

## Gaining Social Work Licensure in California as of 2016

### Helpful Contacts:

Email **Ken Schulman**, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services and External Relations, ([kschul@bu.edu](mailto:kschul@bu.edu)) about how you can stay connected with the BU Alumni network and tap into alumni events across the country.

**Brett Collins**, LICSW, is the current alumni association representative of the Bay Area ([info@brettcollinslcsw.com](mailto:info@brettcollinslcsw.com))

### Social Work Licensing in California:

California recognizes two levels of social workers and license types:

1. ASW: Associate Clinical Social Worker
2. LCSW: California Licensed Clinical Social Worker

<b>California License</b>	<b>ASW</b>	<b>LCSW</b>
<b>Massachusetts License Equivalent</b>	LCSW	LICSW
<b>Education Requirements for Licensure</b>	MSW <u>Including coursework:</u> - CA Law & Professional Ethics (18 hours)	MSW <u>Including coursework:</u> -Child Abuse Assessment & Reporting (7 hours) -Human Sexuality (10 hours) -Alcoholism and other Chemical Substance Dependency (15 hours) - Spousal or Partner Abuse Assessment, Detection, and Intervention (15 hours) - Aging, Long Term Care, and Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse (10 hours)
<b>Exam for Licensure</b>	None	California Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Examination (now consistent with the national ASWB exam)  California Law and Ethics Exam

<b>Field Requirements for Licensure</b>	None	3,200 hours of supervised work experience (See <a href="http://socialworklicensemap.com/become-a-social-worker/become-a-social-worker-in-california/">http://socialworklicensemap.com/become-a-social-worker/become-a-social-worker-in-california/</a> for specifications) * <b>Your hours towards LCSW <u>does not</u> begin until after you've registered as an ASW</b>
<b>Estimated Starting Salary</b>	\$45,000 - \$50,000	\$60,000 - \$75,000
<b>Common Career Positions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community mental health (can bill Medi-Cal for therapy)</li> <li>• Medical social work</li> <li>• Case management</li> <li>• Home visitor (requires car)</li> <li>• Large universities sometimes hire clinicians/social workers for research projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical supervisor</li> <li>• Private practice</li> <li>• Program development/management</li> </ul>

### **How to begin working as a social worker in CA upon graduation from BUSSW:**

#### ***STEP 1: Apply as an ASW registrant***

**ASW Application pdf:** <http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/lcs/aswapp.pdf>

You can apply as an ASW registrant as soon as your MSW degree is conferred. The application is available online as a pdf which must be printed out, completed, and mailed in. There are several components: application, photo, fee, fingerprints, verification of education, and completion of the California Law and Professional Ethics coursework.

#### **Notes on Application Requirements:**

**Fingerprinting:** Applicants applying from outside of CA will need to request CA fingerprint cards from the state of CA (information in application).

**CA Law & Professional Ethics Coursework:** [As of Jan 2016](#) CA ASW candidates who completed their MSW at a university outside of CA must complete CA Law and Ethics course

(18 hours) before submitting the ASW application (a certificate of completion must be provided). The course can be completed in a variety of ways; some options are listed below:

- Places in SF Bay Area that regularly offer free trainings & workshops (in-person):
  - [Seneca Center](#)
  - [A Better Way, Inc.](#)
- On-line through [CA NASW](#)
  - NASW Member: \$160
  - Non-NASW Member: \$185
- On-line through [Aspira](#) & free practice test
  - Option One – Purchase 1 – 9 units and the cost will be \$8 per unit.
  - Option Two – Purchase 10 or more units and the cost will be \$6 per unit.
  - Option Three A – Purchase a limited annual subscription for \$69.99 allowing you up to 18 units (if all 18 units were used within the 12-month period this would equate to less than \$4 per unit).

**Frequently Asked Questions about the ASW application and future LCSW licensure:**  
[http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/publications/asw\\_faq.pdf](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/publications/asw_faq.pdf)

***STEP 2: Prepare for LCSW licensure.***

Once you begin working as an ASW in CA, you can start preparing for the LCSW by completing the required clinical/supervision hours and the additional required coursework.

**Some Options for Completing Coursework:**

- Take **equivalent BUSSW courses** during your MSW – for example, CA’s *Alcoholism and other Chemical Substance Dependency* requirement can be fulfilled by BU’s course: *CP809: Alcoholism and Drug Abuse*.
- Take relevant **BU PEP courses**: BU’s Professional Education Program courses are free to current students and may fulfill some requirements.  
<http://www.bu.edu/ssw/professional-development/professional-education-programs-pep/>
- Take **CEU courses** (continuing education units) after graduation which fulfill requirements.
- Take required courses through **NASW**:  
<http://www.socialworkweb.com/nasw/choose/pre.cfm>

\*Be sure to verify which classes will fulfill the CA requirements before enrolling and save documentation of course content (i.e.: syllabus) and certificates of attendance/completion.

**More Resources on the LCSW Requirements:**

Required Hours of Experience for the LCSW:

[http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/lcs/lcs\\_exp\\_chart.pdf](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/lcs/lcs_exp_chart.pdf)

**\*Your hours towards LCSW do not begin until after you’ve registered as an ASW**

Overview of the LCSW Licensure Requirements: [http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/lcs\\_requirement.shtml](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/app-reg/lcs_requirement.shtml)

CA is now using [national LCSW exam](#):

- This means there is now reciprocity between CA and other states who uses the national exam
- National LCSW exam has a higher pass rate than the previous CA one

**Things to consider for jobs if planning to obtain LCSW:**

- Is there an LCSW to supervise? (13/52 weeks must be supervised by LCSW)
- If not, will the agency pay for secondary supervision by LCSW? And/or does salary allow you to pay out of pocket for private LCSW supervision (approximately \$60-\$120/hour)?
- How many clinical hours per week? (750/2,000 hours must be face-to-face individual or group psychotherapy)
- Is there a fund for professional development or continuing education?
- **\*DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE LIVING EXPENSES, especially in the Bay Area**