

Table of Contents
Board of Social Work

<i>Agency Profile</i>	1
Agency Expenditure Overview	6
Agency Financing by Fund	7
Agency Change Summary	8
<u>Change Item(s)</u>	9
<i>Maintain Current Service Levels</i>	9

<https://mn.gov/boards/social-work/>

AT A GLANCE

Licensing Services

- 5,797 Licensed Social Workers
- 3,228 Licensed Graduate Social Workers
- 686 Licensed Independent Social Workers
- 7,336 Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers
- 397 temporary license applications received
- 2,653 permanent license applications received
- 1,831 permanent licenses granted
- 6,841 license renewals processed
- 8,111 supervision plan and verification forms processed
- 245 continuing education providers approved

Complaint Resolution Services

- 449 new complaints received
- 580 complaints resolved
- 39 corrective and disciplinary actions

Education Outreach Services

- 24 student presentations
- 2 conference exhibits

Staff to Licensee Ratio

- 1 to 1,608 = 10.6 staff to 17,047 licensees

Compliance Staff to Complaints Received Ratio

- 1 to 448 = 1.00 compliance unit staff to 448 complaints received

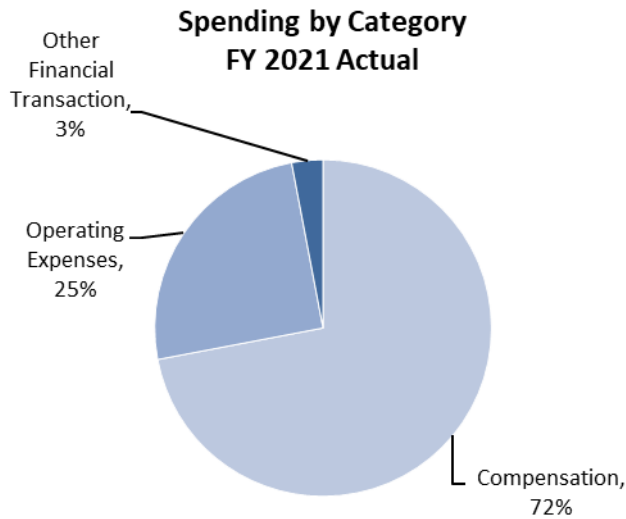
PURPOSE

The Board's mission is to protect the public through licensing and regulation of the social work profession and ensure residents of Minnesota that licensed social workers are qualified, professional, ethical, and accountable. The public safety mission creates the foundation for the Board's work. Fifteen volunteer Board Members, including five public members, provide oversight to make certain we meet the needs of citizens. We promote a diverse and qualified workforce guided by our agency core values and are committed to actively examine and address systemic inequities in policy and practice with a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens to reduce unnecessary licensing barriers, while maintaining standards to ensure our mission of protecting the public.

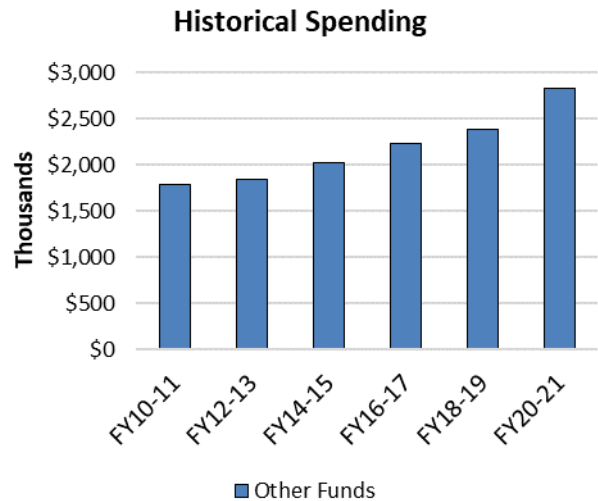
The Board keeps Minnesotans safe by 1) licensing qualified social workers; 2) investigating and resolving complaints when services do not meet standards; and 3) providing outreach and education. The demand for our services has grown in response to a significant increase in the number of applicants, licensees, and complaints.

We collaborate with state and federal agencies, utilize technology to streamline business processes, provide online services, and increase transparency and access to information for citizens. The Board conducts regular strategic planning, identifies outcome-based priorities, measures results, and engages in continuous process and service delivery improvements with the goal to be a mission-driven, efficient, and effective state agency.

