

Bridging the Gap: How Employers Can Support Clinician Success

Triad + National Council Webinar
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Overview

- Problem Statement
- Pathways to Licensure
- The Gap
- Preparing to Succeed
- Doing Our Part
- Doing Your Part



➤ **Problem Statement**

Problem Statement

Licensure exams are a critical step for clinicians on their pathway to licensure, but the process can be challenging – and pass rates vary significantly by test-taker demographics.

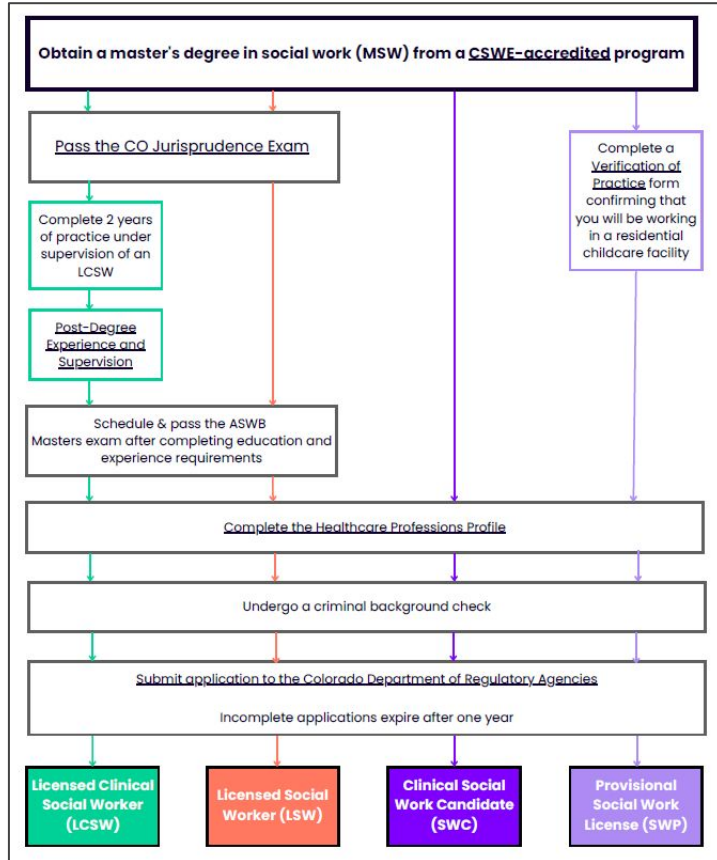
This webinar will explore how employers can bridge the gap, offering vital support to improve pass rates and promote equitable outcomes.



