



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 869

January Session, 2009

Substitute House Bill No. 6676

House of Representatives, April 30, 2009

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. GERAGOSIAN of the 25th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 20-195m of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

3 As used in subsection (c) of section 19a-14, section 19a-18, sections
4 20-195n to 20-195q, inclusive, sections 2, 6 and 7 of this act and this
5 section:

6 (1) "Licensed clinical social worker" means a person who has been
7 licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to this chapter;

8 (2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Public Health;

9 (3) "Department" means the Department of Public Health; [and]

10 (4) "Clinical social work" means the application, by persons trained

11 in social work, of established principles of psychosocial development,
12 behavior, psychopathology, unconscious motivation, interpersonal
13 relationships and environmental stress to the evaluation, assessment,
14 diagnosis and treatment of biopsychosocial dysfunction, disability and
15 impairment, including mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental
16 and addictive disorders, of individuals, couples, families or groups.
17 Clinical social work includes, but is not limited to, counseling,
18 psychotherapy, behavior modification and mental health consultation;

19 (5) "Licensed master social worker" means a person who has been
20 licensed as a master social worker pursuant to this chapter;

21 (6) "Independent practice" means the practice of clinical social work
22 without supervision; and

23 (7) "Under professional supervision" means the practice of clinical
24 social work under the supervision of a licensed mental health, health
25 care, social services or education professional in an individual or
26 group setting.

27 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) An individual licensed as
28 a master social worker pursuant to section 20-195n of the general
29 statutes, as amended by this act, may: (1) Practice clinical social work
30 under professional supervision; and (2) offer a mental health diagnosis
31 provided such diagnosis is offered in consultation with a licensed
32 mental health practitioner who is eligible for independent practice in
33 clinical social work, psychology, psychiatry, advanced practice
34 registered nursing or marital and family therapy. Except as provided
35 in subsection (c) of section 20-195q of the general statutes, as amended
36 by this act, a licensed master social worker may not engage in
37 independent practice.

38 (b) An individual licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to
39 section 20-195n of the general statutes, as amended by this act, may
40 practice clinical social work. A licensed clinical social worker may
41 perform all functions of a licensed master social worker and, in
42 addition, may engage in independent practice.

43 Sec. 3. Section 20-195n of the general statutes is repealed and the
44 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

45 (a) No person shall practice clinical social work unless such person
46 has obtained a license pursuant to this section.

47 (b) An applicant for licensure as a licensed master social worker
48 shall: (1) Hold a master's degree from a social work program
49 accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, if educated
50 outside the United States or its territories, have completed an
51 educational program deemed equivalent by said council; and (2) pass
52 the masters level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards
53 or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner.

54 (c) [Applicants] An applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker
55 shall: (1) Hold a doctorate or master's degree from a social work
56 program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, if
57 educated outside the United States or its territories, have completed an
58 educational program deemed equivalent by said council; (2) have three
59 thousand hours post-master's social work experience which shall
60 include not less than one hundred hours of work under professional
61 supervision by a licensed clinical or certified independent social
62 worker; and (3) pass the clinical level examination of the [American]
63 Association of [State] Social Work Boards or any other examination
64 prescribed by the commissioner. On and after October 1, 1995, any
65 person certified as an independent social worker prior to October 1,
66 1995, shall be deemed licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to
67 this section, except a person certified as an independent social worker
68 on and after October 1, 1990, shall not be deemed licensed as a clinical
69 social worker pursuant to this chapter unless such person has satisfied
70 the requirements of subdivision (3) of this [section] subsection.

71 [(b)] (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of [subsection (a)]
72 subsections (b) and (c) of this section, the commissioner may grant a
73 license by endorsement to an applicant who presents evidence
74 satisfactory to the commissioner that the applicant (1) is licensed or
75 certified as a master social worker or clinical social worker in good

76 standing in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for
77 practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or higher than
78 those of this state, and (2) has successfully completed the master or
79 clinical level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards, or
80 its successor organization, or any other examination prescribed by the
81 commissioner. No license shall be issued under this subsection to any
82 applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or
83 who is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

84 Sec. 4. Section 20-195o of the general statutes is repealed and the
85 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

86 (a) Application for licensure shall be on forms prescribed and
87 furnished by the commissioner. Each applicant shall furnish evidence
88 satisfactory to the commissioner that he has met the requirements of
89 section 20-195n, as amended by this act. The application fee for a
90 clinical social worker shall be two hundred fifty dollars. The
91 application fee for a master social worker shall be one hundred
92 seventy-five dollars.