BUDGET



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Board is funded by licensure fees and receives no general fund dollars. Minnesota Statutes section 214.06, subdivision 1(a) requires the Board to collect fees in the amount sufficient to cover direct and indirect expenditures. Funds are deposited as non-dedicated revenue into the state government special revenue fund. From this fund, the Board receives a direct appropriation to pay for agency operations and program services including licensing, complaint investigation and resolution, education and outreach, salaries, rent, and technology expenses.

In addition to Board direct operational and program service expenses, fees collected must be sufficient to pay statewide indirect costs to other state agencies and programs providing services, including the Office of the Attorney General for legal and investigative services, and inter-board programs including the Administrative Services Unit, Department of Administration Small Agency Resource Team, Health Professionals Services Program, and the Criminal Background Check Program.

STRATEGIES

The Minnesota Board of Social Work (BOSW) is authorized under [MS 148E.001-148E.290](#) to provide key services and strategies to keep Minnesotans safe. Our agency strives to provide efficient and accountable services, effectively respond to the COVID 19 pandemic with a virtual and staff telework business model, and maintain excellent and timely customer service. Our primary services include:

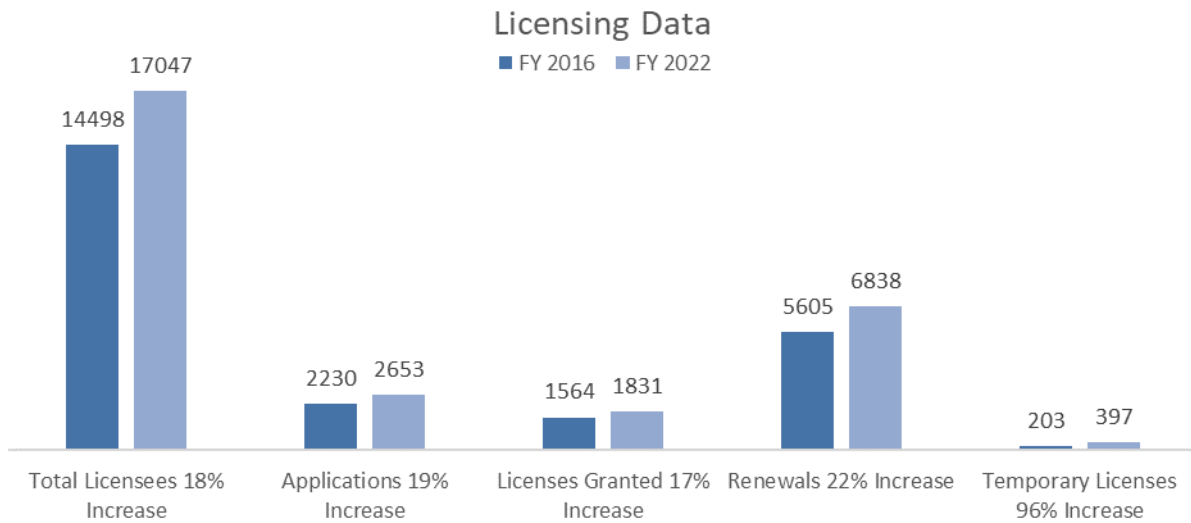
1. License and regulate qualified social work professionals:

- Establish and enforce requirements for initial and continued licensure, including ethical practice standards, education, national examination, criminal background checks, supervised practice experience, and continuing education.
- Issue and renew bachelor and graduate degree licenses via examination and licensure by endorsement: Licensed Social Worker (LSW); Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW); Licensed Independent Social Worker (LISW); and Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW).
- Issue temporary licenses to expedite employment of new graduates, military personnel, license mobility, and licensees relocating to Minnesota from other states.
- Successfully implemented the BOSW 2021 legislation to remove the limitation on virtual supervision, creating greater access and equity for licensees.

