

HOUSE No. 2899

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

David Paul Linsky

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to supporting social workers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>David Paul Linsky</i>	<i>5th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/16/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 2899

By Representative Linsky of Natick, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2899) of David Paul Linsky relative to benefits for social workers. Public Service.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act relative to supporting social workers.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 3 of chapter 32 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting, in line 277 , after the words “social worker
3 A/B, C, or D,;” the following words:- “clinical social worker A/B and C, social work technician,
4 special investigator 1/2, case reviewer, human service assistant, and human service coordinator”.

5 SECTION 2. Section 100 of Chapter 32 of Massachusetts General Laws, as so appearing,
6 is amended by adding at the end the following paragraph:-

7 “Effective January 1, 2025, social workers at the Department of Children and Families
8 shall be eligible for this benefit. The Massachusetts State Board of Retirement shall promulgate
9 regulations under which conditions a DCF social worker can be eligible.”

10 SECTION 3. Chapter 112 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
11 inserting after section 135C the following section:-

12 “Section 135D. To ensure a stable, diverse workforce of licensed social workers in the
13 Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to provide for increased support and retention of
14 practicing licensed social workers, the executive office of health and human services shall create
15 and administer a field placement grant program. The program shall, subject to appropriation,
16 provide grant funding to designated recipients with a specific focus on recruiting and retaining
17 Masters of Social Work (MSW) students from historically marginalized communities and low-
18 income communities. Funds to establish this program shall be allocated from state, federal, or
19 other dedicated resources, including existing trust funds.”

20 Eligible applicants must attend a school of social work Masters program physically
21 located in Massachusetts that has been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

22 To be eligible for consideration, applicants must submit the following:

23 (i) Applicant demographic background information, including, but not limited to, race,
24 ethnicity, geographic location in the state, and date of birth for purposes of data collection;

25 (ii) Applicant’s school of social work, type of Masters program, and grade point average;

26 (iii) Applicant’s stated and signed commitment to working in Massachusetts post-
27 graduation for at least 2 years; and

28 (iv) Applicant’s 1-page statement on the importance of this stipend in the applicant’s life
29 and how the grant will support their educational goals and the workforce needs of the
30 Commonwealth.

31 Priority for the field placement grant program shall go to first-generation college students
32 and persons from currently underrepresented communities in the social worker profession.

33 Applications will be submitted and considered on a rolling basis between January 1st and no
34 later than March 1st of each year. Recipients of stipends shall be notified no later than April
35 15th.

36 Stipends shall be allocated as follows:

37 (i) A current MSW student in good standing completing their first-year field placement of
38 16 hours per week shall be eligible for a monthly stipend of \$1,000 per month, not to exceed
39 \$8,000 annually.

40 (ii) A current MSW student in good standing completing their second-year field
41 placement of 24 hours per week shall be eligible for a monthly stipend of \$2,000 per month, not
42 to exceed a total of \$16,000 annually.

43 (iii) Advanced standing students who are only required to conduct one field placement
44 shall be eligible for the second-year field placement stipend.

45 Applicant data, including application details submitted, shall be tracked by the executive
46 office so that the program efficacy can be evaluated.

47 SECTION 4. Section 136 of chapter 112 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby
48 amended by inserting after the fourth paragraph the following paragraph:

49 “At the time of license renewal, each applicant shall present satisfactory evidence that in
50 the period since the license was issued, he has completed the continuing education requirements
51 specified by the board. Under any circumstances, licensed independent clinical social workers
52 engaged in the independent practice who provide one-on-one supervision to a licensed certified
53 social worker, Masters of social work intern, or Bachelors of social work intern shall be credited

54 with up to 8 hours of continuing education for the renewal cycle in which the supervision was
55 provided. The Board, through the promulgation of regulations, shall establish a process for
56 recognition and application of continuing education hours based upon one-on-one supervision.”

57 SECTION 5. (a.) There shall be established a special commission to investigate the
58 creation of a new certification for child welfare workers at the department of children and
59 families.

60 (b) The commission shall consist of the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on
61 children, families, and persons with disabilities who shall serve as co-chairs; one member
62 appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; one member appointed by the
63 president of the Senate; one member appointed by the minority leader of the House of
64 Representatives; one member appointed by the minority leader of the house; the commissioner of
65 the department of children and families, or their designee; the director of the office of the child
66 advocate, or their designee; two members appointed by SEIU Local 509 who are current workers
67 employed by the department of children and families and who have served at the department for
68 over five years; two representatives of child or family welfare organizations from communities
69 which are disproportionately involved with the department of children and families, appointed by
70 the co-chairs; and two individuals previously personally involved with the department of
71 children and families, appointed by the co-chairs; a representative of the Association of Social
72 Work Boards and a representative of the National Association of Social Workers. All
73 appointments shall be made not later than 60 days after the effective date of this act. The
74 commission shall convene its first meeting not more than 90 days from the effective date of this
75 act.

76 (c) The commission shall examine the feasibility and make recommendations regarding
77 the creation of a new certification for child welfare workers at the department of children and
78 families, including, without limitation: 1) whether social work licensure, as outlined in section
79 121 of chapter 112 of the general laws, is the only appropriate qualification to be a child welfare
80 professional employed by the department of children and families; 2) explore the possibility of a
81 new certification or form of licensure to be made available in addition to social work licensure,
82 with training and education requirements specific to child protection and the work of the
83 department of children and families; 3) consider what would qualify an individual for this new
84 certification.

85 (d) The Commission shall, no later than fifteen months from the effective date of this act,
86 report to the general court on the results of its investigation and study together with its finding,
87 by filing the same with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate who shall forward
88 the same to the secretary of the executive office of health and human services, the house and
89 senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on children, families, and persons
90 with disabilities, and the joint committee on consumer protection and professional licensure.