

## Working towards independent level licensure

Social workers may begin the supervised clinical experience after receiving licensure as a master level social worker. Licensure as a master level social worker requires passing the ASWB masters level examination.

Mental health counselors and marital and family therapists may begin the supervised clinical experience after completion of all graduate coursework (except the thesis). A temporary license is offered, but is not required, although it may be required by your employer. Licensure as a temporary mental health counselor requires passing the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination (NCMHCE) of the NBCC. Licensure as a temporary marital and family therapist requires passing the Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Regulatory Board (AMFTRB) Examination in Marital and Family Therapy.

Prior to beginning the supervised clinical experience, you must submit a supervision plan to the Board office. You will not be able to count any hours accrued prior to submitting a supervision plan. The requirement to submit a supervision plan applies even to those individuals who elect not to get a temporary license.

To accrue hours, you must be providing clinical mental health services. There are many settings in which you may provide clinical mental health services, including, but not limited to, private practice, agencies, schools, hospitals, health care clinics, hospice, or telehealth. It is not the setting of the practice, but the nature of the practice that determines whether the hours will count towards completing the supervised clinical experience. For example, hours spent practicing as a school guidance counselor, providing social services, or providing behavioral health intervention services (BHIS) will not count towards completing the supervised clinical experience.

Be aware that while you may practice in a variety of settings, you are not permitted to practice independently and cannot be a solo private practitioner until you achieve independent level licensure.

Your supervisor must be an Iowa-licensed LISW, LMHC, or LMFT who meets the Board's qualifications to serve as a supervisor. The supervisor may or may not be associated with your employer. If your supervisor is not associated with your employer, there should be another individual at your employer providing workplace supervision. You may utilize more than one supervisor for purposes of accruing supervision hours, but must submit a supervision plan to the Board office prior to starting with a new supervisor.

If permitted by your employer, you are allowed to work remotely. Be aware that a client's state of residence dictates where the practice is occurring. For example, if you are utilizing telehealth to provide therapy to a client in Nebraska, you are considered to be practicing in Nebraska. Most states require that you obtain licensure in that state prior to engaging in practice.

Therefore, you should obtain appropriate licenses in other states and practice in accordance with the other states' laws and rules if you plan to practice in those states. Other states may require that you practice under a supervisor who is licensed in that state. Your Iowa-licensed supervisor may not be able to supervise hours obtained through practice in other states if they are not licensed in the other states.

Licensure as an independent level social worker requires passing the ASWB clinical level examination. Licensure as a mental health counselor requires passing the NCMHCE. Applicants for licensure as a mental health counselor who passed the NCE prior to April 30, 2020, are also eligible for independent licensure. Applicants seeking licensure as a marital and family therapist must pass the AMFTRB Examination in Marital and Family Therapy.