



UPDATE

North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board

SPRING, 2008

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

William E. Lamb, MSW, CMSW



William E. Lamb, MSW, CMSW

I've been spending some time lately thinking over my experiences with the Certification and Licensing Board since this is going to be my last time to write this column in my role as chair. Before writing further, I want to make sure I give thanks to all of my predecessors who really laid the groundwork for my term, particularly Dr. Jacalyn Claes, who served as the chair during my first years on the Board. She gave me guidance, direction, and space to make my own mark on the Board's activities. Over the past six years, the staff moved from being employees of a contract firm to employees of the Board. The Board subsequently adopted personnel policies providing for health benefits, a retirement plan and a salary plan competitive with comparable positions in the area. I know that might sound a bit mundane; but the

Board, until recently, could not exactly have been called a model employer. We also moved our offices to our new location which provides both quality space and a more efficient business environment in which to work.

I would also like to highlight bringing on the Ethics Director as a salaried position, contracting with Jack Nichols, attorney with Allen and Pinnix, P.A. to serve as the Board's legal council, streamlining the Board's process for ethics review, producing a supervisor's manual, promoting needed changes to both the law and regulations affecting social work licensure and fostering what I hope are improved communications and working relationships with other organizations representing social work interests in the state.

The future portends turbulent times for social work practice, particularly clinical practice. Mental health transformation offers both opportunities and challenges. Sometimes it feels like we are trying to hammer a square peg into a round hole. Those advocating for mental health reform and those interested in maintaining high standards for the practice of clinical social work don't seem to be using the same language. I know the environment in North Carolina will require the future attention by the Board and careful contemplation of

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NCSWCLB MEMBERS

WILLIAM E. LAMB
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PROFESSIONAL MEMBER
2nd Term Expires: 6/30/08

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MSW, LCSW
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PROFESSIONAL MEMBER
1st Term Expires: 6/30/08

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MSW, CSWM
PROFESSIONAL MEMBER
2nd Term Expires: 6/30/10

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OFFICE HOURS
9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.
MONDAY-FRIDAY

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NC SOCIAL WORK CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE BOARD IN RESOLVING ETHICS COMPLAINTS

RICHARD D. FERRISS, MSW, LCSW, CSWM
M. JACKSON NICHOLS, ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW, ALLEN AND PINNIX, P.A.

As part of the Board's ongoing commitment to address ethical concerns in social work practice, this article addresses the ethics complaint process from the perspective of the Board and from Jim Wilson, an attorney specializing in regulatory law who has represented social workers before the Board. The Board thanks him for his assistance, and hopes you will find this combination of viewpoints helpful.

One of the roles of the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board is to protect the public by resolving allegations of unethical practice of those under its jurisdiction. This is a regulatory function that differs from that of public advocacy groups or professional associations. Of the total number of certified or licensed social workers, fewer than one percent have complaints filed against them in any given year.

The Board acknowledges that involvement in an ethics matter is time consuming and stressful. Every effort is made to expedite the resolution. The time needed to resolve a complaint depends upon its unique characteristics. A complex matter may take over a year to resolve, while a simple matter may take several months. Disciplinary procedures are conducted under Chapter 150B of the North Carolina General Statutes (G.S. § 150B). The social worker may elect to retain counsel at any time in this process at his or her expense.

Procedures:

- When the Board receives a complaint, it determines if the complaint is valid. If true, is it a violation of the NC Social Worker Certification and Licensure Act? The Board itself may initiate a complaint when it becomes aware of a possible ethical violation.
 - Next, the Board notifies the social worker against whom the complaint was filed. Usually the social worker is sent a copy of the complaint and its supporting documentation. If this is contraindicated, the social worker will be notified of the complaint, noting the allegations and ethical standards brought into question.
 - After the social worker's response is received, a subcommittee of the Board evaluates the merits of the complaint.
- When further information is required, the Board may initiate an investigation and assign the case to an investigator. For example, a staff member, Board counsel, or an investigator acting on behalf of the Board may interview witnesses or obtain documentation, such as clinical records, personnel files, or legal documents. All investigators are Licensed Clinical Social Workers with investigative training.
 - If there is evidence of poor or unethical practice, the subcommittee of the Board may attempt to resolve the matter.