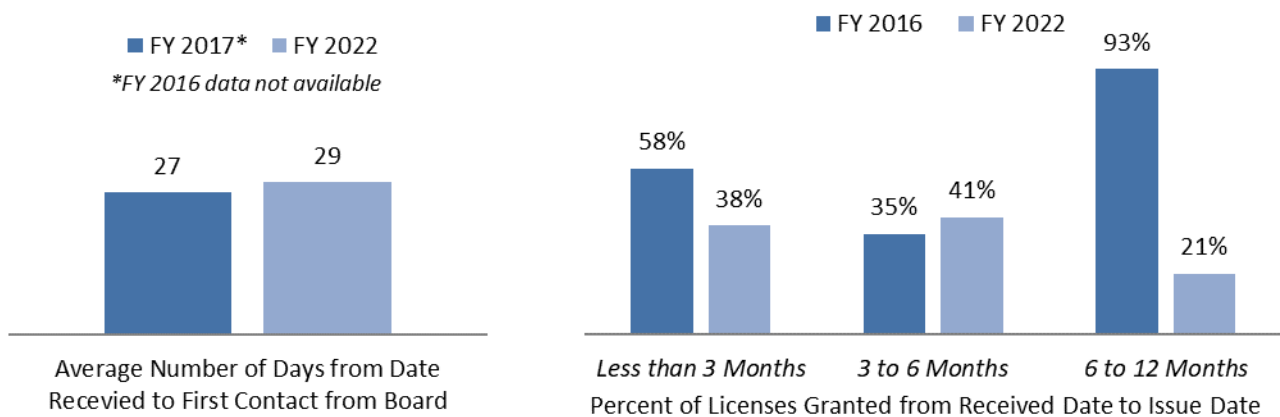
- Provide online services for license application, license renewal, and supervision plan and verification submission, 24/7 license verification service, including public license data, adverse license actions, and licensing supervisor information.
 - Promote a more diverse and qualified licensed mental health workforce.
 - Collaborate with other Health Licensing Boards and MNIT to develop, maintain, and enhance a common platform licensing database system and online services for enhanced data security, improved customer access and services, and greater business efficiencies.
- 2. Investigate and resolve complaints against licensed social workers in a fair and timely manner:**
- Ensure that licensed social workers meet professional standards, practice safely and competently, and are accountable to the people they serve.
 - Increase efficiency and timeliness of complaint resolution process with creation of a new Investigator position, database upgrade, and revised and improved procedures.
 - Collaborate with the Office of the Attorney General to investigate, resolve complaints, and act when appropriate.
 - Utilize and partner with the Health Professionals Services Program, for impaired licensed professionals, to assist with monitoring and remediation of licensees to ensure safe practice.
 - Offer guidance to the public, employers, supervisors, applicants, and licensees about ethical practice standards, licensing requirements, complaint resolution process, and the Social Work Practice Act.
- 3. Provide education, outreach, strategic communications, and build collaborative partnerships:**
- Educate the public, social work students and faculty, licensed professionals, applicants, and organizations about professional licensing responsibilities, ethical practice standards, and the complaint resolution process through in-person and virtual, web-based methods.
 - Expand outreach to wider audiences including the public, employers, and diverse communities and organizations using the GovDelivery subscription service to distribute the agency newsletter and bulletins to over 10,000 stakeholders and citizen subscribers.
 - Utilize technology to increase access to educational opportunities for licensees and applicants including several free webinars, “Know Your Licensing Law” free online service, and seven new online learning module videos published in 2021.
 - Publish an annual quantitative and qualitative Customer Satisfaction Survey to 1) assess the performance of and satisfaction with “customer-facing” services, 2) better understand customer needs, and 3) utilize survey results to make improvements as needed.
 - Partner with local, state, and national organizations to improve public safety policies, regulatory practices, and mental health workforce issues, including social work licensing mobility and portability.
 - Successfully championed new legislation in the 2020 legislative session to benefit social workers and consumers by reducing unnecessary licensing barriers while still maintaining standards, improving license mobility, creating more flexibility for applicants and licensees, and integrating increased use of technology. Changes improve the statute by simplifying and reorganizing sections, improving operational efficiencies, and modernizing paper-dependent, obsolete methods that cause delays in processing.

