



Guide for Providers of Continuing Education for Social Workers

Office of Professional & Occupational Regulation
Maine Board of Social Worker Licensure

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Introduction

The Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation is an umbrella agency housing 37 professional and occupational licensing boards and licensing programs dedicated to public protection through licensure, inspection, enforcement/complaint handling, and discipline. The Department's full time staff performs inspections, investigates complaints, and licenses over 100,000 professionals. Boards and commissions carry out the duties mandated by the Legislature by setting minimum licensure standards and imposing discipline. One of the thirty-seven (37) licensing boards is the Maine Board of Social Worker Licensure.

The Board of Social Worker Licensure was established to license individuals who engage in the practice of social work. The Board currently issues five (5) different types of licenses: Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Master Social Worker – Conditional Clinical, Licensed Master Social Worker, Licensed Social Worker, and Licensed Social Worker – Conditional and has over 5,000 active licensees that have met the minimum requirements for licensure.

One of the ways the Maine Board of Social Worker Licensure ensures continued competency of its licensees of all levels though is to require continuing education for renewal of licensure. Continuing education not only increases licensee's knowledge base but also introduces seasoned social workers to the latest developments in the field.

Sponsors of continuing education are varied and include employers, associations, non-profit organizations and for-profit corporations. This handbook was developed to assist the wide-variety of those sponsoring continuing education to not only meet the challenge of offering continuing education activities that meets high standards but also to ensure that they are providing licensees with the information and documentation that they need to comply with requirements pursuant to Chapter 14 of the Board's rules.

Snapshot of Continuing Education Requirements

Completion of continuing education is required for renewal of a license. All licensees are required to obtain twenty-five (25) hours of continuing education including four (4) hours of ethics within their two-year licensing period. However, please note that LSW-Conditional licensees first issued a license on or after January 1, 2004, must complete an additional two (2) hours of ethics for a total of six (6) hours as well as six (6) hours of psychosocial assessment.

Types of Continuing Education Activities

Hours may be earned in a number of ways including seminars, workshops and academic coursework.

A maximum of ten (10) hours may also be earned through independent study-type activities as follows: teaching (preparation and presentation for the first time it is presented), writing (articles and books for publication), formal home study, audiotapes, videos and reading.

Subject Matter

Please be advised that all continuing education must relate directly to the practice of social work. Final determination of the acceptability of contact hours rests with the Board. Licensees are encouraged to not only save their certificates of completion but to also save descriptions and agendas of continuing education programs should it become necessary to substantiate the program's relevance to social work practice at audit.

The following list includes just some examples of topics and continuing education activities that likely would not be accepted for continuing education credit

- computer-related training;
- time management;
- office management procedures;
- personal growth and enrichment;
- business meetings;
- Reiki and other energy healing techniques;
- service with professional associations or regulatory boards;
- peer supervisory sessions; and
- employer training specifically geared to a particular setting's functions and management

Continuing Education Sponsor Responsibilities

Do's and Don'ts

The following list of do's and don'ts may prove useful to sponsors of seminars, workshops and in-service training sessions wishing to grant continuing education credit to social workers at all levels of licensure.

Do's

✓ Provide documentation to all attendees upon completion of your program

Upon completion of a continuing education activity, sponsors should provide signed certificates of completion to attendees. These certificates of completion should include, at a minimum, the following:

- Attendee's name;
- Date(s) of completion;
- Name of program;
- Instructor's name(s) and credential(s);
- Location of program;
- Number of contact hours; and
- Name and contact information of the sponsoring organization responsible for maintaining the continuing education records.

In addition to certificates, sponsors should also provide attendees with a description and detailed program agenda. These documents may later be used to substantiate a program's relevancy to the practice of social work or to substantiate the number of contact hours completed.

✓ Calculate contact hours accurately

Please note that contact hours are to be calculated based upon actual instruction time. Breaks, lunch, business meetings, etc. are not to be counted within the total number of contact hours listed on the certificate.

✓ Verify attendance of all participants

Attendance of all participants should be verified prior to issuance of certificates. Sign-in sheets should be signed by attendees and archived by the sponsors.

✓ *Collect evaluations*

Sponsors should collect evaluations completed by attendees of the program. The evaluations can include ratings and comments regarding location, facilities, program format, instructional aids, instructors, content of program, etc. Evaluations can be invaluable to program sponsors when planning future activities.