What to Do If You Receive a Complaint

1. Most complaints do not result in disciplinary action against the social worker. Also, remember that the Board cannot take any action against your license without either your written consent, or convening an administrative hearing. Either way, you will be involved in the process that leads to the resolution of the ethics matter.
2. Assess whether or not you wish to obtain counsel. You can do this at any point during the process. If you have malpractice insurance, review your policy; it may include a provision which will pay an attorney to represent you before the Board. National and state associations can also assist you with locating experienced counsel.
3. When you respond to a complaint, please provide the information you believe the Board needs to understand your perspective. The Board statute allows the Board to request patient records and if requested, you must send the Board clinical records. Also, provide to the Board any other documents you deem necessary. Under the Board's statute, Board investigations and the identity of clients are confidential; however, matters may become public if the case goes to an administrative hearing.
4. As noted above, a Board investigator may contact you and other witnesses as part of their investigation. He or she will also obtain relevant documents and records.

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RESOLVING ETHICS COMPLAINTS

5. After receiving your response, the Board subcommittee may request to meet with you. These are informal and informational sessions and are not tape recorded. If you wish, you may bring legal counsel to such meetings. This is your chance to tell your side of the story in person.

Possible outcomes:

Note: Board rules require the social worker and the complainant to be notified in writing of the outcome.

1. Unsubstantiated. The complaint will be closed if the subcommittee and Board do not find sufficient evidence to proceed with the complaint. No record of this matter is made available to the public. One-fourth to one-third of complaints are determined to be unsubstantiated and dismissed.
2. Unsubstantiated, but practice concerns noted. When there is evidence of poor practice that does not rise to the level of a violation, the Board may issue a Letter of Concern. The complaint is closed as above and a confidential letter is issued to the social worker noting the areas of poor practice, with suggestions for improvement. No record of this matter is made available to the public.

Dispositions 1 & 2 have no effect on the certification or licensure of the social worker.

3. If significant professional concerns are identified, the Board may offer to resolve this matter by entering into a Consent Order with the social worker. A Consent Order is a public, voluntary agreement (order) between the social worker and the Board. The Consent Order will specify the facts of the matter, findings, and disposition. It may or may not find a violation of the NC Social Worker Certification and Licensure Act, and may or may not discipline the social worker. Most of the complaints in which significant concerns are noted are resolved by a Consent Order.
4. If needed, this matter will go to administrative hearing before the Board (the subcommittee members, if any, are recused), and the social worker and complainant will be sent a Notice of Hearing. If the complainant is needed as a witness, Board's counsel will contact the complainant. Hearings are conducted as prescribed by

the Administrative Procedure Act. Of the 420 complaints thus far resolved by the Board, 32 have gone to hearing. This is less than eight percent, and especially noteworthy given that the Board currently certifies/licenses around 6000 social workers.

Orders and Consent Orders issued by the Board are public record documents regardless of whether or not a discipline action is imposed. All disciplinary actions are a matter of public record and are published on the Board's website and in the Board's newsletter, the *Update*. Pursuant to North Carolina Administrative Code (21 N.C.A.C 63.0609) all disciplinary actions are also reported to the Disciplinary Action Reporting System (DARS) and to the National Practitioner Data Bank-Healthcare Integrity Protection Data Bank (NPDB-HIPDB).

The Ethics Director, Richard Ferriss, MSW, LCSW, CSWM, is available at any time to address or clarify any procedural questions or concerns you may have. He may be reached at this toll-free number: (866) 397-5263.

Ethics Complaints from a Defense Perspective

James A. Wilson, Attorney at Law

As soon as you become aware of the potential for an investigation, take a "time-out" to focus on this matter alone and consider the following.

Decide Whether to Tell Malpractice Insurers

Many malpractice policies provide coverage for licensing board investigations. Some policies require the social worker to notify the company of an investigation, whether there is coverage or not.

