



Oregon Board of Licensed Social Workers

**Board Presentation for the
Behavioral Health Talent Counsel**

August 14, 2025

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High Level Organization Functions:

LICENSING

- Determine qualifications to practice social work in Oregon
 - Education
 - Exams
 - Supervision/Experience
 - Fitness
- Licenses
 - Issue licenses for new applicants
 - Renew and issue licenses for current licensees
 - Monitor ongoing continuing education
 - Consumer outreach

High Level Organization Functions:

COMPLIANCE

- Set and enforce regulations
 - Code of Ethics
 - Oregon Revised Statutes
 - Oregon Administrative Rules
- Investigate complaints
 - Unethical / unprofessional conduct
 - Unlicensed Practice
 - Impairment
- Enforcement actions through review and vote of the Board
- Stipulated agreements / contested case hearings / appeals

Social Work License & Certificate Types:

<i>CLINICAL</i>	<i>NON-CLINICAL</i>
<p data-bbox="107 365 1014 483"><u>LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER</u> <u>(LCSW)</u></p> <ul data-bbox="107 524 1014 857" style="list-style-type: none">• Highest level of clinical licensure. Allows independent practice, including assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health conditions. Can provide supervision of Clinical Social Work Associates.	<p data-bbox="1073 365 1976 483"><u>LICENSED MASTERS SOCIAL WORKER</u> <u>(LMSW)</u></p> <ul data-bbox="1073 524 1976 816" style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced, non-clinical practice. Scope of practice can include counseling, case management, research, advocacy, and program development. Cannot provide clinical services.
<p data-bbox="107 909 1014 1027"><u>CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATE</u> <u>(CSWA)</u></p> <ul data-bbox="107 1068 1014 1401" style="list-style-type: none">• Clinical social worker on path to LCSW licensure. Engages in clinical social work, such as assessment and diagnosis, but only under direct supervision of LCSW or other approved mental health professional.	<p data-bbox="1060 909 1976 1027"><u>REGISTERED BACCALAUREATE SOCIAL WORKER (RBSW)</u></p> <ul data-bbox="1060 1068 1976 1352" style="list-style-type: none">• Generalist, non-clinical practice. Typical roles include case management, community organization, and client education. Cannot provide clinical services.

Licensing Requirements

- **LCSW:**

- Master's degree in social work
- Post MSW clinical experience:
 - 100 supervision hours
 - 3500 practice hours, including 2000 direct contact hours
- Passing exam scores:
 - Oregon rules and laws exam
 - ASWB clinical exam
- Background check
- Application and associated fees

- **CSWA:**

- Master's degree in social work
- Board approved plan of supervision
- Passage of Oregon rules and laws exam
- Background check
- Application and associated fees

