

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 927 (Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Board of Social Work Examiners - Out-of-State Applicants - Licensure

This bill alters requirements for an out-of-state applicant seeking a certified social worker license or a certified social worker-clinical license. In addition, the bill repeals the board's authority to waive examination requirements for an applicant who is licensed or registered to practice work in another state if the applicant meets specified conditions.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change in requirements for out-of-state applicants is technical in nature and does not directly affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: An out-of-state applicant for a certified social worker license or a certified social worker-clinical license must:

- be at least 18 years old;
- be of good moral character;
- be licensed or registered to practice social work in another state at a level of licensure or registration that is equivalent to a certified social worker license or a certified social worker-clinical license in Maryland;

- have passed an examination in that other state as a condition of licensure/registration; and
- have performed at least 1,000 hours of compensated social work practice per year for 5 out of the 10 years preceding application to the board.

To apply for licensure, an out-of-state applicant must submit a complete written application on the form prescribed by the board, and pay the necessary application fees.

Thus, although an out-of-state applicant must still pass an examination, the applicant does not need to receive a waiver of the board's examination requirement. Instead, the board may accept other forms of examinations for out-of-state applicants who meet all of the other specified requirements.

Current Law: An applicant for licensure as a certified social worker or a certified social worker-clinical must:

- be at least 18 years old;
- be of good moral character;
- have passed an examination or examinations prescribed by the board pertaining to the license sought; and
- have paid applicable fees for licensure to the board.

In addition, applicants must 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 and must provide documentation of having completed two years as a licensee with supervised experience of at least 3,000 hours after receiving the master's degree. For an applicant for licensure as a certified social worker, at least 144 hours of periodic face-to-face supervision in the practice of social work is required. In comparison, an applicant for a certified social worker-clinical license must have at least 144 hours of periodic face-to-face supervision in the assessment, formulation of a diagnostic impression, and treatment of mental disorders and other conditions and the provision of psychotherapy.

If an applicant who is licensed or registered to practice social work in another state has obtained two years of supervised experience that is substantially equivalent to what is required by the State, the board may waive the applicant's supervision requirement.

In general, the board may waive examination requirements for an applicant who is licensed or registered to practice social work in another state if the applicant:

- is of good moral character;
- pays the application fee required by the board;
- provides adequate evidence of meeting the qualifications comparable to those required by the board;
- is currently licensed or registered in another state under requirements substantially equivalent to those in Maryland; and
- became licensed or registered in another state after passing an examination that is the same as the examination for which the applicant is seeking the waiver.

In addition, the applicant may not have previously received a waiver of the examination requirement from the board.

Background: Currently, there are 419 certified social workers and 7,491 certified social workers-clinical in the State. In fiscal 2009, the board received 186 out-of-state applicants for licensure as a certified social worker or certified social worker-clinical. Out of these 186 applicants, 165 were approved during the same period.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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