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HOUSE BILL 2286

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State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Rule, Marshall, Jacobsen, and Shavers

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1 AN ACT Relating to alternative routes to social worker licensure;  
2 and amending RCW 18.225.090.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.225.090 and 2025 c 58 s 1003 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The secretary shall issue a license to any applicant who  
7 demonstrates to the satisfaction of the secretary that the applicant  
8 meets the following education and experience requirements for the  
9 applicant's practice area.

10 (a) Licensed social work classifications:

11 (i) Licensed advanced social worker:

12 (A) Graduation from a master's social work educational program  
13 accredited by the council on social work education or a social work  
14 doctorate program at a university accredited by a recognized  
15 accrediting organization, and approved by the secretary based upon  
16 nationally recognized standards;

17 (B) (~~Successful completion of an approved examination;~~  
18 ~~(C)~~) Successful completion of a supervised experience  
19 requirement. The supervised experience requirement consists of a  
20 minimum of 3,000 hours with supervision by an approved supervisor who  
21 has been licensed for at least two years. Of those supervised hours:

1 (I) At least 90 hours must include direct supervision as  
2 specified in this subsection by a licensed independent clinical  
3 social worker, a licensed advanced social worker, or an equally  
4 qualified licensed mental health professional. Of those hours of  
5 directly supervised experience at least 40 hours must be in one-to-  
6 one supervision and 50 hours may be in one-to-one supervision or  
7 group supervision; and

8 (II) 800 hours must be in direct client contact; and

9 (~~(D)~~) (C) Successful completion of continuing education  
10 requirements established in rule by the secretary in consultation  
11 with the committee, including a minimum number of hours in  
12 professional ethics.

13 (ii) Licensed independent clinical social worker:

14 (A) Graduation from a master's level social work educational  
15 program accredited by the council on social work education or a  
16 social work doctorate program at a university accredited by a  
17 recognized accrediting organization, and approved by the secretary  
18 based upon nationally recognized standards;

19 (B) Successful completion of an approved examination or, in lieu  
20 of examination, successful completion of enhanced supervision with an  
21 attestation of the applicant's skill and safety to practice from an  
22 approved supervisor described in (a)(ii)(C) of this subsection. The  
23 enhanced supervision requirement may be used to fulfill the minimum  
24 3,000 hours of experience required under (a)(ii)(C) of this  
25 subsection;

26 (C) Successful completion of a supervised experience requirement.  
27 The supervised experience requirement consists of a minimum of 3,000  
28 hours of experience, over a period of not less than two years, with  
29 supervision by an approved supervisor who has been licensed for at  
30 least two years and, as specified in this subsection, may be either a  
31 licensed independent clinical social worker who has had at least one  
32 year of experience in supervising the clinical social work of others  
33 or an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner. Of those  
34 supervised hours:

35 (I) At least 1,000 hours must be direct client contact; and

36 (II) Hours of direct supervision must include:

37 (1) At least 100 hours by a licensed mental health practitioner;

38 (2) At least 70 hours of supervision with a licensed independent  
39 clinical social worker meeting the qualifications under this

1 subsection (1)(a)(ii)(C); the remaining hours may be supervised by an  
2 equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner; and

3 (3) At least 60 hours must be in one-to-one supervision and the  
4 remaining hours may be in one-to-one supervision or group  
5 supervision; and

6 (D) Successful completion of continuing education requirements  
7 established in rule by the secretary in consultation with the  
8 committee, including a minimum number of hours in professional  
9 ethics.

10 (b) Licensed mental health counselor:

11 (i)(A) Graduation from a master's or doctoral level educational  
12 program in counseling that consists of at least 60 semester hours or  
13 90 quarter hours, or includes at least 60 semester hours or 90  
14 quarter hours of graduate coursework that includes the following  
15 topic areas:

16 (I) Mental health counseling orientation and ethical practice;

17 (II) Social and cultural diversity;

18 (III) Human growth and development;

19 (IV) Career development;

20 (V) Counseling and helping relationships;

21 (VI) Group counseling and group work;

22 (VII) Diagnosis and treatment;

23 (VIII) Assessment and testing; and

24 (IX) Research and program evaluation; or

25 (B) Graduation from a master's or doctoral level educational  
26 program in a related discipline from a college or university approved  
27 by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards. An  
28 applicant who satisfies the educational requirements for licensure  
29 under this subsection (1)(b)(i)(B) is not qualified to exercise the  
30 privilege to practice under the counseling compact established in  
31 chapter 18.17 RCW unless the master's or doctoral level educational  
32 program in a related discipline consists of at least 60 semester  
33 hours or 90 quarter hours, or includes at least 60 semester hours or  
34 90 quarter hours of graduate coursework that includes the topic areas  
35 specified in (b)(i)(A)(I) through (IX) of this subsection;

36 (ii) Successful completion of an approved examination;

37 (iii) Successful completion of a supervised experience  
38 requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of 36  
39 months full-time counseling or 3,000 hours of postgraduate mental  
40 health counseling under the supervision of a qualified licensed

1 mental health counselor or equally qualified licensed mental health  
2 practitioner, in an approved setting. The 3,000 hours of required  
3 experience includes a minimum of 100 hours spent in immediate  
4 supervision with the qualified licensed mental health counselor, and  
5 includes a minimum of 1,200 hours of direct counseling with  
6 individuals, couples, families, or groups; and

7 (iv) Successful completion of continuing education requirements  
8 established in rule by the secretary in consultation with the  
9 committee, including a minimum number of hours in professional  
10 ethics.

11 (c) Licensed marriage and family therapist:

12 (i) Graduation from a master's degree or doctoral degree  
13 educational program in marriage and family therapy or graduation from  
14 an educational program in an allied field equivalent to a master's  
15 degree or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy approved by  
16 the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards;

17 (ii) Successful passage of an approved examination;

18 (iii) Successful completion of a supervised experience  
19 requirement. The experience requirement consists of a minimum of  
20 3,000 hours of marriage and family therapy. Of the total supervision,  
21 100 hours must be with a licensed marriage and family therapist with  
22 at least two years' clinical experience; the other 100 hours may be  
23 with an equally qualified licensed mental health practitioner. Total  
24 experience requirements include:

25 (A) 1,000 hours of direct client contact; at least 500 hours must  
26 be gained in diagnosing and treating couples and families; plus

27 (B) At least 200 hours of qualified supervision with a  
28 supervisor. At least 100 of the 200 hours must be one-on-one  
29 supervision, and the remaining hours may be in one-on-one or group  
30 supervision.

31 Applicants who have completed a master's program accredited by  
32 the commission on accreditation for marriage and family therapy  
33 education of the American association for marriage and family therapy  
34 may be credited with 500 hours of direct client contact and 100 hours  
35 of formal meetings with an approved supervisor; and

36 (iv) Successful completion of continuing education requirements  
37 established in rule by the secretary in consultation with the  
38 committee, including a minimum number of hours in professional  
39 ethics.

1           (2) The department shall establish by rule what constitutes  
2 adequate proof of meeting the criteria. Only rules in effect on the  
3 date of submission of a completed application of an associate for her  
4 or his license shall apply. If the rules change after a completed  
5 application is submitted but before a license is issued, the new  
6 rules shall not be reason to deny the application.

7           (3) In addition, applicants shall be subject to the grounds for  
8 denial of a license or issuance of a conditional license under  
9 chapter 18.130 RCW.

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