RESULTS

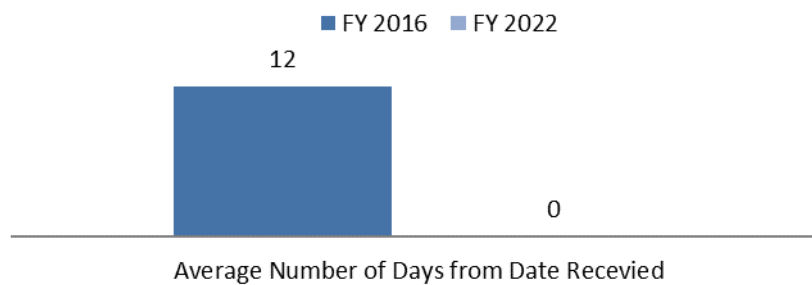
The following charts show the trends in the increased “quantity” and “quality” of licensing data and complaint data and resolution services provided, including the increase in overall numbers served and the processing and resolution times for fiscal years 2016* and 2022.



Application Processing Time

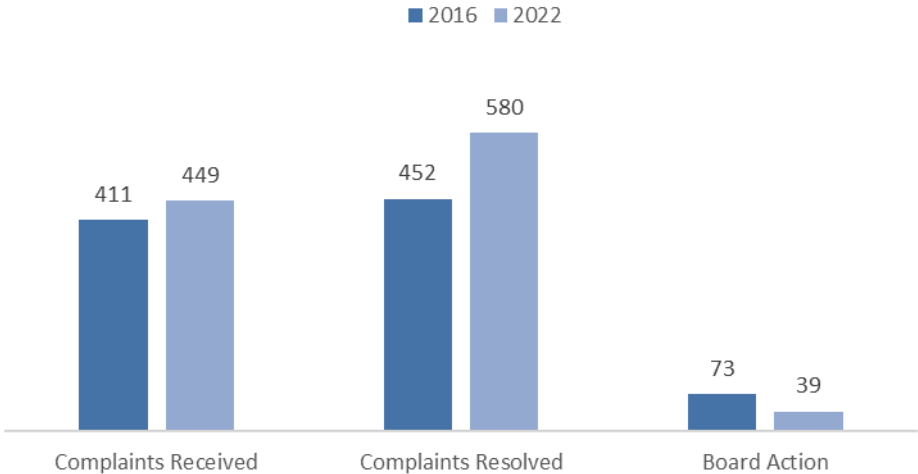


Renewal Processing Time

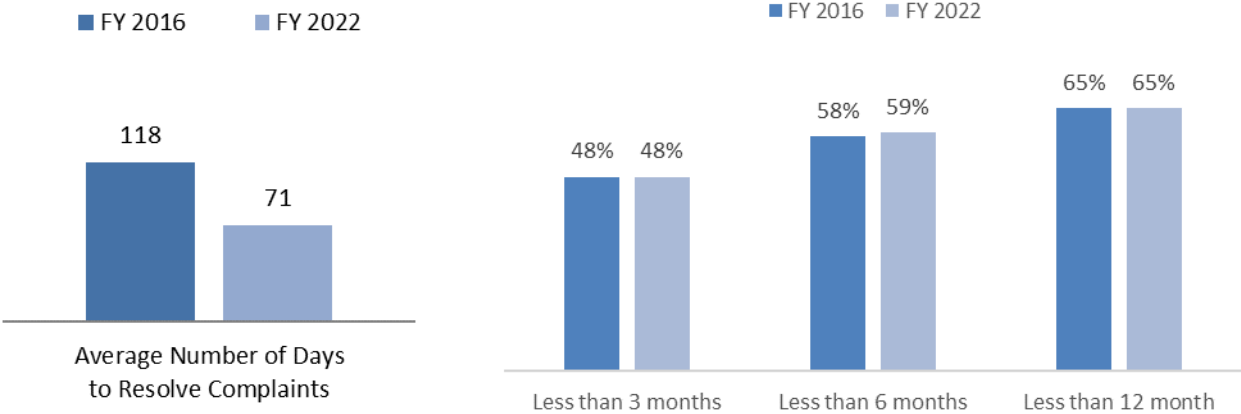


**Note: Renewal processing time reduced to 24 hours or less in December 2016 due to the deployment of a new license database which allowed for automatic approval of renewals.*

Complaint Data



Complaint Processing Time



Board of Social Work Legal Authority:
 Minnesota Social Work Practice Act (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/148E>)
 Minnesota Social Work Practice Act Additional Provisions (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/148D>)
 Examining and Licensing Boards (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/214>)

