

Social Work Profession Fact Sheet

SB884 as Amended

The Certified Master Social Worker (CMSW) was a part of the 491 statute since its original passage in the early 80's (491.0145). In this section it sets forth the education requirements, experience and examination. What it did not do was set forth a requirement for a scope of practice and definition for how a CMSW could practice. This accounts for the small number of current CMSWs registered in Florida.

- ▶ SB884 completes the legal requirements in the 491 statute as it sets forth both the definition and scope of social work practice for CMSWs.
- ▶ SB884 provides an opportunity for certification for Master Level Social Workers (MSWs) who are not seeking to become licensed as clinical social workers. All but two states offer a licensing/certification level for non-clinical master level social workers.

The additional scope of practice and definition offered by SB884 will greatly benefit portability and mobility of licensed/certified social workers moving into Florida. There are approximately 3000+ social workers.

HB991 / SB1090 Keep Our Graduates Working Act

- ▶ This bill prohibits a state authority, including Department of Health (DOH), from suspending or revoking a healthcare practitioner's license solely on the basis of the practitioner defaulting on his or her government-backed student loans, being delinquent on a payment of his or her student loans, or defaulting on the requirements of a work conditional scholarship.

Why is HB991 / SB1090 necessary?

- ▶ Currently DOH can:
 - ▶ Suspend the practitioner's license until he or she agrees to new payment terms or resumes the scholarship obligation.
 - ▶ Place the licensee on probation for the duration of the student loan or scholarship obligation period.
 - ▶ Impose a fine equal to 10 percent of the defaulted loan amount.
- ▶ Supporters of the bill argue that the state is using their licensing authority as a punitive debt collection tool. The purpose of licensing laws is to protect the health and safety of the public, not to operate as defacto debt collectors.
- ▶ In 2010, about half of the states had some form of licensing suspension laws. Since then there has been a trend to reduce or eliminate licensing suspension laws. Currently, there are at least 15 states, including Florida, that still have some form of licensing suspension laws.
- ▶ During the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year, DOH handled 381 cases against healthcare practitioners for defaulting on student loans. For the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year, DOH has handled 528 cases to date.

Vote YES on SB884, HB991 / SB1090!