

Chapter 226

(Senate Bill 18)

AN ACT concerning

State Board of Social Work Examiners – ~~Conditional~~ Provisional License to Practice Social Work – ~~Revisions~~ Established

FOR the purpose of ~~altering the circumstances under which the Board of Social Work Examiners may issue a conditional license to practice social work;~~ establishing ~~alternate pathways~~ a provisional social work license through which an individual issued a ~~conditional~~ provisional license may receive a full license; and generally relating to licenses to practice social work.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Health Occupations
Section 19–101(a), ~~(e–1), and (e)~~ and (c–1)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Health Occupations
Section ~~19–309.1~~ 19–101(e)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY adding to
Article – Health Occupations
Section 19–101(o–1) and 19–309.2
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – Health Occupations

19–101.

(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

(c–1) “Conditional license” means a license issued by the Board under, and as limited by, § 19–309.1 of this title to practice:

(1) Bachelor social work; or

(2) Master social work.

(e) “License” means, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) One of four categories of licenses issued by the Board authorizing an individual to practice:

- (i) Bachelor social work;
- (ii) Master social work;
- (iii) Certified social work; or
- (iv) Certified social work–clinical; ~~or~~

(2) A conditional license issued by the Board; **OR**

(3) A PROVISIONAL LICENSE ISSUED BY THE BOARD.

(O-1) “PROVISIONAL LICENSE” MEANS A LICENSE ISSUED BY THE BOARD UNDER, AND AS LIMITED BY, § 19-309.2 OF THIS TITLE TO PRACTICE:

(1) BACHELOR SOCIAL WORK; OR

(2) MASTER SOCIAL WORK.

19-309.2.

(A) BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1, 2026, THE BOARD SHALL ISSUE A PROVISIONAL LICENSE TO AN APPLICANT WHO, EXCEPT FOR PASSING THE EXAMINATION OTHERWISE REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, HAS MET THE APPROPRIATE EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBTITLE FOR A LICENSE ISSUED UNDER § 19-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO PRACTICE:

(1) BACHELOR SOCIAL WORK; OR

(2) MASTER SOCIAL WORK.

(B) A PROVISIONAL LICENSE:

(1) AUTHORIZES THE HOLDER TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK IN THE STATE ONLY WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE SPECIFIC CATEGORY OF LICENSE ISSUED BY THE BOARD;

(2) REQUIRES THE HOLDER TO PRACTICE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A BOARD-APPROVED SUPERVISOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SECTION;

(3) MAY BE ISSUED ONLY TO AN INITIAL APPLICANT FOR LICENSURE WHO HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN LICENSED UNDER THIS TITLE; AND

(4) DOES NOT QUALIFY THE HOLDER FOR A MULTISTATE LICENSE UNDER THE SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE COMPACT ESTABLISHED UNDER § 19-3A-01 OF THIS TITLE.

(C) A PROVISIONAL LICENSE:

(1) EXPIRES ON A DATE SET BY THE BOARD THAT IS AT LEAST 12 MONTHS, BUT NOT MORE THAN 24 MONTHS, AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE;

(2) MAY NOT BE RENEWED; AND

(3) SHALL TERMINATE AUTOMATICALLY ON:

(i) THE EXPIRATION DATE; OR

(ii) IF THE HOLDER APPLIES AND QUALIFIES FOR A LICENSE UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION, THE DATE THAT THE FULL LICENSE IS ISSUED.

(D) A HOLDER OF A PROVISIONAL LICENSE AND THE SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKER ARE JOINTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE SUPERVISION AND EXPIRATION REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTIONS (B)(2) AND (C) OF THIS SECTION.

(E) THE BOARD SHALL ISSUE A FULL LICENSE UNDER § 19-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO A HOLDER OF A PROVISIONAL LICENSE WHO DEMONSTRATES TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE BOARD THAT THE HOLDER HAS ACHIEVED A SATISFACTORY SCORE ON AN EXAMINATION, AS REQUIRED UNDER § 19-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(F) SUPERVISED HOURS COMPLETED UNDER A PROVISIONAL LICENSE:

(1) MAY BE COUNTED TOWARD THE SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE REQUIRED FOR INDEPENDENT PRACTICE APPROVAL UNDER § 19-302(F) OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND

(2) ~~MAY NOT~~ BE COUNTED TOWARD THE SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO QUALIFY FOR A CERTIFIED SOCIAL WORKER-CLINICAL LICENSE UNDER § 19-302(E) OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(G) THE BOARD SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SECTION, INCLUDING REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH:

(1) MINIMUM SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING PROCEDURES;

(2) STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING SUPERVISED PRACTICE AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (E)(2) OF THIS SECTION;

(3) REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE TRACKING OF PROVISIONAL LICENSES ALIGNS WITH EXISTING LICENSURE CYCLES; AND

(4) A REASONABLE FEE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A PROVISIONAL LICENSE SUFFICIENT TO COVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.

