Draft ASWB Social Work Practice Mobility Plan

Overview

The Mobility plan has been developed following several years of research and member input. The plan significantly streamlines the application process for social workers seeking licensure. A centralized licensee databank is envisioned as the primary tool to assist jurisdictional boards make informed decisions more efficiently when evaluating a license application. Application processing, the Public Protection Database (PPD), exam administration, continuing education audit services, and the Model Social Work Practice Act (model law) are other resources in the Mobility plan infrastructure that are available to support members’ jurisdictional efforts to operationalize the plan. Member jurisdictions’ increasing use of these resources and services is the key to achieving social work mobility for all stakeholders.

The jurisdictional board has the authority to grant a license. With these tools in place and with greater use of the model law to inform their laws and regulations, regulatory boards will be better positioned to demonstrate that they provide the public greater access to care rather than hinder it.

Key components

a. Three categories of license (from the ASWB Model Social Work Practice Act)
   - Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW)
   - Licensed Master’s Social Worker (LMSW)
   - Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)

   Jurisdictions are not expected to change current license titles. Please see the crossmap of license titles and categories for an illustration.

b. Four criteria (based on research from Mobility Task Force)
   - Graduation from an accredited social work program
   - A passing score on the appropriate ASWB exam
   - Completion of supervised experience (as required)
   - No reported disciplinary action

c. A centralized licensee databank structured on the existing Social Work Registry.

   By using the centralized licensee databank, jurisdictional members will be able to increase their efficiency and agility to expedite licensure requests. The envisioned databank will include all licensed and pre-licensed social workers. In order to ensure
participation of as many social workers as possible, databank enrollment will be at no cost to the individual.

The databank will serve as a permanent, centralized repository for social workers’ essential primary source records:

- Transcript(s)
- Application
- Exam scores
- Verification of clinical supervision hours
- License(s) held
- Continuing education credits earned

Enrolled social workers will establish a databank profile, including the primary source records. ASWB staff will verify, at a minimum, the enrollee’s:

- Identity
- Education
- Experience
- Exam results
- Licensure history
- License status

Member jurisdictions use the centralized databank to process license applications and transfer requests. Upon the social worker’s request, ASWB will be able to securely share databank materials with one or multiple jurisdictions when licensure in additional jurisdictions is sought. This could include materials required for initial licensure, licensure by endorsement/transfer, as well as providing auditing of continuing education for license renewal. As the centralized databank is populated, more administrative tasks can be added, including 100 percent auditing of continuing education for licensees.

To populate the databank, individual social workers have multiple opportunities to enroll:

- as a social work student
- when applying for licensure or renewing with the jurisdictional board
- when registering with ASWB to take the licensing exam
- at any time as a social work professional
d. A plan for license portability to address electronic practice

Practice mobility is the first step along a continuum that will include portability for electronic practice in the future. The Mobility plan recommends that all jurisdictions adopt the guidance recommended in the model law regarding electronic practice: That the social worker who is engaging in electronic practice be licensed in the jurisdiction where the client resides.

Access the feedback form