



Social work mobility readiness for clinical licensure

As evaluated through endorsement-related provisions and licensure materials

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Introduction

ASWB started focusing on practice mobility/license portability in 2013, when the ASWB Board of Directors identified it as a strategic objective for the 2014–2018 strategic plan. Because of the work of the Mobility Task Force and all ASWB members, a Mobility strategy was adopted as part of Resolution 2017-1 at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly. Jurisdictions began working on implementation plans in 2018.

A primary principle of the Mobility strategy is that member boards recognize that currently licensed applicants have been vetted and duly licensed by another board of social work. Building on this principle and all the research conducted between 2014 and 2018, the 2018 Regulation and Standards Committee is proposing amendments to the Model Social Work Practice Act that puts endorsement language forward as a solution that respects states' rights and protects the public while easing barriers to current licensees requesting equivalent licenses in additional jurisdictions, subject to eligibility decisions based on discipline and evidence satisfactory to the receiving board of the licensee's good standing.

"Endorsement" refers to a process whereby the state into which a licensee is seeking to endorse performs an analysis of whether the individual was licensed elsewhere under similar circumstances. Under an endorsement process, the receiving board has the discretion to grant or refuse a license to the applicant based on that analysis. It is through this lens that ASWB conducted an evaluation of mobility readiness in U.S. jurisdictions. Efforts focused exclusively on clinical licensure as a first step in understanding how license requirements and the administration of social work regulation compares from state to state.

Mobility Readiness categories

The categories defined here and used in Table 1 were developed by ASWB to convey social work practice mobility readiness for clinical licensure. ASWB staff conducted a comprehensive review of 52 U.S. jurisdictions that included all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Regulatory provisions for endorsement, licensure by credential, reciprocity, temporary license, and more were part of the review scope. Staff also evaluated board licensing websites and application materials for the clinical license.

The review focused on whether licensed applicants were evaluated in the same manner as first-time applicants for clinical licensure. The review included, among other criteria:

- verification of credentialing information
- primary source document requirements
- how required information is collected and submitted by the applicant

As the review progressed, it became clear that state-specific standards for supervised experience and state-specific requirements for the verification of supervised experience make it easier or more difficult for qualified licensed social work professionals to obtain licensure in another jurisdiction. Regulations or policies that waive supervision verification for licensed social workers meeting specific criteria reduce barriers to licensure. Similarly, requirements for supervised experience that are closer to the standards suggested by the Mobility strategy reduce barriers to licensure. States that offer alternatives to verification of supervision, such as the use of affidavits, and states that review a licensee's overall application without scrutinizing specific supervision factors (e.g., the amount of time spent in direct client contact, direct supervisor contact, the frequency of supervision, hours/frequency of supervision, supervisor requirements and verification) also provide licensees a less restrictive route to additional licensure.

Examination and education requirements are nearly uniform across all states and were not considered in assigning Mobility Readiness categories. It is implicit that applicants are held to standards of a passing score on the ASWB Clinical exam and a Master of Social Work degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Mobility Ready

The jurisdiction has waived supervision verification requirements for first-time applicants currently licensed in another jurisdiction because the applicant has the minimum practice experience required, or for other reasons noted.

Less Restrictive

The jurisdiction may require verification of supervised experience, but the verification may be provided by the state where the applicant is currently licensed, or the social worker may submit an affidavit in instances where the original supervisor cannot complete required forms. An applicant is likely to experience less of a challenge obtaining licensure in the state because of how supervision requirements are verified compared to other states.

Gray Area

The jurisdiction may be more, or less restrictive, to practice mobility depending on the reasons noted.

Restrictive

The jurisdiction requires applicants currently licensed in another jurisdiction to satisfy requirements for first-time applicants seeking clinical licensure. The jurisdiction also requires supervision verification from the original supervisor.

Summary of findings

The evaluation resulted in 21 U.S. states being identified as Mobility Ready because they have adopted endorsement or similar provisions eliminating licensing barriers for clinical applicants with a license in good standing in another state. Seventeen states were categorized as Less Restrictive, meaning that verification of supervision is administered in a way that reduces barriers for clinical license applicants with a license in good standing in another state. One state was assigned to the Gray Area category because aspects of requirements may prove to be burdensome for some currently licensed applicants seeking additional licensure. Thirteen states were assigned to the Restrictive category because these states require original supervisor verification and their standards for licensed applicants are identical to those for first-time applicants seeking clinical licensure.

