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School of Social Work

BSW & MSW

Career & Licensure Support Packet

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Dear School of Social Work Graduate,

Congratulations on your graduation from the University Of Illinois School Of Social Work! On behalf of the School of Social Work, we wish you nothing but continued success in your future career and social work journey.

To assist you in the early stages of your career preparation, you will find in this packet of information a few tools that will be beneficial to your professional development. Please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions related to your employment search and licensure process. Congratulations again and I am looking forward to hearing about your accomplishments within our community and the field of social work.

Sincerely,

Sharva Hampton-Campbell, MSW

Student Affairs Coordinator

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Building a Social Work Resume

A resume and cover letter work in conjunction with one another to increase an employer's interest in an applicant. Submitting a resume and cover letter to an employer does not guarantee that an applicant will be scheduled for an interview but if it is strategically constructed it increases the possibility of moving forward in the hiring process.

Preparing to Start Your Resume

Complete a self-assessment. Before jumping into the construction of your resume take a few minutes to complete a self-assessment and reflect on your experiences, achievements, and skills. Take a blank sheet of paper and write down all of your previous work experience, education, volunteer experience, community projects, skills, interests, affiliations, and any other important information that highlights your current skill set and ability. Relevant experiences, skills, and achievements will be taken from this list to construct your resume.

Become familiar with the organization you are applying to. After locating a position that you plan to apply for and before you begin to build your resume, familiarize yourself with the organization. Visit their website and learn more about their mission, the population they serve, and the programs they offer. This process serves two purposes: to ensure the organization is a good fit and to highlight the experiences and skills that are needed to effectively fill the open position that are not included in the employment announcement.

Keep everything connected and relevant. Your resume should be constructed with an end goal in mind. All large and small details should be connected and relevant to the current situation and your field. Highlight the responsibilities and activities that are most closely connected to the roles and responsibilities of the desired position. This technique is referred to as the *Golden Thread Technique* when all elements of a resume are connected through relevance.

Starting Your Resume

Identify all relevant experiences from your self-assessment. Review the employment announcement for your desired position. Then review your self-assessment to identify all of the experiences, skills, and attributes that are connected and relevant to the desired position.

Building a Social Work Resume (continued)

Choose appropriate headings. Select the headings that best highlight the relevant experiences, skills, and attributes you identified in the previous step. Then, begin your resume with the heading that is the strongest. It is common for a recent graduate to begin their resume with the “Education” heading because they can then highlight the acquisition of their degree. Resumes include but are not limited to the following sections: Contact Information, Job Objective, Skills Summary, Experience (Work, Social Work, or Clinical), Interests, Professional Activities/Affiliations, and References.

Choose appropriate format. You are not limited to standard resume templates. As long as all of the information in your resume is in sync you can create your own format. Just remember that your name should be the largest item on the page, should stand alone, and should be followed by up to date contact information.

Describing Your Experience

Use action verbs not complete sentences. (Action verb list is attached on page 6) Omit personal pronouns and “a”, “an”, and “the” to achieve a concise style that will be easier and faster for employers to read.

Use keywords and phrases that are applicable to the desired position. For clinical positions emphasize your clinical skills. Include details about your client population such as diagnoses or presenting issues, age, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. For macro-level positions stress skills such as supervising, program development, community organizing, and budget management. The key is to utilize phrases that are appropriate and connect your skill set to the desired position.

Stress accomplishments and sequence phrases according to the skills most relevant to your reader. List less relevant information later in your descriptions, condense it, or omit it.

Your Resume’s Presentation

The length of your resume depends on your audience and level of experience. If you can fit your resume onto one page without crowding, do so. However, resumes for clinical positions may be longer if you have significant previous experience. Don’t be afraid to exceed one page as long as the experience is relevant.