Decide Whether to Hire a Lawyer

Sometimes hiring a lawyer is unnecessary and is a waste of money; more often health professionals regret not hiring one. Unfortunately, usually it is impossible to be sure in advance. Early treatment of a legal problem can be the least expensive approach and often leads to the best possible result under the circumstances. Sometimes a social worker's response to an investigation makes the situation worse. A lawyer experienced in licensing board disciplinary matters can help prevent that.

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SUPERVISION OF PRACTICE

DEANA F. MORROW, PHD, LPC, LCSW, ACSW

Let's suppose you have just been asked to supervise a newly minted P-LCSW social worker or to supervise an administrative social worker who is seeking CSWM certification. Sounds like fun, right? Indeed it can be fun as well as professionally rewarding—both for you and the supervisee. You may be wondering what your responsibilities as supervisor would be and how you might begin to engage the supervisory process. This purpose of this article is to help you learn more about supervision as it relates to licensure and certification in North Carolina.

Supervision for Licensure/Certification

Both the LCSW and the CSWM credentials require supervision as part of the licensure/certification process. The LCSW license requires that P-LCSW applicants (provisional licensees) complete two years of clinical social work experience under the supervision of a MSW/LCSW who has a minimum of two years post-LCSW clinical social work experience.

Supervision should be “in person” and on a regular basis throughout the two years of supervision with at least one hour of supervision for every 30 hours of clinical practice experience. At least 100 hours of supervision is required; and, a maximum of 25 hours of group supervision may be applied toward meeting the supervision requirement.

The CSWM certification requires that applicants complete two years of experience in an administrative setting under the supervision of a social work administrator who has at least five years of administrative social work experience and also holds certification or licensure by the Board. A minimum of 100 hours of in person supervision is required; and, a maximum of 50 hours of group supervision may be applied toward meeting the supervision requirement.

Characteristics of Quality Supervision

Supervisors are ultimately responsible for the social work practice rendered by the supervisee. Supervisors should model high ethical standards, possess and convey a depth of knowledge related to the area of supervision, and carefully facilitate the supervisee's development in practice knowledge and skills. Effective supervision is collaborative, yet also evaluative and directive as needed for facilitating the supervisee's development. Quality clinical supervision includes active engagement in the review of clinical cases and case documentation.

Supervision also includes attention to assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, clinical intervention, termination of clinical services, and professional ethics. In situations where clinical supervision is from an external supervisor not affiliated with the supervisee's employment setting, an agreement should be developed to preserve appropriate privacy and confidentiality of client records in accordance with agency policies and federal privacy guidelines.

Administrative supervision for the CSWM certification includes attention to administrative social work duties including policy and budgetary development and implementation, supervision and management, program evaluation, planning, staff development, and professional ethics. In situations where supervision is from an external source, an agreement should be negotiated to preserve the protection of private agency information in accordance with agency policies and federal policy guidelines.

Whether supervision is in clinical or administrative practice, it is prudent for the supervisor and supervisee to develop a written agreement that specifies the details of the supervisory relationship, including access to records, protection of privacy, frequency and terms of supervisory sessions, and payment (if indicated) for services.

Supervision and Independent or Private Clinical Practice

The Board strongly discourages independent private practice during the provisional period of clinical social work licensing. Independent practice represents professional maturity and expertise in clinical practice typically found among workers who have acquired years of clinical practice experience. Independent practice also represents a greater risk of fewer in-house professional supports (compared to agency settings) for responding to complex clinical emergencies. Private practice, be it solo or agency based, may not provide the provisional licensee with adequate and appropriate in-house support as defined by the statutes and regulations governing social work practice, thereby increasing the risk of a potential ethical dilemma for a new practitioner. Therefore, provisional licensees who seek to pursue independent practice must seek advance approval by the Board. In such situations, the Board considers whether the provisional licensee has already demonstrated minimum competency by passing

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RESOLVING ETHICS COMPLAINTS

Decide How Much to Cooperate

Full cooperation usually works best. This attitude shows professionalism, which often is the most important question about the social worker the Board wants to determine. Even when a social worker knows he or she has done something wrong, cooperation will gain some goodwill with the Board and usually leads to a better outcome. There are other strategies besides full cooperation, but these are not for the faint of heart or those unrepresented by counsel.

