Key Provisions of the Licensed Master Social Worker Law

The following are the key points social workers need to know about the new Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) license that licenses social workers upon graduation with the MSW degree. Applications will be online only and information and forms can be found at the DPH website http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3121&q=508424. The LMSW law does NOT change the requirements for the LCSW except that your 3000 hours of post-graduate experience must be as a LMSW.

- Upon graduation all MSWs seeking to practice clinical social work must pass the Master level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards. A one-time temporary license is available for those working in a clinical capacity who has not yet taken the exam. The temporary license is valid for 120 consecutive calendar days and is only available during a 120 day period starting with your graduation date.
- LMSWs must practice under the professional supervision of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Marital and Family Therapist, Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed APRN or Licensed Physician. Supervision is at minimum one hour per month and must be face-to-face.
- LMSWs can only diagnose with consultation of a licensed clinical social worker, psychologist, marital & family therapist, professional counselor, APRN or physician.
- LMSWs cannot practice independently. As of October 1, 2013 independent practice requires the LCSW.
- The fee for the new LMSW is $220 to apply and $190 annually for renewal.
- Licensed social workers will need 15 hours of continuing education each license year starting when the social worker first renews their license. At least one hour must be in cultural competence.
- The bill has a “grandfathering clause” that allows for licensure without examination. MSWs that attained the MSW degree before October 1, 2013 are eligible for grandfathering. The grandfathering period will expire on October 1, 2015 (those applying under grandfathering should apply well before the deadline).
- For MSWs who on May 15, 2014 are within one year of attaining the LCSW you may continue to work toward the LCSW without attaining the LMSW. You need to attain the LCSW within one year from May 15, 2014, in an understanding with DPH. Attaining the LMSW may be advantageous.
- Social workers exempt from the new law are: those practicing non-clinical social work including administration, community organization, policy & planning, or research as long as they are not performing any clinical tasks or supervising a clinical social worker engaged in clinical practice with clients; BSWs performing non-clinical functions; nursing home social workers practicing under state and federal regulations; certified school social workers practicing within their school social work certification; and social work students practicing within their internship.

This fact sheet is for information purposes only. DPH has final say on licensure decisions.