



# NASW

National Association of Social Workers / Connecticut Chapter

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## ***SOCIAL WORK LICENSING FEES IN CONNECTICUT ARE HIGHEST IN THE NATION***

To put it succinctly, Connecticut has, by far, the highest social work licensing fees in the nation. When compared on an annualized basis Connecticut fees are up to several hundred dollars more than the next highest fee states. These costs are unjustified and at a time when social workers, who are essential workers, are needed more than ever it is time that Connecticut brought its fee schedule in line with other states. As the Connecticut Legislature addresses the mental health crisis the high costs of licensure for the behavioral health profession with the largest number of providers of mental health services in Connecticut must be addressed.

Connecticut has two levels of social work licensure: Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) that new MSW graduates attain to practice clinically and Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) that is an advanced independent practice license. Both licenses require passage of national exams and the LCSW requires 3,000 hours of post-graduate experience with at least 100 hours of LCSW supervision prior to sitting for the exam.

As of December 31, 2020 (most recent figures) the Department of Public Health statistics had 7,486 LCSWs and 3,441 LMSWs for a total of 10,927 licensed social workers. Compare this to 7,878 licensed psychologists, marital & family therapists, marital & family therapists associate, licensed professional counselor and licensed professional counselor associate combined.

### **Connecticut Initial Application Fees:**

The LMSW has an application fee of \$220 and the LCSW an application fee of \$315. Both licenses require annual renewal at a fee of \$195, however this can be deceiving since the license is first renewed on the month of the licensee's birth date so that almost all licensees pay the \$195 fee within in less than a 12-month period. This means LMSWs are paying \$415 within the first year of being licensed and LCSWs are paying \$510 within the first year of licensing. These fees are on top of the licensure examination fees of the Association of Social Work Boards that are \$230 for the Master exam (LMSW) and \$260 for the Clinical exam (LCSW) per each time one sits for the exam.

Compare this with other states initial application fees that run as low as \$50 and typically in the \$100-\$200 range. Only 7 states have initial license fees higher for the LCSW and 6

states have higher initial license fees for the LMSW, **however all but one of these higher priced states have biennial licensure and one of the states has triennial licensure, compared to Connecticut's annual fee structure.**

### **Annual Renewal in CT:**

Connecticut is one of only 6 states that renew the social work license annually. There are 4 states with triennial renewal and the remaining 40 states plus the District of Columbia have biennial renewal.

### **Select State Comparison with Connecticut for Total Initial Costs**

Here are the states with an estimated initial total application fee higher than Connecticut and estimated annualized cost compared to Connecticut for the first year of licensure:

#### **LMSW:**

Typical cost in Connecticut for the first year of state licensure is \$220 application fee and \$195 renewal fee for a total of \$415. Compare this to:

- Alaska \$375 (biennial) annualized \$187.50.
- Arizona \$350 (biennial) annualized \$175.
- District of Columbia \$230 (biennial) annualized \$115.
- Hawaii \$374 (triennial) annualized \$124.66.
- Massachusetts \$227 (biennial) annualized \$113.50.
- New York \$294 (triennial) annualized \$98.
- Wyoming \$300 (biennial) annualized \$150.

#### **LCSW**

Typical cost in Connecticut for the first year of state licensure is \$315 application fee and \$195 renewal for at total fee of \$510. Compare this to:

- Alaska \$425 (biennial) annualized \$212.50.
- Arizona \$350 (biennial) annualized \$175.
- California \$450 (biennial) annualized \$225.
- Hawaii \$478 (triennial) annualized \$159.33.
- Minnesota \$385 (biennial) annualized \$192.50.
- Oregon \$460 (biennial) annualized \$230.
- Wyoming \$350 (biennial) \$175.

### **Select State Comparison with Connecticut Total Renewal Costs**

Here are the states with a renewal fee higher than Connecticut's \$195 renew fee and actual annualized cost compared to Connecticut for licensure renewal:

#### **LMSW**

Cost for license renewal **annually** in Connecticut is \$195. Compare this to:

- Alaska \$275 (biennial) annualized \$137.50.
- Hawaii \$222 (triennial) annualized \$74.
- Kentucky \$200 (triennial) annualized \$66.66.
- Maryland \$226 (biennial) annualized \$113.
- New York \$224 (triennial) annualized \$74.66.
- Oregon \$220 (biennial) annualized \$110.

## LCSW

Cost for license renewal **annually** in Connecticut is \$195. Compare this to:

- Alaska \$325 (biennial) annualized \$162.50.
- Arizona \$325 (biennial) annualized \$162.50.
- California \$200 (biennial) annualized \$100.
- Hawaii \$270 (triennial) annualized \$90.
- Kentucky \$200 (triennial) \$100.
- Maryland \$301 (biennial) \$150.50.
- Minnesota \$325 (biennial) \$162.50.
- New Hampshire \$270 (biennial) \$135.
- New Mexico \$200 (biennial) annualized \$100.
- New York \$224 (triennial) \$74.66.
- Oregon \$286 (biennial) \$143.
- South Dakota \$210 (biennial) \$105.

There are 30 states that have license renewal fees of \$100 or less and out of those 30 states 25 have biennial renewal, 1 has triennial renewal and only 4 have an annual renewal. Again, compare this to Connecticut's \$195 annual fee.

## Recommendations:

- **Renew the social work license biennially at the current cost of \$195 or continue the annual renewal with a fee of \$105.**
- **Put the LCSW application and renewal process online. This will save the state printing, postage and personnel time. The LMSW is already an online process.**
- **Reduce the application fee for both the LMSW and LCSW by at least 10%.**

The licensure figures used in this document are from data collected by the Association of Social Work Boards, 2019. This document was prepared February 15, 2022.

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