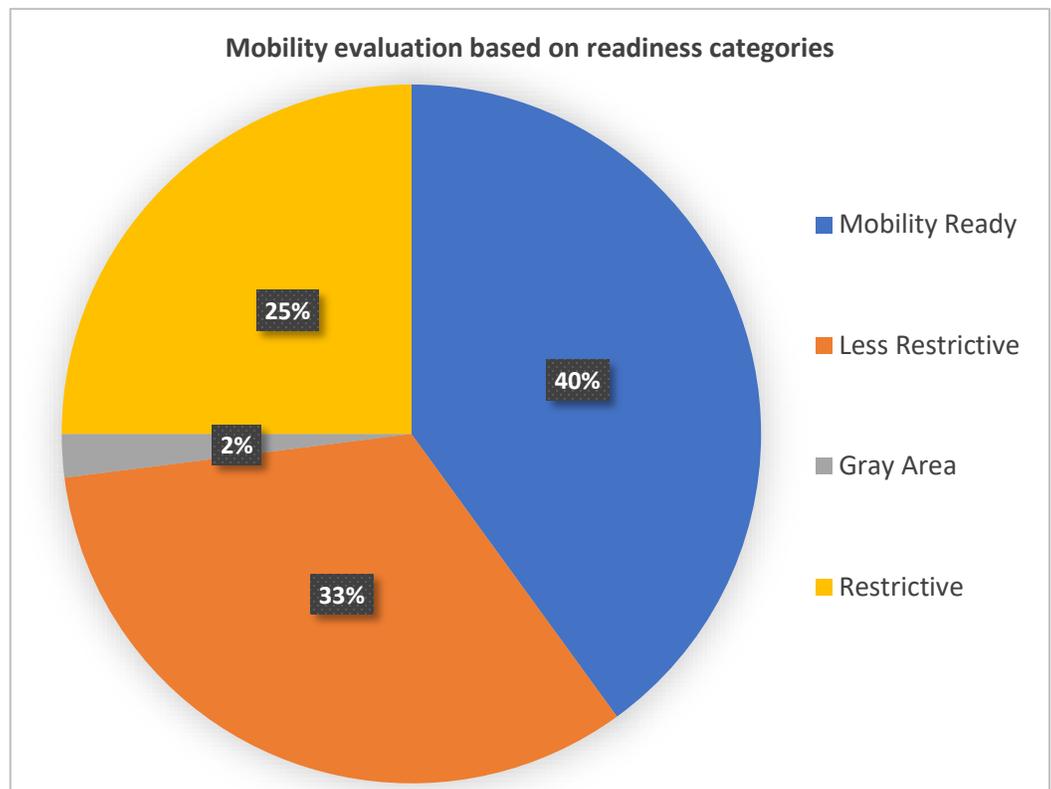


Table 1. Suggested, assigned Mobility Readiness categories based on review of regulations and clinical license application materials		
Jurisdiction	Minimum practice experience or supervised experience requirements and other factors specific to Mobility applicants	
MOBILITY READY		
Arizona	Three years minimum practice experience ¹	MOBILITY READY
California	Two years minimum practice experience ^{1,2}	
Connecticut	Three years minimum practice experience ¹	
District of Columbia	Supervised practice experience is not evaluated for applicants clinically licensed in good standing ³	
Florida	Three years minimum practice experience ^{1,6}	
Idaho	Supervision verification is not required	
Indiana	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Iowa	Supervised practice experience is not evaluated for applicants clinically licensed in good standing ³	
Kansas	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Kentucky	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Maryland	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Massachusetts	Supervision verification is not required	
Missouri	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Nebraska	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
New Mexico	Five years minimum practice experience ^{1,4}	
Nevada	No credential verification for clinical applicants licensed in good standing in another U.S. jurisdiction	
North Dakota	Supervision verification is not required; applicants are reviewed against standards in the other state at the time the original license was granted. Professional practice experience can be applied to address differences in required supervision hours. ³	
Texas	Five years minimum practice experience ¹	
Utah	One year minimum practice experience ¹	
Virginia	36 months out of 60 months minimum practice experience ¹	
Wyoming	Supervision verification is not required ⁵	
LESS RESTRICTIVE		
Alabama	Original supervisor(s) ⁸ verify applicants have received 96 hours of direct supervisor contact in 24 months of supervised practice experience. An applicant affidavit of supervised experience will be considered by the board if the original supervisor(s) are unable to complete the required paperwork. The minimum supervisory time period is the same in 96% of states (all except two); all states have the same or more stringent requirements for direct supervisor contact hours; these requirements are likely not a barrier.	LESS RESTRICTIVE
Alaska	Supervision verification is not required. Regulations require substantial equivalency, as determined by the board. First-time clinical license applicants in Alaska must demonstrate 3,000 hours of supervised practice experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.	LESS RESTRICTIVE

