

What is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Florida?

Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) hold the highest level of licensure in the social work profession

LCSWs are skilled mental health professionals who are authorized to assess, diagnose and treat individuals and families of all ages and economic groups. They treat a range of problems including behavioral disorders, addictions, severe mental illness and serious emotional disturbance. They provide individual, marital, couple, family and group therapy; mediation; counseling; supportive counseling; direct practice; and psychotherapy.

LCSWs are held to Social Work Core Values: Service, Social Justice Dignity and Worth of Every Person, Importance of Human Relationships, Integrity and Competence.

Florida LCSWs are authorized to practice autonomously. An LCSW may provide services in an independent office, with a group or in an agency without clinical supervision from another health care provider.

LCSWs in Florida serve as Qualified Supervisors for 3,500 registered clinical social work interns seeking licensure.

Social workers provide 60% of mental health services in Florida and the U.S., sometimes practicing in rural areas where there are few other mental health services.

It takes eight years to earn the LCSW. Requirements are:

- Hold an undergraduate degree;
- Earn a Master's of Social Work (MSW) degree: 60 semester hours of course work, 900-hour Practicum
- Pass a national exam to earn a Licensed Master Social Worker License;
- Complete 1,500 hours of direct supervision with a plan and a supervisor approved by the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling.

It is not uncommon to see LCSWs with additional State of Florida Qualified Practitioner certifications to practice:

- Hypnosis;
- Sex Therapy;
- Juvenile Sex Offender Therapy; and
- Completing Risk Assessments and Treatment of Sexual Offenders.

Many LCSWs also have additional national Clinical Certifications:

- Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW) by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- Qualified Clinical Social Worker (QCSW) by NASW
- Diplomat in Clinical Social Work (DCSW) by NASW
- Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work (BCD) by the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (ABECSW)

LCSWs are trained in evidence-based practice with a variety of specializations in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Informed Therapy and other advanced techniques.