

The Value of Supervision

The value of clinical supervision to your development as a mental health professional cannot be emphasized enough. It's important that you make the most out of the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge and experience of a licensed mental health professional and to develop a strong relationship that will facilitate your growth as a clinical social worker.

In order to make the most of the supervision experience, it is critical that both you and your supervisor are aware of each party's responsibilities in the supervision process, including the legal and ethical requirements pertaining to supervision.

California law requires at least two (2) years of supervised experience to qualify for licensure; however, the value of the relationship with your supervisor goes further than merely qualifying you for licensure.

Developing a Strong Relationship

The amount of time you are able to spend with your supervisor is often limited. Below are several strategies that may help you maximize the time that you do have with your supervisor:

- Spend some time at the beginning of your supervisory relationship setting goals and objectives.

- Set aside time in future meetings to revisit these goals and objectives.
- Be proactive with your supervisor. Make sure you are getting the value that you expected from supervision. Supervision should be a collaborative experience.
- Take a moment to thoroughly read the [Responsibility Statement for Supervisors of an Associate Clinical Social Worker](#). This form outlines the supervisor's legal requirements pertaining to the licensure process and must be signed by the supervisor upon commencement of supervision.

Don't Be Afraid to Ask Questions

Below are some questions you may want to ask your supervisor in order to provide you with a better understanding of your supervisor's qualifications, professional background and knowledge base.

Questions to consider asking include:

- What type of license do you possess?
- Is your license current and valid?
- When were you licensed?
- Have you completed the mandatory supervision course?
- Have you met the requirement of having practiced psychotherapy or provided direct supervision to Associate Clinical Social Workers or Marriage and Family Therapist

Interns or Trainees who perform psychotherapy for at least two (2) years within the last five (5) years?

- Have you ever provided supervision to an Associate Clinical Social Worker before, and if so, how many?
- What is your practice background (private practice, agency, school, etc.)?
- Do you practice from a particular theoretical orientation, and if so, will other theoretical orientations be discussed?
- Do you have any specialty areas of practice?

Preparing for the Licensing Examinations

Effective clinical supervision should help prepare you to pass the licensing exams. You can help ensure that you get what you need out of supervision by taking the following steps:

- Download the examination candidate handbooks from the BBS [website](#).
- Review the sample questions and exam content outlines, then take them to your supervisor and discuss how your work is preparing you for the exams. Revisit periodically to ensure your supervision and experience supports your goal of licensure.
- Ask your supervisor for suggestions on effective exam preparation strategies.

- Carefully read the exam information provided on the Board’s [website](#) by selecting the *Applicants* tab, and then clicking the *Exams* link.

Know Your Supervised Experience Requirements

Supervisors often supervise multiple individuals working towards different professional licenses, all with different experience and supervision requirements. Therefore, it is critical that you become knowledgeable about your profession’s specific requirements.

Here are some resources available to help you understand the supervised experience requirements for the clinical social worker profession:

- The [Applicants](#) section of the BBS website
- [Frequently Asked Questions Relating to Associate Clinical Social Workers](#)
- Current and past issues of the [BBS Newsletter](#)
- Professional social work associations

Your Supervisor’s License Status

Your supervisor’s license status must be current and active while you are under supervision in order for your hours to count.

Visit the “Breeze” [License Search](#) to verify your supervisor’s license status. Do this upon commencement of supervision, and make note of the expiration date. Check again near your supervisor’s expiration date to ensure his or her license has been renewed so that you do not lose any hours.

Your Registration’s Status

The status of your registration as an Associate Clinical Social Worker with the BBS is important too. Renew your registration early to ensure no hours are lost due to a delinquent renewal.

Complaints Against a Supervisor

Supervisees who wish to file a complaint against their supervisor can do so using the [Consumer Complaint Form](#) or through the [“Breeze” online](#) system.

Who to Contact for Questions

For questions regarding experience and supervision requirements, you can email the LCSW evaluators directly at BBS.LCSW@dca.ca.gov

The Board’s entire email directory is on the Board’s website under [Contact Us](#).

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A Guide to Supervision for Associate Clinical Social Workers



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