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Social Work Supervision; The Current Rules

What is the Difference between Clinical Supervision and Training Supervision?

The CSWMFT Board often receive inquires about supervision CEU requirements to earn and maintain the LISW-S designation. Let's say there's a type of supervision related to human resources and we call it "administrative supervision". This has to do with policies and procedures of the agency, signing your time card, completing your paperwork on time, and that rule about not wearing jeans with holes in them on Friday. CEUs that focus only on personnel issues do not count for supervision CEUs. Okay ... so what is the difference between clinical supervision and training supervision? This isn't one of those Zen riddles that you're supposed to figure out after deep meditation, the CSWMFT Board addresses social work supervision in the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). This article is a brief summary and interpretation of those rules and will end with a paragraph summarizing social work supervision continuing education.

So let's first take a look at how supervision is defined in the rules. OAC 4757-23-01 defines social work supervision as follows:

- (1) **“Clinical supervision”** of social workers performing social psychotherapy and social workers employed in a private practice, partnership, or group practice means the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the supervisee's performance; professional guidance to the supervisee; approval of the supervisee's intervention plans and their implementation; the assumption of responsibility for the welfare of the supervisee's clients; and assurance that the supervisee functions within the limits of their license. The assessment, diagnosis, treatment plan, revisions to the treatment plan and transfer or termination shall be cosigned by the supervisor and shall be available to the board upon request.
- (2) **“Training supervision”** means supervision for the purposes of obtaining a license and/or development of new areas of proficiency while providing services to clients. Training supervision may be individual supervision or group supervision.

The rule also states that an LSW who is working at an agency can be **clinically supervised** by an independent social worker, a professional clinical counselor, a psychologist, a psychiatrist or a registered nurse with a master's degree with a specialty in psychiatric nursing for their clinical supervision. Any of these disciplines can co-sign the required documentation. However, **training supervision**, which is the supervision necessary to become an LISW, must be done by an LISW-S. The training supervisor and the clinical supervisor are often the same person; however, they don't have to be.

There should be an average of one hour of supervision for every twenty hours worked by the supervisee, with no less than one hundred fifty (150) hours total. Training supervision must be face-to-face contact between the supervisor and the supervisee in a private session wherein the supervisor and supervisee(s) deal with problems unique to the practice of the supervisee(s). Group supervision is face-to-face contact with a small group not to exceed six supervisees. The Social Work Professional Standards Committee has determined that video chat, such as Skype, is an acceptable means of training supervision if proper safe-



Social Work Supervision Continued

guards for confidentiality are observed. Records of training supervision shall be maintained by the supervisee and made available to the Board upon request. The supervision records shall contain information concerning the dates of supervision, content and goals of supervision. The supervisor must sign the supervision records at least quarterly to document their review

Furthermore, training supervision of a LSW shall be done by a LISW-S who has demonstrated competence in the area in which they are supervising, have training in supervision theory and practice, have training in legal and ethical issues relevant to counseling, psychosocial interventions and social psychotherapy. The LISW-S is also required to complete and forward to the board all supervision evaluation forms (PER or Professional Employment Reference) required by the board within thirty days of receipt of the form from a supervisee.

OAC 4757-19-02 states the requirements for licensure as an independent social worker are two years of supervised social work experience post MSW **and** post LSW. This means 24 full months of supervised experience, which includes three thousand hours of work for a fee, salary, or other considerations, during which time the applicant was engaged in the practice of master's level social work, and held licensure as a social worker; except that no applicant may be credited with more than 1,500 hours of experience during any twelve-month period. If you are working part-time your second year of experience cannot begin until the first 1,500 hours have been satisfied. Likewise your second year is not complete until it has been a full-year and at least 1,500 hours.

Social Worker supervision continuing education courses need to focus on training supervision as defined in rule 4757-23-01 of the Administrative Code, which is the sole reason for the independent social worker supervision designation. Ultimately, training supervision is focused on developing social worker trainees and the master's holding social workers into ethical and competent social workers and independent social workers respectively. Supervision trainings which have a strong component about the supervisee-client relationship or the clinical supervisor-supervisee relationship apply. Courses on work place supervision or employer-employee relationships do not apply.

Rules are routinely changed if the Board perceives a problem with existing rules because they don't meet the changing work environment, or other complication. Read the current rules in their entirety here: <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/4757-19-02> and <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/4757-23>

Comments or questions about this article, or questions you would like to see addressed under the "Social Work Issues" column, can be sent to: douglas.warne@cswb.state.oh.us

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