



Notice of Proposed Changes in the Regulations of the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners

Proposed Regulations - FAQ

August 2024

1. What is the purpose of the proposed regulations? What will this regulation do?

12 AAC 18.112. Continued competency

- This amendment is to change the references to section 12 AAC 18.210 with the corrected regulation subsections, based on the current proposed regulations.

12 AAC 18.113. Clinical supervisor requirements

- This is a new section proposed to be added. The addition of this section will clean up regulations by separating clinical supervisor requirement regulations and supervision of clinical social work regulations.
- 12 AAC 18.113(a) and 12 AAC 18.113(a)(2) were previously required and have been moved from section 12 AAC 18.115 to this section.
- The remaining additions will establish supervision requirements and standards for clinical supervisors to ensure applicants are receiving adequate supervision which will ensure that social workers in Alaska are equipped to serve the public safely and with increased clinical competence. This will go into effect **after June 30, 2026** to allow for a smooth transition.

12 AAC 18.115. Supervision of experience for clinical social work license

- Remove the regulations that have been moved to 12 AAC 18.113 (12 AAC 18.115(b)).
- Update 12 AAC 18.115(c) to refer clinical supervisors and supervisees to the new proposed section 12 AAC 18.113.
- Update the approval process for an applicant to receive an alternate method of supervision. Currently, the applicant must send in a request in writing for the board to review. The proposed language requires the applicant to complete a request on a form provided by the department. This will be a new form that will be available on the Board of Social Work Examiners website for the public if these regulations are adopted. This will streamline the process for applicants, supervisors, and the board, to allow for faster reviews.

12 AAC 18.150. Social worker code of ethics

- This proposed change will update the Code of Ethics from an outdated version to the most up to date version from NASW. This will ensure licensees are using the most current resource. This document will be adopted by reference.

12 AAC 18.210. Continuing education requirement

- The majority of the changes are to simplify and streamline regulations for ease of use by licensees.
- An additional change is requiring one-half of continuing education contact hours for renewals to be obtained via live, live online, or synchronous training courses. Not more than one-half of the total number of continuing education contact hours required for renewal will be able to be earned via completion of an asynchronous program. This change will increase interaction in the field of social work, which is positive.

2. Do the changes in 12 AAC 18.210 increase continuing education hours?

No, continuing education hours for renewal are not being increased. They remain the same. The main change is requiring half of continuing education contact hours to be received ‘live’, ‘live online’ or ‘synchronous training courses’.

3. Will requiring ‘live’ continuing education contact hours for renewal create a barrier? What is the need for this?

Live continuing education contact hours are largely available – while this may cause some barrier to access live hours, there are many resources licensees will be able to use to meet this requirement. Obtaining live education offers social workers the opportunity to strengthen their skills and allows them the opportunity to network with other professionals in the field, which will lead to better patient care. This change is to bring the Board of Social Work Examiners into alignment with the other mental health boards in the state.

4. What are the positive changes to requiring a certain number of years of experience for supervisors and annual supervision continuing education requirements?

While requiring a certain number of years of experience and annual supervision CEs might raise questions or be considered a negative by some providers, enacting this regulation will ensure Alaska’s social workers are well-trained and better equipped to serve the public safely. All supervisors will sign an attestation that they have completed the requirements. This board will be diligent in providing detailed information on the board’s Frequently Asked Questions page in order to provide licensees and supervisors all of the information necessary to be successful. This change **will not go into effect until after June 30, 2026**, if adopted.

5. What are the costs to comply with the proposed regulations?

There are no known costs to implement these changes.

6. When will the regulations be effective?

After the public comment deadline, comments received are compiled and given to the Board for consideration. The Board may adopt the regulation as written/publicly noticed, may amend and adopt them, choose to take no action, or may withdraw the proposed regulations in part or in its whole. After Board action, the adopted regulations goes to Department of Law (DOL) for final review/approval. DOL either approves or disapproves regulations. Once approved by DOL, it goes to the Lt. Governor for filing. Regulation takes effect on the 30th day after they have been filed by the Lt. Governor.

Do you have a question that is not answered here? Please email RegulationsAndPublicComment@alaska.gov so it can be added.