

Please support licensure for bachelor level social workers like me!

Currently, 33 states and the District of Columbia recognize licensure at the bachelor's level. Licensure is about public protection, and the services I will provide are critical to the lives of Pennsylvanians. To that end, it is important that I meet nationally established competency standards and be held accountable by the state for my actions.

I want to be licensed, regulated and held accountable for my practice of social work.

- In Pennsylvania, social workers are licensed, but only at the master's level. There are two tiers of professional licensure, creating a professional ladder of services. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth is missing the first rung on the ladder without the inclusion of BSW licensure. Nurses with bachelor's degrees are licensed in Pennsylvania, so there is precedent for licensure at the bachelor's level.
- Licensure would show prospective employers that I passed a nationally recognized exam that tests core competencies in social work service delivery. Licensure reinforces my commitment to the profession and guarantees continuous professional improvement by requiring continuing education.
- As a licensed professional, I will be held accountable to social work laws set forth by the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors. Licensure provides public protection and professional accountability for the clients I will serve. It also would serve to protect the people of the Commonwealth from receiving poor quality services.

Professional training

Unlike other majors, I am required to take very specific courses designed to prepare me for entry into the workforce as a front-line social work professional. My training as a BSW student prepares me to engage in the following areas as I enter the workforce:

- Adherence to a Professional Code of Ethics
- Client Advocacy
- Cause Advocacy
- Case Management
- Community Outreach
- Crisis Intervention
- Interviewing
- Intake and Referral
- Problem Solving
- Safety Assessment

Professional education

The BSW education combines liberal arts with professional social work foundation content to prepare graduates for the practice of social work. My BSW program, in fact all programs in the country, meet rigorous academic standards recognized by the Council

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on Social Work Education, our national accrediting body. The BSW curriculum is one of the few that must be accredited at the program and university level. The BSW curriculum provides a professional social work foundation that is transferable to different settings and population groups. This foundation includes study in areas such as:

- Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Human Biology
- Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- Critical Thinking
- Family Dynamics
- Social Services Systems
- Social Work Theory and Standards
- Social Welfare Policies
- Practice-Based Research
- Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
- Social Work Values and Ethics

Professional experience

My social work program requires me to complete a field placement practicum which consists of at least 400 hours of direct social work practice in a professional agency. Those hours must be supervised by a credentialed professional with a master's or bachelor's in social work. This signature requirement of a BSW degree is intended to allow me a structured opportunity to apply classroom learning to real life. This is an essential component of the BSW curriculum that provides me with real world experience under the leadership of a highly qualified field supervisor. No other bachelor level program requires a professional placement, field supervision, and an accompanying field placement academic course the way that a BSW program does.

How does my BSW degree make me different from other human service majors?

My BSW degree will prepare me for immediate entry into a social work career in many different public and private social work settings. After graduating,

I will possess the professional skills and training needed to promote beneficial change in the lives of my future clients. I will be able to deliver front line social work services in a multitude of professional settings including:

- Aging Services and Nursing Homes
- Criminal Justice Agencies
- Children and Youth Services
- Child Welfare Agencies
- Domestic Violence Programs
- Family Services
- Home Care Agencies
- Hospitals
- Public Health Agencies
- Mental Retardation/ Developmental Disability Services
- Community Action Agencies
- Homeless Shelters
- Residential Treatment Programs
- Rape Crisis Programs

Why license me?

While not a mental health clinician, I will be providing critical services to very vulnerable individuals. My future roles could include tasks such as conducting safety assessments for abused children, providing crisis advocacy services to rape victims, visiting the elderly in their homes, serving as a probation officer, mentoring troubled teens, making determinations about parental abilities, and matching adoptive families with needy children. I will deliver services in many different settings working for many different types of employers, but in each setting I will be functioning as a social worker.

My future clients, and society at-large, have a right to know that I have met nationally established competency standards, that I am continuing to expand my knowledge-base, and that they have recourse should I operate in an unethical or unprofessional manner. I am a member of a profession, and I want to be held to the professional licensing standards already in place in 33 other states and the District of Columbia.

For all the reasons stated above, I and the thousands of other BSW students and graduates committed to serving the citizens of this Commonwealth, ask for your support for bachelor level social work licensure.

PENNSYLVANIA BSW PROGRAMS — Alvernia University ● Bloomsburg University ● Cabrini College ● California University of Pennsylvania ● Carlow University ● Cedar Crest College ● Chatham University ● Eastern University ● Edinboro University of Pennsylvania ● Elizabethtown College ● Gannon University ● Juniata College ● La Salle University ● Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania ● Mansfield University of Pennsylvania ● Marywood University ● Mercyhurst College ● Messiah College ● Millersville University of Pennsylvania ● Misericordia University ● Philadelphia Biblical University ● Saint Francis University ● Seton Hill University ● Shippensburg University ● Slippery Rock University ● Temple University ● University of Pittsburgh ● Valley Forge Christian College ● West Chester University ● Widener University.