

Proposed 2026 Social Work Legislation

Key Changes at-a-Glance

Updated Practice Definitions

- **Modernizes** definition of social work practice
- **Incorporates** evidence-based practice language
- **Allows** for emerging technology practice methods

Streamlined Licensing

- **Removes** outdated "good moral character" requirement
- **Eliminates** 3-month exam retake waiting period
- **Allows** provisional license for students (focus on MSWs preparing for clinical work)

Telehealth

- **Clarifies** telehealth framework beyond basic video calls
- **Maintains** professional standards across all service delivery methods

Cross-Border Practice Framework

- **Integrates** with Social Work Licensure Compact for seamless multi-state practice
- **Clarifies** licensing requirements for out-of-state practitioners serving clients in Kentucky
- **Establishes** clear rules for non-compact participants and visitors
- **Authorizes** international telehealth practice with appropriate safeguards
- **Strengthens** Kentucky oversight of services provided to clients located in Kentucky

What Stays the Same

- Core licensing requirements and educational standards
- Board authority and disciplinary procedures
- Professional ethics and conduct standards
- Public protection focus
- Supervision requirements for clinical practice
- Fees and applications

Key Benefits

Protects Competitive advantage for Kentucky licensees with Compact participation and traditional licensing pathways

Clear pathways and protection for non-compact participants

Legal clarity for student practice with appropriate supervision

Professional parity for social work students with other health professions

Reduced administrative burden with streamlined processes

Technology flexibility for modern practice needs

Clear cross-border practice rules for expanding opportunities

Maintains professional standards and public protection