

What is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Texas?

Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) hold the highest level of license in the social work profession.

LCSWs are skilled mental health professionals who are authorized to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals and families of all ages & economic groups. They treat a range of problems including behavioral disorders, addictions, severe mental illness, and serious emotional disturbance. They provide individual, marital, couple, family, and group therapy, mediation, counseling, supportive counseling, direct practice, and psychotherapy.

LCSWs are uniquely qualified by their skills and training in health, mental health, diversity and social issues to treat vulnerable populations.

LCSWs, MDs, and PhD Psychologists are authorized by The Center for Medicare/Medicaid to practice independently.

Texas LCSWs are authorized to practice autonomously. An LCSW may provide services in an independent office, with a group, or in an agency without clinical supervision from another health care provider.

Social Workers provide 60% of the mental health services in Texas and the United States, sometimes practicing in rural areas where there are few other mental health services.

It takes **eight** years to earn the LCSW. The requirements are:

- Hold an undergraduate degree
- Earn a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree: **60** semester hours of course work , **900** hour Practicum
- Pass a National Exam to earn a Licensed Master Social Worker License
- Complete **3,000** clock-hours of full time employment experience
- Complete **100** hours of direct supervision with a plan and a supervisor approved by Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners
- Pass a national Advanced Clinical Examination by Association of Social Work Boards
- Pass The Texas Jurisprudence Examination published by the State of Texas.

Social work continuing education requires **30** hours, including **6** ethics hours, during each 24 months.

It is not uncommon to see LCSWs with additional State of Texas Certifications:

- Licensed Sex Offender Therapist (LSOT) by the Council on Sex Offender Treatment
- Licensed Chemical Dependency Clinician (LCDC) by the Licensed Chemical Dependency Program

Many LCSWs also have additional National Clinical Certifications:

- Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW) by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- Qualified Clinical Social Worker (QCSW) by NASW
- Diplomate in Clinical Social Work (DCSW) by NASW
- Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work (BCD) by the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (ABECSW)

LCSWs are trained in evidence based practice, with a variety of specializations in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Informed Therapy, and other advanced techniques.

Reference: Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners: About the Profession - Scope of Practice §781.202. The Practice of Social Work.