



WASHINGTON STATE SOCIETY FOR
CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK

LICSW Timeline to Licensure

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Here are the steps required to become licensed as a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in Washington.

1. **MSW Degree** – you must have your MSW before starting on your road to licensure.
2. **Licensed Associate** – as of July 1, 2010, all LICSW candidates must become licensed as a Social Work Associate-Independent Clinical (LSWAIC). Download the application from the Department of Health (DOH) website (www.doh.wa.gov) and send in with application fee. You will also need to get 36 hours of Continuing Education every two years, with six hours specifically in ethics.
3. **Agency Position** – the easiest way to get your 4000 hours of supervised experience is to work under approved supervision in an agency, institution, clinic, or other supervised setting. WSSCSW recommends that LSWAICs not work in private practice until they have an LICSW. LSWAICs are not eligible to take the LICSW examination until they have acquired 4000 hours of supervised experience and 130 hours of individual/group supervision over three years post MSW.
4. **Get an Approved Supervisor** - direct clinical supervision must be with an approved supervisor. Often licensure candidates must find and pay for a supervisor outside their agency. LSWAICs need a minimum of 60 hours of

individual face-to-face supervision with an LICSW who is an approved supervisor; 70 hours can be in a group of no more than 6 candidates. An approved supervisor must be registered with the Department of Health and meet several criteria beyond being licensed. A written contract with your supervisor is recommended by WSSCSW. All approved supervisors must attest to DOH to having met the 15 hours of training in supervision; having one year of non-approved supervision; and 2 years of post-licensure clinical experience.

5. **Document** – make sure your 4000 hours of experience, 1000 direct contact hours, and your 130 hours of supervision are being documented. If you leave your job or supervisor, get a written statement of the hours you have accrued toward either experience or supervision.
6. **Application** – when you have met the experience and supervision requirements, download the LICSW Application from the Department of Health website. Send it in with your documentation of experience and supervision hours, signed by your Approved Supervisor and the application fee. Keep copies of everything. It takes 4-6 weeks to get a response from DOH.
7. **Examination Preparation** – you will be allowed to choose your examination date by DOH. Give yourself time to take a couple test Clinical Examinations (all examinations are developed by the Association of Social Work Boards and test exams can be found at www.aswb.org) and/or an examination preparation course (offered by NASW.)
8. **Passing Examination**- once you have passed the ASWB Clinical Examination, you are eligible to become an LICSW! You will receive your LICSW Documentation from DOH in 2-4 weeks. Renewals occur on your birthday every year. You will also need to keep getting 36 hours of Continuing Education every two years, with six hours specifically in ethics, and six hours in suicide prevention every six years.

You are now an LICSW!