

What's New

COVID-19 Info and FAQ's

05/07/2020

In accordance with the State of National Emergency, guidance from the Center for Disease Control, and Executive Orders from the Governor's Office, our office staff will be working remotely until it is determined safe to resume regular on-site business operations based on guidance provided by local authorities and government agencies. **Please be advised that we continue to process our mail daily during this time (mailing address: NCSWCLB, PO Box 1043, Asheboro, NC 27204).** Also note, that Board staff are currently unavailable by phone at this time; however, you may contact our office by email at any time. Please refer to the [Administrative Services Directory](#) to select the individual you will need to contact regarding your inquiry.

As the effects of coronavirus (COVID-19) remain a growing concern across the country, the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board (“the Board” or “the NC Social Work Board”) wants to assure you that we are working diligently to address the concerns and ongoing inquiries of licensees regarding electronic practice, clinical supervision, testing center closures and continuing education mandates. We appreciate your patience as we navigate through this challenging time, and encourage you to check the website regularly for updated information, as we will provide information on the Board’s website as it becomes available.

For more information on COVID-19 in North Carolina, [click here](#).

In an effort to reduce the increased volume of inquiries received by the Board office on a daily basis, the Board has compiled the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to the Board’s licensing requirements.

Should I continue to mail documents to the Board’s mailing address: P.O. Box 1043 Asheboro, NC 27204?

Yes, the Board continues to process mail daily.

I am applying for certification/licensure; can I have my transcripts sent electronically to the Board office?

While the Board, under normal circumstances will only accept mailed, sealed transcripts, during this time, the Board has made exception to accept electronic transcripts submitted to the Board office directly from the university/source (cannot be received from applicant). Once you have mailed your application, you may request for your transcripts to be sent electronically to Kenia (ktabon@ncswboard.org).

I have applied for certification/licensure OR submitted my certification/licensure renewal. How do I check on my status?

Please be advised, processing is generally 21 days; however, during this time, review may be extended. Board staff continue to pick up mail from the post office on a regular basis. **Please allow at least 21 days from the date of receipt by the Board AND check the website through the [License Lookup](#) tab to determine if certification/licensure has been issued OR if your**

credential has been renewed prior to contacting the Board office. During these unprecedented times, Board staff are attempting to maintain daily processes as best as possible and we appreciate your patience and understanding

Please be reminded that tracking may be added to your correspondence submitted to the Board office through your delivery carrier so that you are aware of the Board's receipt.

If I am scheduled to take the Bachelors/Masters/Clinical Examination, what do I do?

At this time the Board understands that testing sites have closed until further notice and this has impacted those that have scheduled dates during the shut-down, as well as those planning to schedule. For those of you still waiting to test, please follow ASWB's guidance. *The time that the testing sites are down will not count against the two years you have to take and pass the exam, since the exam was not available.*

The Board has been advised that with the closing of the examination sites, new examination dates are not automatically being issued to applicants who have registered for the examination. [ASWB](#) advises that candidates will need to reschedule with [Pearson VUE](#), either online or by phone, however, please be advised that Pearson VUE is experiencing high call volume with wait-times longer than usual at the moment. You may also access [FAQ's addressed by Pearson VUE here](#).

Please refer to the ASWB's normal processes and procedures for [making an appointment](#) to take an ASWB social work examination at a Pearson VUE test center. The above-referenced hyperlink includes access to information for cancelling or changing an appointment. ASWB candidates have the flexibility of canceling or changing their appointment without penalty by contacting Pearson VUE up to 24 hours before the scheduled appointment time.

****Pursuant to [21 NCAC 63 .0810\(2\)](#), IF YOUR ASSOCIATE LICENSE EXPIRES DURING THE PERIOD OF TESTING SITE CLOSURES, PLEASE EMAIL THE BOARD DIRECTLY AT INFO@NCSWBOARD.ORG REQUESTING A LIMITED EXTENSION OF YOUR ASSOCIATE LICENSE AND AN EXTENSION TO TAKE THE LICENSING EXAMINATION. PLEASE IDENTIFY ON THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR EMAIL: **EXTENSION REQUEST******

Can I receive clinical supervision via electronic means? What if I have already exceeded the twenty (20) hours of clinical supervision by electronic means allowed by the Board?

Pursuant to [21 NCAC 63 .0810\(1\)](#), *“The Board shall waive the requirement for licensure set forth in 21 NCAC 63 .0211(a)(4) that requires preapproval by the Board to engage in more than 20 hours of supervision provided through the use of technology. This waiver will allow for up to half of the required supervision hours to be provided through the use of technology. This expanded definition will only apply until the state of emergency is lifted. All supervision provided through the use of technology shall be synchronous, involve visual and audio interactions throughout the entire session, and shall take place in such a manner as to maintain the confidentiality of the communication.”*

Please refer to the [Position Statement on Technology Facilitated Services](#) for best practice guidelines, paying particular attention to the section regarding confidentiality. Please note that supervision may not be conducted telephonically and must be provided through secure means.

If my employer has issued a company-wide social distancing policy, am I able to practice electronically?