Comply with Lawful Demands

The Board may request a patient record. Usually the Board is entitled to it; however, the law can be complicated. If the law permits or requires compliance, the Board usually will be satisfied with a copy of the record rather than the original.

Express Yourself Well

Board investigators are social workers themselves, so speak to them using professional, not lay, language. Express concern but never anger. This is not usually an occasion for debate of scientific ideas or social work theories.

Remember the Big Picture

Sometimes a fight cannot be avoided. Usually, though, the best outcome comes from avoiding a Board hearing and settling early and inexpensively. Experienced counsel can be invaluable for this. Experienced counsel also can help fix whatever might have caused the concern, preventing recurrence. ❖

SUPERVISION OF PRACTICE

the ASWB clinical exam. In addition, the Board must be satisfied that there is a written crisis management plan in place that provides for 24-hour emergency consultation and backup by a NC licensed mental health professional available to the licensee. The mental health professional backup requirement may include the clinical supervisor and/or other approved licensed professionals.

Board Sources for Supervision

The Board offers a number of information sources for clinical and administrative supervisors. A comprehensive

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

appropriate responses. The nature of clinical practice is changing now and will continue to do so in response to the needs of our clients in a changing system of care. The Board will need to accommodate some to the nature of practice as it evolves. At the same time, however, it is very important to determine and hold fast to the core principles that are central to our discipline, regardless of what is "transformed" in the public system. I wish Deana Morrow, the incoming chair and the Board all my best wishes for the future.

These years have been very affirming. The work has been both challenging and a great learning experience. While the process of ethics review and determination of proper course of action can be a bit messy at times, we really have worked hard to be fair and correct in our deliberations. Through my experience on this Board I am most affirmed by my knowledge that social workers, as a group, give serious attention to their professional ethics, and in most cases where breaches occur, are quick to resolve issues in the best interests of the clients being served.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to mention Micki Lilly, our Executive Director, and the other staff, Richard, Janice, Deidre and Charity. They are an incredibly dedicated, talented and hardworking people. We would not be able to address our responsibilities without their support. We all owe them our gratitude, and I give them my thanks. ❖

PLEASE ADVISE THE BOARD OFFICE OF ANY CHANGES IN NAME, ADDRESS, HOME AND WORK TELEPHONE NUMBERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

Supervisor Manual is available on line through the Board website as is the Board's Position Statement on Clinical Supervision.

In addition, the Board greatly appreciates that NASW-NC regularly sponsors supervisor training facilitated by Board members at NASW-NC continuing education events.

Board staff are available to answer additional questions concerning licensure/certification supervision by phone at 800-550-7009 or by email at swboard@asheboro.com. ❖

COMMON CONCERNS ABOUT THE ASWB SOCIAL WORK EXAM

MICKI LILLY, MSHE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

One of the functions and duties of the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board ("Board") is to examine and pass on the qualifications of all applicants for certification or licensure under Chapter 90B of the North Carolina General Statutes, and to issue a certificate or license accordingly. The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) develops and administers the examinations utilized by this Board for determining certification and licensure qualifications. The information provided here is taken from a publication prepared by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) and distributed in response to questions or concerns about the exam that have been reported to ASWB.

Not passing an ASWB social work licensing examination can be a disappointing and frustrating experience and ASWB has noted that test-takers who have been unsuccessful in passing an exam tend to share a set of common concerns. Two common concerns regarding exam scores are presented below:

I am confused about how the exams are scored.

When a candidate completes an examination, the testing software calculates a raw score—the actual number of questions you answered correctly. Because raw scores can be affected by the difficulty of individual items on a particular version ("form") of an examination, these variations are accounted for through an equating process. Equating essentially moves the number of items you need to answer correctly up or down depending on the difficulty levels on a particular form (version) of the examination. Through equating, the passing raw score is adjusted for each examination so that fewer correct items are needed to pass a more difficult form of the test (and more correct answers are needed to pass an easier form of the test). Making these statistical adjustments ensures that the overall ability that needs to be demonstrated remains the same from test form to test form. In other words, nobody receives an advantage or disadvantage because of the version of test they receive. This is why ASWB cannot identify an unchanging number of correctly answered items needed to pass the examination.