Table 1. Suggested, assigned Mobility Readiness categories based on review of regulations and clinical license application materials	
Jurisdiction	Minimum practice experience or supervised experience requirements and other factors specific to Mobility applicants
LESS RESTRICTIVE	LESS RESTRICTIVE
Illinois	Ten years minimum practice experience required. Applicants without ten years of experience must provide verification of 3,000 hours of supervised practice experience, 100% of which was acquired under an LCSW. Otherwise applicants must obtain an LSW license and practice under supervision according to requirements for first-time clinical license applicants.
Maine	Supervision verification is not required. The other state standards are evaluated. Regulations require substantial equivalency, as determined by the board. First-time clinical license applicants in Maine must demonstrate 3,200 hours of supervised practice experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 30% of states (16 states), and nearly the same in 65% of states ¹⁰ (35 states); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
Mississippi	The other state verifies that the applicant has obtained 24 months of supervised experience. The minimum supervisory time-period is the same or more in 96% of states (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
Montana	Original supervisor(s) ⁸ verification of 3,000 hours supervised practice experience is required. Applicants may provide an affidavit if the original supervisor cannot be located. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
New York	Ten years minimum practice experience ¹ in the 15 years prior to application. Applicants without 10 years of experience must obtain an LMSW license and practice under supervision according to requirements for first-time clinical license applicants.
North Carolina	Supervision verification is not required. Regulations require substantial equivalency, as determined by the board. First-time licensing applicants in North Carolina must demonstrate 3,000 hours of supervised practice experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
Ohio	Supervision verification is not required. Applicants are reviewed against standards in the other state at the time that the original license was granted. Regulations require substantial equivalency, as determined by the board. First-time licensing applicants in Ohio must demonstrate 3,000 hours of supervised practice experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
Pennsylvania	The other state verifies the applicant has obtained 3,000 hours of supervised experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
Rhode Island	The other state verifies the applicant has obtained 3,000 hours of supervised experience. Regulations require substantial equivalency, as determined by the board. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
South Carolina	The other state verifies the applicant has obtained 3,000 hours of supervised experience. The requirement for total supervision hours is the same or more in 96% of states ¹⁰ (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.
South Dakota	The other state verifies that the applicant has obtained 24 months of supervised experience, four hours direct supervision per month with a licensed clinical social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist. The minimum supervisory time period is the same in 96% of states (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.

Table 1. Suggested, assigned Mobility Readiness categories based on review of regulations and clinical license application materials		
Jurisdiction	Minimum practice experience or supervised experience requirements and other factors specific to Mobility applicants	
		RESTRICTIVE
		RESTRICTIVE
Louisiana	Original supervisor(s) ⁹ verification of 5,760 hours of supervised practice experience (3,840 hours must be with a board-approved clinical supervisor) including documentation of direct supervisor contact hours is required. Board has discretion in determining substantial equivalency for applicants licensed in good standing in another jurisdiction should supervision verification be a challenge for applicants.	
Michigan	Original supervisor(s) verification of 4,000 hours supervised practice experience including documentation of the frequency of supervision is required.	
Minnesota	Specific education course content requirements. Original supervisor(s) verification of 4,000 hours supervised practice experience including documentation of direct supervisor contact hours, frequency of supervision, and supervisor qualifications is required.	
New Hampshire	Specific education course content requirements. Original supervisor(s) verification of 3,000 hours supervised practice experience including documentation of direct supervisor contact hours is required.	
Oklahoma	The other state verifies that the applicant has obtained two years of supervised experience. The minimum supervisory time period is the same in 96% of states (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier. Residency is required for reciprocity applicants.	
Oregon	Original supervisor(s) ⁹ verification of 4,000 hours supervised practice experience including documentation of direct client contact hours is required. Board has discretion in determining substantial equivalency for applicants licensed in good standing in another jurisdiction should supervision verification be a challenge for applicants.	
Virgin Islands	The original supervisor(s) verify that the applicant has obtained two years of supervised experience. The minimum supervisory time period is the same in 96% of states (all except two); the requirement is likely not a barrier.	
Washington	Original supervisor(s) verification of 4,000 hours supervised practice experience including documentation of direct supervisor contact hours, frequency of supervision, and supervisor qualifications is required.	

