

CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

INTERN means an applicant for licensure as an independent or as a clinical social worker who has not yet completed 3000 hours of supervised postgraduate training, but is in the process of doing so under a program of internship approved by the Board. (NAC 641B.035)

CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK means the application of methods, principles and techniques of case work, group work, community organization, administration, planning, consultation, research and psychotherapeutic methods and techniques to persons, families and groups to help in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional conditions. (NRS 641B.030)

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC METHODS AND TECHNIQUES means the methods of treatment that use a specialized, formal interaction between a clinical social worker and a client in which a therapeutic relationship is established and maintained to:

- Understand unconscious processes and intrapersonal, interpersonal and psychosocial dynamics; and,
- Diagnose and treat mental, emotional and behavioral disorders, conditions and addictions. (NAC 641.057)

Clinical Social Worker: Performance of supervised, postgraduate social work in Nevada.

An applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker must complete an internship program consisting of not less than 3, 000 hours of supervised, postgraduate social work. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the required work must be:

- (a) Undertaken in a program that is approved by the board before the applicant begins the program. The program must include, without limitation:
 - (1) An examination, if deemed necessary by the board;
 - (2) An appropriate setting, as determined by the board;
 - (3) Supervision of the applicant by a supervisor who has been approved by the board; and
 - (4) A plan of supervision that has been approved by the board.
- (b) Completed not earlier than 2 years or later than 3 years after the board approves the program. For good cause, the board will grant a specific extension of this period.
- (c) Conducted pursuant to the requirements and standards set forth by the board. For good cause, the board will withdraw its approval of a particular program.

At least 2,000 hours of the supervised, postgraduate clinical social work required by subsection 1 must be in the area of psychotherapeutic methods and techniques to person, families and groups to help in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional conditions. The remaining hours may be completed in others areas of clinical social work. [NAC641B.150 (1,2)]

The applicant must be able to demonstrate:

A. The ability to diagnose, assess, and treat mental and emotional conditions

- Comprehensive psychosocial assessment including knowledge and utilization of Mental Status Exams (MSE)
- Determination of diagnosis, i.e. use of the DSM
- Development of treatment plans with specific goals
- Various clinical intervention approaches
- Document and review of treatment outcomes
- Knowledge of psychopharmacology
- Knowledge of addictions and the related clinical interventions
- Suicidal/homicidal evaluations and interventions
- Abuse/neglect evaluations and interventions
- Experience with a range of clientele

B. The skills and professional conduct necessary for continuing competency

- Establish professional clinical relationships – initiating and sustaining a worker/client relationship based in social work standards of professional conduct that strengthens the client.
- Appropriate “use of self” with clients and colleagues – the separation of personal issues from professional responsibility and relationships
- Commitment to the social work profession and services to clientele
- Application of social work values and ethics
- Knowledge and application of human behavior and the social environment
- Recognize and reinforce the client's prerogative of self-determination
- Utilize supervision for critical review of practice

Internship Policy – Clinical

An *Internship Program* is defined as the contract between a Board eligible **intern**, a Board approved **intern supervisor** and a Board approved internship **site** (agency). Clinical internship applicants must submit an **application** to the Board for approval prior to engaging in any direct practice with clients. The applicant must demonstrate to the Board's satisfaction that the internship position is at an approved site for clinical practice pursuant to NAC 641B.150. The internship program must be an integral part of the agency's philosophy and service delivery.

Additionally, the Board looks at the applicant's practice site for information of the client population, typical presenting problems/diagnoses of the clients and whether the position requires a knowledge of psychopharmacology. An applicant has the burden of demonstrating that a position constitutes clinical social work and is appropriate as a learning setting. The agency, intern and supervisor must be aware that the site(s) is subject to Board review at any time. The agency must give Board permission to conduct site visits. If a site is found not meet the requirements as described above, Board may terminate an internship. The Board will give intern 30 days to close cases. If internship is terminated, intern will immediately notify clients in writing and seek the transfer, referral or continuation of services for the client to minimize possible adverse effects.

An agency job description must be submitted with the internship application. The job description must include the provision of clinical practice and psychotherapeutic methods, as detailed above. **Any change of position / job must be reported to the Board.** A new job description must be submitted with a request for an internship change. This change must be approved by the Board for the internship to remain active.

The internship site must be in an **agency** that has a clinical program in place that would be appropriate for the educational needs of an internship. If the intern supervisor is **off-site**, the site must be able to designate a clinical supervisor on-site that is a licensed mental health professional. The on-site supervisor must coordinate with the Board approved supervisor regarding intern practice issues and concerns. An intern may not engage in direct practice unless a supervisor or an agency designated licensed mental health professional is available for immediate consultation. Although it is preferable that supervisor be on-site, other provisions for immediate consultation may include, but are not limited to, the use of cellular phones, pagers, and presence of co-therapists or clinical teams particularly when there is a high risk of violence, verbal hostility, or intern isolation during the provision of clinical services.

The intern and supervisor must submit a **plan of supervision** specific to intern abilities and the practice setting which describes how the intern will gain the skills necessary to diagnose, assess and treat mental and emotional conditions and gain the skills and professional conduct necessary for continuing competency.

For the purposes of licensure in Nevada, clinical practice in the area of **psychotherapeutic methods and techniques** includes, but is not limited to, (1) the completion of comprehensive psychosocial assessments, including mental status exams; (2) determination of diagnosis, i.e. using the DSM; (3) development of treatment plans with explicit goals; (4) achievement of goals through the use of one or more intervention approaches, i.e.

brief and long-term psychotherapy, family and group therapies, crisis interventions; (5) documentation and review of treatment outcomes.

The clinical social work intern must understand **concepts relating to risk and safety issues** in clinical situations and how to use safety procedures to protect themselves and their clients. To ensure that the interns are trained in and demonstrate the ability to assess and function safely in emergency situations, the internship supervisor and agency site must address the following:

- That the safety of the client and the intern are addressed through the use of safety and risk assessments and by the establishment of related safety policies and procedures;
- That included in policies and procedures is an emergency protocol for access to the internship supervisor when such situations take place;
- That a plan be developed for assessing an intern's readiness for competent autonomous practice in relation to such safety and risk factors and that this assessment be incorporated into the intern's first quarterly report to the Board.

The agency and intern supervisor will ensure that during the first quarter of the internship (or longer if deemed necessary), **a mental health professional must be available on-site during the provision of direct service by the intern.** If the provision of clinical services occurs off-site, a mental health professional must accompany the intern during the first quarter of the internship or longer if deemed necessary. **The supervisor will make provision for the opportunity of participation and observation of intern's practice regardless of where the services are provided throughout the remainder of the internship program.**

At the conclusion of each quarter, the intern supervisor shall submit a **Quarterly Progress Report**. This report will be reviewed and approved by the Board. Approval of hours is not a guarantee. The Board may **refuse to accept a quarterly or final report** submitted by a supervisor of an intern if the report, (a) does not satisfy the reporting requirements for the forms provided by the Board; (b) does not include such additional information concerning the internship as requested by the Board; or (c) is received by the Board after the date on which the report is due. If the Board refuses to accept a quarterly or final report, the Board will disallow credit for all hours of internship as reported on the report.

The Board may limit hours acceptable at any site if it determines that the intern is not gaining the requisite skills necessary to be licensed as a Clinical Social Worker and require the intern to show competence in specific areas necessary to be a Clinical Social Worker.