Although raw passing scores vary between forms, that's where the variation stops. Within a single form of an examination, the number of correct answers needed to pass the ASWB examination is the same no matter where you

may be trying to get licensed. For purposes of licensure, the raw score, after it has been equated, is converted to a "scaled" score that reflects the scoring system used by a particular state or jurisdiction. Some jurisdictions require a scaled score of "75" in order to pass the exam, while others require a "70;" because ASWB adjusts scores to fit these varying scales, the two score requirements describe the same passing point (the same way that 32 degrees Fahrenheit and 0 degrees Celsius describe the same point at which water freezes). A failing score in one jurisdiction is a failing score in every other jurisdiction, regardless of whether the board uses a "70" or "75" scale.

I keep failing the exam and receiving close to the same score each time.

It is not unusual for examination scores to vary only one or two points for most candidates who take a test more than once. This is because the ASWB examinations are reliable; that is, they accurately measure candidates' knowledge. If there is no measurable increase in a candidate's knowledge between administrations, a candidate will usually score within .5 standard deviations from a previous score, provided that score reflected their true level of knowledge at the earlier administration. A high degree of reliability—something present in all ASWB examinations—is an indicator that the test is a fair and accurate measure of competency.

How Can I Improve My Score

Lavina G. Harless, LCSW
Examination Development Coordinator, ASWB

In order to allow yourself the best opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, it is important that you fully understand the ways the examination measures knowledge, the limits of individual test items, and the ways in which items may be worded. It is also helpful to have a "big picture" view of the examination and how items are distributed across content areas. Finally, the strong reliability of the ASWB examinations means that you need to think about ways to increase your level of social work knowledge before the next time you take the test.

First, remember the limits of each question on the test. Each item on the ASWB examination is targeted to a

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North American Pass/Fail Rates for the ASWB Examinations - 2007

Exam Category and Group Type	Total Number of Candidates	Pass Rate	
		Number	Percentage
Associate			
First-Time	152	102	67.1
Repeat Group	46	16	34.8
Total Group	198	118	59.6
Bachelors			
First-Time	3695	2885	78.1
Repeat Group	906	297	32.8
Total Group	4601	3182	69.2
Masters			
First-Time	8662	6360	73.4
Repeat Group	3887	847	21.8
Total Group	12549	7207	57.4
Advanced Generalist			
First-Time	213	124	58.2
Repeat Group	57	15	26.3
Total Group	270	139	51.5
Clinical			
First-Time	8333	6161	73.9
Repeat Group	3270	1020	31.2
Total Group	11603	7181	61.9
TOTAL	29,221	17,827	61.0

Pass/Fail Rates in North Carolina (NC) in 2007

Exam Category and Group Type	Total Number of Candidates	Pass Rate	
		Number	Percentage
Associate			
First-Time			
Repeat Group			
Total Group			
Bachelors			
First-Time	10	4	40.0
Repeat Group	0	0	0.0
Total Group	10	4	40.0
Masters			
First-Time	6	2	33.3
Repeat Group	2	0	0.0
Total Group	8	2	25.0
Advanced Generalist			
First-Time	1	1	100.0
Repeat Group	0	0	0.0
Total Group	1	1	100.0
Clinical			
First-Time	299	209	69.9
Repeat Group	152	43	28.3
Total Group	451	252	55.9
TOTAL	470	259	55.1

RENEWAL ALERT!!

Affidavits for renewal are automatically mailed from the Board office in early April. The renewal process has once again undergone some changes in an effort to expedite the turnaround time. Administrators will process the renewal affidavits verifying documentation of 40 hours of continuing education, of which at least 4 hours reflect ethics focused training. *Please do not attach certificates, etc. to your Recertification Affidavit when submitting for renewal.* The Board will conduct a Continuing Education audit (initiated early in 2009) and you will be contacted if your Recertification Affidavit has been selected for audit. The audit is designed to review all continuing education activity submitted for renewal to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. At that time you will be asked to provide verification of attendance and completion of all documented continuing education activity.