93 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 20-195n, as amended
94 by this act, concerning examinations, on or before October 1, 2011, the
95 commissioner may issue a license without examination, [prior to
96 January 1, 1998, to any applicant who offers proof to the satisfaction of
97 the commissioner that he met the requirements of subdivisions (1) and
98 (2) of section 20-195n and was an employee of the federal government
99 with not less than three thousand hours postmaster's social work
100 experience prior to October 1, 1986] to any master social worker who
101 demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commissioner that, on or before
102 October 1, 2009, he or she met the licensing requirements for a master
103 social worker as prescribed in section 20-195n, as amended by this act.

104 (c) [(1)] Each person licensed pursuant to this chapter may apply for
105 renewal of such licensure in accordance with the provisions of
106 subsection (e) of section 19a-88. A fee of one hundred fifty dollars shall
107 accompany each renewal application for a licensed master social
108 worker or a licensed clinical social worker. Each such applicant shall

109 furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having
110 [participated in] satisfied the continuing education requirements
111 prescribed in section 7 of this act. [The commissioner shall adopt
112 regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to (A) define basic
113 requirements for continuing education programs, (B) delineate
114 qualifying programs, (C) establish a system of control and reporting,
115 and (D) provide for waiver of the continuing education requirement
116 for good cause.

117 (2) A person licensed pursuant to this chapter who holds a
118 professional educator certificate that is endorsed for school social work
119 and issued by the State Board of Education pursuant to sections 10-
120 144o to 10-149, inclusive, may satisfy the continuing education
121 requirements contained in regulations adopted pursuant to this section
122 by successfully completing professional development activities
123 pursuant to subsection (l) of section 10-145b, provided the number of
124 continuing education hours completed by such person is equal to the
125 number of hours per registration period required by such regulations.
126 For purposes of this subdivision, "registration period" means the one-
127 year period during which a license has been renewed in accordance
128 with section 19a-88 and is current and valid.]

129 Sec. 5. Section 20-195q of the general statutes is repealed and the
130 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

131 (a) No person shall (1) use the title "licensed master social worker"
132 or any initials associated with such title, or (2) advertise services under
133 the description of a licensed master social worker as defined in section
134 20-195m, as amended by this act, unless such person is licensed as a
135 master social worker pursuant to this chapter.

136 [(a)] (b) No [persons, except those licensed pursuant to this chapter,]
137 person shall (1) use the title "licensed clinical social worker" or any
138 initials associated with such [titles] title, or (2) advertise services under
139 the description of a licensed clinical social worker as defined in section
140 20-195m, as amended by this act, unless such person is licensed as a
141 clinical social worker pursuant to this chapter.

