

National Association of Social Workers

Specialty Certification for the Clinical MSW Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Social Worker

Summary of Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet ALL criteria to qualify for certification

1. MEMBERSHIP

Current "regular" [National Association of Social Workers](#) (NASW) membership in good standing. Associate members are not eligible for NASW Specialty Certifications. NASW "regular" membership must be established before an application for the C-CATODSW is submitted.

2. EDUCATION

Social Work Education

MSW -- Master's degree in social work from program accredited by the [Council on Social Work Education](#) (CSWE). The program must have been accredited by CSWE at the time the degree was received.

An original transcript is required and must be sent in a sealed envelope directly to NASW. If you were admitted to NASW's ACSW (Academy of Certified Social Workers) in 1989 or later or received NASW's QCSW (Qualified Clinical Social Worker) or DCSW (Diplomate in Clinical Social Work) credential in 1996 or later, you do not have to submit an original transcript. Otherwise, there are NO exceptions.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs-Specific Education (see substitution section)

Documentation of completion of 180 contact hours of ATOD-specific education across the 11 Knowledge Domains described in this booklet. This ATOD specific education must focus directly on alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and the substance-abusing population. The education must be provided by one whose expertise is in the field of ATOD. All education must meet the definition of education as described in this booklet. Of the required 180 hours, 60 must have been obtained within the last five years. Of the 180 contact hours required for initial certification, 50% may be distance learning.

3. EXPERIENCE

Clinical Social Work Experience

Two years (3,000 hours, not counting administrative duties, approximately 30 hours per week of direct client-level social work experience) post-MSW degree, full-time paid, appropriately MSW-supervised (see SUPERVISION) work experience as a social worker, in an agency or institutional setting. (In most cases, holding the ACSW, DCSW or state MSW-level social work license at the clinical or independent level will serve as proof of this. Some applicants may be required to supply documentation to satisfy this requirement.)

Substance Abuse Counseling Experience (see substitution section)

Two years, (3,000 hours, not counting administrative duties, approximately 30 hours per week of post-MSW direct social work substance abuse counseling/treatment social work experience) post-MSW degree full-time paid, appropriately supervised (see SUPERVISION) work experience as a substance abuse counselor, preferably in an agency or institutional setting.

4. ATOD SUPERVISION AND SUPERVISORY EVALUATION (see substitution section)

Completed supervisory evaluation(s) must correspond in time to the qualifying experience that is submitted. Supervision must cover a minimum of two years (3,000 hours -- not counting administrative duties, of approximately 30 hours per week of direct social work substance abuse counseling experience) post-MSW degree full-time, paid work experience as a substance abuse counselor, preferably in an agency or institutional setting. The supervisor(s) must be able to evaluate the applicant's substance abuse counseling skills, knowledge, and abilities of social work substance abuse counseling described in this booklet.

The clinical practice by which the treatment provided by the counselor is evaluated and is either modified or approved by the supervisor. Clinical supervision shall be face-to-face in either a group or individual setting. Group clinical supervision is limited to not more than six individuals. Clinical supervision shall include a review of client charts and observation of clinical practice. Observation of clinical practice may include audio, video, two-way, co-facilitation, and/or direct observation.

Hours of Supervision

The standard for clinical supervision is provided at a rate of one hour for every 30 hours of direct practice. This certification require proof of 100 hours of direct face-to-face supervision over two years (3,000 hours) of social work substance abuse counseling experience.

Qualified Supervisors

Social work supervision is preferred

MSW supervisors must have had at least two years post-MSW experience as a social worker and as a substance abuse counselor.

Social work references will not be accepted from non-MSW social work-degreed individuals who have been granted social work licenses by individual states.

Alternate Supervisors

ATOD supervision can be provided by the following:

- A "qualified ATOD supervisor" is a substance abuse professional with a master's degree or above in a human services field (see list of appropriate human services degrees and licenses below) with a clinical application.
- The supervisor must have a minimum of two years (3,000 hours) of ATOD clinical experience

Appropriate Human Services field degrees in addition to social work are as follows:

- Licensed MD psychiatrist
- Licensed PhD clinical psychologist
- Licensed master's-level mental health practitioner (LMHP) – specific license
- Licensed professional counselor (LPC) – specific license

6. MSW SOCIAL WORK COLLEAGUE REFERENCE

Confidential reference from an MSW social work colleague. This reference cannot be from someone you supervise. The colleague reference cannot be completed by the same person who completed the supervisory evaluation and must be from an MSW social work colleague with knowledge of the applicant's skills and functions as an ATOD clinician and must be able to address the applicant's professional identity as a social worker.

7. LICENSE/CREDENTIALS

Only ONE of the following is required:

NASW's exam-based DCSW (Diplomate in Clinical Social Work)

Current clinical or independent level state MSW-level license or certification that requires passing the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) advanced or clinical level exam. (See list of state social work licenses that are accepted for this certification.)

For states without clinical or independent level MSW licenses, please consult the listing of social work licensing/credentials requirements.

In NY state, CSW's must submit a current CSW and must provide proof of a passing score on the ASWB Advanced or Clinical level exam, or hold the NASW ACSW or DCSW.

Passing score on the ASWB (Association of Social Work Boards), clinical level exam. This option is intended for more recent MSW graduates who are in the process of applying for licensure and have completed the exam requirement but who have not yet received the actual social work license. (Copy of test scores required)

SUBSTITUTION for ATOD-specific Education, the ATOD-specific Experience and the ATOD-specific Supervision

One of the following items may be accepted in lieu of documenting the post-MSW ATOD-specific education, the ATOD-specific experience, and the ATOD-specific supervision requirements:

- A current alcohol and drug treatment certification at the highest level that is part of the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) available in 41 states (including the District of Columbia). In some states the certification that is part of the IC&RC is issued by a state board. In other states, the certification that is part of the IC&RC is issued by a substance abuse association or other professional substance abuse organization. If you are not sure, please check with the issuing agency to verify that the certificate you hold is from a board or association whose certification is recognized as part of the IC&RC before you submit it with your application. (The 10 states in which NO IC&RC - member certifications are issued are: AK, CO, KS, MT, NV, ND, OR, TN,

WA and WY. Please do not submit substance abuse certifications from these 10 states as they will not qualify for this substitution.) Please see the IC & RC reciprocal board member certifications and credentials list. A current copy of this certification/license showing the expiration date must be submitted with the application.

- A current master's-level certification (the ICADC) from International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC). A current copy of this certification showing the expiration date must be included with the application.
- A current master's-level certification from NAADAC (the MAC). A current copy of this certification showing the expiration date must be included with the application.
- A current master's-level certification from NBCC (the MAC)

APPLICATION FEE \$120.00

CERTIFICATES

Applicants who meet all eligibility criteria and successfully qualify for the C-CATODSW will receive a certificate suitable for wall display. Each renewal period, those who successfully renew (see RENEWAL) will receive an updated seal to place on the original certificate. (If necessary, replacement certificates can be provided at a cost of \$10.)

RENEWAL

Renewal occurs every two years at a fee of \$50.

20 contact hours of continuing education are required. At least 10 hours must be ATOD-specific in content and the other 10 must be relevant to practice as a social work substance abuse counselor.

The DCSW or current MSW-level state social work clinical or independent licensure is required. The certification holder must comply with NASW's Standards of Continuing Professional Education, supplied at the back of the application booklet.

For complete information or to request an application packet, call: (800) 638-8799, ext. 409 or write: credentialing@naswdc.org