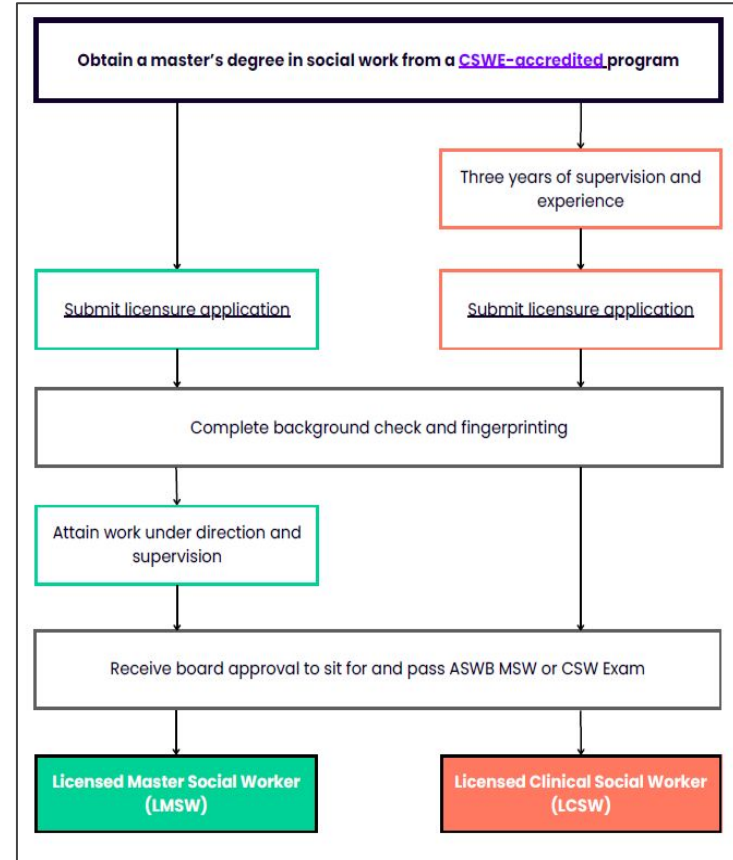
➤ Pathways to Licensure

Pathways to Licensure (CO & GA Social Work Examples)

COLORADO SOCIAL WORK PATHWAY



GEORGIA SOCIAL WORK PATHWAY



➤ The Gap

Summary: The Gap

We are experiencing an acute and sustained mental health workforce crisis in the United States. Despite the acute need for more clinicians, we lose thousands of licensure-track therapists from the workforce every year due to candidates' inability to pass licensure exams.

And those outcomes are not evenly distributed by demographic: more than 30% fewer Black-identifying test-takers pass their licensure exams than their White-identifying counterparts.

Every newly licensed clinician will support thousands of clients seeking care over their career – so every “lost clinician” means thousands of missed clinical care-giving opportunities. And with those lost clinicians not being evenly distributed by demographic, that loss is also felt disproportionately across those communities that they would have otherwise served.



Behavioral Health Licensure Exams

Licensure	Exams	Test-Maker	Last Released Outcomes Data
Social Work	ASWB Clinical, Masters, Bachelors	Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)	August 2022 (published periodically)
Counseling	NCE, NCMHCE	National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)	-
Marriage & Family Therapy	NMFT	Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB)	-
Psychology	EPPP Part 1, EPPP Part 2	Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB)	-

Source: Association of Social Work Boards. (2022). 2022 ASWB Exam Pass Rate Analysis. ASWB.org.
<https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-ASWB-Exam-Pass-Rate-Analysis.pdf>



Extended Healthcare Market Licensure Exams

Licensure	Exams	Test-Maker	Last Released Outcomes Data
Nursing	NCLEX	National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)	April 2024 (published quarterly)
Psychiatry (and all MDs)	USMLE	Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) and National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME)	January 2024 (published annually)
Behavior Analysis	BCBA, BCaBA	Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)	April 2024 (published quarterly)

Sources

- *National Council of State Boards of Nursing (2024). 2023 NCLEX Pass Rates. NCBSN.org. https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCLEX_Stats_2023_Q4_PassRates.pdf*
- *United States Medical Licensing Examination. (2024). USMLE Administration, Minimum Passing Scores, and Performance. USMLE.org. <https://www.usmle.org/performance-data>*
- *Behavior Analyst Certification Board (2024). BACB Annual Data Report. BACB.com. <https://www.bacb.com/about/bacb-certificant-annual-report-data/>*



ASWB Report Overview

- Published in August 2022, reports outcomes over prior year (2021) and prior eleven year (2011–2021) periods
- Reports data separately for each Clinical, Masters, and Bachelors exams
- For each exam, reports the following data for each period:
 - # of test takers
 - First-time test taker pass rates
 - Ultimate pass rates
 - Performance splits by demographic: race/ethnicity, gender, age, and primary language
- As noted, ASWB is not the only testmaker in behavioral health, and social work exams are not the only licensure exams, but 1) ASWB (to its credit) has produced the most robust recent reporting of any testmaker, and 2) we expect that other licensure exams in behavioral health would show similar results



