General Assembly

Raised Bill No. 5166

February Session, 2026

LCO No. **750**

Referred to Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH

Introduced by:
(PH)

AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL WORK LICENSURE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 20-195n of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

(a) No person shall practice clinical social work unless such person has obtained a license pursuant to this section.

(b) An applicant for licensure as a master social worker shall: (1) **[**(A)**]** Hold a master's degree from a social work program **[**(i)**]** (A) accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or **[**(ii)**]** (B) that is in candidate status for accreditation by said council and offered by an institution of higher education in the state during or after the spring semester of 2024, and prior to the spring semester of 2028; **[**,**]** or **[**(B)**]** (2) if educated outside the United States or its territories, have completed an educational program deemed equivalent by the council. **[**; and (2) pass the masters level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner.**]**

(c) An applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker shall: (1) Hold

a doctorate or master's degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, if educated outside the United States or its territories, have completed an educational program deemed equivalent by the council; (2) have three thousand hours post-master's social work experience which shall include not less than one hundred hours of work under professional supervision by a licensed clinical or certified independent social worker, provided on and after October 1, 2011, such hours completed in this state shall be as a licensed master social worker; and (3) pass the clinical level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner. On and after October 1, 1995, any person certified as an independent social worker prior to October 1, 1995, shall be deemed licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to this section, except a person certified as an independent social worker on and after October 1, 1990, shall not be deemed licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to this chapter unless such person has satisfied the requirements of subdivision (3) of this subsection.

(d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, the commissioner may grant a license by endorsement to an applicant who presents evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the applicant **[**(1)**]** is licensed or certified as a master social worker or clinical social worker in good standing in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or higher than those of this state. **[**, and (2) has successfully completed the master level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards, or its successor organization, or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner.**]** No license shall be issued under this subsection to any applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or who is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, the commissioner may grant a license by endorsement to an applicant who presents evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the applicant (1) is licensed or certified as a clinical social worker in good

standing in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or greater than those of this state, and (2) has successfully completed the clinical level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards, or its successor organization, or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner. No license shall be issued under this subsection to any applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or who is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

(f) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, an applicant who is licensed or certified as a clinical social worker or its equivalent in another state, territory or commonwealth of the United States may substitute three years of licensed or certified work experience in the practice of clinical social work in lieu of the requirements of subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of this section, provided the commissioner finds that such experience is equal to or greater than the requirements of this state.

(g) The commissioner shall notify each applicant who is approved to take an examination required under subsection **[**(b),**]** (c) **[**, (d)**]** or (e) of this section that such applicant may be eligible for testing accommodations pursuant to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12101 et seq., as amended from time to time, or other accommodations, as determined by the Association of Social Work Boards, or its successor organization, which may include the use of a dictionary while taking such examination and additional time within which to take such examination.

Sec. 2. Section 20-195o of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

(a) Application for licensure shall be on forms prescribed and furnished by the commissioner. Each applicant shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that he or she has met the requirements of section 20-195n<u>, as amended by this act</u>.

80 **[**(b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 20-195n concerning
81 examinations, on or before October 1, 2015, the commissioner may issue
82 a license without examination, to any master social worker applicant
83 who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commissioner that, on or
84 before October 1, 2013, he or she held a master's degree from a social
85 work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or,
86 if educated outside the United States or its territories, completed an
87 educational program deemed equivalent by the council.

88 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 20-195n concerning
89 examinations, the commissioner shall waive the requirement to pass the
90 masters level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or
91 any other examination prescribed by the commissioner, as described in
92 subsection (b) of section 20-195n until January 1, 2026, at which time
93 such requirement shall be reinstituted. Not later than July 1, 2025, the
94 commissioner shall notify institutions of higher education offering
95 social work programs about the reinstitution of the examination for all
96 persons graduating after January 1, 2026.**]**

97 **[**(c)**]** (b) Each person licensed pursuant to this chapter may apply for
98 renewal of such licensure in accordance with the provisions of
99 subsection (e) of section 19a-88. A fee of two hundred dollars shall
100 accompany each renewal application for a licensed clinical social worker
101 and a fee of one hundred twenty-five dollars shall accompany each
102 renewal application for a licensed master social worker. Each such
103 applicant shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of
104 having satisfied the continuing education requirements prescribed in
105 section 20-195u.

106 **[**(d)**]** (c) No fee shall be required for an application for licensure under
107 subsection (a) of this section.

108 **[**(e)**]** (d) (1) An individual who has been convicted of any criminal
109 offense may request, in writing, at any time, that the commissioner
110 determine whether such individual's criminal conviction disqualifies

111 the individual from obtaining a license issued or conferred by the
112 commissioner pursuant to this chapter based on (A) the nature of the
113 conviction and its relationship to the individual's ability to safely or
114 competently perform the duties or responsibilities associated with such
115 license, (B) information pertaining to the degree of rehabilitation of the
116 individual, and (C) the time elapsed since the conviction or release of
117 the individual.

118 (2) An individual making such request shall include (A) details of the
119 individual's criminal conviction, and (B) any payment required by the
120 commissioner. The commissioner may charge a fee of not more than
121 fifteen dollars for each request made under this subsection. The
122 commissioner may waive such fee.

123 (3) Not later than thirty days after receiving a request under this
124 subsection, the commissioner shall inform the individual making such
125 request whether, based on the criminal record information provided,
126 such individual is disqualified from receiving or holding a license
127 issued or conferred pursuant to this chapter.

128 (4) The commissioner is not bound by a determination made under
129 this subsection, if, upon further investigation, the commissioner
130 determines that an individual's criminal conviction differs from the
131 information presented in the determination request.

132 Sec. 3. Section 20-195t of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes
133 is repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2026*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*July 1, 2026*	20-195n
Sec. 2	*July 1, 2026*	20-195o
Sec. 3	*July 1, 2026*	Repealer section

Statement of Purpose:

To eliminate the examination requirement for persons seeking licensure as a master social worker.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]