142 [(b)] (c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit: (1) A student enrolled
143 in a doctoral or master's degree program accredited by the Council on
144 Social Work Education from performing such work as is incidental to
145 his course of study, provided such person is designated by a title
146 which clearly indicates his status as a student; (2) a person holding a
147 doctoral or master's degree from a program accredited by the Council
148 on Social Work Education from gaining social work experience under
149 professional supervision, provided such activities are necessary to
150 satisfy the work experience required by section 20-195n and such
151 person is designated as "social work intern", "social work trainee" or
152 other title clearly indicating the status appropriate to his level of
153 training; (3) a person licensed or certified in this state in a field other
154 than clinical social work from practicing within the scope of such
155 license or certification; (4) a person enrolled in an educational program
156 or fulfilling other state requirements leading to licensure or
157 certification in a field other than social work from engaging in work in
158 such other field; [or] (5) a person who is employed or retained as a
159 social work designee, social worker, or social work consultant by a
160 nursing home or rest home licensed under section 19a-490 and who
161 meets the qualifications prescribed by the department in its regulations
162 from performing the duties required of them in accordance with state
163 and federal laws governing those duties; (6) for the period from
164 October 1, 2009, to October 1, 2012, inclusive, a master social worker
165 from engaging in independent practice, provided after October 1, 2012,
166 a master social worker may not engage in independent practice unless
167 such master social worker has obtained licensure as a clinical social
168 worker; (7) a social worker practicing community organization, policy
169 and planning, research or administration that does not include
170 engaging in clinical social work or supervising a social worker
171 engaged in clinical treatment with clients; (8) an employee of the state,
172 who works in a formal clinical social work trainee or internship
173 program, from practicing clinical social work under supervision and
174 without requiring such employee to attain licensure as a master social
175 worker; and (9) individuals with a baccalaureate degree in social work
176 from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program from

177 performing nonclinical social work functions.

178 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) The department may issue a
179 temporary permit to an applicant for licensure as a master social
180 worker who holds a master's degree from a social work educational
181 program, as described in section 20-195n of the general statutes, as
182 amended by this act, but who has not yet taken the licensure
183 examination prescribed in said section. Such temporary permit shall
184 authorize the holder to practice as a master social worker as provided
185 for in section 2 of this act. Such temporary permit shall be valid for a
186 period not to exceed two hundred seventy calendar days after the date
187 of attaining such master's degree and shall not be renewable. Such
188 permit shall become void and shall not be reissued in the event that the
189 applicant fails to pass such examination. The fee for a limited permit
190 shall be fifty dollars.

191 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) Except as otherwise
192 provided in this section, each clinical social worker licensed pursuant
193 to the provisions of chapter 383b of the general statutes and, on and
194 after October 1, 2010, each master social worker licensed pursuant to
195 said chapter shall complete a minimum of fifteen hours of continuing
196 education during each registration period. For purposes of this section,
197 "registration period" means the twelve-month period for which a
198 license has been renewed in accordance with section 19a-88 of the
199 general statutes and is current and valid.

200 (b) Continuing education required pursuant to this section shall be
201 related to the practice of social work. Such continuing education shall
202 consist of courses, workshops and conferences offered or approved by
203 the Association of Social Work Boards, the National Association of
204 Social Workers, a school or department of social work accredited by
205 the Council on Social Work Education or an organization that
206 demonstrates to the department that such organization's standards are
207 substantially similar to the organizations identified in this subsection.
208 A licensee's ability to engage in on-line and home study continuing
209 education shall be limited to not more than six hours per registration

210 period. Within the registration period, an initial presentation by a
211 licensee of an original paper, essay or formal lecture in social work to a
212 recognized group of fellow professionals may account for five hours of
213 continuing education hours of the aggregate continuing education
214 requirements prescribed in this section.

215 (c) Each licensee shall obtain a certificate of completion from a
216 provider of the continuing education for all continuing education
217 hours that are successfully completed and shall retain such certificate
218 for a minimum of three years following the license renewal date for
219 which the activity satisfies the continuing education requirement.
220 Upon request by the department, the licensee shall submit such
221 certificate to the department. A licensee who fails to comply with the
222 continuing education requirements prescribed in this section may be
223 subject to disciplinary action pursuant to section 20-195p of the general
224 statutes.

225 (d) A person licensed pursuant to chapter 383b of the general
226 statutes who holds a professional educator certificate that is endorsed
227 for school social work and issued by the State Board of Education
228 pursuant to sections 10-144o to 10-149, inclusive, of the general statutes
229 may satisfy the continuing education requirements contained in this
230 section by successfully completing professional development activities
231 pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (l) of section 10-145b of the
232 general statutes, provided the number of continuing education hours
233 completed by such person is equal to the number of hours per
234 registration period required by this section.

