Office of Professional Regulation – Social Worker

Disclosure Document for Clinical Social Workers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Initial</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>License #</th>
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<th>Previous Name(s) (Maiden)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Formal Education</th>
<th>Name of Institution:</th>
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<td>Dates Attended:</td>
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<td>Degree(s) awarded, if any:</td>
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<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Status:</th>
<th>Receive supervision or peer consultation?</th>
<th>How often?</th>
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<td>Scope of Practice</td>
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<td>Area of Specialization:</td>
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<td>Special Qualifications:</td>
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**Client’s Disclosure Confirmation**

My signature acknowledges that I have been given the professional qualifications and experience of (Name, Name), a listing of actions that constitute unprofessional conduct according to Vermont statutes, and the method for making a consumer inquiry or filing a complaint with the Office of Professional Regulation. This information was given to me no later than my third office visit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client’s Signature or Parent/Guardian</th>
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<tr>
<th>Practitioner’s Signature</th>
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Office of Professional Regulation Notice

The Office of Professional Regulation provides Vermont licenses, certifications, and registrations for over 56,000 practitioners and businesses. Forty-six professions and occupations are supported and managed by this office. A list of professions regulated is found below.

Each profession or occupation is governed by laws defining professional conduct. Consumers who have inquiries or wish to obtain a form to register a complaint may do so by calling (802) 828-1505, or by writing to the Director of the Office, Secretary of State’s Office, 89 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Montpelier, VT 05620-3402.

Upon receipt of a complaint, an administrative review determines if the issues raised are covered by the applicable professional conduct statute. If so, a committee is assigned to investigate, collect information, and recommend action or closure to the appropriate governing body.

All complaint investigations are confidential. Should the investigation conclude with a decision for disciplinary action against a professional’s license and ability to practice, the name of the license holder will then be made public.

Complaint investigations focus on licensure and fitness of the licensee to practice. Disciplinary action, when warranted, ranges from warning to revocation of license, based on the circumstances. You should not expect a return of fees paid or additional unpaid services as part of the results of this process. If you seek restitution of this nature, consider consulting with the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General, retaining an attorney, or filing a case in Small Claims Court.

Accountancy                     Naturopaths
Acupuncture                     Nursing
Architects                      Nursing Home Administrators
Athletic Trainers               Occupational Therapists
Auctioneers                     Opticians
Audiologists                    Optometry
Barbers & Cosmetologists        Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
Boxing Control                  Pharmacy
Chiropractic                    Physical Therapists
Dental Examiners                Private Investigative & Security Services
Dietitians                      Property Inspectors
Drug and Alcohol Counselor     Psychoanalyst
Electrolysis                    Psychology
Professional Engineering       Psychotherapist, Non-licensed
Funeral Service                 Radiologic Technology
Hearing Aid Dispensers          Real Estate Appraisers
Land Surveyors                  Real Estate
Landscape Architects            Respiratory Care
Marriage & Family Therapists    Social Workers, Clinical
Clinical Mental Health Counselors Tattooists
Midwives, Licensed              Veterinary
Motor Vehicle Racing

Chapter 78: Roster of Psychotherapists Who Are Nonlicensed

§ 4090. Disclosure of Information

The board shall adopt rules requiring persons entered on the roster to disclose to each client the psychotherapist’s professional qualifications and experience, those actions that constitute unprofessional conduct, and the method for filing a complaint or making a consumer inquiry, and provisions relating to the manner in which the information shall be displayed and signed by both the rostered psychotherapist and the client. The rules may include provisions for applying or modifying these requirements in cases involving institutionalized clients, minors and adults under the supervision of a guardian.
3 V.S.A. § 129a. Unprofessional conduct

(a) In addition to any other provision of law, the following conduct by a licensee constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license or other disciplinary action. Any one of the following items, or any combination of items, whether or not the conduct at issue was committed within or outside the State, shall constitute unprofessional conduct:

(1) Fraudulent or deceptive procurement or use of a license.

(2) Advertising that is intended or has a tendency to deceive.

(3) Failing to comply with provisions of federal or state statutes or rules governing the practice of the profession.

(4) Failing to comply with an order of the board or violating any term or condition of a license restricted by the board.

