

Joint Committee on Higher Education Bill Summary

<u>BILL NUMBER</u>	S.218
<u>TITLE</u>	An Act relative to social work uplifting practices and exam removal
<u>SPONSORS</u>	Senator DiDomenico
<u>SIMILAR MATTERS</u>	H.1423
<u>PRIOR HISTORY</u>	S.160 of the 2023/2024 Legislative Session was redrafted as S.2673 and reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Higher Education. The bill was then referred to Senate Ways and Means and no further action was taken.
<u>SUMMARY</u>	This bill removes the requirement of passing a licensing board exam to receive a license as a certified social worker (LCSW). If deemed necessary, the executive office of health and human services will do an evaluation on the effect of this removal and submit the evaluation to the Legislature. The bill also requires the Commonwealth to administer a paid practicum placement grad program for master of social work students, with a focus on recruiting and retaining students from historically marginalized and low-income communities. The bill also provides that licensed independent social workers shall be eligible to receive continuing education credits for providing one-on-one supervision to other social workers or interns.

SECTION-BY-SECTION

Section 1: In section 131 of chapter 112, removes the requirement for individuals seeking a license to be a certified social worker (LCSW) to pass an exam prepared by the board.

Section 2: In section 132 of chapter 112, removes the requirement for LCSWs to take an examination, but keeps the requirement for licensed independent certified social workers.

Section 3: Inserts section 135D into chapter 112;
Requires the Commonwealth to administer a paid practicum placement grant program for master of social work students (MSW) to provide grant funding to recruit and retain MSW students from historically marginalized and low-income communities. Funds shall come from state, federal, and other dedicated resources, including existing trust funds. Eligible applicants

must attend a MA school accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

Section 4: Amends section 136 of chapter 112 to allow licensed independent social workers (LICSWs) providing one-on-one supervision to a licensed certified social worker, licensed social worker, MSW intern, or bachelors of social work intern, to receive up to 8 continuing education credits during a licensing period for that supervision.

Section 5: Allows the executive office of health and human services to conduct an evaluation of the impact of removing the licensing exam requirement for LCSWs if they deem an evaluation necessary. The evaluation and analysis will be conducted independently of the executive office. The office will submit the evaluation to the Legislature not less than one year after the evaluation was initiated.