¹Supervision verification requirements are waived for individuals licensed in another jurisdiction if licensees have the specified minimum practice experience

²Proposal discussed at the 2018 ASWB Education Conference; regulations pending

³Confirmed by board staff; not found in regulations or application materials

⁴As stated on board website; not found in regulations or application materials

⁵Revised reciprocity regulations approved by the licensing board 10.24.2018; regulations pending

⁶Board staff indicated the intention to eliminate specific coursework requirements for endorsement applicants; regulations pending

⁷Proposed legislation submitted for governor's approval to change reciprocity provision to endorsement and to give the board discretion in evaluating whether another state's standards are substantially equivalent; regulations pending

⁸Applicant affidavit accepted in lieu of original supervisor verification

⁹Board staff indicated current board uses broad discretion in evaluating supervised experience requirements despite prescriptive nature of regulations

¹⁰Twenty-nine states require 3,000 hours supervision; eight states require between 3,200 and 3,600 hours; eight states require 4,000 hours; one state requires 5,760 hours; four states require two years of supervision; and two states require 24 months of supervision

Table 2. Mobility applicant credential verification requirements								
Jurisdiction	Education verification¹	Education course content requirements	Supervision verification¹	License in good standing	Exam	Supervision	Education	
Alabama	3		3a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
Alaska	1		1a	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified	
Arizona	3		1a	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts	
Arkansas	3		3b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
California²	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts	
Colorado	3		3b	Original or notarized copy of license	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
Connecticut	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts	
Delaware	3		3b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
District of Columbia	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Copy of original or score transfer	Not verified	Official transcripts	
Florida⁴	4	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts	
Georgia	3		3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	

Table 2. Mobility applicant credential verification requirements							
Jurisdiction	Education verification¹	Education course content requirements	Supervision verification¹	License in good standing	Exam	Supervision	Education
Hawaii	3		3e or ABE/NASW credential	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form or Verification of ABE BCE or NASW QCSW/DCSW credential	Official transcripts
Idaho	3		1b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified	Official transcripts
Illinois	3		1a or 3f	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts
Indiana	3	X	1a or 3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer or submitted by other state	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Not verified, but specific course listing collected in application
Iowa	3		1a or 3g	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts
Kansas	2 or 3		1a	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Verified by other state allowed, or official transcript
Kentucky	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts
Louisiana	3		3e	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts
Maine	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified	Official transcripts
Maryland	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts

Table 2. Mobility applicant credential verification requirements									
Jurisdiction	Education verification¹	Education course content requirements	Supervision verification¹	License in good standing	Exam	Supervision	Education		
Massachusetts	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified	Official transcripts		
Michigan	3		3b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
Minnesota	3	X	3e	Verified by other state	Exam score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
Mississippi	5		3h	Verified by other state	Exam score transfer	Supervision verification form	Educational institution completes form		
Missouri	2		2a	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state		
Montana	3		3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
Nebraska	1	X	1a	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Not verified		
Nevada	3		1a	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified	Not verified		
New Hampshire	3	X	3c	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
New Jersey	3	X	3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
New Mexico	3		3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Official transcripts		
New York	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with 10 years of practice within the last 15 years	Educational institution completes form		

Table 2. Mobility applicant credential verification requirements									
Jurisdiction	Education verification ¹	Education course content requirements	Supervision verification ¹	License in good standing	Exam	Supervision	Education		
North Carolina	3		1b or 2b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Verified by other state OR not verified; other state regulations are consulted	Official transcripts		
North Dakota	1		1a	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified	Not verified		
Ohio	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified; applicants are reviewed against standards in the other state at time license was granted	Official transcripts		
Oklahoma	3		2a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Verified by other state	Official transcripts		
Oregon	3		3i	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts		
Pennsylvania	3		3a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form OR verified by other state with copy of original submitted	Official transcripts		
Rhode Island	3		2c	Verified by other state	Copy of original or score transfer	Verified by other state	Official transcripts		
South Carolina	3	X	2e	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Official transcripts		
South Dakota	3		3d	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Verified by other state	Official transcripts		
Tennessee	3		1a	Photocopy of original license	Score transfer	Not verified	Official transcripts		
Texas	3		2d	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Official transcripts		

