

What is Licensure?

Basic Licensing Concepts

Oregon State Board of Licensed Social Workers

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- Martin Pittioni, Interim Executive Director
- Kim Sommer, Licensing Specialist

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Why Licensing? What is Licensing?

- Public protection in two ways:
 - Front end: Minimum educational standard
 - Plus criminal background check
 - Ongoing:
 - recourse for public harmed by social worker
 - Accountability via ethics code enforced by the Board, with ability to sanction the license
 - Continuing education requirements for renewal of license to enforce minimum standard of staying current in profession

What is a Licensing Board?

- Government Agency
- Client is the Public served by social work community
- Differentiation of Mission
 - Associations advocate for members
 - Boards protect the public
 - Both are essential and complementary components of a profession

How does a licensing Board work?

- Administrative agencies in the Executive Branch
- - Oregon State Board of Licensed Social Workers:
Policy-Making Board, Seven Members (4 LCSWs, 3 Public Members, Governor appointed, Senate-confirmed)
- Boards vary in composition and type (policy making or advisory)
- **Licensing Boards combine all three functions of government:**
 - Executive (licensing, investigation, agency administration)
 - Legislative (rule writing)
 - Judicial (Adjudication of complaints)

What is a rule?

- Board has to write rules to implement laws passed by the Legislature where the Board has rule-writing authority
- **Why is that important?**
 - Rules have the force of law
 - Violation of licensing or conduct rule (Ethics Code) violates Oregon law
 - What does this mean for conduct?

Conduct Implications / Ethics Code

- Board Ethics code is in Board rule (has force of law)
- Board has disciplinary authority over the license of a licensee who violates Board rules or statutes
- Board Ethics Code does not render NASW Code of Ethics meaningless
 - Board has no direct authority to enforce the NASW Code of Ethics
 - Board Ethics Code includes most basic principles of the NASW Code of Ethics
 - Knowledge of NASW Ethics Code is not a substitute for reading Board Ethics Code

Summary

What is Licensing? Why Licensing?

- Licensing implements specific eligibility standards for licensure
- Licensing creates an accountability construct through a Board-enforced Ethics Code that holds licensees accountable for services (conduct) provided to clients
- The primary function of licensing is about public protection

The Good News....

- You are now ready to review the next module - Licensing Requirements for Social Workers in Oregon
- Please refer to the Board's web site www.oregon.gov/blsw for that presentation and other Board updates