

## Emergency Rules due to COVID-19

*Notice is hereby given in accordance with G.S. 150B-21.1 that the Social Work Certification and Licensure Board intends to adopt the rules cited as 21 NCAC 63 .0810.*

*Codifier of Rules approved this rule as an emergency rule effective April 8, 2020 and received for publication the following notice and proposed temporary rule on March 31, 2020.*

**Reason for Proposed Temporary Action:** *A serious and unforeseen threat to the public health, safety or welfare. In light of the State of National Emergency declared by President Trump as a result of the COVID-19 Virus and the urgent need to have licensed clinical social workers available to provide clinical social work services to clients and associate licensees impacted by the COVID-19 Virus, the Board has determined to waive certain provisions in its rules as set forth below and during the effective period of this Temporary Rule.*

**Comment Procedures:** *Comments from the public shall be directed to: Elizabeth N. Pope, NC Social Work Board Certification and Licensure Board, PO Box 1043, Asheboro, NC 27204; phone (336) 625-1679, Ext 226; fax (336) 625-4246; email [epope@ncswboard.org](mailto:epope@ncswboard.org). The comment period begins April 14, 2020 and ends May 12, 2020.*

### **SECTION .0800 – DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

#### **21 NCAC 63 .0810 WAIVER**

In light of the State of National Emergency declared by President Trump as a result of the COVID-19 Virus, and the urgent need to have licensed clinical social workers available to provide clinical social work services to clients and associate licensees impacted by the COVID-19 Virus, the Board has determined to waive certain provisions in its rules, as set forth below, and during the effective period of this Temporary Rule:

- (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;
- (2) The Board shall waive the requirement for licensure set forth in 21 NCAC 63 .0301 that requires applicants for licensure to pass the qualifying examination within two years of the initial application. An applicant who is unable to take the licensing examination prior to the expiration of the associate license due to the testing service locations being closed shall make a written request to the Board. The Board shall provide a limited extension of the licensee's associate license and

grant each associate licensee an extension to take the licensing examination not to surpass December 31, 2020.

- (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.

*Authority G.S. 90B-6; 150B-19(6).*