Licensing Requirements

- **LMSW:**

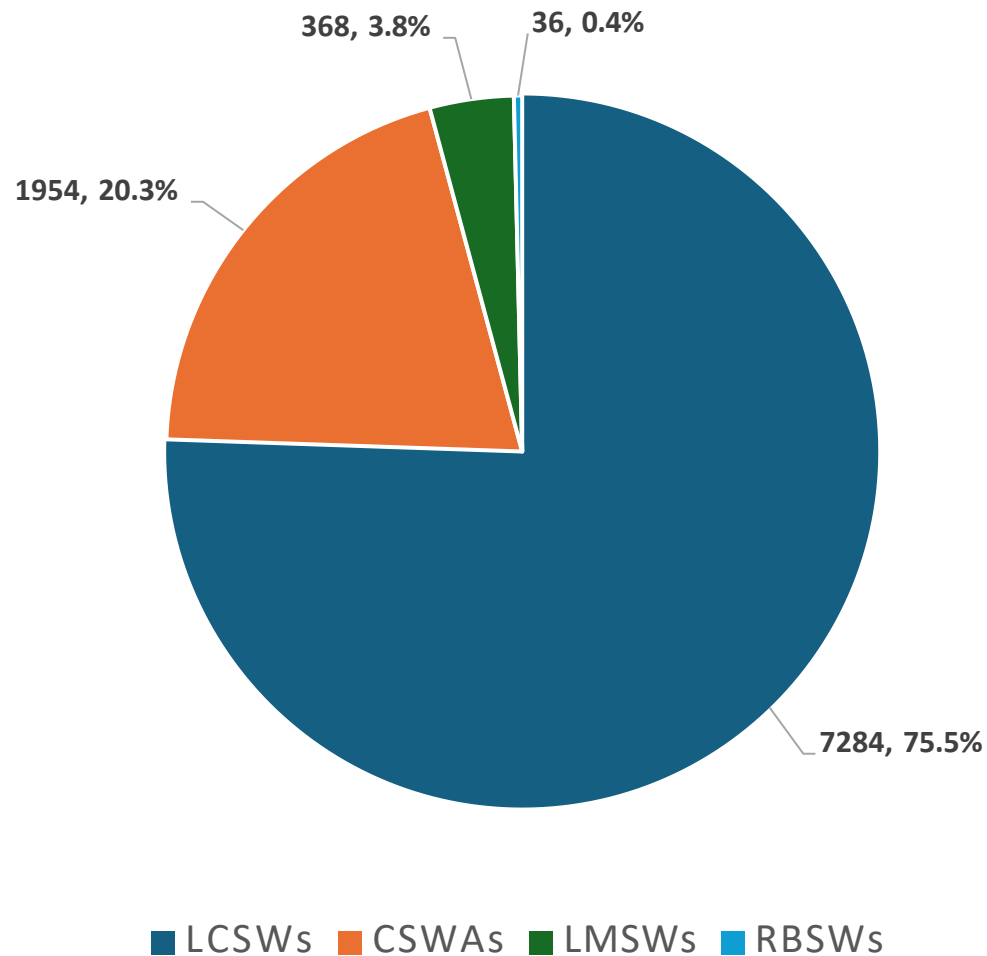
- Master's degree in social work
- Passing exam scores:
 - Oregon rules and laws exam
 - ASWB masters exam
- Background check
- Application and associated fees

- **RBSW:**

- Bachelor's degree in social work
- Passing exam scores:
 - Oregon rules and laws exam
 - ASWB bachelors exam
- Background check
- Application and associated fees

