

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Board of Social Work

(Amendment)

201 KAR 23:120. Equivalency standard.

RELATES TO: KRS 335.070, 335.080, 335.090, 335.100, 335.135

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS Chapter 13A, 335.070

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 335.070(5) authorizes the Kentucky Board of Social Work to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335. KRS 335.080(1)(c) and 335.090(1)(c)2 authorize the board to approve educational institutions and determine equivalent course requirements for applicants seeking licensure as a certified social worker or licensed social worker. This administrative regulation establishes the equivalency standards for single-state licensure under KRS 335.080 and KRS 335.090. In accordance with the strict educational mandates of KRS 335.100(1)(a) and the Social Work Licensure Compact in KRS 335.135, these equivalency standards do not apply to applicants for a licensed clinical social worker license or a multistate license, both of which require a degree from an institution accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. [This administrative regulation clarifies what the board will consider as equivalent education to that of a baccalaureate degree in social work or a social welfare program.]

Section 1. In determining equivalency, the board will compare any program to that of a master's or bachelor's degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) ~~(council of social work educators)~~ accredited school. In determining equivalency, the board will require that the educational content of a program shall include:

- (1) Human behavior and the social environment;
- (2) Social welfare policy and service;
- (3) Research;
- (4) Social work practice; and
- (5) Educational practicum.

Section 2.

- (1) In human behavior and the social environment emphasis should be placed on the psychosocial situation. Six (6) hours of such courses should be at the upper division, or three (3) hours if such is built on a base of psychological and sociological courses.
- (2) Social welfare policy and service courses shall include at least three (3) hours at the upper division social work or social welfare courses, built on courses in political science and economics. In the absence of political science and economics, there shall be at least six (6) hours in the social welfare policies and services area.
- (3) Research courses shall be one three (3) hour social research course based on some kind of basic research.
- (4) Social work practicum shall include six (6) hours of social work practice courses taught by an individual with an advanced degree in social work. In the absence of classes in lower division social work methods, three (3) additional hours shall be required in a lower division course, totaling nine (9) hours.
- (5) Practicum shall be taught by an individual with an advanced degree in social work for at least 450 hours. Two (2) hours per week of supervision shall be required by an individual with an advanced degree in social work.

Section 3. Limitations on Equivalency.

(1) Equivalency established in Sections 1 and 2 of this administrative regulation only qualifies an applicant for a Kentucky single-state license as a licensed social worker under KRS 335.090 or a certified social worker under 335.080.

(2) Equivalency established in this administrative regulation shall not apply to applicants for a licensed clinical social worker license under KRS 335.100.

(3) To qualify for a multistate license under KRS 335.135, an applicant shall hold a bachelor's or master's degree in social work from a program that is:

(a) Accredited by the CSWE; or

(b) In candidacy with CSWE at the time of the applicant's graduation and subsequently becomes accredited; and

(c) Meets all other requirements for the multistate license as set forth in KRS 335.135.

Section 4. Background Check.

(1) Equivalency applicants shall complete a background check in accordance with KRS 335.160.

(2) Pay the application fee of twenty-five (25) dollars required by 201 KAR 23:020 and the cost of the background check.

HANK CECIL, LCSW, Board Chair

APPROVED BY AGENCY: June 15, 2026

FILED WITH LRC: June 15, 2026 at 10:35 a.m.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT PERIOD: A public hearing on this administrative regulation shall be held on August 31, 2026, at 1:00 p.m., at the Kentucky Board of Social Work, 125 Holmes St., Suite 310, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601. Individuals interested in being heard at this hearing shall notify this agency in writing by five (5) workdays prior to the hearing, of their intent to attend. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing was received by that date, the hearing may be cancelled. A transcript of the public hearing will not be made unless a written request for a transcript is made prior to the end of the hearing. If you do not wish to be heard at the public hearing, you may submit written comments on the proposed administrative regulation. Written comments shall be accepted through August 31, 2026. Send written notification of intent to be heard at the public hearing or written comments on the proposed administrative regulation to the contact person.

CONTACT PERSON: Marc Kelly, Executive Director, Kentucky Board of Social Work, 125 Holmes St., Suite 310, Frankfort Kentucky 40601, phone (502) 564-2350, email marc.kelly@ky.gov.

REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS AND TIERING STATEMENT

Contact Person: Marc Kelly **Phone:** (502) 564-2350 **Email:** marc.kelly@ky.gov

Subject Headings: Social Work, Boards and Commissions, Licensing

(1) Provide a brief summary of:

(a) What this administrative regulation does:

This administrative regulation establishes equivalency requirements for credential holders.

(b) The necessity of this administrative regulation:

This regulation is necessary to establish equivalency standards as authorized by KRS 335.070, 335.080 and 335.090.

