

Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners

Guidelines for Approving

Continuing Education Programs

The Louisiana Social Work Practice Act of 1999 mandates that all social workers, whether registered, certified or licensed, receive 20 hours of continuing education per year in order to enhance and upgrade their skills and knowledge base. The rationale behind this requirement is to protect the public by ensuring that social workers in Louisiana are prepared to give competent, safe services. The Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, consequently, is committed to ensuring that continuing education offerings contain worthwhile content presented in a professional manner by presenters who are knowledgeable about their subjects. (See Section 2714 of the Louisiana Social Work Practice Act and Rule No. 317 of the Board's *Rules, Standards and Procedures* for further information on continuing education.)

The Board will grant authorization to qualified organizations to serve as Approval Organizations. Approval Organizations are designated by LABSWE to pre-approve educational offerings for social work continuing education. Education offerings sponsored by an Approval Organization are considered approved continuing education. Organizations will be given authority to pre-approve social work continuing education for five (5) years. After five (5) years, the organization shall reapply to the Board if interested in maintaining designation as a pre-approving body.

In order to be an Approval Organization, the group must study the following guidelines for assessing continuing education offerings and determine if the group is prepared to assess continuing education opportunities by those guidelines on a timely basis. The group shall then submit the application to LABSWE. By submitting the completed application, the group agrees to adhere to the guidelines outlined in Section C of the application.

The Board will review the group's application to be an Approval Organization in its next regular meeting.

Criteria for Approving Continuing Education Offerings

Any applicant(s) seeking approval for a continuing education offering will submit to the Approval Organization the application requesting pre-approval and the following information by deadline set by organization. The Approval Organization is responsible for evaluating the logistical procedures and educational strategies, and deciding whether the educational offering is appropriate for approved continuing education hours.

Logistical Procedures

1. Organizational Support

- a. The applicant(s) and/or sponsoring organization must be capable of administering and coordinating the educational offering.
- b. The applicant(s) sponsoring the offering must be clearly identified by name, address, telephone number, and other contact information.
- c. The location of the workshop should be designated.

2. Credit Hours

- a. The request for approval must designate the number of contact hours that the educational offering involves.
- b. Contact hour credit will include only actual instruction time. A contact hour is defined as 60 minutes.
- c. The applicant(s) applies for approved credit hours, not the individuals who attend the offering.

3. Attendance and Certificates

- a. The applicant(s) assume responsibility for keeping accurate attendance records.
- b. The applicant(s) will only issue credit for time attended. The applicant may choose to not issue credit for partial attendance. This should be written on the flyer to allow people fair notice.
- c. The applicant(s) will issue certificates that include dates, location, topic, contact hours and Approval Organization. The cost charged to issue a certificate shall be stated.
- d. The applicant(s) will include on the certificate a statement relative to continuing education approval. Example: This program is approved for # of hours (clinical/general/ethics) contact hours by (Approval Organization) as authorized by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners.
- e. The applicant(s) shall retain attendance records of the educational offering for three (3) years.

4. Fees and Advertising

- a. The applicant(s) shall stipulate any fees charged for the educational offering and its cancellation policy.
- b. The applicant(s) should also submit promotional materials of the program.
- c. The applicant(s) will include on all advertisements, i.e. brochure, a statement relative to continuing education approval. Example: This program is approved for # of hours (clinical/general/ethics) contact hours by (Approval Organization) as authorized by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners.
- d. The applicant shall not advertise an education program as approved until official notification is received.

Educational Strategies

5. Qualified Presenters

- a. The presenters shall submit accurate vita/professional data that demonstrates the appropriate background, expertise, and credentials to present accurately and completely on the proposed topic of the presentation. Applicant is responsible for completing bio sheet on all presenters which shall include license type, credential number, degrees, current employment, education, training and pertinent experience to present on a particular subject.
- b. A credentialed social worker must be involved in the planning and evaluation of the educational offering. This social worker should be identified by name and credential. The social worker must verify that he/she participated in the development of the presentation and the evaluation process.

6. Target Audience

Identify and describe the expected audience.

7. Appropriate Curriculum

- a. The topic and its development shall be appropriate and meaningful for professional social workers.
- b. The title of the workshop should adequately reflect the content.
- c. The relevance of content to social work should be stated.
- d. Clearly state learning objectives and educational format methods (such as lecture or simulated learning situations) for achieving those objectives.
- e. Include agenda and time schedule of the educational offering.

8. Evaluation

- a. Applicant is required to keep a copy of all evaluations for three (3) years from the date of the workshop. The pre-approving organization has the authority to request copies of the evaluations.
- b. Applicant is required to administer evaluations for each educational offering.
- c. Applicant shall submit a copy of the evaluation tool intended to be used with application.

9. Record Keeping

Sponsoring organization is required to keep continuing education approval letter and brochure for the program for three (3) years from the date of the workshop.