



Ten Myths About the LCSW in Georgia

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This brief article is meant to dispel some of the myths about the LCSW in Georgia. Our state is in critical need of more qualified LCSWs across the state, particularly in our rural areas and in the field of aging.

1. **There are already too many LCSWs in Georgia.** Actually Georgia has the lowest ratio of LCSWs to the population in the Southeast and is in the bottom five of all states in the U.S.
2. **There are few LCSW opportunities around the state:** Over 1/3 of Georgia's counties have no LCSW located in them. Many employers would prefer to hire LCSWs if they were in their applicant pool.
3. **You can't get the LCSW unless you have the LMSW.** Indeed all social workers who qualify (have MSW degree) should consider the LMSW, but Georgia law does not require having the LMSW in order to pursue the LCSW. It should be noted that most employers prefer to hire licensed MSWs.
4. **LCSW supervision is really hard to get.** While this is true in some areas, only 60 of the 120 supervision hours must be from an LCSW and all 60 can be done in supervision groups of up to six people. The balance of supervision can come from a related discipline and the 60 hours of individual supervision required can be for up to two people per session.
5. **You don't need to keep supervision records:** Yes you do! Both supervisors and supervisees are required to maintain a contemporaneous record of the date, duration, type (individual, paired, or group), and a brief summary of the pertinent activity for each supervision session to be submitted to the Board upon request.
6. **Any LCSW can provide my supervision.** Not so! Supervisors must have two years of post-licensure experience, be currently licensed, and without any board related infractions or actions that would prohibit the person from providing supervision. It is very important to check out supervisors really carefully.
7. **You don't need the LCSW unless you want to third-party bill.** Actually the LCSW authorizes the social worker to practice independently (LMSWs must practice under supervision). The purpose of licensure is to protect the consumer of services; licensure is not there to accommodate third party billing!
8. **The LCSW exam is really hard to pass.** The national first time pass rate for the ASWB clinical exam for 2008 was 75.9%. Social workers in Georgia also have the option of taking the Advanced Generalist Exam from ASWB, although this exam accounted for only about 2% of the total advanced exams administered by ASWB in 2008.
9. **If I fail the exam I have wasted all that time meeting the requirements.** Georgia allows applicants who fail to request approval to repeat the exam. There are also some excellent workshops and study guides that can help with exam preparation.
10. **I heard I can get the LCSW in another state in two years.** That is true in some states because all licensure boards are state governed and set their own laws and rules. Whether a person lives in Georgia or moves here from another state is irrelevant, but all applicants must meet our minimum requirements. For Georgia, that's a minimum of three years, not two.

For more information:

Georgia Composite Board: <http://sos.georgia.gov/plb/counselors/>

Association of Social Work Boards: <http://www.aswb.org/>

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