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base FY24 FY25		Governor's Recommendation FY24 FY25	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>								
1201 - Health Related Boards	1,325	1,425	1,312	1,809	1,560	1,560	1,779	1,839
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	37	40	61	108	55	55	55	55
Total	1,362	1,465	1,373	1,917	1,615	1,615	1,834	1,894
Biennial Change				463		(60)		438
Biennial % Change				16		(2)		13
Governor's Change from Base								498
Governor's % Change from Base								15

Expenditures by Program

Social Work Board	1,362	1,465	1,373	1,917	1,615	1,615	1,834	1,894
Total	1,362	1,465	1,373	1,917	1,615	1,615	1,834	1,894

Expenditures by Category

Compensation	989	1,053	1,062	1,265	1,179	1,199	1,308	1,378
Operating Expenses	372	369	309	652	436	416	526	516
Other Financial Transaction		44	2					
Total	1,362	1,465	1,373	1,917	1,615	1,615	1,834	1,894

Full-Time Equivalents

12.15	12.10	12.14	13.63	12.63	12.63	12.63	12.63
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(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimate FY23	Forecast Base FY24 FY25		Governor's Recommendation FY24 FY25	
1201 - Health Related Boards								
Balance Forward In		184		249				
Direct Appropriation	1,437	1,404	1,561	1,560	1,560	1,560	1,779	1,839
Cancellations		162						
Balance Forward Out	112		249					
Expenditures	1,325	1,425	1,312	1,809	1,560	1,560	1,779	1,839
Biennial Change in Expenditures				371		(1)		497
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				13		(0)		16
Governor's Change from Base								498
Governor's % Change from Base								16
Full-Time Equivalents	12.15	12.10	12.14	13.63	12.63	12.63	12.63	12.63

2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	26	38	51	53				
Receipts	49	53	63	55	55	55	55	55
Balance Forward Out	38	51	53					
Expenditures	37	40	61	108	55	55	55	55
Biennial Change in Expenditures				92		(59)		(59)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				121		(35)		(35)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Biennium 2024-25
Direct				
Fund: 1201 - Health Related Boards				
FY2023 Appropriations	1,560	1,560	1,560	3,120
Forecast Base	1,560	1,560	1,560	3,120
Change Items				
Maintain Current Service Levels		219	279	498
Total Governor's Recommendations	1,560	1,779	1,839	3,618
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Planned Spending	108	55	55	110
Forecast Base	108	55	55	110
Total Governor's Recommendations	108	55	55	110
Revenue Change Summary				
Dedicated				
Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue				
Forecast Revenues	55	55	55	110
Total Governor's Recommendations	55	55	55	110
Non-Dedicated				
Fund: 1201 - Health Related Boards				
Forecast Revenues	2,141	2,229	2,255	4,484
Total Governor's Recommendations	2,141	2,229	2,255	4,484

Board of Social Work

FY 2024-25 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Maintain Current Service Levels

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
General Fund				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	219	279	279	279
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	219	279	279	279
FTEs	0	0	0	0

Recommendation:

The Governor recommends additional funding of \$219,000 in FY 2024 and \$279,000 in each subsequent year from the state government special revenue fund to maintain the current level of service delivery at the Board of Social Work.

Rationale/Background:

Each year, the cost of doing business rises—employer-paid health care contributions, FICA and Medicare, along with other salary and compensation-related costs increase. Other operating costs, like rent and lease, fuel and utilities, and IT and legal services also grow. This cost growth puts pressure on agency operating budgets that remain flat from year to year.

Agencies face challenging decisions to manage these costs within existing budgets, while maintaining the services Minnesotans expect. From year to year, agencies find ways to become more efficient with existing resources. However, cost growth typically outstrips efficiencies, and without additional resources added to agency budgets, service delivery erodes.

For the Board, operating cost pressures exist in multiple categories—increases in compensation and insurance costs at the agency, increasing costs to maintain our current staff complement in a challenging labor market, and increasing IT costs. If an operational increase is not provided, the Board will be unable to meet its legislative mandate to provide timely critical public safety services to children, families, underserved and disadvantaged communities, and ensure that citizens receive social work services from licensed social workers who meet Board ethical standards of practice.

Proposal:

The Governor recommends increasing agency operating budgets to support maintaining the delivery of current services. For the Board, this funding will support expected and anticipated employee compensation growth and known cost increases in lease expenses and IT services.

Results:

This proposal is intended to allow the Board of Social Work to continue to provide current levels of service and information to the public.