ASWB Report Details: Clinical Exam First-Time Test-Takers

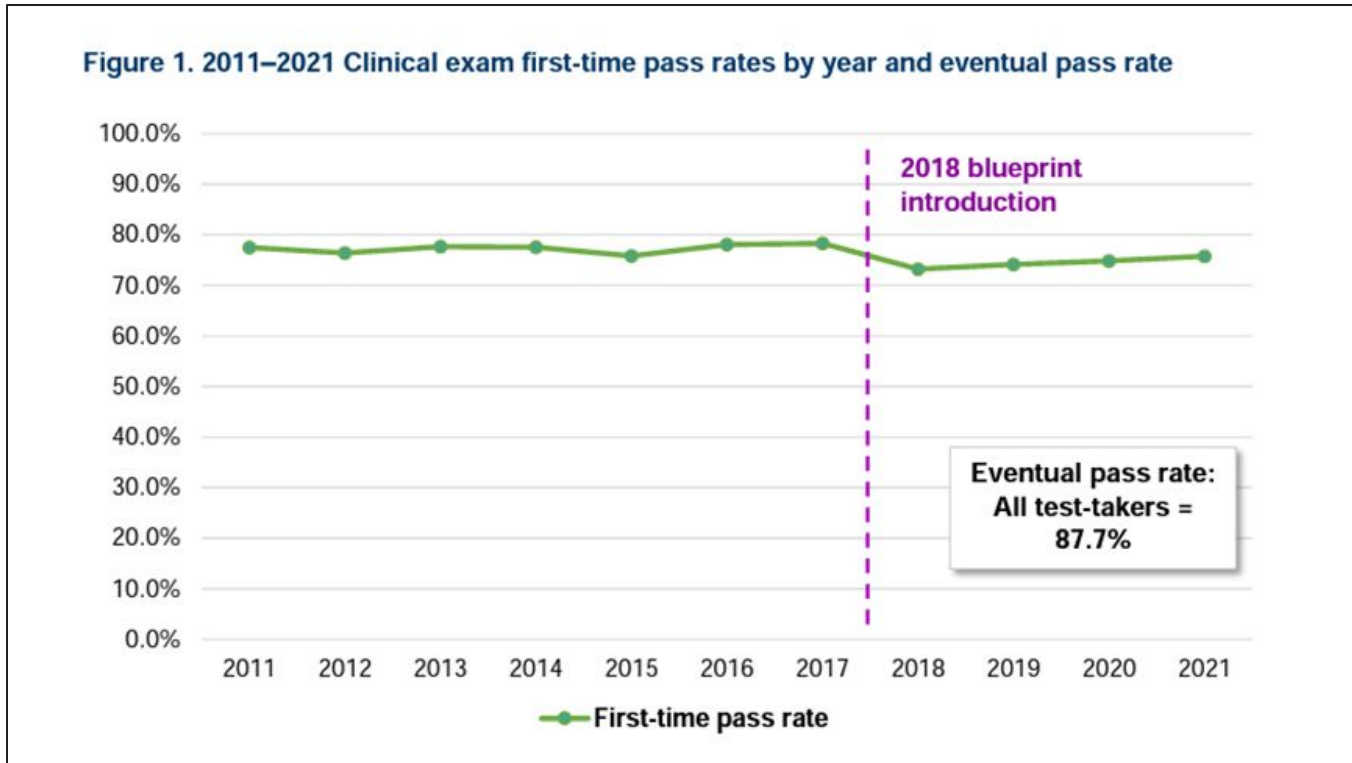
Table 2. 2011–2021 number of Clinical exam first-time test-takers by race/ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	In 2011	Proportion of test- takers	In 2021	Proportion of test- takers	Total 2011– 2021	Proportion increase/ decrease 2011–2021
Asian	162	2%	768	4%	4,805	+2%
Black	1,079	12%	2,932	14%	20,858	+2%
Hispanic/Latino	466	5%	2,726	13%	14,988	+8%
Multiracial	119	1%	576	3%	3,423	+2%
Native American/ Indigenous peoples	57	1%	115	1%	911	0%
White	6,855	75%	12,977	63%	105,758	-12%
Total	9,100	--	20,657	--	155,633	--