✓ *Archive documentation upon completion of your program*

After a continuing education activity, the sponsor of the program is responsible for maintaining a roster of attendees, sign-in sheet(s), a description, a detailed biography or CV of the instructor(s), a detailed agenda and any handouts in its files. A licensee may request a duplicate certificate or the Board may need to verify attendance of an attendee at a later time.

✓ *Obtain instructor(s) who are qualified and have expertise in the subject area of instruction*

It is the sponsor's responsibility to obtain qualified instructors who have education and expertise in the subject area of instruction as evidenced by their current or past work experience, educational background, publications and/or previous teaching experience. Legal and liability issues should be considered and addressed to a qualified attorney.

✓ *Review the Board's website periodically for updates to continuing education requirements and this handbook*

This guide was developed to assist a sponsor in offering continuing education activities that will not only provide excellent educational opportunities but will also meet the requirements necessary for licensees attending your programs. Please contact the Board directly should you have additional questions or have suggestions for future editions of this guide.

Don'ts

✓ Represent that your continuing education activity is approved or will be accepted by the Board

It is the licensee's responsibility to ensure that the continuing education activity conforms to the requirements as outlined in Chapter 14 of the Board's Rules. Licensees may contact the Board directly if they have questions regarding continuing education requirements.

✓ Award continuing education credit in the workshop category if immediate interaction with the instructor is not available

For a continuing education activity to be counted in the category of workshops, immediate interaction with the instructor is necessary. For distance learning activities in which immediate interaction with the instructor is available, documentation of such availability of interactivity may be requested by the Board.

✓ Measure continuing education activities by using the term CEU

While the term CEU is used frequently for other license types, the Board of Social Worker Licensure measures continuing education in contact hours. Contact hours are calculated based upon actual hours of instruction time as previously indicated.

✓ Forward attendance lists to the Board on behalf of licensees

It is the licensees' responsibility to retain their certificates of completion and supplemental information in their own files and to submit it to the Board upon request at audit.

✓ Seek pre-approval from the Board

The Board of Social Worker Licensure is no longer pre-approving continuing education activities.

Additional Information for Sponsors of Continuing Education

✓ *Lists of Licensees*

Lists of licensees are available for download at the Board's website. The following link will take you to the site where sponsors can obtain simple instructions and start a search:

<http://pfr.informe.org/almsonline/almquery/SearchIndividual.aspx>

✓ *Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)*

ASWB's ACE program reviews and approves individual courses and providers. Although the Board does not blanket approve any particular provider or organization, the ACE program through ASWB can assist the Board in making a determination regarding the relevancy of a continuing education activity. Information regarding the ACE program can be obtained at the following website:

<http://www.aswb.org/Links/ACEprogram.asp>

Certificate of Completion



(Insert program name)

Held (insert date) in (insert location)



Issued to:

(licensee's name)

(insert number) contact hours

Presented by: (insert instructor's name & credentials)

Sponsor's Name

Sponsor's Contact Information

Sponsor's Signature

PARTICIPANT TRAINING EVALUATION TEMPLATE

Workshop Title:

Date:

Sponsored By:

Instructor's Name:

Place/Room:

Student Name (optional):

To the participant:

Please complete the following evaluation at the conclusion of the program. Your comments are necessary to assist us in offering the best continuing education programs possible in the future.

Use the following rating scale: 5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – neither agree nor disagree, 2 – disagree, 1 – disagree strongly
Circle N/A if the topic is not applicable to you.

PROGRAM OVERALL

Topic	Rating						Comments
The stated goals and objectives of the workshop were met	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
The topics were covered in sufficient detail	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
The topics covered in this workshop will improve my social work practice	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
I would recommend this workshop to others	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	

INSTRUCTOR

Instructor was well prepared	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
Instructor was able to appropriately respond to questions	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
Instructor was knowledgeable in the topics presented	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
The instructor involved participants in learning activities	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
The instructor's presentation style was effective	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	

FACILITIES AND TRAINING MATERIALS

The room and amenities were conducive to learning	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
Audio-visual aids were used effectively	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
Training materials/handouts were helpful	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	
Sponsor was well organized and responsive to participant needs (registration, special accommodations, certificates, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1	N/A	