

Steps to Apply to Take the Master's License Exam in Pennsylvania

To be eligible for the master's licensing exam in PA, you must be in the final semester of a master's or doctoral degree program or hold a master's or doctoral degree in social work.

Step One: Register for an account using [PA Licensing System \(PALS\)](#)

Register online with the PA State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors through the PA Licensing System (PALS). The PA State Board must pre-approve all applicants to take the master's exam.

If you are a current master's student and applying for the LSW, you should select the following when prompted:

For **Board/Commission**, select "State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors"

For **License Type**, select "Social Worker"

Recommendation: Print the Application Checklist that is available in PALS. Review carefully as not all checklist items apply to every applicant.

Step Two: Submit PA State Board application in PALS

Once you provide information for the Criminal History Record Check and the National Practitioner Databank Report (Self Query), you should have the option to submit your application and pay the fee.

You can continue to upload required documents after your application is submitted.

If applying in your final semester of your program, print or save the **Education Verification form (this form only becomes available after you apply)** and send it to the Registrar's Office.

Bryn Mawr students can mail, e-mail (officeoftheregistrar@brynmawr.edu), or hand deliver the form to the Registrar's Office at Guild Hall, 101 N. Merion Ave., Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. The Registrar will mail the form directly to the licensing board.

Post-master's applicants skip the Education Verification form but must have an official graduate school transcript sent to the PA State Board at the address provided on the application checklist. Official transcripts for GSSWSR graduates may be e-mailed to ra-socialwork@pa.gov.

Wait for Approval: Once the PA State Board has approved your application, they will send you an approval letter with information about how to register for the exam with the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB).

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
AND SOCIAL RESEARCH
OF
BRYN MAWR
COLLEGE

Recommendation: Review the [ASWB Candidate Handbook](#).

Step Three: Register for the exam with [ASWB](#)

Follow the instructions for how to register for the exam provided by the PA State Board in your approval letter.

Wait for Authorization from ASWB: ASWB will send you an Authorization to Test via e-mail within two business days to the e-mail address you provided. Retain your Authorization to Test for future reference. If you do not receive your Authorization to Test, notify ASWB.

Step Four: Schedule your exam with [Pearson VUE](#)

You must wait for the ASWB Authorization to Test to arrive before scheduling your exam with Pearson VUE, and you must have an appointment to take the exam. There are no fixed administration dates.

Special testing accommodations must be arranged in advance of the exam.

Wait for confirmation of your testing appointment. Confirmation should be received within 24 hours.

Step Five: Prepare for exam day

Review Pearson VUE's [Helpful Resources for Test-Takers](#)

Consider test preparation resources such as the Center for Professional Development's [exam preparation course](#) or the [study guide available](#) to GSSWSR current students through TriPod

Reminders

Once you complete your degree, it is your responsibility to request that the College Registrar submit an official transcript to the PA State Board. Your license will not be finalized until the official final transcript is received by the Board. Official transcripts can be mailed or e-mailed (ra-socialwork@pa.gov). The Board will mail your license to you once all requirements are met.

Check out additional information and resources available through [GSSWSR Career Services](#) and [Center for Professional Development](#).

State Board Contact Information:

The State Board of Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists and Professional Counselors
P.O. Box 2649 Harrisburg,
PA 17105-2649
Phone: 717-783-1389
Email: st-socialwork@pa.gov

ASWB Contact Information:

Association of Social Work Boards
400 Southridge Parkway, Suite B
Culpeper, VA 22701
Candidate Services: 888-579-3926