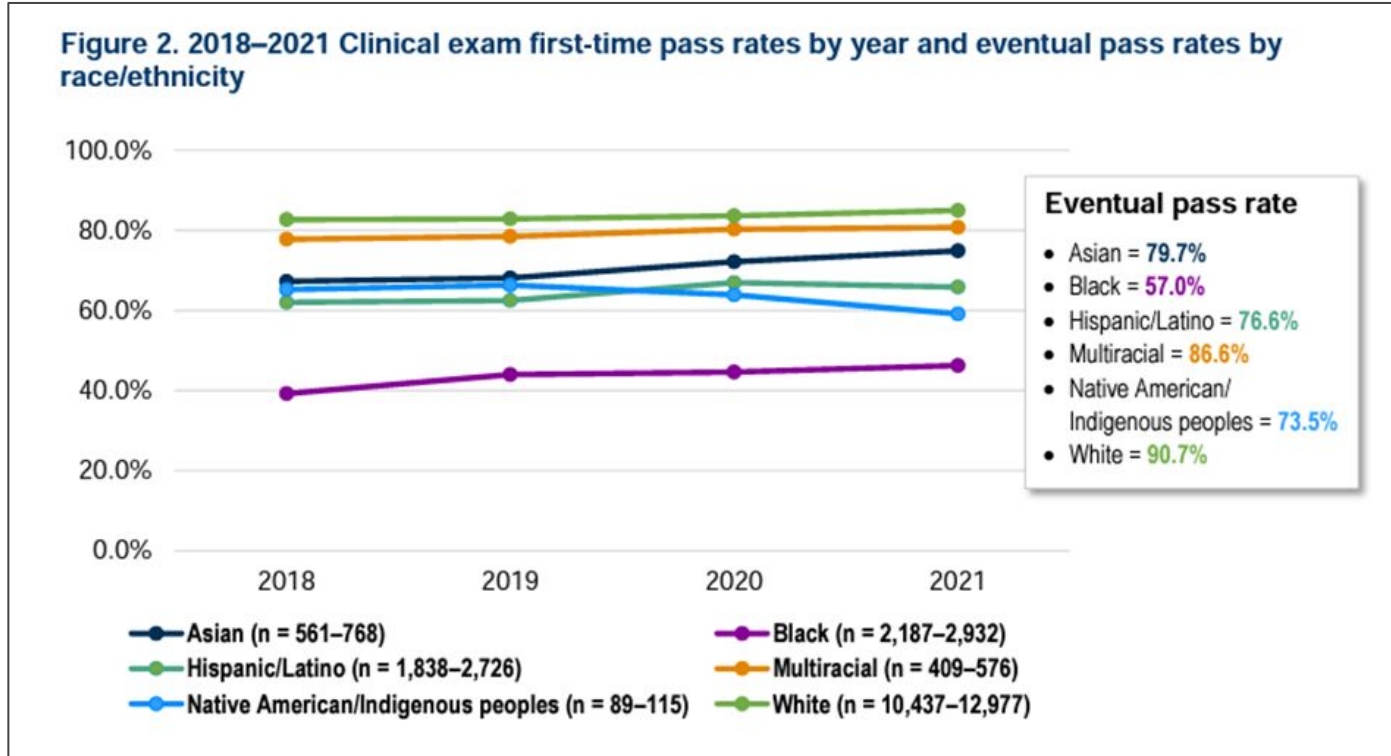
Note. Percentages may not total 100 percent because test-takers who selected options such as Prefer not to say or filled in their own identifiers were excluded from this analysis. These options were not available to test-takers at all points during the target time period. ASWB has altered the response options available on the exam registration forms and will continue to evaluate these options to ensure test-takers may accurately respond.



