**Guidelines for Meeting the Continuing Education License Requirement for Training in Veterans Services**

Public Act 15-242, Section 60, An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes, took effect on January 1, 2016. Under this act, licensed mental health providers, including LMSWs and LCSWs, who have a continuing education requirement, must attain at least two contact hours of training or education on the topic of Veterans Service every six years. On or after January 1, 2016, when a license is renewed, the requirement begins. You may acquire the hours all at once or over time as long as you reach two hours within the required timeframe. It is recommended by NASW that this requirement be met during the first full year of licensure and then every six years thereafter. Hours acquired on this topic prior to January 1, 2016, will not count toward this new mandate.

Many social workers, regardless of primary practice area, will work with clients who do, or have, served in the Military and/or with their family members including spouses, partners, children, and parents of the Service Member or Veteran. Using their expertise in assisting individuals and families across the lifespan from varying cultures, social workers can help Service Members, Veterans, and their families in a variety of ways to address challenges they may be facing.

Social workers are directed to the NASW Standards for Social Work Practice with Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families, a resource to social workers serving this population in any way, whether it be by providing direct clinical mental and behavioral health services or advocating for this population. The Standards for Professional Practice are applicable to social workers on the basis of their level of education and experience, employment setting, and services provided. The NASW Standards address: Ethics and Values; Qualifications; Knowledge; Assessment; Intervention and Treatment Planning; Practice and Program Evaluation and Improvement; Professional Development; Supervision, Leadership, Education and Training; Documentation; Interdisciplinary Leadership and Collaboration; Cultural Competence; and Advocacy.

**Topics that Qualify**: It is expected that the training acquired by social workers will be directly focused on Veterans and Services to Veterans and their Families. For example, while some Veterans suffer from PTSD, a class on PTSD that covers children who have suffered child abuse or immigrants who have lived through war, would not necessarily translate to the Veteran who is living with PTSD as a result of deployment and combat. The training should pertain to the unique hardships of Veterans and their families, the culture of the military lifestyle, and the effects of participation in the war zone. It could address readjustment and reintegration of the Veteran as well as resiliency-building considerations specific to this population.

**How Do I Know if Training Meets the Requirement**? Continuing education providers may state that the program meets the requirement in the program publicity. Programs offered or approved by NASW/CT will include language stating that the program meets the requirement. If the provider does not include such a statement the attendee should use the above information as a guideline. It is important to remember that all continuing education hours that are being applied to renewal of the social work license in Connecticut must be approved by the National Association of Social Workers (either National office or a chapter office of NASW), the Association of Social Work Boards, or an undergraduate or graduate program of social work approved by the Council of Social Work Education.

**Amount of Training Required**: The requirement is two hours every six years, in person, by webinar, or online/homestudy. Keep in mind, however, that the total number of home study/online education credits allowed per license year is 6 hours.
Proof of continuing education hours must be kept for at least three years. However, given that this requirement is for every six years we recommend holding onto your training certificate for the full six year period. This will assure that you can document having met the requirement if needed.

**Further Guidance and Resources**: For further guidance we recommend the NASW Standards for Social Work Practice with Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families as noted above.

*This information is presented as a service of NASW/CT and is not to be construed as legal advice.*