in another state for a minimum of two years immediately preceding the application for reactivation. [ARC 0093C, IAB 4/18/12, effective 5/23/12]
- **645—280.15(17A,147,272C)** License reinstatement. A licensee whose license has been revoked, suspended, or voluntarily surrendered must apply for and receive reinstatement of the license in accordance with 645—11.31(272C) and must apply for and be granted reactivation of the license in accordance with 645—280.14(17A,147,272C) prior to practicing social work in this state.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapters 17A, 147, 154C and 272C.

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Effective date of rules 161.212 to 161.217 delayed 70 days by the Administrative Rules Review Committee.

² Effective date of 280.100(154C) is July 1, 1993.

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