ASWB Report Details: Clinical Exam Pass Rates



ASWB Report Details: Clinical Exam Pass Rates by Race/Ethnicity



ASWB Report Summary

- Overall pass rates have remained relatively flat over the past four year period, but still lag behind other comparable exams (e.g. NCLEX: first-time pass rate for US-educated test-takers = 90%)
- We are losing thousands of would-be clinicians every year based on failure to pass licensure exams

Period	Clinical	Masters	Bachelors	Total
2021	2542	3052	684	6278
2011-2021	19,143	24,292	7727	51,162

- Given disparity in exam pass rates, “lost clinicians” are not distributed evenly across demographics

Population (2021)	Clinical	Masters	Bachelors	Total
“Lost” Black clinicians	1260	2032	275	3567
% of total test-takers	14%	20%	13%	~15%
% of total “lost”	50%	67%	40%	57%



➤ **Preparing to Succeed**

Exam Details – Overview

	ASWB Masters	ASWB Clinical	NCE	NCMHCE	NMFT
# of Questions	170	170	200	130-150	180
Unscored Qs?	Yes (20)	Yes (20)	Yes (40)	Yes (30-50)	No
Time	4 hours	4 hours	3 hours 45 min	4 hours 15 min	4 hours
Cost	\$230	\$260	\$275	\$275	\$370
Location	PSI	PSI	Pearson VUE	Pearson VUE	Prometric



Exam Preparation – Overview

Across a range of educational testing, three particular things have been demonstrated to improve outcomes the most:

- **Early access.** The best time to start preparing for licensure exams is today. Most successful test-takers prepare for 3–9 months, but preparation can start as early as during grad school.
- **Realistic practice.** Practice doesn't make perfect; perfect practice makes perfect.
- **Accountability partners.** Whether a study group or a 1:1 coach, having someone in your corner can help you stay on track with your preparation.



Keys to Successful Exam Preparation

- **Start Early.** Even if you are not planning to test for two years, you can start by exposing yourself to test-like content now.
- **Build a Study Plan.** Like any journey, having a map is key to getting to your destination.
- **...and Make it Manageable.** Some studying every week is better than a lot of studying in the final month.
- **Review Wrong Answers.** Reviewing answers is arguably more important than taking practice questions.
- **...and Right Ones.** If you got a question right for the wrong reason, that won't be replicable on test day.
- **Incorporate Full-Length Practice.** Exams are a marathon, not a sprint.
- **Establish a Support Network.** Don't go it alone.



► **Doing Our Part**

Triad is a leading provider of education, community, and career solutions for mental health and substance use professionals, employers, institutions, and organizations. Six brands, 45+ years of experience, and over one million professionals served.



Purpose/Mission/Strategy

PURPOSE

Why do we exist?

We are helping narrow the divide between those who need behavioral and mental health care and those who provide it.

In short, we help people help people.

MISSION

Who do we serve?

We serve the behavioral and mental health professional community, from student to practitioner.

We work directly with students and professionals, and with the universities, employers, and organizations that support them.

STRATEGY

How do we do it?

- Help licensure-track professionals pass their exams
- Shift the cost burden for prep to institutional payers
- Simplify the pathway to licensure
- Provide ongoing training
- Help employers find better candidates, faster
- Advocate for positive change



Test Preparation through AATBS

Discipline	Exams
Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examination for the Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP)• California Psychology Law & Ethics (CPLÉE)
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Counselor Examination (NCE)• National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE)• Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE)• California Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor Law & Ethics Exam• Alcohol & Drug Counselor Exam (ADC)
Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Licensed Clinical Social Work Exam• Licensed Master Social Work Exam• Bachelor's Licensed Social Work Exam• California Licensed Clinical Social Worker Law & Ethics Exam
Marriage & Family Therapy (MFT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Marriage and Family Therapy Exam (NMFT)• California Marriage and Family Therapy Exam• California Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor Law & Ethics Exam
Behavior Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board Certified Behavior Analyst Exam (BCBA)• Registered Behavior Technician Exam (RBT)



AATBS Exam Prep Package Assets

Key components of ATBS exam prep packages:

- **Assessment Exam.** Full-length diagnostic exam that evaluates your knowledge of topics from the content domains covered by the exam.
- **Digital Study Volumes.** Detailed review of the critical areas of each domain on the exam, important key terms, and testing strategies for each section.
- **TestMASTER.** Practice tests and questions in both study mode and exam mode, plus answer rationales for each question (available in both modes).
- **Full-Length Practice Exams.** Full-length exams to get you ready for the full-length experience of test day.
- **Live Online Workshops.** Two 10-hour workshop series (Exam Strategy and Content Review and Critical Thinking and Test-Taking Strategies) taught by licensed professionals and test prep experts.
- **1:1 Coaching.** Four live coaching sessions to help you organize your study plan, learn exam and test-taking strategies, clarify materials, and keep you on track.



AATBS Exam Prep Package Assets, Continued

AATBS Exam Prep Packages also include the following supplemental resources:

- **Digital Flashcards.** Key terms and phrases you'll need to know to help reinforce your studies as you go.
- **Audio Lectures.** Enhance your understanding of significant concepts and theories – “hit the books” without the books.
- **Digital Charts.** Crisis Management and Theories of Psychotherapy Charts provide a quick reference for key concepts.
- **Hypnosis Video Lectures.** Manage your exam preparation anxiety (it's natural!) through these stress-relieving lectures.



AATBS Pass Guarantee

Pass rate claims exist in the exam prep industry, but unlike other companies, we don't make them. We believe that the only pass rate that matters is yours.

While most of our students pass on their first try, we know that some will need additional preparation (and an additional attempt), so we stand behind our products with a Pass Guarantee.



Triad + National Council Partnership

Triad has partnered with the National Council for the past four years. In October 2022, we announced the expansion of our partnership to the Gold tier.

Through our partnership, National Council member organizations receive exclusive discounts on all Triad products and services, including 30% off employer-paid exam prep, and/or 20% off exam prep for employee self-pay, available at no cost to the organization itself.



➤ Doing Your Part

Take Action

1

Advocate for more data transparency from test-makers

2

Educate clinical staff on the pathway to licensure

3

Support licensure-track staff with exam prep resources



Support through Continuing Education Budget

Although the cost of exam prep is relatively low – a comprehensive package for social work exam prep through AATBS, for example, is under \$300, and many individual prep assets are available for under \$100 – licensure-track staff also have to bear the cost burden of exam fees (also several hundred \$) and are typically early-career professionals with relatively lower total compensation than their fully licensed colleagues.

Many organization have budget dollars allocated to continuing education (and/or professional education, more generally, and/or training) – using these monies to pay for exam prep can alleviate the cost burden on licensure-track staff, thereby leveling the playing field.

Investing in the exam success of your licensure-track clinicians can be used as a retention tool (since you're supporting them through test day) and a recruitment tool (since you can demonstrate that support to candidates).



Support through Allowable Cost (PPS CCBHCs)

Prospective Payment System (PPS) CCBHCs can incorporate exam prep into their allowable costs under 2 CFR 200.473.

§ 200.473 Training and education costs.

The cost of training and education provided for employee development is allowable.

[78 FR 78608, Dec. 26, 2013. Redesignated at 85 FR 49570, Aug. 13, 2020]

Depending on the state and the covered scope of service, this can be included as a direct cost, using line 27 in the cost accounting report.

Additionally, grant-recipient CCHBCs can earmark monies for training and education, including exam prep (similar to any community mental health organization that invests in the development of its staff).



Support through Payviders (and/or other Grant Funding)

Triad is currently partnered with Kaiser Permanente (in partnership with the National Council) and Optum to support candidates (particularly minoritized candidates) through placement at providers, exam prep, and clinical supervision.

We hope to see both the KP and Optum programs expand over time, and we expect that there will continue to be funding opportunities through payviders, federal, state, and county budgets, and philanthropic efforts.



Contact Us

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