(H) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31 EACH YEAR, BEGINNING IN ~~2026~~ 2027, THE BOARD SHALL REPORT TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE HEALTH COMMITTEE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 12-MONTH PERIOD:

(1) THE NUMBER OF PROVISIONAL LICENSES ISSUED;

(2) THE NUMBER OF HOLDERS OF PROVISIONAL LICENSES WHO OBTAINED FULL LICENSURE UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION; AND

(3) ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING:

(I) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION; AND

(II) THE IMPACT OF THIS SECTION ON THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE.

~~19-309.1.~~

~~(a) [If an administrative delay for any reason or an unforeseen circumstance, act, or occurrence prevents an examination required under this subtitle from being available to an applicant for a period of at least 15 business days, the] THE Board [may] SHALL issue a conditional license to an applicant who, except for passing the examination OTHERWISE~~

~~REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, has met the appropriate education and experience requirements of this subtitle for a license issued under § 19-302 of this subtitle to practice:~~

~~(1) Bachelor social work; or~~

~~(2) Master social work.~~

~~(b) A conditional license issued under this section [authorizes]:~~

~~(1) AUTHORIZES the holder to practice social work in the State only WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE SPECIFIC CATEGORY OF LICENSE ISSUED BY THE BOARD;~~

~~(2) REQUIRES THE HOLDER TO PRACTICE under the supervision of a Board approved supervisor [while the conditional license is effective] IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS SECTION; AND~~

~~(3) MAY BE ISSUED ONLY TO AN INITIAL APPLICANT FOR LICENSURE WHO HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN LICENSED UNDER THIS TITLE.~~

~~(c) A conditional license [is valid until 180 days after the examination becomes readily available to the applicant]:~~

~~(1) EXPIRES ON A DATE SET BY THE BOARD THAT IS AT LEAST 12 MONTHS, BUT NOT MORE THAN 24 MONTHS, AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE;~~

~~(2) MAY NOT BE RENEWED; AND~~

~~(3) SHALL TERMINATE AUTOMATICALLY ON:~~

~~(i) THE EXPIRATION DATE; OR~~

~~(ii) IF THE HOLDER APPLIES AND QUALIFIES FOR A LICENSE UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION, THE DATE THAT THE FULL LICENSE IS ISSUED.~~

~~(D) A HOLDER OF A CONDITIONAL LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION AND THE SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKER ARE JOINTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE SUPERVISION AND EXPIRATION REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTIONS (B)(2) AND (C) OF THIS SECTION.~~

~~(E) THE BOARD SHALL ISSUE A FULL LICENSE UNDER § 19-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE TO A HOLDER OF A CONDITIONAL LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION WHO DEMONSTRATES TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE BOARD THAT THE HOLDER HAS:~~

~~(1) ACHIEVED A SATISFACTORY SCORE ON AN EXAMINATION, AS REQUIRED UNDER § 19-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR~~

~~(2) COMPLETED AT LEAST 1,500 HOURS OF SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK DURING THE PERIOD OF CONDITIONAL LICENSURE, AS VERIFIED BY A BOARD-APPROVED SUPERVISOR, IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE BOARD, IN CONSULTATION WITH AN INSTITUTION THAT:~~

~~(i) IS ACCREDITED BY THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION OR AN EQUIVALENT ORGANIZATION APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION; AND~~

~~(ii) OFFERS BOTH A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE AND A MASTER'S DEGREE.~~

~~(F) THE BOARD SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SECTION, INCLUDING REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH:~~

~~(1) MINIMUM SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS AND REPORTING PROCEDURES;~~

~~(2) STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING SUPERVISED PRACTICE AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (E)(2) OF THIS SECTION;~~

~~(3) REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE TRACKING OF CONDITIONAL LICENSES ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION ALIGNS WITH EXISTING LICENSURE CYCLES; AND~~

~~(4) A REASONABLE FEE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A CONDITIONAL LICENSE ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION SUFFICIENT TO COVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.~~

~~[(d)](G) On or before December 31 each year, beginning in [2024,] 2026, the Board shall report to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the following information for the immediately preceding 12-month period:~~

~~[(1) Whether the examination was unavailable at any time during the reporting period; and~~

~~(2) If the examination was unavailable:~~

~~(i) The number of applicants who were eligible for a conditional license due to the unavailability of the examination;~~

~~(ii) The number of applicants who applied to take the examination;~~

~~(iii) The number of applications that were delayed in processing; and~~

~~(iv) The number of conditional licenses issued under this section.]~~

~~(1) THE NUMBER OF CONDITIONAL LICENSES ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION;~~

~~(2) THE NUMBER OF HOLDERS OF CONDITIONAL LICENSES WHO OBTAINED FULL LICENSURE UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION; AND~~

~~(3) ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING:~~

~~(I) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION; AND~~

~~(II) THE IMPACT OF THIS SECTION ON THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted.

Approved by the Governor, April 28, 2026.