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Action Verb List

accelerated	contrived	focused	orchestrated	researched
accomplished	controlled	forecast	organized	reshaped
achieved	cooperated	fortified	oriented	restored
adapted	coordinated	founded	originated	revamped
adjusted	counseled	generated	oversaw	reviewed
aided	created	guided	overhauled	revised
allocated	dealt	handled	participated	scheduled
amplified	defined	harmonized	performed	selected
analyzed	delegated	headed	persuaded	set up
answered	demonstrated	implemented	planned	simplified
applied	designed	improved	pinpointed	solved
appointed	determined	incorporated	prepared	specialized
approved	developed	increased	presented	stimulated
arbitrated	devised	influenced	preserved	streamlined
arranged	devoted	initiated	produced	structured
assisted	diagnosed	inspected	programmed	substituted
assumed	diagrammed	installed	promoted	suggested
attained	directed	instituted	proposed	summarized
augmented	displayed	instructed	proved	supervised
awarded	distributed	interpreted	provided	supported
began	edited	introduced	ran	systematized
brought	effected	launched	received	teamed
built	eliminated	led	recommended	trained
catalogued	employed	lectured	reconciled	treated
chaired	encouraged	listed	recorded	tutored
co-led	enlisted	maintained	recruited	unified
compared	established	managed	reduced	updated
compiled	estimated	modified	re-established	used
completed	evaluated	molded	regulated	utilized
conceived	examined	monitored	rehearsed	volunteered
conducted	expanded	motivated	reinforced	widened
constructed	expedited	negotiated	renegotiated	worked
consulted	extended	observed	reorganized	wrote
contracted	facilitated	operated	reported	

Building a Social Work Cover Letter

A cover letter introduces your resume to an employer. It expresses why you are writing the letter, where you heard of the position, and why you are a good fit for the position. It highlights your relevant experiences and skills to show the match between you, the organization, and the open position. Be sure to send a cover letter with your resume even if it is not required.

Become familiar with the organization before writing the letter. This is also stressed prior to starting your resume and continues to be a vital step.

Address your letter to a person by name, preferably the person with the hiring authority. Contact the organization for this information if it is not provided. If you are unable to get a name and title follow the directions in the employment announcement.

Use business letter format. Place your name, address, phone number, and email blocked left, right, or centered as a header.

Write in an active, conversational style. For example, “I would be honored to join your company,” or “I have all the needed skills to effectively fulfill the responsibilities of the (title of the desired position).” Always be confident about your skill set and specific.

Keep your letter to one page unless you are applying for academic, research, or fellowship positions. There is no set number of paragraphs for a cover letter but make sure each one is concise.

Follow up. Whether you are presenting your resume and cover letter via email or in person always follow up to ensure that your documents were received and to provide any additional information.

Keep track of your application. Upon follow-up you should inquire about the organization’s timeline to fill the position. Therefore, you can continue to follow up at the appropriate time.

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Employment Search Engines

Below are links to browse for social work jobs in Illinois. Please note all job sites are not specific to social work related positions, but you can enter “social work” as a search field.

- Career Builder
<http://www.careerbuilder.com/>
- Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette
<http://careers.news-gazette.com/>
- Idealist
<http://www.idealists.org/>
- Illinois Education Job Bank (school positions)
<https://www.illinoiseducationjobbank.org/jobsearch/JobSearch.aspx>
- Illinois Job Network
<http://www.illinoisjobnetwork.com/>
- Indeed
<http://www.indeed.com/>
- K12 Job Spot (school positions)
<https://k12jobspot.com/>
- Monster
<http://swoop.monster.com/>
- Metro Chicago Jobs
<http://www.metrochicagojobs.com/>
- National Association of Social Workers
http://joblink.socialworkers.org/jobs/state_province/illinois
- Simply Hired
<http://www.simplyhired.com/>
- The Social Service Job Site
<http://www.socialservice.com/>
- Social Work Job Bank
<http://www.socialworkjobbank.com/site/>
- Work 4 Illinois, State of Illinois Employment Opportunities
<http://work.illinois.gov/>
- University of Illinois School of Social Work Job Board
<http://socialwork.illinois.edu/job-board/>







LSW LICENSURE CHECKLIST

The School of Social Work Office of Student Affairs believes it is best to wait until your degree has been conferred before you begin the application process to prevent your application and supplemental documentation from getting lost or misplaced during the multi-level approval process. Degrees are expected to be awarded in Banner for May graduates in June.

