

TRANSMITTAL SHEET FOR  
NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

Control Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners

Rule No. 850-X-2-.01

Rule Title: Definitions of Terms

X New                      Amend                      Repeal                      Adopt by Reference

Would the absence of the proposed rule significantly harm or endanger the public health, welfare, or safety?                     Yes                    

Is there a reasonable relationship between the state's police power and the protection of the public health, safety, or welfare?                     Yes                    

Is there another, less restrictive method of regulation available that could adequately protect the public?                     No                    

Does the proposed rule have the effect of directly or indirectly increasing the costs of any goods or services involved and, if so, to what degree?                     No                    

Is the increase in cost, if any, more harmful to the public than the harm that might result from the absence of the proposed rule?                     No                    

Are all facets of the rulemaking process designed solely for the purpose of, and so they have, as their primary effect, the protection of the public?                     Yes                    

Does the proposed action relate to or affect in any manner any litigation which the agency is a party to concerning the subject matter of the proposed rule?                     No                    

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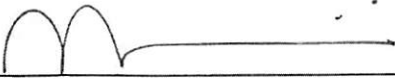
Does the proposed rule have an economic impact?  
                    No                    

If the proposed rule has an economic impact, the proposed rule is required to be accompanied by a fiscal note prepared in accordance with subsection (f) of Section 41-22-23, Code of Alabama 1975.

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Certification of Authorized Official

I certify that the attached proposed rule has been proposed in full compliance with the requirements of Chapter 22, Title 41, Code of Alabama 1975, and that it conforms to all applicable filing requirements of the Administrative Procedure Division of the Legislative Services Agency.

Signature of certifying officer                                         

Date                     7/20/20                    

REC'D & FILED  
JUL 20 2020  
LEGISLATIVE SVC AGENCY

(DATE FILED)  
(STAMP)

APA-2

(Agency Name)  
(Agency Division, if applicable)

NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

AGENCY NAME: Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners

RULE NO. & TITLE: 850-X-2.01 Definitions of Terms

INTENDED ACTION: New

SUBSTANCE OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Board proposes new definitions of terms that must be followed by social workers.

TIME, PLACE, MANNER OF PRESENTING VIEWS: Written comments will be accepted by the Board until 4:30pm on Friday, September 4th, 2020. Comments should be directed to Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director at 100 North Union Street, Suite 736, Montgomery, AL 36104 or via electronic mail at [Rachel.dickinson@swb.alabama.gov](mailto:Rachel.dickinson@swb.alabama.gov)

FINAL DATE FOR COMMENT AND COMPLETION OF NOTICE:  
Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

CONTACT PERSON AT AGENCY: Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director  
100 North Union Street, Suite 736  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
334-242-5806



(Signature of officer authorized  
to promulgate and adopt  
rules or his or her deputy)

**CHAPTER 850-X-2**  
**DEFINITIONS**

**850-X-2-.01 Definitions of Terms.**

(1) To the extent not defined within these rules and regulations, Code of Ala. 1975, §34-30-1 (1991) also provides for definitions of the following terms: Board; Social Work; Social Work Practice; Social Work Specialty; Social Work Method; Full-Time Social Work; Part-Time Social Work.

(2) **Social Work Practice.** The Board defines social work practice as including both direct and indirect practice. Direct practice includes the delivery of services to individuals, families, groups, and communities. Indirect practice includes conducting research into problems of human behavior and conflict, and applying principles and techniques of consultation, social planning, administration, and supervision. The teaching of social work by an individual employed in social work education and presenting him/herself to the public as a social worker is considered social work practice.

(3) **Social Work Method.** Areas of practice methods include the following:

(a) **Social Casework.** A method of helping people based on knowledge, understanding, and the use of techniques skillfully applied to helping individuals solve and manage problems. It is individualized and although scientific, i.e., derives its understanding from the disciplines of science, also includes artistic effort. It helps individuals with personal as well as external environmental difficulties. It is a matter of helping through a relationship that taps personal and other resources for coping with problems. Interviewing is a major tool of social casework.

(b) **Clinical Social Work Practice.**

1. Clinical social work shares with all social work practice the goal of enhancement and maintenance of psychosocial functioning of individuals, families, and small groups. Clinical social work practice is the professional application of social work theory and methods to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial dysfunction, disability, or impairment, including emotional and mental disorders. It is based on knowledge of one or more theories of human development within a psychosocial context. The perspective of person-in-situation is central to clinical social work practice.

2. Clinical social work services consist of assessment; diagnostic impression; treatment, including psychotherapy and counseling; client-centered advocacy; and evaluation. It includes direct client intervention, client centered supervision and client centered consultation. It involves the scientific, artful, ethical application of social work theories and methods of assessment, opinions, diagnostic impression, prevention and treatment. Assessment of interpersonal relationships, mental health status, family dynamics, environmental stresses and supports, social systems and the impact of physical, emotional and mental illness and disability on functioning are the emphasis of clinical social work practice.

3. Clinical social work also includes crisis intervention, case management and client centered advocacy. Treatment methods are designed to provide the client and opportunity to express himself or herself, and foster an atmosphere of candid self observation, expectations of change and amenability to the social worker's efforts to facilitate such change.

