

Council for Social Work Certification

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Agency Functions

The regulation of the profession of social work in Texas was established in 1981. The Department of Human Services (DHS), with advice from the Council for Social Work Certification, is responsible for examining, licensing and regulating the use of titles related to the profession of social work. The council's act is a title act in that it regulates those who use titles associated with social work and prohibits unlicensed individuals from using such titles. To fulfill its responsibilities, the DHS board, with the advice of the advisory council, adopts rules regarding the practice, determines the qualifications of applicants, administers a national exam, issues initial and renewal licenses, investigates complaints, and takes disciplinary action to enforce its enabling act. In 1992, the department regulated approximately 12,000 social workers.

Agency Funding

| | FY 1992 Expended | FY 1993 Budgeted |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| | \$ 293,391 | \$ 304,115 |
|--|------------|------------|

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----|----|
| Percent of General Revenue | 0% | 0% |
|-------------------------------|----|----|

**Number of Positions
(FY 1993)** 4 FTE

Commission Findings and Recommendations

The sunset review of the Council for Social Work Certification included a determination of the continued need for the regulation carried out by the council, whether benefits could be achieved by changing the organizational structure used to carry out the regulation, and whether statutory changes are needed to improve the regulatory ability of the council.

Need for Regulation

The Sunset Commission concluded that the current regulation of social workers was appropriate and should be continued.

Reorganization Alternatives

The Sunset Commission concluded that a change was needed in the organizational structure used to regulate social workers and recommended that the Council for Social Work Certification be merged with the boards that regulate marriage and family therapists, psychologists, and professional counselors.

Major Recommendations

After determining the need for regulation and the appropriate organizational structure, the Sunset Commission adopted a number of standard recommendations to be applied to this agency and all other health care licensing agencies under review. These are set out elsewhere. The commission did not develop any additional major recommendations that specifically related to the board.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact other than costs resulting from the merger is anticipated as a result of the recommendations.

Complete List of Recommendations

1. Merge the programs that regulate marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, psychologists, and social workers and create a new agency to administer the programs.

2. Require that fees be set by the board as necessary to cover the cost of regulation.
3. Require that all licensing examinations be validated.
4. Require mandatory continuing education for all licensees.
5. Standardize the enforcement process of the board.
6. Require training for new members of the board.
7. Establish a standard approach for licensing out-of-state practitioners coming into Texas.
8. Authorize the council to establish a limit on the number of exam retakes, conditions to be met before retakes, and alternative methods of competency testing.
9. Across-the-board recommendations. (These are standard recommendations placed in the statutes of all agencies under review.)