235 (e) A licensee applying for the first time for license renewal
236 pursuant to section 20-195o of the general statutes, as amended by this
237 act, is exempt from the continuing education requirements of this
238 section. The department may, for a licensee who has a medical
239 disability or illness, grant a waiver of the continuing education
240 requirements or may grant the licensee an extension of time in which
241 to fulfill the requirements, provided the licensee submits to the
242 department an application for waiver or extension of time on a form

243 prescribed by the department along with any documentation required
 244 by the department. The department may grant a waiver or extension
 245 not to exceed one registration period, except that the department may
 246 grant additional waivers or extensions if the initial reason for the
 247 waiver or extension continues beyond the period of the waiver or
 248 extension. A waiver of the continuing education requirement may be
 249 granted by the department to a licensee who is not engaged in social
 250 work during a given continuing education registration period,
 251 provided the licensee submits a waiver request prior to the expiration
 252 of the continuing education period, on a form prescribed by the
 253 department.

254 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) The issuance of all licenses
 255 pursuant to chapter 383b of the general statutes shall be accomplished
 256 within the existing budgetary resources of the Department of Public
 257 Health, and all costs associated with such issuance, including, but not
 258 limited to, administrative, personnel, examination and investigative
 259 costs, shall be met within such budgetary resources.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195m
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195n
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195o
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195q
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In section 1 (1), the phrase "as a clinical social worker" was added for clarity. Likewise, in section 1 (5), the phrase "as a master social worker" was added for clarity. In section 5, subsections (a) and (b) were rewritten to provide additional clarity and consistency in the use of terms "licensed master social worker" and "licensed clinical social worker". In section 7, the effective date was changed to "October 1, 2009" for conformity with the provisions of section 4. In section 7 (a),

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Cost	58,534	206,230
Comptroller Misc. Accounts (Fringe Benefits) ¹	GF - Cost	11,646	48,199
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Revenue Gain	206,300	371,300

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to create a new licensure category for master social workers, resulting in a cost to DPH of \$58,534 in FY 10 and \$206,230 in FY 11 for staff and related expenses. These staff positions would prompt associated fringe benefit costs under the Comptroller of \$11,646 in FY 10 and \$48,199 in FY 11. It would also result in a revenue gain to the General Fund of \$152,000 in FY 10 and \$272,000 in FY 11.

Costs to DPH to issue these initial and renewal licenses, provide complaint investigation, hearings, and prosecution are detailed below.

Item	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
1.0 Processing Tech	47,534	47,534

¹ The fringe benefit costs for state employees are budgeted centrally in the Miscellaneous Accounts administered by the Comptroller on an actual cost basis. The following is provided for estimated costs associated with additional personnel. The estimated non-pension fringe benefit rate as a percentage of payroll is 25.43%. Fringe benefit costs for new positions do not initially include pension costs as the state's pension contribution is based upon the 6/30/08 actuarial valuation for the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) which certifies the contribution for FY 10 and FY 11. Therefore, new positions will not impact the state's pension contribution until FY 12 after the next scheduled certification on 6/30/2010.

1.0 Program Associate (investigator)		64,184
0.5 Staff Attorney (hearing officer)		42,506
0.5 Staff Attorney (prosecutor)		42,506
Equipment (scanner in FY 10, staff computers)	1,500	2,500
Other Expenses (outreach in FY 10, travel for investigator in FY 11, supplies, printing)	9,500	7,000
Total	58,534	206,230

Master social workers must be licensed to engage in independent practice by 8/1/2012, according to Sec. 5 of the bill. The initial license fee would be \$175 and the renewal license fee, to be paid annually during the month of the licensee's birth, would be \$150. It is estimated that 1100 people would apply for initial licenses in FY 10 and FY 11, along with 92 renewals in FY 10 and 1192 renewals in FY 11, resulting in a revenue gain to the General Fund of approximately \$206,300 in FY 10 and \$371,300 in FY 11. Funds are not included for this purpose in the budget bill, sHB 6365, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee.

The requirement that this new licensure category be developed by DPH within existing budgetary resources will likely result in one of four outcomes: (1) DPH will proceed with the establishment of the new licensure category and require a deficiency appropriation in FY 10; (2) DPH will delay the establishment of the new licensure category pending the approval of additional appropriations to meet this mandate in future fiscal years; (3) DPH will shift administrative resources from other departmental priorities to establish the new licensure category, thereby impacting existing departmental programs; or (4) DPH will not establish the new licensure category.

