

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 619

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .190230.1

Short Title: Social Work License for Some Degrees

Sponsor(s): Representative Rick Miera

Analyst: James Ball

Date: February 28, 2013

Bill Summary:

HB 619 amends the *Social Work Practice Act* to allow an individual to be licensed as a master social worker without passing a written examination, if the individual:

- has filed an application;
- has a master's degree in social work;
- meets all other requirements for licensure as a master social worker; and
- has been employed for at least three years in a private or public agency under the title of social worker or other title under which the applicant is deemed by the Board of Social Work (BSW) to have been practicing social work.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 619 does not contain an appropriation.

Substantive Issues:

According to the Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD), while HB 619 would authorize an as yet unknown number of individuals to obtain licensure in social work, it could, at the same time, limit the mobility of the New Mexico licensed social workers because the vast majority of states require passing of the Association of Social Work Board (ASWB) national examination. The only current exception is California.

RLD also states that anyone who has been employed as a social worker in a private or public agency without a license to practice social work in the past 20 years would be in violation of existing statute.

Background:

According to RLD, the BSW began licensing social workers in 1990 and did allow a grandfathering period for one year for individuals who did not have a social work degree. From 1991 to the present, the BSW has licensed only individuals who have obtained a bachelor's or master's degree in social work from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. In addition, applicants who were granted licensure from 1991 to the present were required to take and pass the ASWB examination.

Committee Referrals:

HEC/HLC

Related Bills:

None as of 2/28/2013.