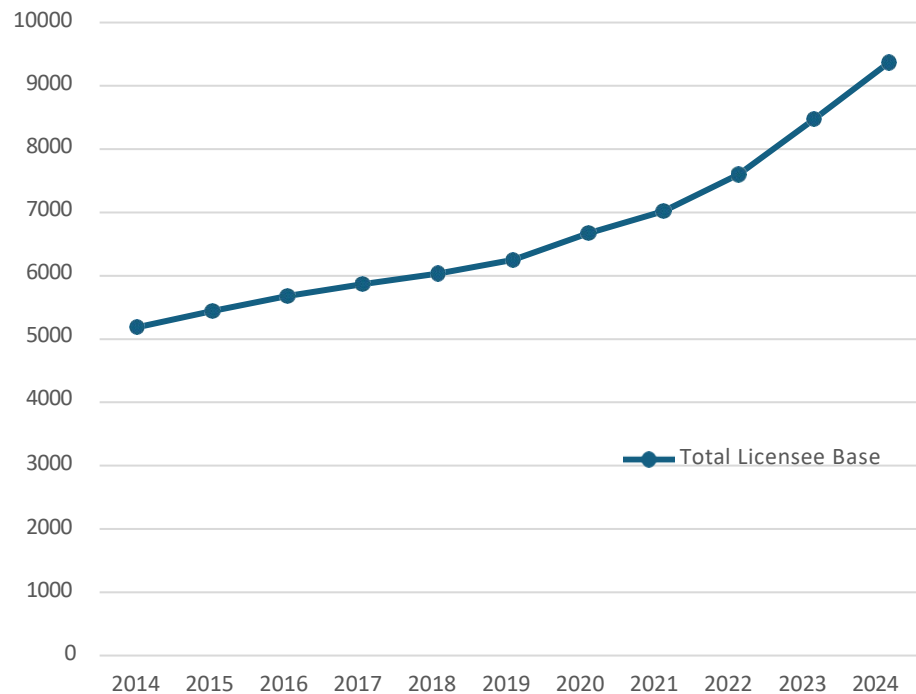
Regulated Social Workers by Type

Total Licensees: 9642



Licensee Growth – 10 Years

2014 – 2024



Year	LCSW	CSWA	LMSW	RBSW	Total
2014	3745	862	503	76	5186
2015	4031	896	445	71	5443
2016	4206	1003	412	57	5678
2017	4341	1095	384	60	5867
2018	4521	1105	357	51	6034
2019	4720	1172	312	45	6249
2020	5018	1274	331	46	6669
2021	5300	1350	330	40	7020
2022	5733	1533	326	37	7629
2023	6268	1839	331	33	8471
2024	6890	2090	357	33	9370