[The N.C. Social Work Certification and Licensure Act \[NCGS 90B\]](#) neither prohibits nor endorses electronic practice; however, the definition of [clinical social work practice](#) does include electronic practice (“by whatever means of communication”). As an occupational licensing agency, the expectation of the Board is that licensees comply with the [Statutes \[90B\]](#) and [Rules \[Title 21, Chapter 63 of the North Carolina Administrative Code\]](#) that govern social work practice in North Carolina (regardless of the service delivery method), as these principles set forth the minimum standards for licensees’ conduct in the profession of social work. As a reminder, any violation of the Board’s Statutes and/or Rules may result in disciplinary action. As licensees are exploring electronic practice, they are encouraged to select a course of action consistent with the Statutes and/or Rules that govern licensure and the conduct of licensees. Because electronic practice carries potential risks for ethical dilemmas, the Board has prepared a [Position Statement on Technology Facilitated Services](#) to assist licensees with navigating the provision of services by electronic means. Further, pursuant to [21 NCAC 63 .0503\(a\)](#), please note that licensees MUST ensure that they have the requisite skill to engage in this area of practice prior to implementing clinical social work services by electronic means.

Can the Board issue an emergency/temporary change to the number of distance learning hours required?

Pursuant to [21 NCAC 63 .0810\(3\)](#), *“The Board shall waive the requirement for licensure set forth in 21 NCAC 63 .0401(c)(4) that allows for half of the required continuing education accepted as distance learning to permit all hours for renewal to be accepted through distance learning that meet the requirements of 21 NCAC 63 .0401 and to include a minimum of four contact hours of continuing education focused on ethics related to social work practice and ethical decision making”*.

Also, please be reminded that pursuant to [21 NCAC 63 .0401](#), live synchronous audio-video broadcasts allowing for real time interaction between the instructor and participants attended through electronic means counts toward the in-person training requirements. Renewal of certification or licensure shall require 40 contact hours of continuing education credits within each *two year renewal cycle*. Further, pursuant to [N.C.G.S § 90B-9](#), licensees have until August 30 of the renewal year to renew with a late fee, which allows 60 days after the renewal deadline of June 30 to satisfy the continuing education requirements. However, please note that *licensees will not be permitted to practice during the time period that his or her license is expired*.

If I hold a North Carolina LCSW or LCSWA, am I able to treat clients residing in other states or internationally?

If you hold a North Carolina LCSW or LCSWA license and are interested in providing services to someone residing outside of North Carolina, you would need to contact that jurisdiction(s) to determine if it requires you to be licensed there prior to providing services across state lines, even if you intend to do so electronically. As an NC licensee, it is important that you regularly review both the Board’s [Statutes](#) and [Rules](#) and the statutes and rules of any jurisdiction in which you intend to practice to ensure compliance with all jurisdictions. While the NC Statutes do not prohibit electronic practice, and you are exploring whether to deliver services to a client who is located in different jurisdiction, you must first ensure that you satisfy the requirements for delivering service in both NC and in the jurisdiction in which the client is located to ensure you are not violating any laws.

For more information on regulatory provisions regarding social work licensure, please visit [ASWB's website](#) for a [list of jurisdictions that have emergency provisions regarding social work licensure](#) related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

If I am not licensed in North Carolina, but my client is in North Carolina, can I provide services to my client via electronic means?

Pursuant to [N.C.G.S. 90B-4 \(b\)](#), it is unlawful to engage in or offer to engage in the practice of clinical social work in North Carolina without first being licensed as a clinical social worker in North Carolina. If you would be providing any clinical social work services to individuals located in North Carolina, you would first be required to obtain licensure from the NC Social Work Board.

You may view the Board's licensure [application packet](#) on our [website](#). The application details the [levels of certification/licensure](#) offered, in addition to the requirements and information that must be submitted to the Board for consideration. It is also important to note that the Board licenses individuals by way of substantial equivalency if an applicant currently is licensed in good standing at the comparable level in another jurisdiction. There is not a residency requirement to be licensed in NC.

In addition, we also offer the option of a temporary license at a reduced rate for a period of time not to exceed 6 months (pursuant to [21 N.C.A.C 63 .0213](#)). Pursuant to [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90B-8\(b\)](#), you may be eligible to apply for a temporary license if you believe you will need to provide clinical social work services in North Carolina beyond the allowable 5 days in a single calendar year. If you have any questions or wish to request the Temporary License Application, please email dteague@ncswboard.org.

If you remain interested in providing services to your client that will continue to be located in North Carolina, I would also advise reading the [Position Statement on Technology Facilitated Services](#), which provides information regarding the Board's expectations, as well as familiarizing yourself with the [Statutes](#) and [Rules](#) that govern clinical social work practice in North Carolina. **Please note that practitioners MUST ensure that they have the requisite skill to engage in this area of practice prior to implementing clinical social work services by electronic means.**

If I am licensed in another jurisdiction and would like to provide clinical social work services to individuals in NC during the state of emergency and pursuant to Executive Order 116, can I practice in NC?

NC Governor Roy Cooper's [Executive Order No. 116](#) temporarily waives the licensure requirements for behavioral health care personnel who are licensed in another state to provide services within North Carolina. However, please be advised that this waiver will expire once the Executive Order is lifted. As detailed above, the temporary licensure is available and will be valid for a maximum of six months.

Any clinical social worker licensed in another state who wishes to provide clinical social work services (either through electronic means or in person) to individuals located in North Carolina must notify the NC Social Work Certification and Licensure Board at dteague@ncswboard.org of their intent to provide clinical social work services to someone located in North Carolina and also must identify the state(s) in which the clinical social worker is licensed and license number. This notification must be done PRIOR to providing clinical social work services to someone located in North Carolina. The Board will notify the clinical social work licensee once licensure has been

confirmed that the provision of clinical social work services can commence. The licensure waiver is temporary and is effective only until Executive Order No. 116 is rescinded.