



## IDAHO SOCIAL WORK LICENSING GUIDE

UPDATED 2020  
GLOBAL TALENT IDAHO

## **IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION:**

### **IDAHO BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

If you received your social work degree from an international institution, your best option for licensing in Idaho is to receive a credential evaluation from the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Services (ISWDRES) and use that evaluation to apply to a CSWE accredited master's program in Idaho.

**If you have already received a bachelor's degree or higher in social work, it is recommended that you use your ISWDRES to apply into at least a master's program.** The Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners does not accept candidates with an ISWDRES for licensure. See below, for the exact rules the board has set forth. The ISWDRES is a program within CSWE that evaluates social work degrees from foreign institutions for compatibility to U.S. accredited social work baccalaureate and master's degrees. **Make sure that you contact the school prior to applying to see if they accept the ISWDRES evaluation for admissions.** This recognition process is necessary to establish qualifications for employment, graduate school admission, membership in the National Association of Social Workers, state licensing (IBSWE does not accept ISWDRES for licensing), and/or certification.

The Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners (IBSWE) requires all licensure applicants graduate from a "...college, university, or school of social work accredited or is a candidate for accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities or any similar accrediting body, and that offers a social work program that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or that is otherwise approved by the Board. The social work program must be a recognizable, coherent organizational entity within the institution"\* . CSWE is the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the U.S.

\* Idaho State Board of Social Work Examiners (3/29/2012). Rules of the State Board of Social Work Examiners: Rule 100-Approved College and Universities. Retrieved from <https://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/24/241401.pdf>

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**1. HOW THE PROFESSION IS ORGANIZED IN IDAHO**

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REGULATION

Idaho requires licensure to work under the title of Social Worker. The Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners (IBSWE) is the regulatory agency that oversees the licensing process for social work.

The IBSWE licenses three types of social workers:

1. Licensed Bachelors of Social Work (LBSW/LSW)- This requires graduating from a CSWE accredited school of social work and passing the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) baccalaureate exam. This is the first level of licensure in social work and allows the social worker to assist clients in multiple areas of practice outside of clinical counseling.
2. Licensed Masters of Social Work (LMSW)- This requires graduating from a CSWE accredited school of social work and passing the ASWB masters' exam. This is the next level of licensure in social work and allows the social worker to earn a higher wage, move into a higher position, and is the foundation for continuing on to an LCSW license.
3. Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) must have 3,000 hours of supervised experience performing clinical services at a mental health facility. With a clinical license, social workers are able to provide clinical counseling and set up a private practice that works with clients.

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In order to receive your social work license, IBSWE requires each international social work candidate to graduate from a CSWE accredited bachelor's or master's of social work program

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from a university or college that is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities or any similar accrediting body. **However, if you have already received a bachelor's degree or higher in social work, it is recommended that you use your ISWDRES to apply into at least a master's program.** A candidate will also need to pass an ASWB examination. In order to sit for regional examinations, internationally trained social workers will need to complete numerous steps in order to receive their license and practice in Idaho.

This guide includes all the necessary steps in order to receive your license in Idaho. This process includes: foreign credential evaluation, admissions and completion of an accredited masters of social work program, and successful completion of an ASWB examination.

## EMPLOYMENT

Social workers are employed in a variety of settings, including mental health clinics, schools, child welfare and human service agencies, hospitals, settlement houses, community development corporations, and private practices. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of social workers is projected to grow 12 percent from 2020 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth will be driven by increased demand for healthcare and social services, but will vary by specialty. The [average salary](#) for an MSW in Idaho is \$61,000.

## **2. TIME AND COSTS**

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Successfully licensing as a Social Worker in Idaho depends on many factors. Some of these include:

- The completeness of your educational and professional records
- Your ability to attend and finance an accredited social work program
- Successfully complete an ASWB examination

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The following is a hypothetical scenario of the time and cost it would take for you to become licensed as a social worker in the U.S.

HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIOS FOR SOCIAL WORK LICENSING:

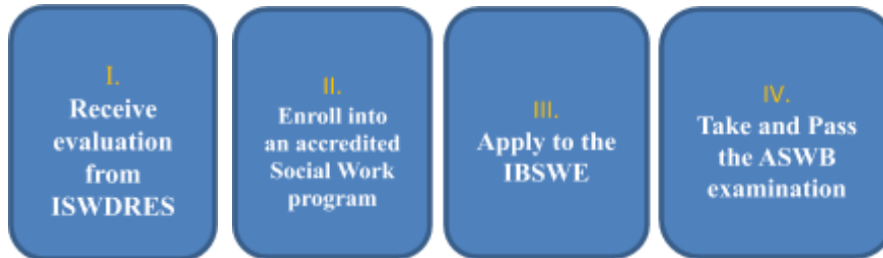
<b>Step</b>	<b>More Efficient Scenario</b> <i>Approximate Time and Cost</i>
1. Receive <a href="#">ISWDRES credential evaluation</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$166-\$523 and six months</li><li>• Price depends on the country where you received your degree</li></ul>
2. Enroll into a CSWE accredited master's' of social work program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$18,000-\$30,000 and 2 ½ years</li><li>• Price and time varies based on school</li></ul>
3. Apply to the Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$160 and one week</li></ul>
4. Take and pass the ASWB Masters Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$230 and one month</li><li>• Scheduling and studying for the exam can take some time</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>More Efficient Total</b> <b>About \$21,000 and 3 1/2 years</b></li></ul>

### 3. **ELIGIBILITY FOR LICENSING**

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This section explains 4 important steps that you need to complete before you can be licensed to practice social work in Idaho. The steps to licensing are as follows:

#### SOCIAL WORK LICENSING MAP



#### I. **ISWDRES CREDENTIAL EVALUATION**

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\*The following information in this section has been provided by Council on Social Work Education. For more information, please go to:

Council on Social Work Education’s International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service (2020). ISWDRES Application Instructions. Retrieved from <https://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Initiatives/International-Degree-Review.aspx>.

#### **ISWDRES Overview**

ISWDRES is a program within CSWE that evaluates social work degrees from foreign institutions and compares them to U.S. accredited social work baccalaureate and master’s degrees. This evaluation process is necessary to establish qualifications for employment, graduate school admission, membership in the National Association of Social Workers, state licensing (IBSWE does not accept ISWDRES for licensing), and/or certification.

#### **Application Process**

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You can access a step-by-step guide on how to apply to the ISWDRES. [Click here](#), to learn more.

### **Application Fee/Payment**

In addition to the nonrefundable \$28 Screen Form fee, the fee for the evaluation varies based on which country you received your degree. [Click here](#), to see current fees based on your country of education.

You are also able to pay your fee by debit card/credit card by [clicking here](#). Make sure that you know which group you fall into for the correct payment.

### **Required Documents and English Translation**

After submitting and paying for the Recognition Application Form, you will need to contact the international social work program where you received your degree and have them send Official Supporting Documents verifying your degree. The list of required documents can be found below.

1. ***Transcript*** or mark list must be sent directly to CSWE by the social work program.
2. ***Proof of graduation*** – an official letter from your university stating that you attended the Social Work program, received a baccalaureate- or master’s-level degree and graduated in good standing, including the date.
3. ***Competencies or Expected Outcomes\**** from the social work program you attended at the time you were enrolled. Competencies or Expected Outcomes are the skills and values that a social work program expects its students to possess by graduation.
  - a. Applicants will need to contact their Social Work program director/staff or faculty and have the institution send its competencies or expected outcomes directly to



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the CSWE. [Click here](#) (PDF) for examples of U.S. Social Work expected outcomes.

4. ***Course descriptions of all Social Work courses*** that appear on applicant's transcript, including field placements. The course descriptions must be official translations made from the social work program's course catalog or official notarized copies from the original text if printed in English. Applicants need to clearly mark the classes they attended for easy reference.

### **Translation of Documents**

All documents must be officially translated into English in order to be considered for review. Photocopies of transcripts and diplomas **MUST** be affixed with a university/program seal or notary public to be considered for evaluation.

"Officially Translated" means that translation can be done at your social work program (it **MUST** be affixed with a university/program seal) or through an outside service (as long as it is notarized by a notary public and accompanied by the originals).

### **ISWDRES Determination Letter**

Once your full application is submitted, your file will be reviewed. You can expect to receive the formal determination letter informing you if the degree is recognized within 45 days of ISWDRES receiving all of the documentation listed in [steps 2 and 3](#) of the Application.

## **II. ENROLL INTO AN ACCREDITED SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

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Once you receive your Determination Letter recognizing your foreign degree, you will be able to

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choose and apply to a master's of social work program. If your degree is not recognized, you will need to apply to a bachelor's of social work program.

