

## How to Apply to Take the Master's License Exam in Pennsylvania

To be eligible for the master's licensing exam in PA, you must be in the final semester of a master's or doctoral degree program or hold a master's or doctoral degree in social work.

**Recommendation:** Review the [ASWB Examination Guidebook](#).

### Step One: Register/Create an Account in [PA Licensing System \(PALS\)](#)

The PALS system can be accessed from the PA State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors site. All first-time applicants must start the application process by creating a PA Licensing System (PALS) account. Once you have a PALS account you can start your application.



### Step Two: Start/Submit PA State Board Application in PALS

**Recommendation:** Print the Application Checklist that is available in PALS. The application checklist contains all required steps. If you are a current master's student and applying for the LSW, you should select the following when prompted:

For **Board/Commission**, select "State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors"

For **License Type**, select "Social Worker"

Once you provide information for the Criminal History Record Check and the National Practitioner Databank Report (Self Query), you should have the option to submit your application and pay the fee.

You can continue to upload required documents after your application is submitted.

If applying in your final semester of your program, print or save the **Education Verification** form (**this form only becomes available after you apply**) and send it to the **Registrar's** Office.

**Bryn Mawr students** can mail, e-mail ([registrar@brynmawr.edu](mailto:registrar@brynmawr.edu)), or hand deliver the form to the Registrar's Office at Guild Hall, 101 N. Merion Ave., Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. The Registrar will mail the form directly to the licensing board.

**Post-Masters applicants** will skip the Education Verification form and instead request from their college Registrar's Office that an official graduate school transcript be sent to the PA State Board. BMC GSSWSR alums follow instructions on the BMC Registrar's website.

**Wait for Approval:** Once the PA State Board has approved your application, they will send you an approval letter with information about how to register for the exam with the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB).

### Step Three: Register for the exam with [ASWB](#)

Follow the instructions for how to register for the exam provided by the PA State Board in your approval letter.

**Wait for Authorization from ASWB:** ASWB will send you an Authorization to Test via e-mail within two business days to the e-mail address you provided. Retain your Authorization to Test for future reference. If you do not receive your Authorization to Test, notify ASWB.

### Step Four: Schedule your exam with [PSI Test Administration](#)

You must first receive *ASWB Authorization to Test* before scheduling your exam with **PSI**.

ASWB requires that you request and receive approval for testing accommodations before registering for your licensing exam. ([LINK](#) to request nonstandard testing arrangements.)

There are no fixed administration dates.

**Wait for confirmation** of your testing appointment. Confirmation should be received within 24 hours.

### Step Five: Prepare for Exam Day

Review the ASWB Examination Guidebook!

Consider test preparation resources such as the Center for Professional Development's [License Exam Prep workshop](#) or the [study guide available](#) to current students through TriPod Library.

Know where your Test Center is located and what to expect on check-in, ID, personal belongings, etc. (Information can be found in the ASWB Examination Guidebook)

### Reminders

*(If you sit and pass the exam in your final semester)* Once you graduate, it is your responsibility to request from the College Registrar that an official transcript be sent to the PA State Board. *Your license will not be finalized until the official final transcript is received by the Board.*

Official transcripts can be mailed or e-mailed (ra-socialwork@pa.gov). The Board will mail your license to you once all requirements are met.

Check out additional information and resources available through [GSSWSR Career Services](#) and [Center for Professional Development](#).

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#### State Board Contact Information:

The State Board of Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists and Professional Counselors  
P.O. Box 2649 Harrisburg,  
PA 17105-2649  
Phone: 717-783-1389  
Email: st-socialwork@pa.gov

#### ASWB Contact Information:

Association of Social Work Boards  
400 Southridge Parkway, Suite B  
Culpeper, VA 22701  
Candidate Services: 888-579-3926

#### PSI

Candidate Services: 855-205-5823  
Email: aswbsupport@psionline.com