4. The primary focus of the clinical social worker is on the needs, interests and welfare of the client. The goal of clinical social work practice is to relieve a client's psychosocial distress; to help the client to modify barriers that are preventing the client from realizing his or her human potential or enjoying rewarding interpersonal relationships; and to improve the overall functioning of the client. The basic value postulates of social work practice are essential to the process.

(c) **Community Organization.** A conscious process of social interaction and method of social work concerned with bringing about and maintaining adjustment between needs and resources in a community or other areas; helping people to deal more effectively with their problems and objectives by helping them develop, strengthen and maintain qualities of participation, self-direction and cooperation, and bringing about changes in community and group relationships and in the distribution of decision-making power. The community is the primary client in community organizations. The community may be an organization, neighborhood, city, county, state or national entity.

(d) **Social Work Research.** The professional study of human capabilities and practice of social work specialties, including direct and indirect practice, through the formal organization and the methodology of data collection and the analysis and evaluation of social work data.

(e) **Social Work Administration.** The practice concerned primarily with translating laws, technical knowledge and administrative rulings into organizational goals and operational policies to guide organizational behavior; designing organizational structure and procedures or processes through which social work goals can be achieved; and securing resources in the form of material, staff, clients and societal legitimation necessary for goal attainment and organizational survival.

(4) **Psychosocial Assessment.** The determination of psychosocial functioning involves a comprehensive process, assessment and evaluation conducted by the social worker in order to learn about the client. It includes four levels of analysis: the individual; the interpersonal system; the family unit and the family's interchange with its social network; and other environmental or ecological factors. Interviewing is the major tool of psychosocial assessment. Psychosocial assessment does not include making diagnoses, nor interpreting of psychological tests.

(5) **Psychotherapy.** A specialized, formal interaction between a social worker and a client (individual, couple, family or group) in which a therapeutic relationship is established to help resolve symptoms of mental disorder, psychosocial stress, relationship problems and difficulties in coping in the social environment.

(6) **Counseling.** Counseling is to render evaluation and therapy that includes, but is not limited to, providing individual counseling, family counseling, marital counseling, group therapy, group counseling, play therapy, rehabilitation counseling, art therapy, human growth and development counseling, couples counseling, chemical abuse or dependency counseling, career counseling, and vocational disability counseling utilizing specific methods, techniques, or modalities.

(7) **Telehealth.** Telehealth is a mode of providing social work services through interactive audio, video or electronic communication occurring between a licensed social worker and the client, including any electronic communication for evaluation, assessment, treatment, and management of confidential information and case records in a secure platform.

(8) **Independent Practice.** The practice of social work outside of an organized setting, such as a social, medical, or governmental agency, in which the social worker assumes responsibility and accountability for services provided.

(9) **Private Practice.** The practice of Social Work by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker who assumes responsibility and accountability for the nature and quality of the services provided to the Client in exchange for direct payment or third-party reimbursement.

(10) **LBSW.** Licensed Bachelor Social Work.

(11) **LMSW.** Licensed Master Social Work.

(12) **LICSW.** Licensed Independent Clinical Social Work.

(13) Practice of Clinical Social Work. Subject to the limitations set forth in Section 34-30-22(c), the practice of Clinical Social Work is a specialty within the practice of Master's Social Work and requires the application of social work theory, knowledge, methods, ethics, and the professional use of self to restore or enhance social, psychosocial, or biopsychosocial functioning of individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations and communities. The practice of Clinical Social Work requires the application of specialized clinical knowledge and advanced clinical skills in the areas of assessment, and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders, conditions and addictions. Treatment methods include the provision of individual, marital, couple, family and group Counseling and Psychotherapy. The practice of Clinical Social Work may include Private Practice and the provision of Clinical Supervision. The practice of clinical social work is restricted to either a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, or a Licensed Master Social Worker under clinical supervision in employment or under a clinical supervision plan.

(14) Practice of Non-Clinical Social Work. The practice of non-clinical social work incorporates non-clinical work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and social systems which may involve locating resources, negotiating and advocating on behalf of clients or client groups, administering programs and agencies, community organizing, teaching, researching, providing employment or professional development non-clinical supervision, developing and analyzing policy, fund-raising, and other non-clinical activities.

(15) Supervision for Licensure. The professional relationship between a supervisee and an Approved Supervisor who provides oversight, direction, and evaluation over the services provided by the supervisee and promotes continued development of the supervisee's knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide social work services in an ethical and competent manner.

(a) Clinical Supervision. The interactional professional relationship between an Approved Clinical Supervisor and a licensed master social worker that provides evaluation and direction over the supervisee's practice of clinical social work and promotes continued development of the social worker's knowledge, skills, and abilities to engage in the practice of clinical social work in an ethical and competent manner.

(b) Non-Clinical Supervision. The interactional professional relationship between an Approved Supervisor and a licensed master social worker or licensed bachelor social worker that provides evaluation and direction over the supervisee's practice of non-clinical social work and promotes continued development of the social worker's knowledge, skills and abilities to engage in the practice of non-clinical social work in an ethical competent manner.

**Author:** Alabama Board of Social Work Examiners **Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §34-30-1 (1991); §34-30-57(6) (1991). **History: Repealed and Replaced:** Filed October 31, 1997; Operative December 5, 1997; effective January 1, 1998; Filed July 19, 2007; effective December 12, 2007; September 15, 2016; effective October 21, 2016. Amended: Filed June 20, 2019; effective October 1, 2019; New: Filed July 31, 2020; effective