### **Choosing a Program**

Currently, Idaho has two masters of social work programs. There are also numerous online programs available as well. These programs vary widely in pricing and each school has its own requirements for admissions, including taking and passing the TOEFL, IELTS, or another similar English assessment. Please, contact these schools directly to learn more about their admissions requirements and make sure that your ISWDRES evaluation is accepted for entrance into their program.

#### **Program**

Boise State University

1910 University Dr.

Boise, Idaho 83725

(208) 426-1000

<http://www.boisestate.edu>

[Cost and Fees](#) for BSU's MSW program

#### **Contact**

Ellie Pierce

Academic Advisor

Education Building, 717

[elliepierce@boisestate.edu](mailto:elliepierce@boisestate.edu)

(208) 426-3106

#### **Program**

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Northwest Nazarene University

623 S University Blvd

Nampa, ID 83686-5897

(208) 467-8011

<http://www.nnu.edu>

[Cost and Fees](#) for Northwest Nazarene University MSW program

### **Contacts**

Lindsay Kuhl

Admissions Counselor for MSW

lkuhl@nnu.edu

(208) 467-8854

### **Online Schools**

There are also numerous online masters' programs that are accredited by CSWE. [Click here](#), for more information.

### **III. APPLY TO THE IDAHO BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS**     [Back to](#)

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Once you near the end of your schooling, you will need to apply to IBSWE to take the ASWB Master's Examination. You can start this process by completing [this form](#). The application consists of the following steps

1. [Completed application](#). All requested information must be provided along with a notary seal.
2. \$70 application fee. All returned checks are subject to a \$20 fee.
3. Copy of driver's license or birth certificate.
4. Addendum 1 completed by school registrar if applying prior to graduation.

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5. Official transcript after degree is posted in a sealed envelope sent directly from college or university.
6. Copy of marriage license or divorce decree if name is different on application than accompanying documents.
7. Completed reference form.
8. Conviction of any felony or any crime involving moral turpitude requires submitting a detailed statement, summary of charges, final order and any probation or parole documentation.

#### **IV. TAKE AND PASS THE ASWB MASTERS EXAMINATION**

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Once you have applied to IBSWE, you will be approved by the ASWB to schedule an exam. You are required to take the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Masters Exam in order to qualify for licensing in the state of Idaho. You are also required to download and read the [ASWB Candidate Handbook](#). This will guide and answer any questions that you might have when registering, preparing and taking the ASWB exam.

The following information in this section has been provided by the Council on Social Work Education. For more information, please go to:

Association of Social Work Boards (2016). Exam Candidates. Retrieved from <https://www.aswb.org/exam-candidates/>.

#### **Register for ASWB Examination**

Please note: In order to register, you **MUST** be eligible to take the social work examination. In most jurisdictions, this means that you have applied for licensure and paid any fees that are required at this point in the licensure process to your jurisdiction's social work licensing board

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and that you must have received notification from your social work board that you may take the ASWB examination.

If you have a disability: you must request and receive approval of special accommodations from your board before registering to take the examinations. [Information on testing accommodations can be found here.](#)

If you need more information on registering: You can access the [ASWB Candidate Handbook](#).

### **Scheduling Examination**

Examinations are administered by appointment at [Pearson Professional Centers](#) worldwide.

There are no fixed administration dates. Instead, registered candidates can go to [Pearson VUE's website](#) to schedule a time to take the test.

### **ASWB Fees**

The most common way to register for the ASWB Masters exam is through [ASWB's website](#).

You will be able to pay for your exam by Visa, Mastercard, and/or Discover. The current fee for the Master's exam is **\$230**, which is nonrefundable. Once you have paid this, you will need to wait three business days to receive your email registration status.

### **Examination Overview**

Each examination contains 170 multiple-choice questions designed to measure minimum competencies at four categories of practice. Only 150 of the 170 items are scored; the remaining 20 questions are pretest items included to measure their effectiveness as items on future examinations. These pretest items are scattered randomly throughout the examination.

Candidates have four hours to complete the test, which is administered electronically.

## **ASWB Preparation Material**

It is highly recommended that you purchase the ASWB guide to the social work exam as well as the online practice test to help you prepare for the exam. Current prices can be found by [clicking here](#).