Table 2. Mobility applicant credential verification requirements								
Jurisdiction	Education verification ¹	Education course content requirements	Supervision verification ¹	License in good standing	Exam	Supervision	Education	
Utah	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Not verified	
Vermont	3		2c	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	Verified by other state	
Virgin Islands	3		3a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
Virginia	3	X	1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified with minimum practice experience	Not verified	
Washington	3		3e	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Supervision verification form	Official transcripts	
West Virginia	3	X	3c	Verified by other state	Not verified	Not verified	Not verified	
Wisconsin	3	X	1b	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified; other state regulations are consulted	Educational institution completes form	
Wyoming ³	3		1a	Verified by other state	Score transfer	Not verified	Not verified	

¹See key on page 13 of this report

²Proposal discussed at the 2018 ASWB Education Conference; regulations pending

³Revised reciprocity regulations approved by the licensing board 10.24.2018; regulations pending

⁴Board staff indicated the intention to eliminate specific coursework requirements for endorsement applicants; regulations pending

Table 3. Provisions relating to practice mobility in U.S. social work regulations

Jurisdiction	Reciprocity	Endorsement	Temporary License	Other
Alabama	X		X	
Alaska			X	X ¹
Arizona		X	X	
Arkansas	X		X	
California	X			
CNMI				
Colorado				
Connecticut		X		
Delaware	X			
District of Columbia	X	X	X	
Florida		X		
Georgia				
Hawaii	X	X		
Idaho		X		
Illinois		X		
Indiana	X		X	X ²
Iowa	X	X		
Kansas	X		X	
Kentucky			X	
Louisiana	X	X		
Maine	X			
Maryland		X	X	
Massachusetts	X			
Michigan		X		
Minnesota	X	X	X	
Mississippi	X		X	
Missouri	X		X	
Montana		X		
Nebraska	X			
Nevada		X		
New Hampshire				X ¹
New Jersey		X		
New Mexico	X		X	
New York		X	X ³	
North Carolina			X	X ¹
North Dakota	X			
Ohio	X	X	X	
Oklahoma	X			
Oregon			X	
Pennsylvania	X	X		
Rhode Island		X		
South Carolina				
South Dakota	X			
Tennessee	X		X	
Texas	X		X	

Jurisdiction	Reciprocity	Endorsement	Temporary License	Other
Utah		X	X	
Vermont				X ¹
Virgin Islands				
Virginia		X		
Washington				
West Virginia			X	
Wisconsin			X	X ¹
Wyoming	X			

¹License by credential

²Regulatory provisions for out-of-state applicants

³A limited permit is offered; it allows the holder to practice under supervision of an LCSW while attempting the clinical exam.

Table 2 Key — Supervised experience and education requirements

Supervised experience

1. Supervised experience is not verified
 - a. Supervised experience requirements are not considered in decision to approve an applicant's license because the licensee has met minimum experience requirements or for reasons determined by the board
 - b. Other state regulations are consulted
2. The other state provides supervision verification on a form provided by the applicant state
 - a. Two years of supervision
 - b. Total supervised hours
 - c. Total supervised hours and frequency
 - d. Total supervised hours, including one or all: direct supervisor contact hours, face-to-face/distance and/or group hours, and direct client contact hours
 - e. Total supervised hours and supervisor qualifications
3. Supervised experience is verified by the original supervisor on a form provided by the applicant state
 - a. Total supervised hours
 - b. Total supervised hours and frequency of supervision
 - c. Total supervised hours and direct supervisor contact hours including face-to-face/distance and/or group hours
 - d. Total supervised hours and direct supervisor contact hours including face-to-face/distance and/or group hours and frequency of supervision
 - e. Total supervised hours and direct supervisor contact hours including face-to-face/distance and/or group hours, frequency of supervision, and supervisor qualifications
 - f. Total supervised hours; 100% must be under the supervision of an LCSW
 - g. Total hours of direct supervision and minimum experience requirements of supervisor
 - h. Total hours of direct supervision and direct clinical client contact
 - i. Total supervised hours, direct client contact hours, and direct supervisor contact hours including face-to-face/distance and/or group hours

Educational credentials

1. Education is not verified
2. The other state verifies on a form provided by the applicant state
3. Official transcripts
4. Official transcripts and specific course content of program
5. The applicant state requires the educational institution to complete a form

