

**Reverse Deterrent:  
Applying for Licensure for those with a Criminal Record**

This guide is for the sole use and distribution of **NASW-CA's Rehabilitation & Inclusion Council**. For additional questions or assistance, please contact the Council at: [RIcouncil@naswca.org](mailto:RIcouncil@naswca.org) and in the subject line type "Reverse Deterrent." Our response time is typically 24-48 hours. Please note, the time-lines below may vary depending on your individual situation, and location of documents.

**Steps before applying for licensure**

1. Within 6-months of graduating with your Masters Degree, **Obtain a copy of your own live-scan**. This will be very helpful, especially for older convictions, so that your statements match the documents. Use the dispute sheet sent with your results to dispute inaccuracies on your RAP sheet. For example, your conviction was expunged, yet DOJ has yet to note such on your RAP sheet/live-scan results (if this is the case, you will need to include a photocopy of the court document showing expungement/dismissal).
2. Within a minimum of 2-months of graduating with your Masters Degree, we suggest you **begin the process of obtaining your "certified" court documents and police reports**.
  - a) **Obtaining certified court documents:** Depending on where your conviction occurred, the costs and timeline for obtaining certified court documents vary. Wherever your arrest/conviction occurred, it is best to physically show up to request your documents as this can decrease wait time. Be prepared for differentiating costs affiliated with obtaining your certified court documents. Here are some examples:
    - If your conviction occurred within Sacramento County, you will need to know the file number, which can be looked up on-site on one of their computers by using your name. You will fill out a file request using a carbon paper next to the computer. The clerk will inform you of the approximate wait time, generally 1-10 business days, and will give you back the yellow-copy (keep this safe, it is needed to obtain your documents). Wait for the 10<sup>th</sup> day to go back, especially if traveling from a far distance to ensure your documents are there. When you arrive, provide your Photo Id with the yellow carbon copy to the clerk. Inform the clerk that you will need "certified copies" of the file, and to include (the foregoing pertains to court documents regardless of county) each item BBS lists on their website under "FAQ's for those with criminal records." The cost is \$25 per file and .50 each page copied. The clerk will certify the cover sheet which states the pages within the file being certified. Do not remove, alter or change in any way pages within the certified copy. If you want to make copies of what you are submitting to BBS, we suggest you pay the .50 per page for the clerk to duplicate the certified file, then just make a copy of the front cover-sheet so that there is no folding or bending of the file being submitted.
    - If your conviction occurred within Shasta County, your Photo Id is required when you reach the clerk counter. If you don't know your file number, the

clerk can look you up based on your name and DOB. For those who used an *aka*, or may have their file under their *aka*, you must obtain your file number. This can be found by obtaining your own live-scan, which will list the file number associated with the conviction. This county is different in the costs associated with the certified copies. They charge \$25 plus .50 each page per each document that BBS requests. For example, BBS requires you have the dismissal order and the probation report, etc. Shasta County charges \$25 plus .50 per page of the dismissal document (can be up to 3-pages) and an additional \$25 plus .50 per page of the probation report (can be as little as 3 pages). Shasta county treats each document within the file individually, whereas Sacramento county treats the file as an individual document.

3. **Obtaining certified copies of police reports** is one of the most harrowing feats of the pre-application requirements. Unless your police report was imaged with the county clerk, more than likely you will not be given this. However, you must do your due-diligence and call, or physically show up to the records branch of the arresting agency. Again, having your live-scan already and/or your court documents can assist you in figuring out which L.E. agency arrested you. If you're unable to obtain the certified police report, you must type a separate letter to BBS and title it "certified police reports" stating your exact actions and the outcome for each conviction police reports were requested. If you have multiple convictions, address in separate paragraphs. Include the date/time, file number associated with the conviction, location of where you attempted to obtain your certified police reports, the outcome, and who you spoke with if possible.
4. **Obtaining Recommendation Letters** should be completed within 30-days from applying for licensure. We suggest obtaining a minimum of three, and having it mixed. For example, obtaining both professional (employment/internship) and academic (professor) letters is impactful. Conversely, you should also consider including a personal reference such as a pastor, sponsor, etc., who is familiar with your rehabilitation. You want your recommendation letters mailed to you in hard copy format and wet-signed, not digital. You will include the hard copies with your application.  
**Obtaining Transcripts:** We suggest paying for expedited degree posting, and rushed official transcripts. Once you receive the official sealed transcript, apply immediately.

**Completing the Background Statement form(s):** Utilize the live-scan and/or court documents, and police reports if available to complete this form. You will need to do one form for each conviction. You want your statement to match the facts. For some, the conviction was so long ago that we have little memory of all the 5 "W's" in detail. Stick to the facts at hand. Use your **letter of rehabilitation**, *not the background form*, to describe your previous behavior that led to the conviction(s), however, focus more in-depth on what you've done to achieve and ensure your rehabilitation remains unchanged (back it up with your letters of recommendation).

### **After applying**

The majority receive a letter from BBS's enforcement unit stating their application is placed on hold for an additional 4-6 months while they review & investigate your documents. After which, you are approved or denied. Anticipate receiving this letter 4-6 weeks from the date BBS receives your application.