

1 Attend the student presentation offered at your school

Every year, the Board presents at Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work programs in Minnesota to educate graduating students about professional licensure requirements. Contact your school to find out when the Board will be there and attend for valuable information about the Board's mission, licensing requirements, and the application and Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exam process.

2 Review the requirements for licensure and [Application Action Steps](#)

Application requirements and information about the standard application process can be found on the [Board website](#). Take time to review this information before submitting an application to avoid delays in the application process by missing steps or information.

3 Plan to apply for your license six months before you will graduate

Students enrolled in a CSWE accredited social work degree program may submit an application for licensure and take the ASWB exam, upon Board approval, no more than six months before graduation, which allows students to complete the licensing process more quickly after they have graduated.

4 Create an online profile to check your application status online

Applicants can create an [online profile](#) via the Board website to apply for licensure and check application status. Review the application checklist regularly and look at the comments added by Board staff on each item for details. Board correspondence regarding applications will be sent by mail, but updates may also be available online.

5 Complete fingerprinting for the Criminal Background Check

All applicants for initial licensure must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check (CBC) (current licensees are not required to complete a CBC if applying for a different license type). The CBC fee is bundled with the application fee when you submit your application. The [Criminal Background Check Program Office](#) will email instructions and forms directly to you; wait to receive this email to schedule fingerprinting. Provide a valid email address when submitting your application to ensure you receive this information. Federal law prohibits sharing of fingerprint-based CBC data, so a new fingerprint-based CBC must be completed even if you have completed a CBC for another purpose such as employment. It typically takes three weeks for the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) to process the CBC from the date fingerprints are submitted to the CBC Program Office. Your application cannot be approved until the CBC is complete.

6 Keep the Board up-to-date with your current mailing and email address

The Board contacts applicants by mail with information about their application. If your mailing or email address changes, be sure to notify the Board to avoid missing important application information. Contact information can be updated at any time by logging in to your [online profile](#) on the Board website.

7 Download and review the ASWB Candidate Handbook for important information about the ASWB exam

The Candidate Handbook is published by ASWB and contains critical information that you will need to know before scheduling your exam. [ASWB](#) is the best source of information about the exam.

8 Passing the exam is NOT the equivalent of being licensed

An individual is not licensed until the Board approves the license and receives the initial licensure fee. For students who have passed the exam before graduation, an official transcript showing degree completion is required before an application can be approved.

9 Wait until your degree is conferred to send your official transcript to the Board

The Board must receive an official transcript including the degree, major, and the date the degree was conferred or awarded. It can take at least a few weeks after you graduate for this information to be included on your official transcript. Contact your school before requesting your transcript to ensure the degree conferment date is included before having it sent to the Board.

10 Plan to apply for a temporary license if you will be practicing social work soon after graduation

Students are eligible for a [temporary license](#) if they have already applied for licensure, passed the exam, submitted their fingerprints, and completed all degree requirements but are awaiting their official transcript with the degree conferment date. Do not apply for a temporary license too early - students may apply for a temporary license up to a week before completing degree requirements, but you must provide the exact degree completion date on the application or there may be delays in processing. Check your temporary license application status by logging in to your [online profile](#) on the Board website.