(c) How this administrative regulation conforms to the content of the authorizing statutes:

KRS 335.070 authorizes the board to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335. KRS 335.080(1)(c) and 335.090(1)(c) 2 authorize board to approve educational institutions and determine equivalent course requirements for applicants seeking licensure as a certified social worker or licensed social worker.

(d) How this administrative regulation currently assists or will assist in the effective administration of the statutes:

This administrative regulation will assist in effective administration by establishing equivalency requirements for qualified applicants.

(2) If this is an amendment to an existing administrative regulation, provide a brief summary of:

(a) How the amendment will change this existing administrative regulation:

This amendment establishes limitations on equivalency and requirements for background checks.

(b) The necessity of the amendment to this administrative regulation:

This amendment is necessary to specify limitations on equivalency as required by statute.

(c) How the amendment conforms to the content of the authorizing statutes:

KRS 335.070 authorizes the board to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 335. KRS 335.080(1)(c) and 335.090(1)(c) 2 authorize board to approve educational institutions and determine equivalent course requirements for applicants seeking licensure as a certified social worker or licensed social worker.

(d) How the amendment will assist in the effective administration of the statutes:

This amendment will assist in the effective administration of the statutes by establishing approved educational institutions and determining equivalent course requirements for applicants seeking licensure as a certified social worker or licensed social worker.

(3) Does this administrative regulation or amendment implement legislation from the previous five years? No.

(4) List the type and number of individuals, businesses, organizations, or state and local governments affected by this administrative regulation:

Applicants for licensure with the Board.

(5) Provide an analysis of how the entities identified in question (4) will be impacted by either the implementation of this administrative regulation, if new, or by the change, if it is an amendment, including:

(a) List the actions that each of the regulated entities identified in question (4) will have to take to comply with this administrative regulation or amendment:

Future applicants will take the examinations as specified by this administrative regulation.

(b) In complying with this administrative regulation or amendment, how much will it cost each of the entities identified in question (4):

No costs are associated with this administrative regulation.

(c) As a result of compliance, what benefits will accrue to the entities identified in question (4):

Future applicants will know which test they are required to take and will benefit from a uniform examination procedure.

(6) Provide an estimate of how much it will cost the administrative body to implement this administrative regulation:

(a) Initially:

No costs are anticipated.

(b) On a continuing basis:

No costs are anticipated.

(7) What is the source of the funding to be used for the implementation and enforcement of this administrative regulation or this amendment:

Existing agency funds. This administrative regulation does not establish fees. Funding for the KBSW comes from licensure and certification fees; the board does not receive any general funds.

(8) Provide an assessment of whether an increase in fees or funding will be necessary to implement this administrative regulation, if new, or by the change if it is an amendment:

There is no anticipation of an increase in fees or needed funding to implement this administrative regulation.

(9) State whether or not this administrative regulation establishes any fees or directly or indirectly increases any fees:

No fees are established or increased by this administrative regulation.

(10) TIERING: Is tiering applied?

No. All regulated entities have the same requirements according to their application status.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(1) Identify each state statute, federal statute, or federal regulation that requires or authorizes the action taken by the administrative regulation:

∴ KRS 335.070.

(2) State whether this administrative regulation is expressly authorized by an act of the General Assembly, and if so, identify the act:

KRS 335.070.

(3)(a) Identify the promulgating agency and any other affected state units, parts, or divisions:

The Kentucky Board of Social Work.

(b) Estimate the following for each affected state unit, part, or division identified in (3)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

2. Revenues:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

(4)(a) Identify affected local entities (for example: cities, counties, fire departments, school districts):

No local entities are affected.

(b) Estimate the following for each affected local entity identified in (4)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

2. Revenues:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

(5)(a) Identify any affected regulated entities not listed in (3)(a) or (4)(a):

None.

(b) Estimate the following for each regulated entity identified in (5)(a):

1. Expenditures:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

2. Revenues:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

3. Cost Savings:

For the first year:None

For subsequent years:None

(6) Provide a narrative to explain the following for each entity identified in (3)(a), (4)(a), and (5)(a)

(a) Fiscal impact of this administrative regulation:

There is no fiscal impact from this administrative regulation.

(b) Methodology and resources used to reach this conclusion:

This administrative regulation establishes examination requirements and has no costs, fees, or revenues associated with it.

(7) Explain, as it relates to the entities identified in (3)(a), (4)(a), and (5)(a):

(a) Whether this administrative regulation will have a "major economic impact", as defined by KRS 13A.010(14):

This administrative regulation will not have a major economic impact as defined.

(b) The methodology and resources used to reach this conclusion:

This administrative regulation establishes examination requirements and has no costs, fees, or revenues associated with it.