**College of Education, Humanities and Behavioral Sciences**

**Department of Social Work**

***Social Work Licensure Report***

**July 2025**

 **Data from the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) 2024 Report**

All persons who have earned a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or Master of Social Work (MSW) from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program are deemed to have been academically prepared to enter into the profession of social work. The passage of a licensure examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) is required in all fifty states. In Alabama a social work license is required to practice under the designation of *social worker*.

In August, 2022 a first-time report of ASWB licensure exam pass rate analysis was released to the public. The report reflected wide-racial disparities in exam pass rate results, particularly for African-American test-takers, who were significantly less likely to pass the exam on first and eventual tries than whites.

The release of the report impacted the Council on Social Work Education’s requirements for the 2022 Education Policies and Accreditation Standards, as indicated in a September, 8, 2022 notice, which reads:

“*This July, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) celebrated the release of the 2022 Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Since that time, the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) published the 2022 ASWB Exam Pass Rate Analysis), which included descriptive statistics that suggest significant race and age disparities in exam pass rates. While more rigorous data analysis is needed to accurately understand these disparities among test takers, the descriptive data are alarming.”*

*“Therefore, CSWE’s Commission on Accreditation has made the decision to remove licensing exam pass rates from the 2022 EPAS accreditation standards. This change reinforces the 2022 EPAS’ emphasis on anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion, which supports social work education programs in developing a workforce of social workers who are knowledgeable about the ways positionality, power, privilege, and difference affect all levels of practice.”*

*Licensing exam pass rates were identified as an optional post-graduation program outcome in Accreditation Standard 5.0.3. The ASWB data suggest that licensing exam pass rates may not be an equitable measure of program outcomes. Therefore, licensing exam pass rates have been removed in the following areas:*

*2022 EPAS—Accreditation Standard 5.0.3*

*2022 EPAS Glossary—definitions of Licensing exam pass rates and Program outcomes*

*2022 EPAS Frequently Asked Questions—information on program outcomes. (*https://www.cswe.org/news/newsroom/coa-removes-licensing-exam-pass-rates-from-the-2022-epas/)

Many social work organizations, students, and educators are contributing to the call to discuss and address the issue of disparate social work licensure test results. The Alabama A & M Social Work Department has worked diligently to improve student performance on the licensure exam, and in conjunction with the Alabama National Association of Social Workers has provided free full-day and week-end licensure trainings with nationally recognized trainers who have each helped thousands of testers pass the licensure exams. Areas targeted include: Overview of Test Construction, Standardized Test-Taking Strategy, Professional Ethics & Values, Human Development, Diversity and Behavior, Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment Planning, Models & Methods of Social Work Practice, Supervision, and a Comprehensive workbook with sample test questions. Free licensure preparation is offered to BSW graduates, MSW students, AAMU MSW Program graduates and persons with social work degrees who are working within the Department of Family & Children Services. We realize that graduates of AAMU social programs may opt to take the exam at any time after graduation-which can include several years post-graduation.

**The ASWB 2024** report which examines the 2023 social work licensure pass rates, is the most recent data available to social work programs currently. Results from AAMU licensure exam applicants for the Bachelor of Social Work, Master of Social Work and the Clinical Social Worker licensure are provided. The tables below contain licensure examination passage rates from 2023, tabulated by ASWB for both undergraduate and graduate alumni of Alabama A & M University. The tables also provide comparative ASWB pass rates for the state of Alabama

**School:** Alabama A&M University

**Date:** June 2024

The table presents the numbers of examinations administered to candidates who indicated that they attended the college or university listed above. Figures indicate the percentage of first-time, repeat, and total test-takers who passed the indicated exam categories during the year 2023. Note that test-takers who are unsuccessful may repeat the examination more than once.

Table 1.0 Alabama A & M University 2023 Licensure pass rates



Table 1.0 indicates a first-time Master of Social Work licensure exam pass rate of 34.6% (N=52), and a 13.3% (N=75) pass rate for repeat testers. The Bachelor of Social Work licensure exam had a 50% (N=2) pass rate, with two persons taking the exam. First-time test takers for the Clinical Social Work licensure exam, have a pass rate of 42.3% (N=26), and a 23.3% (N=43) pass rate for repeat testers. We note that MSW licensure percentages have been steady since 2022, where there was a MSW licensure exam first-time pass rate of 37%( N=62), and 23.5% (N=132) pass rate for repeat testers.

We initially noted an upward trend in the percentage of first-time test takers who passed the Masters and Clinical exams from 2018-2021. The Masters first-time pass rate percentage increased from 26% in 2018 to 37% in 2021, while the clinical first- time pass rate increased from 29% in 2018 to 39% in 2021.

**2023 pass rate summary report**

**Jurisdiction:** Alabama

**Date:** June 2024

The table presents the numbers of examinations administered to candidates who were authorized by the state or jurisdiction listed above. Figures indicate the percentage of first-time, repeat, and total test-takers who passed the indicated exam categories during the year 2023. Note that test-takers who are unsuccessful may repeat the examination more than once.

Table 2.0: State of Alabama Social Work Licensure Pass Rates



The following tables from ASWB provide data from licensure testers who listed AAMU the school from which they graduated. The tables provided are part of a detailed report of licensure results and trends of AAMU students in 2021. This report includes content domain scores/means which can provide input, when reviewing curriculum--an ongoing process linked to the evaluation of our social work programs.



Table 7 shows the annual 2018–2021 scaled means for each content domain of the exam.



<https://www.aswb.org/exam/exam-scoring/exam-pass-rates/>