(5) Practicing the profession when medically or psychologically unfit to do so.

(6) Delegating professional responsibilities to a person whom the licensed professional knows, or has reason to know, is not qualified by training, experience, education, or licensing credentials to perform them, or knowingly providing professional supervision or serving as a preceptor to a person who has not been licensed or registered as required by the laws of that person's profession.

(7) Willfully making or filing false reports or records in the practice of the profession; willfully impeding or obstructing the proper making or filing of reports or records or willfully failing to file the proper reports or records.

(8) Failing to make available promptly to a person using professional health care services, that person's representative, or succeeding health care professionals or institutions, upon written request and direction of the person using professional health care services, copies of that person's records in the possession or under the control of the licensed practitioner, or failing to notify patients or clients how to obtain their records when a practice closes.

(9) Failing to retain client records for a period of seven years, unless laws specific to the profession allow for a shorter retention period. When other laws or agency rules require retention for a longer period of time, the longer retention period shall apply.

(10) Conviction of a crime related to the practice of the profession or conviction of a felony, whether or not related to the practice of the profession.

(11) Failing to report to the office a conviction of any felony or any offense related to the practice of the profession in a Vermont District Court, a Vermont Superior Court, a federal court, or a court outside Vermont within 30 days.

(12) Exercising undue influence on or taking improper advantage of a person using professional services, or promoting the sale of services or goods in a manner which exploits a person for the financial gain of the practitioner or a third party.

(13) Performing treatments or providing services which the licensee is not qualified to perform or which are beyond the scope of the licensee's education, training, capabilities, experience, or scope of practice.

(14) Failing to report to the office within 30 days a change of name or address.
(15) Failing to exercise independent professional judgment in the performance of licensed activities when that judgment is necessary to avoid action repugnant to the obligations of the profession.

(b) Failure to practice competently by reason of any cause on a single occasion or on multiple occasions may constitute unprofessional conduct, whether actual injury to a client, patient, or customer has occurred. Failure to practice competently includes:

(1) performance of unsafe or unacceptable patient or client care; or

(2) failure to conform to the essential standards of acceptable and prevailing practice.

(c) The burden of proof in a disciplinary action shall be on the State to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the person has engaged in unprofessional conduct.

(d) After hearing, and upon a finding of unprofessional conduct, a board or an administrative law officer may take disciplinary action against a licensee or applicant, including imposing an administrative penalty not to exceed $1,000.00 for each unprofessional conduct violation. Any money received under this subsection shall be deposited in the Professional Regulatory Fee Fund established in section 124 of this title for the purpose of providing education and training for board members and advisor appointees. The Director shall detail in the annual report receipts and expenses from money received under this subsection.


§ 3210. Unprofessional conduct

(a) The following conduct and the conduct set forth in 3 V.S.A. § 129a by a licensed social worker constitutes unprofessional conduct. When that conduct is by an applicant or a person who later becomes an applicant, it may constitute grounds for denial of a license:

(1) failing to use a correct title in professional activity;

(2) conduct which evidences unfitness to practice clinical social work;

(3) engaging in any sexual conduct with a client, or with the immediate family member of a client, with whom the licensee has had a professional relationship within the previous two years;

(4) harassing, intimidating, or abusing a client or patient;

(5) practicing outside or beyond a clinical social worker's area of training, experience, or competence without appropriate supervision;

(6) engaging in conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of the clinical social worker's professional discretion and impartial judgment;

(7) failing to inform a client when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and to take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the client's interest primary and protects the client's interest to the greatest extent possible;

(8) taking unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploiting others to further the clinical social worker's personal, religious, political, or business interests;

(9) engaging in dual or multiple relationships with a client or former client in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client;

(10) failing to take steps to protect a client and to set clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries, in instances where dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable;
(11) failing to clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of the clinical social worker's professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services, when a clinical social worker provides services to two or more people who have a spousal, familial, or other relationship with each other;

(12) failing to clarify the clinical social worker's role with the parties involved and to take appropriate action to minimize any conflicts of interest, when the clinical social worker anticipates a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or anticipates having to perform in conflicting roles such as testifying in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients.