

Things to consider about HB250

CSWE's Nine Competencies in 2022

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

Look at the full guidelines here:

<https://www.cswe.org/accreditation/standards/2022-epas/>

Note there are no specific clinical emphasis in these competencies and no measures of mastery.



BRAD LITTLE
Governor
RUSSELL BARRON
Administrator

State of Idaho
Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses
Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners

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January 6, 2023

Jana Johansen
Utah Division of Professional Licensing
PO Box 146741
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6741

RE: Substantial Equivalence with Idaho Licensing Requirements

Dear Ms. Johansen:

It has come to our attention that the Utah State Legislature may consider a bill to eliminate the requirement of the ASWB exam for new social work applicants in the State of Utah. Please be aware that Idaho continues to require the exam and has no immediate plans to change that requirement.

IDAPA 24.14.01.350.03.d requires that all endorsement applicants must successfully pass either the ASWB examination relative to the level of licensure, the Education Testing Service (ETS) examination, or an examination provided by the Professional Examination Service (PES) at the clinical social worker and social worker levels.

Should the Utah State Social Work Licensing Board eliminate the ASWB exam requirement, licensed social workers from Utah may have difficulty obtaining Idaho licensure unless they have successfully passed an exam from one of the other two exam providers.

If you have any questions, please contact the Board office at Cesley.metcalfe@dopl.idaho.gov or (208) 577-2622.

Sincerely,

Alex Zamora
Board Chair
Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners

Social Work Licensing Compact

SECTION 3. STATE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT

A. To be eligible to participate in the compact, a potential Member State must currently meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. License and regulate clinical, master's, or bachelor's categories of Social Work practice.
2. Require applicants for licensure to pass a corresponding Qualifying National Exam for the category of licensure sought as outlined in Section 4.
3. Require applicants for licensure to graduate from a program that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or its successor, or by the United States Department of Education and operated by a college or university recognized by the Licensing Authority and that corresponds to the licensure sought as outlined in Section 4.
4. Require applicants for clinical licensure to complete a period of supervised practice.
5. Have a mechanism in place for receiving, investigating, and adjudicating complaints about Licensees.

Here is section 4:

For a Regulated Social Worker who is a master's-category Social Worker:

1. Passed a master's-category Qualifying National Exam. Regulated Social Workers holding an active and unencumbered license, who were licensed in a state before a qualifying national exam was required, may be exempted from this requirement, as provided for by the Rules of the Commission; and
2. Graduated with a master's degree, or higher, in Social Work, from a program that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or its successor, or by the United States Department of Education and operated by a college or university recognized by the Licensing Authority.

Here is what a Qualified National Exam is defined as:

"Qualifying National Exam" means a national licensing examination developed and administered by a national association of Social Work Licensing Authorities or other competency assessment approved by the Commission.



Dear Murette,

Update - Social Work Interstate Compact

January 2023

Laura Groshong, LICSW, CSWA Director of Policy and Practice
Judy Gallant, LICSW, CSWA Deputy Director of Policy and Practice

As most of you know, CSWA has been working for over 2 years on a project funded by the Department of Defense and led by the Council of State Governments to develop the Interstate Compact for Social Workers for occupational licensing portability. Representatives from CSWA, NASW and ASWB have been working with the National Center for Interstate Compacts (part of the Council of State Governments) on the framework and language for a Compact to be put into place.

One question that has come up frequently is which levels of social work practice will be covered by the Compact. The answer is that all forms of licensed social work practice will be eligible to join the Compact, i.e., licensed clinical social work; licensed associate social work; and licensed bachelor social work practice. **The only way a licensed social worker will be eligible to work through the Compact is to abide by the scope of practice established in the Compact language.** For clinical social workers this means having met the standards for clinical social work licensure in their home state.

Another question that has come up often is whether LCSWs who have not taken the ASWB Clinical Examination will be able to join the Compact. If an

LCSW was grandparented into licensure in their home state without taking the Examination, they do not need to take the examination to join the Compact.

The Compact, once finalized, will be distributed to stakeholders in each state and a campaign started to inform state legislatures and Boards of Social Work about the compact. The Compact will need to become law in at least 7 states in order for Social Workers to be able to participate in states that agree to accept it. Once we have a finalized document, we will also be informing you, our members, how you can best help advocate for this to be enacted within your state.

Unfortunately, even though we were expecting the Compact to be finalized by the beginning of 2023, this has not yet happened. Kendra Roberson, PhD, CSWA President, and Laura Groshong, LICSW, CSWA Director of Policy and Practice, along with others who have been working in the Technical Assistance Group, will be attending a meeting in DC in early February in order to finalize the Compact language. We are hopeful that the Compact will be sent to all states and jurisdictions shortly after that.

Because many state legislatures meet for limited amounts of time, frequently at the beginning of each year, it is unlikely that legislatures will be able to approve the Compact within 2023. It is more likely that legislatures will be considering, and hopefully, voting the Compact into law, in 2024. Once at least seven states have voted to approve the Compact, a Commission will be formed for the administration of the Compact. After the Commission is formed, additional states can still join the Compact.

Although this is not the timeline we would have hoped for, the compact is slowly but surely moving in the right direction. CSWA will update you as we get more information.



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January 31, 2023

Submitted Electronically

Representative Ken Ivory, Chair
Representative Cheryl Acton, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
350 North State Street, Suite 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

RE: Oppose HB 0250 Social Worker Licensing Amendments

Dear Representatives Ivory and Acton, and Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

Thank you for considering this letter from the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) opposing HB 0250 that would eliminate the criterion of successful completion of an entry-level competence examination as a prerequisite to licensure eligibility for certified social workers and social service workers.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the policy and practical risks of this proposed legislation, and to offer information about the benefits of professional competency measurement. As you know, all applicants for licensure of *any profession* should be capable of performing the duties and responsibilities of that regulated profession in a manner that does not pose a threat to members of the public receiving those services. This speaks to the very essence of why licensure exists, and professional examinations offer a primary means by which regulatory boards determine entry-to-practice competence consistent with practice industry standards.

The question is how do the licensing boards in Utah establish entry-level competence? As with physicians, osteopaths, nurses, optometrists, psychologists, counselors, marriage and family therapists, and virtually *all* licensed professionals in Utah and nationwide, entry-level competence is established through the successful completion of a psychometrically validated competence examination, the only true objective measure guiding regulatory licensure decisions.

Why should populations served by social workers, often consisting of those who are particularly vulnerable and historically marginalized, be subject to less? The Utah Social Work Licensing Board, like other professional boards, uses professional examinations as part of their duty, their responsibility as regulators, to be accountable to the public in verifying minimum competency.

To place these issues in perspective, it is important to understand the difference between the two major variables impacting licensure decisions: educational programs and post-graduate, entry-to-practice competency examinations. This point is crucial because the elimination of examinations as contemplated under HB 0250 does one of two things. It either entirely eliminates the substantiation of practice-validated competence as a prerequisite to licensure, or it presumes that competence is established solely through the other component, namely education programs. Because professional licensure examinations are not an academic “capstone,” but a practice-grounded measure against criterion-referenced standards, both of these conclusions threaten public protection and diminish regulatory accountability.

Educational programs focus on foundational knowledge over the course of the approximately two to six years a student matriculates through a program. Even under the broad umbrella of “accreditation,” they are highly varied in their instructional approaches and student experience. Factors such as academic freedom, array of concentration/specialization areas, student school selection, faculty composition and research agendas, all point to vast differences – *even across Utah schools*. It is notable that even accredited social work programs do not blanketly accept courses from other accredited programs. Each assesses transfers against *their own individual academic* priorities. The varied nature of educational programs directly supports the need for a uniform postgraduate examination of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of licensure applicants expected to ultimately serve the public.

A crucial difference between schools and regulation is that the minute a student graduates, the school’s responsibility for that person’s competence comes to an abrupt end. After graduation, there is nothing a school can do in response to a harm perpetrated by a practitioner. Regulators alone are the ones who must answer to the public over the course of that social worker’s 10-, 20- or 40-year career. ***Licensure = accountability.***

Because of the magnitude of this regulatory responsibility, regulators should oversee some component of the licensure equation, and for social workers that component is the ASWB professional licensure exam. As was shared with the Utah Social Work Board on October 6, 2022, ASWB follows a process that includes robust anti-bias measures (the likes of which are absent in educational settings) in developing, administering, scoring, and maintaining its examinations. This psychometric process follows industry-vetted standards, developed jointly with the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

Education, supervised experience, and moral character are licensure determination components that all contain elements of subjectivity and judgement. The only objective component is the licensure examination. This is not to suggest that the examination should replace educational or experiential components; they each play important and distinct roles in assessing licensure eligibility. Together, the “3Es + C” of examinations, education, experience, and character offer boards multiple data points equipping them with the elements toward which more equitable and just decisions can be made.

At a time when practice mobility across jurisdictional lines, including rapidly evolving service modalities like telehealth, an additional benefit of an objective, uniform exam is *portability*. For the military and others for example, the exam offers opportunities beyond a single state's boundaries. Because a passing score in Utah meets the exact same standard as a passing score in Washington, D.C., jurisdictions supporting the exam are also supporting administrative endorsement efficiencies, better agility for social work service providers, and broader access for client populations.

Interestingly in these debates, no one is questioning whether heart surgeons or airline pilots...or even a new teen driver for that matter should take a test. Of course, they should. But, social work, an historically female profession, with one of the most diverse workforces in the human services across all demographic dimensions, and primary providers of mental health services in north America – somehow finds ourselves needing to justify our status as professionals and needing to explain and defend our use of the processes that all other professionals use.

From our long-term perspective, ASWB stands firmly behind the position that social work is in fact a "profession" and that efforts like H.B. 0250 that threaten a slippery slope toward de-professionalization not only subvert the responsibilities of regulatory bodies to uphold the public trust, but also pose threats to the profession – including on vital matters of parity and pay equity – and ultimately run counter to our public protection mandate.

On behalf of ASWB, I sincerely appreciate your consideration of the complex topics addressed in this letter. We are available for additional conversations and to answer any questions that you may have. We invite you to reach out and explore opportunities for dialogue.



Stacey D. Hardy-Chandler, PhD, JD, LCSW
Chief Executive Officer, ASWB

ASWB is a not-for-profit association whose members are comprised of the 64 social work licensing boards from the United States, Canada, and north American territories, including the Utah State Social Work Licensing Board. It is recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as an entity that provides programs and services to social work regulatory boards in promoting uniformity and lessening burdens on state governments. Among its services, ASWB oversees the Social Work Model Practice Act reflecting best practice guidance for regulators and legislators, facilitating greater regulatory uniformity, and increasing public information about the social work profession.

How the ASWB Tests are Created

Close to 200 people are involved in the development of the test and include:

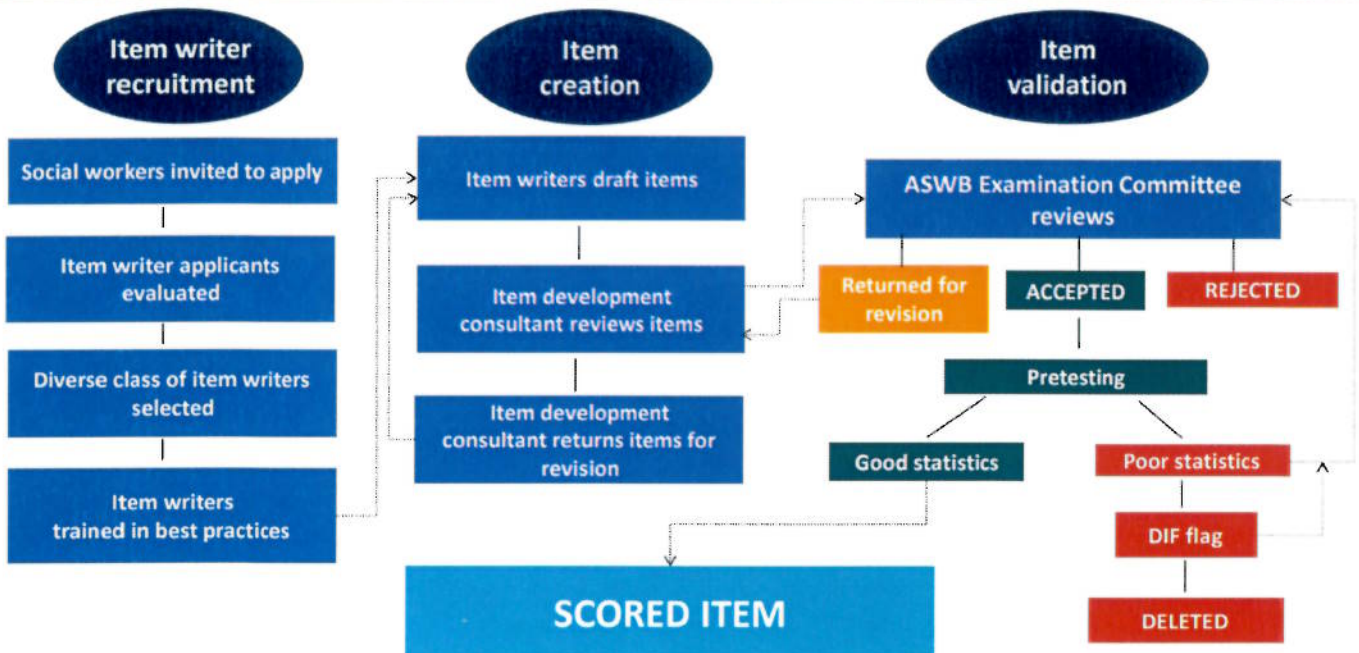
- 20 ASWB staff (16 to administer the exam and 4 to organize the development of it)
- 4 outside vendors who are experts at creating valid testing measures.
- 7 item development consultants.
- 65 volunteers.
- 90 item writers.

The next page has a picture of the item writers, who you can see are from very diverse ethnic backgrounds and most are women. We even have one item writer from Utah.

Topics for questions come from a massive practice survey called the social work census that is mailed out to thousands of social workers every few years to understand how they practice.

Questions are tested for bias before they are allowed to become scored items. Only 150 of the total 170 questions are scored. The other 20 questions are being tested for validity and bias, which is discovered when test takers fail the question at high rates. ASWB tracks these questions and the demographics of the test takers who fail them. If they notice any patterns that indicate bias or poor validity, the item is revised or deleted. If there is no bias, the question rotates into the question pool.

ASWB's examination item development process





ASWB item writers are **licensed social workers**, selected for demographic, geographic, and practice setting diversity.

- Items are randomly assigned to students taking multiple versions.
- Forms are rotated quarterly.
- The test is computer administered at 300 Person Vue centers in the United States and Canada.
- There is a four-hour time limit.
- Students with ESL can bring up to two language dictionaries and have additional time on the test.
- Students with disabilities, such as anxiety, can request further individualized accommodations in accordance with the ADA.

Utah's Test Results by minority and university for the bachelor's exam.

First-time pass rate includes only those test-takers who took the exam for the first time during the target time period and passed the exam.

Eventual pass rate includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the target time period and eventually passed the exam. For those test-takers who took the exam more than once during the target time period (i.e., repeat test-takers), only the most recent attempt is included in the analysis.

The national average first time pass rate is 68.4%. The eventual pass rate is 72.5%.

BYU pass rates for BSW exam:

Table 3. Pass rates by year for test-takers reporting graduation from this school

Exam and test-taker group	Percent passing			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bachelors				
First-time	90	-	100	-
Eventual	100	-	100	-

BYU had a total of 39 test takers during this period: 5 men and 34 women. Of those, all 39 indicated they spoke English primarily and 19 were under 30, 11 between 30 and 50, and 9 over 50. Everyone passed at this school.

Weber State pass rates for BSW exam:

Table 3. Pass rates by year for test-takers reporting graduation from this school

Exam and test-taker group	Percent passing			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bachelors				
First-time	81	90	86	79
Eventual	78	87	87	81

Weber State had 91 test takers, 15 men and 76 women. 86 said they spoke English primarily and five said they spoke another language. 53 were between 18 and 29, 20 between 30 and 39, 13 between 40 and 49, and 5 over 50.

Table 5b. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school by race/ethnicity

Exam and test-taker group	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	Native American/Indigenous peoples	White	Prefer not to say
Bachelors							
N of test-takers	1	1	7	4	0	77	1
% passing	-	-	-	-	-	92.2	-

Weber State did not have enough minority populations take the test to gather data that is non-identifiable on.

Utah State University pass rates for the BSW exam:

Table 3. Pass rates by year for test-takers reporting graduation from this school

Exam and test-taker group	Percent passing			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bachelors				
First-time	88	76	80	69
Eventual	77	74	78	67

Utah State had a total of 157 test takers, 21 men and 136 women. Of those, 154 said English was their primary language and 3 said it was not. 102 were

between 18 and 29, 28 were between 30 and 39, 20 were between 40 and 49, and 7 were older than 50.

Table 5b. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school by race/ethnicity

Exam and test-taker group	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	Native American/Indigenous peoples	White	Prefer not to say
Bachelors							
N of test-takers	2	1	6	2	4	138	2
% passing	-	-	-	-	-	82.6	-

Utah state did not have enough minority populations take the test to gather data that was non-identifiable.

Utah Valley University pass rates for the BSW exam:

Table 3. Pass rates by year for test-takers reporting graduation from this school

Exam and test-taker group	Percent passing			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bachelors				
First-time	87	76	71	84
Eventual	88	68	78	88

UVU had a total of 84 test takers: 21 men and 63 women. Of those, 81 indicated English was their primary language and 3 said it was not. 53 were under 30, 22 were between 30 and 40, and 5 were over 50.

Table 5b. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school by race/ethnicity

Exam and test-taker group	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	Native American/Indigenous peoples	White	Prefer not to say
Bachelors							
N of test-takers	1	2	9	1	0	68	2
% passing	-	-	-	-	-	88.2	-

UVU did not have enough minorities take the test to gather data on their pass rates that is non-identifiable.

U of U pass rates for BSW exam (percent passing):

Table 3. Pass rates by year for test-takers reporting graduation from this school

Exam and test-taker group	Percent passing			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bachelors				
First-time	84	87	84	78
Eventual	82	88	82	73

The U of U had 147 test takers: 20 men and 127 women. Of those, 134 said English was their primary language, 13 said other. 85 were between 18 and 29 years old, 37 were between 30 and 40, 13 were between 40-49, and 12 were over 50.

The U had enough minority students to compare pass rates, but only among Latino/Hispanic populations and white populations.

Eventual pass rates for those populations are:

Table 5b. 2018-2021 pass rates for test-takers reporting graduation from this school by race/ethnicity

Exam and test-taker group	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	Native American/Indigenous peoples	White	Prefer not to say
Bachelors							
N of test-takers	2	1	28	6	4	104	2
% passing	-	-	71.4	-	-	92.3	-

While we can see a difference in pass rates, it's difficult to say at this point how much is due to factors like differences in the admissions process and criteria and programing differences at the University.

Since we don't have data on minorities from other universities, we can't rule out if differences in university programs accounts for some of the discrepancy.

Utah's Test Results by minority and university for the master's exam.

Note: We only have one year's worth of valid data on this test because we only started requiring it in May of 2022.

First-time pass rate includes only those test-takers who took the exam for the first time during the target time period and passed the exam.

Eventual pass rate includes all test-takers, both repeat and first-time, who tested during the target time period and eventually passed the exam. For those test-takers who took the exam more than once during the target time period (i.e., repeat test-takers), only the most recent attempt is included in the analysis.

The national average first time pass rate is 73%. The eventual pass rate is 66.6%.

BYU pass rates for the Master's exam in 2021:

Masters				
First-time	4	-	91.0	73.0
Eventual	4	-	83.0	66.6

BYU only had 4 people take the test because students are given time to prepare and study after graduation for six months with the CSW-I license. The rest of their students chose to wait to take the test after this data was gathered in August of 2022.

Of those four students, 1 was a man, 3 were women. 3 indicated they spoke English primarily and 1 did not. One of those students were over 50.

There is no data on pass rates for BYU because the number was so small.

Weber state pass rates for the Master's exam in 2021:

Weber did not have any students take the Master's exam.

Utah State pass rates for the Master's exam in 2021:

Masters							
N of test-takers	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
% passing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Utah State only had two people take the test and that wasn't enough to gather any data.

Utah Valley University pass rates for the Master's exam in 2021:

The first time pass rate was 91% with an eventual pass rate of 83%. They had 12 test takers, 6 women and 6 men. All were white.

There is no data on minority pass rates because they had no minorities take the test.

U of U pass rates for the Master's exam in 2021:

They had a first-time pass rate of 81% and an eventual pass rate of 67.7%. They had 24 test takers. Of those, 7 were men and 17 were women. 18 had English as a primary language, 6 did not. 9 were between 18 and 29, 5 were between 30-39, 6 are between 40-49, and 4 are over 50.

Masters							
N of test-takers	2	4	4	1	0	11	1
% passing	-	-	-	-	-	90.9	-

The only category of results you see here is for white students because there were not enough minorities who took the test to report.

There is no pass rate data by minority for any school in Utah for this test. It is impossible to say the test pass rates are low because of bias against minorities and therefore it needs to be eliminated.

Pass rates in Utah by test for the last 10 years with larger groups of minorities included.



Utah's data

Clinical exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=3,716 (Black test-takers, N=57)

Utah first-time pass rate: **81.6%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N=3,794 (Black test-takers, N=66)

Utah eventual pass rate: **92%**

Masters exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=431 (Black test-takers, N=12)

Utah first-time pass rate: **85.6%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N= 445 (Black test-takers, N=14)

Utah eventual pass rate: **87.9%**

Bachelors exam

First-time test-takers, 2011-2021
N=1,727 (Black test-takers, N=17)

Utah first-time pass rate: **85.5%**

Overall test-takers, 2011-2021
N=1,739 (Black test-takers, N=18)

Utah eventual pass rate: **90.4%**