

October 10, 2009

David Hamilton, Ph.D., LMSW
Executive Secretary, State Board for Social Work
New York State Education Department- Office of the Professions
89 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12234-1000

Dear Dr. Hamilton,

As the representative of the NYS Social Work Board to the Association of Social Work Boards, NASW-NYS would like to express our opposition and concern to the recently proposed ASWB examination fee increase. As you are likely aware, many new, yet to be employed MSW graduates as well as professionals who are currently working toward their LCSW already face financial challenges in relation to the costs of becoming a licensed professional in New York State. Further, as you know, the NY SED has recently implemented a licensing registration fee increase. Should the ASWB proposal be accepted, the dual increase will be substantially burdensome and potentially hinder some to future applicants.

NY Social Work License Category	Total Cost SED Application & Registration Fee*; ASWB Exam Fee	NEW Total Cost SED Application & Registration Fee; ASWB Exam Fee**
LMSW Applicant	\$115, \$155, \$175= \$445	\$115, \$179, \$230= \$524
LCSW Applicants	\$115, \$155, \$175= \$445	\$115, \$179, \$260= \$554

*Prior to September 25, 2009

**Includes SED registration fee and proposed ASWB exam fee increases

ASWB's rationale for such an increase focuses on the lack of any such increase over the course of the last eight years and the fact that their exam fees are currently on the lower end of the spectrum in comparison to those for other professions. They have not however, demonstrated the fiscal necessity for such an increase. In fact, they noted that they are operating under a balanced budget through the use of reserved funds, a comfort which many of our social workers do not enjoy. The stated consequences for not instituting the requested increase would be reduced administrative programs and services that directly benefit member agencies, not the social workers who are subject to the increased costs. As an association we can certainly understand the difficult financial climate in which we are all forced to operate and can only ask that ASWB explore every alternative to optimize their organization before resorting to an action that would place undue burdens on our professionals in a climate of fiscal distress. Therefore we implore you to reject this proposed fee increase at the ASWB annual meeting on behalf of the social workers of New York State.

Respectfully,

Reinaldo Cardona, MSSW, LCSW
Executive Director