The licensure process is comprised of a three part procedure as follows:

I. Illinois Department of Professional Regulations (IDFPR)

IDFPR processes licensure applications for multiple professions; therefore, the approval process is not very expedient.

-  Print the licensure application from <https://www.idfpr.com/renewals/apply/forms/sw.pdf>
-  Carefully read pages 1-4 of the application instructions and highlight the pertinent and applicable information in Steps 1-5. Doing so will create a guide for you to follow to make sure the application is completed correctly and all supporting documentation has been obtained.
-  The application begins after the page break and is labeled as APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE AND/OR EXAMINATION and it consists of 4 pages.
-  Complete Part I (Application Category Information) and II (Applicant Identifying Information) on page 1 of 4.
-  Complete Part III (Education Information) on page 2 of 4. Before moving on to the next page, include your name, SS# and profession horizontally on the right side of the page. little bit of body text
-  Page 3 of 4 covers previous licensure and examination. If you have ever been licensed to practice as a social worker, complete Part IV (Record of Licensure Information) and if you have previously taken the exam in Illinois or any other state complete Part V (Record of Examination). Before moving on to the next page, include your name, SS# and profession horizontally on the right side of the page.

Complete Part VI (Personal History Information), Part VII (Child Support and Tax Information), and Part VIII (Certifying Statement) on page 4 of 4. Before moving on to the next page, include your name, SS# and profession horizontally on the right side of the page.

The next section covers the Supporting Documentation as follows:

a. **CCA: Health Care Workers Charged With or Convicted Of**

Criminal Acts- This form is required to be completed by all applicants.

b. **CT: Certification By Licensing Agency/Board-** This form must be completed if you are licensed as a social worker in another state or U.S. jurisdiction.

c. **ED: Certification of Education-** This form is required for all applicants. Complete the APPLICANT portion of the form and submit the form to the Office of the Registrar for completion of the SCHOOL OFFICIAL Section. Scan and email the form to transcripts@illinois.edu. Include your UIN in the body of your email and request to have the completed form mailed back to you. It may take up to six weeks before you will get the form back from the Office of the Registrar. After receiving the form back from the Office of the Registrar, add your name, SS# and profession horizontally on the right side of the page.

d. **VE-SW: Verification of Employment Experience-** this form is only applicable for LCSW applicants or BSW students with 3 years of experience.

Upon receipt of the ED form from the Office of the Registrar, your licensure application is ready to be mailed to IDFPR. Mail the application and supporting documentation and application fee of \$50 to Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Division of Professional Regulation, P.O. Box 7007, Springfield, Illinois 62791

Copy the entire packet before mailing it to IDFPR for your personal records in case the application is lost or misplaced.

You have completed the first part of the LSW licensure process.

- Once IDFPR has received your application, it will be processed. The length of time that this may take varies.
- Once processed and approved, you will be notified of the approval from IDFPR to sit for the exam and will be given instructions and access to sign up to take the exam.

II. Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)

- Review the ASWB Examination Candidate Handbook at <https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Candidate-Handbook.pdf> before completing the ASWB exam registration to familiarize yourself with the process.
- Complete the online exam registration at <https://www.aswb.org/exam-candidates/exam-registration/>
- The exam fee is \$230 and is non-refundable.

III. Receive LSW License

- After you pass the ASWB Master's exam, IDFPR should receive your scores within about two weeks. After IDFPR processes your scores, they will issue your LSW license and you can begin practicing as a Licensed Social Worker.