### **Failing and Retaking Examination**

Candidates who fail the ASWB examination will be supplied with diagnostic information outlining their performance on the test. Please note that some jurisdictions limit the number of times a candidate may retake an ASWB examination. In all cases, you must wait 90 days before taking another ASWB examination. You will need to register and pay the full examination fee again to retake the examination.

## **4. OTHER CAREERS AND CREDENTIALS**

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### **LOWER-LEVEL JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

While you are pursuing your long-term goal of licensing as a LMSW or LCSW, you may want to consider looking for work in lower-level social services as a short-term solution for financing and networking. There are advantages to working in lower-level social services while you are pursuing your licensure:

- More energy to focus on studying and saving money for a Master's program
- A chance to adapt to the social work system and workplace culture in a lower-pressure environment

Below are some of the lower-level career options while you are pursuing your LMSW or LCSW. If you choose any of these positions, be sure to explain your long-term plans to your employer.

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Some employers offer tuition reimbursement benefits or schedule flexibility that can support your goals.

### COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION SERVICES (CBRS) WORKER

CBRS workers work one-on-one with clients that have mental illnesses. CBRS workers work in clients' homes and in the community to enhance skills needed to reduce the impact their mental illness has on their life. CBRS workers offer a wide range of skill-building services to adults recovering from severe and persistent mental illnesses.

In order to work as a CBRS worker in Idaho, you are required to have a Bachelor's degree in any social discipline. After receiving a credential evaluation, you may be eligible to work on this field.

### CAREGIVER

Caregivers assist people who are sick, injured, mentally or physically disabled, or the elderly and fragile. Caregivers work in the home and help their clients with daily activities, such as bathing and bathroom functions, feeding, grooming, taking medication, and some housework. Caregivers help clients make and keep appointments with doctors, provide or arrange transportation and serve as a companion for their clients.

Most caregivers have at least a high school diploma when starting their career, but it is not required. Much training is done on the job by nurses or other caregivers. The training includes safety information, emergency response, cooking special dietary foods if necessary.

### HEALTHCARE INTERPRETER

If you are bilingual and a strong communicator, you may want to research opportunities for work in hospitals as an interpreter. Certified Medical Interpreters is a course that you can take and become licensed. This type of role is regulated in Idaho, so standards for employment as well as

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pay and benefits may be very different depending on the employer. You are more likely to have benefits such as tuition reimbursement if you find work as a direct employee of a healthcare facility, instead of working for a company that provides interpretation services to hospitals. The following is one company that offers this training:

Lopez Translation and Training

107 S. Kimball Avenue

Caldwell, ID 83605

(208) 250-6507

## **5. BEYOND LICENSING**

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### MAINTAINING LICENSURE

For information about licensure renewal, continuing education requirements, fees, and inactive licenses, please [click here](#).

### JOINING A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

In order to increase your professional development and networking skills, it is highly suggested that you join state and national associations. These associations will also help you learn up-to-date social work standards and policies. These associations can also help you understand the licensing and examination process, as well as offer test preparation material. They are also a source of learning what Continuing Professional Education (CPE) courses are available for you to fulfill. You are required to fulfill CPE credits annually to maintain your license.

STATE:

- [Idaho Association of Social Workers](#)



- [National Association of Social Workers](#)

## **LICENSING MOBILITY (LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT)**

The state of Idaho grants licensing to social workers from other states. A licensed social worker in another state, who wants to practice in Idaho, must independently meet all Idaho requirements for licensing. [Click here](#), for more information about these requirements.

## **6. IMPORTANT LINKS**

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### LICENSING AND REGULATION:

- The [Idaho Board of Social Work Examiners](#) has more information on regulation and renewal of a social work license, as well as the links to the licensing application and other resources.

### CREDENTIALING ORGANIZATIONS:

- [International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service](#) (ISWDRES);  
Phone: (703) 683-8080
- [World Education Services](#)

## **7. TIPS**

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### GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Be your own advocate throughout the licensing process. Seek clarification about questions and concerns directly from official sources. Organize your questions and ask for assistance.

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**FIND OUT ABOUT FINANCIAL AID**

The very high cost of a social work program is a big obstacle to licensing. However, since it is a degree program, you are eligible for financial aid. You should first ask to speak with a financial aid counselor to get a better understanding about your ability to pay. Educational debt is common in the U.S. and you need to consider the income you expect to make after finishing your education.