BLSW Staff

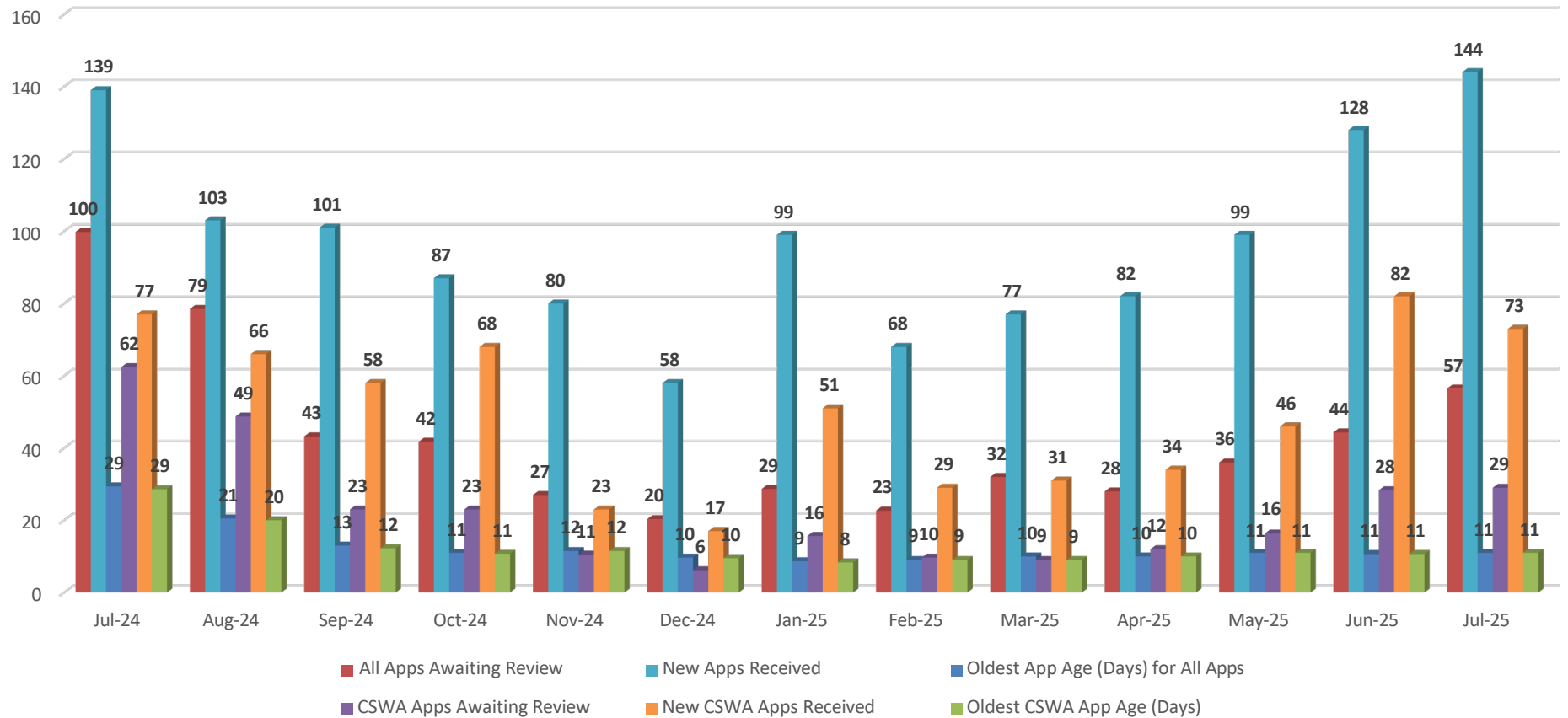
9.0 FTE total for agency

- **Executive Director:**
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Agency Head 9
- **Licensing Staff:**
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Office Specialist 2
 - 0.5 FTE permanent Office Specialist 2
 - 1.0 FTE limited duration Office Specialist 2
 - 0.5 FTE temporary Office Specialist 2
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Compliance Specialist 1
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Operations & Policy Analyst 1
- **Compliance Staff:**
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Investigator 2
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Investigator 2
 - 1.0 FTE permanent Compliance Specialist 2

Application Processing

- Applications are approved and provider numbers are issued every 1-10 business days.
- Application approvals are independent of Board meetings. Applicants do not have to wait for Board meetings to receive approval.
- Total processing time from application submission to approval is approximately 30 days.
- Applications not processed within 30 days are missing one or more of the following action items that are the responsibility of the applicant:
 - Fingerprinting for background check, Transcript request, License verification request, Experience verification request, National exam score transfer.

Application Tracking – Past Year



Current Workforce Challenges:

- Existing licensing system affects licensees' customer service experience and ability to complete required licensure tasks.
- COA requirement may impact workforce in unforeseen ways.
- Lack of resources to keep regulations updated at the rate of influx in telehealth agencies.
- Agencies putting CSWAs with little to no experience in compromising positions / setting them up to operate outside of their scope of practice.

Positive Practices BLSW has Implemented:

- BLSW chartered the Alternative Pathways to Licensure Committee in 2024.
- Increase in licensing staff FTE:
 - Permanent 0.5 FTE OS2 (2023), Limited duration 1.0 FTE OS2 (2024), Temporary 0.5 FTE OS2 (2025). Currently recruiting for Temporary 1.0 FTE OS2.
- Implemented 24-hour response time policy on voicemail and 48-hour response time on email.
 - In 2022 44% of phone calls were answered. Voicemails were responded to in 72+ hours or not at all. 64% of emails received responses, of those the response time was 72+ hours.
- Reduced application backlog.
 - In August 2023, submitted applications were reviewed by staff in an average of 112 days.
 - In July 2025, submitted applications were reviewed by staff in an average of 11 days.
- Executive Director provides informational presentations on licensure and regulations for schools of social work throughout Oregon.

Positive Practices Continued...

- BLSW works closely with professional associations, including the National Association of Social Workers, to clarify current regulatory requirements and develop new administrative rules.
- Implementation of SB 1512 (2022) licensing predetermination.
- HB 4071 (2022) allocated funds to support the behavioral health workforce. Supported by these funds, BLSW waived fees for all new applications for 1 year.
- Participation in HB 2235 (2023) workgroup to study barriers to workforce recruitment and retention.
- Talent Council work on establishing common terminology, understanding, and strategy will facilitate boards' navigation of issues of scope or duplication of effort in creating/regulating new credentials/licenses.

Thank you for this opportunity!

Questions?

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