

**HEALTH OCCUPATIONS
TITLE 19. SOCIAL WORKERS**

SUBTITLE 1 DEFINITIONS; GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 19-101. Definitions

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

(b) "Board" means the State Board of Social Work Examiners.

(c) "Certified" means having demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board that the individual has completed 2 years of supervised social work practice as defined in § 19-302(d) or (e) of this title.

(d) "Independent practice" means to practice bachelor social work or master social work without the requirement of supervision by another social worker.

(e) "License" means, unless the context requires otherwise, one of four categories of licenses issued by the Board authorizing an individual to practice:

- (1) Bachelor social work;
- (2) Master social work;
- (3) Certified social work; or
- (4) Certified social work—clinical.

(f) "Licensed bachelor social worker" means an individual licensed by the Board to practice bachelor social work.

(g) "Licensed certified social worker" means an individual licensed by the Board, on or before December 31, 2023, to practice certified social work.

(h) "Licensed certified social worker—clinical" means an individual licensed by the Board to practice clinical social work.

(i) "Licensed master social worker" means an individual licensed by the Board to practice master social work.

(j) "Practice bachelor social work" means to use the education and training required under § 19-302(b) of this title to:

(1) Practice social work under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker, licensed certified social worker—clinical, licensed master social worker, or licensed bachelor social worker who meets the conditions specified in regulations; or

(2) If approved by the Board in accordance with § 19-302(f) of this title, engage in independent practice.

(k) "Practice certified social work" means to use the education, training, and experience required under § 19-302(d) of this title to practice social work.

(l) "Practice clinical social work" means to use the specialized education, training, and experience required under § 19-302(e) of this title to practice social work.

(m) "Practice master social work" means to use the education and training required under § 19-302(c) of this title to:

(1) Practice social work under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker, licensed certified social worker-clinical, or licensed master social worker who meets the conditions specified in regulations; or

(2) If approved by the Board in accordance with § 19-302(f) of this title, engage in independent practice.

(n) (1) "Practice social work" means to apply the theories, knowledge, procedures, methods, and ethics derived from receiving a baccalaureate or master's degree from a program in social work that is accredited by or a candidate for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education, or an equivalent organization approved by the Council on Social Work Education, to restore or enhance social functioning of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, or communities through:

(i) Assessment;

(ii) Planning;

(iii) Intervention;

(iv) Evaluation of intervention plans;

(v) Case management;

(vi) Information and referral;

(vii) Counseling that does not include diagnosis or treatment of behavioral health disorders;

(viii) Advocacy;

(ix) Consultation;

(x) Education;

(xi) Research;

(xii) Community organization;

(xiii) Development, implementation, and administration of policies, programs, and activities; or

(xiv) Supervision of other social workers as set forth in regulations.

(2) "Practice social work" includes:

(i) Counseling for alcohol and drug use and addictive behavior; and

(ii) Using technology as set forth in regulations.

(3) For an individual licensed as a master social worker, "practice social work" also includes:

(i) Supervision of other social workers if the master social worker meets the requirements set out in regulations;

(ii) Formulating a diagnosis, under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical;

(iii) Treatment of biopsychosocial conditions, under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical; and

(iv) Treatment of behavioral health disorders, including substance use disorders, addictive disorders, and mental disorders, and the provision of psychotherapy under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical.

(4) For an individual licensed as a certified social worker, "practice social work" also includes:

(i) Supervision of other social workers;


(ii) Formulating a diagnosis, under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical;

(iii) Treatment of biopsychosocial conditions, under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical; and

(iv) Treatment of behavioral health disorders, including substance use disorders, addictive disorders, and mental disorders, and the provision of psychotherapy under the supervision of a licensed certified social worker-clinical.

→ (5) For an individual licensed as a certified social worker-clinical, "practice social work" also includes:

(i) Supervision of other social workers;

 (ii) Evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of biopsychosocial conditions, mental and emotional conditions and impairments, and behavioral health disorders, including substance use disorders, addictive disorders, and mental disorders, as defined in § 7.5-101 of the Health – General Article;

(iii) Petitioning for emergency evaluation under Title 10, Subtitle 6 of the Health –

General Article; and

(iv) The provision of psychotherapy.

(o) “Private practice” means the provision of psychotherapy by a licensed certified social worker–clinical who assumes responsibility and accountability for the nature and quality of the services provided to a client:

(1) In exchange for direct payment or third–party reimbursement; or

(2) On a pro bono basis as determined in regulations adopted by the Board.

(p) “Psychotherapy” means the assessment and treatment of mental disorders and behavioral health disorders.

(q) “Reactivation” means the process of obtaining a license less than 5 years after the Board placed an individual on inactive status.

(r) “Reinstatement” means the process of obtaining a license less than 5 years after the Board placed an individual on nonrenewed status.

(s) “Reissuance” means the process of obtaining a license more than 5 years after the Board placed an individual on inactive or nonrenewed status.

(t) “Supervision” means a formalized professional relationship between a supervisor and a supervisee that:

(1) Provides evaluation and direction of the supervisee; and

(2) Promotes continued development of the supervisee’s knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide social work services in an ethical and competent manner.

§ 19-102. Legislative policy

(a) The General Assembly finds that the profession of social work profoundly affects the lives, health, safety, and welfare of the people of this State.

(b) The purpose of this title is to protect the public by:

(1) Setting minimum qualification, education, training, and experience standards for the licensing of individuals to practice social work; and

(2) Promoting and maintaining high professional standards for the practice of social work.

§ 19-103. Scope of title

This title does not limit the right of an individual to practice a health occupation that the individual is authorized to practice under this article.