A revised format is being used and you are reminded of the need to provide the cumulative total of all hours submitted. Individuals renewing their certificate or license this June are reminded to complete the re-certification affidavit and return it with the appropriate fee, prior to the June 30th expiration date, to avoid lapse in licensure and penalty of an additional late fee, or automatic suspension of the certificate/license. We hope to have the newly formatted Recertification Affidavit document posted on the website by the end of April.

If your license or certification is due to expire on June 30, 2008 and you have not received a Recertification Affidavit for renewal of your credential by the end of April, it may be because the Board does not have a current address. ❖

NCSWCLB MEETING SCHEDULE

2008 Calendar Year

Friday-Sunday, Jan. 11-13 (Retreat)	Friday, July 11
Friday, February 1	Friday, August 1
Friday, March 14	Friday, September 5
Friday, April 4	Friday, October 3
Friday, May 2	Friday, November 7
Friday, June 6	Friday, December 5

CONTINUING EDUCATION AUDIT UNDERWAY

The continuing education audit for the June 2007 renewals is underway. A random sampling of 225 Recertification Affidavits was selected for this audit and individuals were notified in February.

If you have received an audit notice and have not yet responded, please submit your documentation to the Board immediately. Failure to respond and non-compliance with a continuing education audit can subject your certificate/license to action by the Board.

Individuals requesting additional time to gather the required documentation must do so in writing, specifying the reason for the request and providing a date by which you expect to be able to comply with the audit request. ❖

Most Frequently Asked Questions

In keeping with our effort to respond to common concerns or questions, here is one of the most frequently occurring inquiries addressed to the Board Administrative Office in the recent past:

- Q. Can I take an online or home study course as a continuing education activity?**
- R.** Yes. A readily available option may be to explore distance education activities offered by providers already approved by the Association of Social Work Board's Approved Continuing Education Committee (ASWB-ACE), as well as those already approved by the North Carolina Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NC). The Board accepts their approval as equivalent to approval by this Board and the pre-approval process is *not* necessary. The Board *does* require pre-approval of any distance learning activity that has not already been approved by ASWB or NASW-NC. A form is available on the Board's website at www.ncswboard.org under the Printable Forms link. This process can be lengthy as it requires two submissions: the request for pre-approval and final approval of a completion document.

Remember: no more than 20 hours (half) of your continuing education activity may be done through distance learning. ❖

Current Disciplinary Action

The North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board (NCSWCLB) reports all disciplinary action to the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Disciplinary Action Reporting System (DARS) and to the National Practitioners Databank. The list below represents those social workers who have been disciplined by the NCSWCLB since the Board decided to publish their disciplinary actions in late 1999, and whose disciplinary action remains in effect. For information regarding disciplinary action prior to that date, or for public record information regarding any disciplinary action, please contact the Board office directly. Individuals who have been disciplined but who complied with Board mandates and have had their credential restored to good standing will be removed from this list. The discipline action remains in their history and certification/license search will reveal that the credential has been disciplined.

