

Community and Social Services

Child, Family and School Social Workers

Child, Family, and School Social Workers work with children and families to provide social assistance, counseling, and support for mental health and well-being. This often includes coordinating available services to assist a child or family. They may assist single parents in finding day care, arrange adoptions, or help find foster homes for neglected, abandoned, or abused children. These workers can specialize in working with a particular problem, population or setting, such as child protective services, adoption, homelessness, domestic violence, or foster care.

School social workers are often the primary outreach between schools and parents or guardians, and are responsible for helping to ensure that students get the chance to fully benefit from their education. They assist students in dealing with personal or emotional problems. They may deal extensively with children with disabilities and their families. In addition, they address problems such as misbehavior, truancy, teenage pregnancy, violence, and drug and alcohol problems and advise teachers. School social workers may teach workshops to groups or classes on topics like healthy communication, or conflict resolution.

Child, family, and school social workers are known as child welfare social workers, family services social workers, or child protective services social workers. These workers often work for individual and family services agencies, schools, or State or local governments.

Social workers may work all day at a particular site, or may be traveling frequently, to see clients, meet with other service providers, or attend meetings. Although social work can be very satisfying, large caseloads or inadequate staffing are a problem in many areas, so full-time social workers need to have plans in place for recuperation and stress management.

Education/Training

How to Obtain:

A bachelor's degree is the minimum requirement for entry into the occupation, but some positions require an advanced degree, typically a Master's in Social Work (MSW).

New York and all other states also have licensing boards. Licenses are not necessarily required for all positions, or for entry and training, but are typically required for advancement. License requirements in most states commonly include:

- a written examination,

- continuing education, or
- 1-3 years of experience.

The requirements for a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in New York include:

- statement of moral character
- 21 years of age
- A Masters in Social Work
- 12 hours of clinical coursework
- 3 years of supervised experience
- a written examination

Some more specialized credentials involving continuing education, though not necessarily mandatory, may be helpful for advancement after initial licensing, and are available through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

More Information on Licensing:

- Directory of state licensing boards: <https://www.datapathdesign.com/ASWB/Laws/Prod/cgi-bin/LawBoardWebsitedll.dll/EXEC/0/0ygtpd30za0u3g1eyif1b115x868>
- New York State licensing information: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/sw/>
- NASW: <http://www.socialworkers.org/credentials/default.asp>

Average Costs:

Tuition and fees for a master's degree earned in the social and behavioral sciences, such as a Master's in Social Work (MSW), costs an average of \$10,900* per year. Completion time is generally 2 years.

Licensure and certification occurs at the state level: Costs vary by state, ranging from \$40-\$500

The cost in New York State is approximately \$300, plus the cost of any exam study aids.

The costs of continuing education vary.

*Note: This figure does not include federal, state, or university financial aid resources such as grants, fellowships, scholarships or work study. It also does not include vocational rehabilitation or other state resources available specifically to people with disabilities. The out-of-pocket expense may be significantly less.