The Out Years

In the out-years costs discussed above, subject to inflation, will continue. It is estimated that revenue from a fully operational licensure program would be approximately \$235,050 in the out-years.

Sources: 3/16/09 Public Hearing Testimony, Department of Public Health

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6676*****AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill creates a new license category for certain social workers. The new licensure program, known as “master social worker,” is administered by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The bill: (1) establishes licensure requirements and sets fees for initial licenses and renewals, (2) defines the practice of a master social worker, (3) allows for licensure by endorsement or licensure without examination in certain cases, (4) provides for one- time temporary permits to practice, (5) allows independent practice for a limited time, (5) specifies activities certain social workers are allowed to do, and (6) establishes continuing education requirements.

DPH currently licenses clinical social workers and continues to do so under the bill (see “BACKGROUND”).

The bill specifies that DPH must issue licenses to clinical social workers and master social workers within its existing budgetary resources. All costs associated with such issuance (e.g., administrative, personnel, examination and investigative) must be met within these budgetary resources.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2009.

MASTER SOCIAL WORKER***Terms and Definitions***

Under the bill, a licensed master social worker can (1) practice clinical social work under professional supervision and (2) offer a mental health diagnosis in consultation with a licensed mental health

practitioner eligible for independent practice in clinical social work, psychology, psychiatry, advanced practice registered nursing, or marital and family therapy.

The bill defines “under professional supervision” as the practice of social work under the supervision of a licensed mental health, health care, social services, or education professional in an individual or group setting. (It is unclear which health care professionals can provide the supervision and what kind of social services professionals are licensed; also education professionals are certified, not licensed.)

The bill specifies that a licensed clinical social worker can perform all functions of a licensed master social worker and practice independently. Under the bill, a licensed master social worker cannot engage in independent practice, except for a limited period of time (see below). “Independent practice” means the practice of social work without supervision.

License Requirements

The bill requires an applicant for a master social work license to (1) have a master’s degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or if educated outside the United States or its territories, have completed an educational program the council deems equivalent and (2) pass the masters level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by DPH.

The application fee for a master social work license is \$175. (The law establishes a \$250 fee for licensed clinical social workers.) The renewal fee for both licenses is \$150.

Licensure by Endorsement

The bill allows the DPH commissioner to grant a license by endorsement to an applicant for a master social work license who (1) is licensed or certified as a master social worker in another state or jurisdiction whose practice requirements are substantially similar to or higher than Connecticut’s and (2) has successfully completed the

master level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner. The law already allows for licensure by endorsement for clinical social workers. The bill allows the commissioner to prescribe an alternative examination for clinical social workers.

Licensure without Examination

The bill allows DPH, until October 1, 2011, to issue a license without examination to any master social worker who demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that by October 1, 2009 the individual met the requirements for a master social worker license.

Independent Practice

The bill allows a master social worker (presumably one who is licensed as such) to engage in independent practice between October 1, 2009 and October 1, 2012. After October 1, 2012, a master social worker cannot engage in independent practice unless he or she is licensed as a clinical social worker (see BACKGROUND).

Temporary Permit

The bill allows DPH to issue a temporary permit to a license applicant who has a master's degree from an accredited or equivalent social work program but has not yet taken the required licensure examination. The temporary permit authorizes the holder to work under supervision as a master social worker for up to 270 calendar days after the date of receiving the master's degree. A temporary permit is not renewable; it is void and cannot be reissued if the applicant fails the examination. The temporary permit fee is \$50.

Title Protection

The bill prohibits an individual from (1) using the title "licensed master social worker" or any initials associated with it or (2) advertising services under the description of a licensed master social worker, unless the individual has a master social worker license. The law already provides this protection for licensed clinical social workers.