Applewhite, Tracey Coale	P003029	REVOKED 03/14/08
Bartlett, Jody	C002309	CENSURED/PROBATION 10/06/06
Blalock, Amy Clark	C003993	REPRIMAND 02/01/08
Bryant, Pier A.	C003144	REPRIMAND 10/06/06
		[License restored to good standing 03/14/08]
Bussey, Gina Yvette	P002013	REPRIMAND 05/05/06
		[License restored to good standing 09/07/07]
Cagle, Stan C.	C000796	SUSPENDED 08/05/04
		[Reinstated under PROBATION 12/01/07]
Claxton, Pamela C.	B000556	REPRIMAND 08/04/06
Clemons, Jr., Samuel D.	C000799	REVOKED 08/12/05
Cockrell, Jr., James O.	C001732	REVOKED 05/22/07
Deese, Dalton W.	P002248	REVOKED 01/06/04
DeLauney, Katz	C004169	SUSPENDED 04/13/07
Eubanks, Jane R.	C004104	REVOKED 07/16/04
Foss, Kelly Ann	C003068	SUSPENDED 01/10/03
Foushee, Nancy G.	C001404	REVOKED 03/14/08
Garis, Richard Douglas	C001939	REVOKED 03/04/05
Gould, David R.	C000416	SUSPENDED 12/12/03
Gramling, Margaret	C003298	PROBATION 10/5/07
Hager, Scott	C003706	SUSPENDED 12/12/03
Hammond, Theresa	P002936	REVOKED 07/09/07
Harper, Lisa Uranga	C004053	REVOKED 06/20/05
Harris, Jr., Aubrey Russell	C000703	SUSPENDED 12/10/04
Hiller-Tyree, Loretta	C000709	PROBATION 09/15/06
Hoffler, Jr., Thomas L.	C000519	SUSPENDED 12/10/04, REVOKED 11/03/06
Kali, Kathleen	P003074	REVOKED 12/01/06
Kasey, Yohminna K.	P003228	PROBATION 07/09/07
Knox, Walter E.	C002927	REPRIMAND 10/06/06
Koehne, Patrick	C000447	SUSPENDED 12/22/06
		SUSPENSION CONTINUED 11/02/07
Konnell, Alan	C000720	CENSURED 10/22/01
Leadem, Timothy	P003216	VOLUNTARY SURRENDER 10/5/07
Lovelace, Darryl	C005014	REVOKED 09/07/07
Martin, Lea	C000119	SUSPENDED 05/25/05, REVOKED 01/12/08
Masters, Cary J.	P002928	REPRIMAND/SUSPENDED 10/06/06
McDuffie, Emily E.	A000447	REVOKED 08/04/06
Merrill, Rebecca	C002485	CENSURE 02/25/00
Merrill-May, Rebecca	C002485	CENSURE 02/25/00
Purcell, Nora	C004891	REPRIMAND/SUSPENDED 12/01/06
Rosner, Karen M.	P002275	SUSPENDED 11/14/02
Ruiz, Peter Alan	C001830	REVOKED 06/17/02
Sweeting, Lucy G.	C001530	SUSPENDED 12/12/03
(Tate) Martin, Lea Almond	C000119	SUSPENDED 05/25/05, REVOKED 01/12/08
Taylor, Wesley E.	C003643	REPRIMAND 03/02/06
VanBuskirk, Priscilla A.	P003177	REVOKED 11/02/06
Watson, Madeline J.	C003680	REVOKED 12/10/07
Weathersby, Barbara	C000359	REPRIMAND 08/03/07
Whealton, Jr., Bruce	C002485	REVOKED 06/14/01

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ASWB SOCIAL WORK EXAM

specific knowledge, skill, or ability. What this means is that an individual test question is designed to measure a relatively discrete piece of the overall competence picture. The items on the examination contain all the information necessary to answer them correctly—except the social work knowledge you must employ. In other words, test takers must be extremely careful that they do not “read into” a test question or allow hypothetical situations and “what-if” scenarios to cloud their ability to arrive at a correct answer.

Second, remember that qualifying words deserve your attention. Many items on the ASWB examinations ask what the social worker should do “FIRST” or “NEXT,” or require test takers to identify something that is “MOST likely,” “MOST appropriate,” or “BEST.” These words are bolded and capitalized in the actual test, and should be considered very carefully as you choose an answer.

Third, familiarize yourself with not only your failing score report, but with the pie chart supplied [from ASWB upon request, which identifies clinical examination content area

weights]. Some content areas of the test contain more items than others; as you prepare to re-take your test, you may want to consider these weights, your reported performance, and the time you wish to devote to the different content areas.

Finally, remember that the ASWB examinations do not rely on tricks, gimmicks, or word games. They are not designed to purposefully confuse test-takers. They are designed to measure knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to safe social work practice. Putting energy in to trying to figure out how to “beat” the examination through various “tricks and tips” type strategies is a waste of your time, and will probably not improve your score. Re-assessing your social work knowledge, however, and conducting an honest appraisal of your weaknesses and strengths, may well put you on the road to success with the examination. When coupled with the thorough understanding of the exam’s mechanics and intent, a concerted effort to fill in the gaps in your social work knowledge can make a significant difference in your performance on your next attempt. ❖