Allowed Activities

The bill specifies that it does not prohibit (1) a social worker from practicing community organization, policy and planning, research, or administration that does not involve engaging in clinical social work or supervising a social worker engaged in clinical treatment with clients; (2) a state employee who works in a formal clinical social work trainee or internship program from practicing clinical social work under supervision without a master social worker license; and (3) individuals with a baccalaureate degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program from performing nonclinical social work functions.

CONTINUING EDUCATION***Current Requirements for Licensed Clinical Social Workers***

Under existing law, licensed clinical social workers must meet continuing education requirements in order to have their licenses renewed. Currently, DPH must adopt regulations that define basic requirements for continuing education programs, delineate qualifying programs, establish a control and reporting system, and provide for waiving the requirements for good cause. These regulations have been adopted (DPH Regs. § 20-195o(c)-1 to 7).

Current law allows a licensed clinical social worker who also holds a State Board of Education professional educator certificate with a school social worker endorsement to meet continuing education requirements for social workers by completing continuing education activities required for the educator certificate. The number of continuing education hours for maintaining the educator certificate must equal that required for clinical social worker continuing education over a one-year period.

The Bill's Requirements for Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Master Social Workers

The bill eliminates the provision that continuing education requirements be adopted by regulation and instead establishes

statutory requirements for both licensed clinical and master social workers. (Some of the bill's requirements reflect those currently in regulation.)

The bill requires each type of social worker to complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education during each registration period. A "registration period" is the 12-month period for which a license is current and valid. The requirement for licensed master social workers begins on October 1, 2010. Continuing education must be related to the practice of social work and consist of courses, workshops, and conferences offered or approved by the Association of Social Work Boards, the National Association of Social Workers, a school or department of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or an organization that demonstrates to DPH that its standards are substantially similar to the above organizations.

A person can take up to six hours of on-line and home study continuing education per registration period. During the registration period, an initial presentation by a licensee of an original paper, essay, or formal lecture in social work to a recognized group of fellow professionals may account for five continuing education hours.

Each licensee must get a certificate of completion from the continuing education provider for all hours successfully completed. The social worker must retain these certificates for a minimum of three years following the license renewal date for which the activity satisfies the continuing education requirement. The licensee must submit the certificate to DPH, upon request. A licensee failing to comply with the continuing education requirements may be subject to DPH disciplinary action including license revocation or suspension, censure, letter of reprimand, placement on probation, or a civil penalty.

The bill continues to recognize the professional educator certificate-related continuing education described above and applies it to both licensed clinical and master social workers.

A licensee applying for his or her first renewal is exempt from the

continuing education requirements. DPH may grant a waiver from the requirements or an extension of time to a licensee who has a medical disability or illness. The licensee must apply for a waiver or time extension to DPH and submit any documentation the department requires. The waiver or extension cannot exceed one registration period. DPH may grant additional waivers or extensions if the initial reason for the waiver or extension continues beyond the waiver or extension period.

DPH may also grant a continuing education waiver to a licensee who is not engaged in social work during a given registration period, if the licensee submits a waiver request before the continuing education period expires. This must be done on a department form.

BACKGROUND

Licensed Clinical Social Workers

By law, licensed clinical social workers must (1) have a doctorate or master's degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or if educated outside of the United States or its territories, have completed an educational program deemed equivalent by the council; (2) have 3,000 hours post-master's social work experience, which must include at least 100 hours of work under professional supervision by a licensed clinical or certified independent social worker; and (3) pass the clinical level examination of the American Association of State Social Work Boards (the bill changes this to Association of Social Work Boards) or any other examination prescribed by DPH (CGS § 20-195n).

Clinical Social Work

The law defines "clinical social work" as the application, by people trained in social work, of established principles of psychosocial development, behavior, psychopathology, unconscious motivation, interpersonal relationships and environmental stress to the evaluation, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of biopsychosocial dysfunction, disability and impairment, including mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, of individuals, couples,

families or groups. Clinical social work includes, but is not limited to, counseling, psychotherapy, behavior modification, and mental health consultation (CGS § 20-195m(4)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference

Yea 28 Nay 2 (03/26/2009)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 54 Nay 0 (04/15/2009)