

2024 Regulatory Research Committee report to the Delegate Assembly



Charge to committee

The Regulatory Research Committee reports to the Board of Directors. The committee shall be composed of individuals representing a diverse range of regulatory and academic perspectives. As necessary and appropriate, the committee will work in collaboration with other ASWB committees and task forces to complete its charges. The committee's work will be guided by the ASWB strategic plan whenever applicable.

Ongoing charges

1. Conducting an annual assessment of the regulatory research needs of ASWB membership, to include prioritizing the types of research needed and making the list available to interested researchers.
2. Reviewing published research about occupational licensing, with particular focus on the social work profession, and making relevant research and/or a synopsis of the research available to ASWB members.

During 2024, the Regulatory Research Committee is charged with:

1. Establishing policies for commissioning research and reviewing commissioned research proposals. Develop policies for awarding grants to researchers.
2. Determining the next award cycle and recommend to the Board of Directors.
3. Reviewing progress on three funded projects from 2023.

Recommendations/actions

The Regulatory Research Committee discussed and prioritized topics for future research in response to needs identified by regulators. The selected topics are:

- Supervision
 - Supervision for clinical licensure
 - Independent and supervised practice
 - Supervisor qualifications
- Social Work Licensure Compact
- Electronic practice

The committee revised the request for proposals (RFP) for use in the next funding cycle. Revisions include simplifying and clarifying

Committee members

Chair

Kenya Anderson (TN)

Amy Ashton-Williams (OR)

Brian Brumley (TX)

Adrienne Ekas (MD)

Leannette Henegan (AZ)

Board liaison

Elizabeth Pope (NC)

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the language in the RFP, aligning the evaluation rubric with the requirements in the request for proposals, and recalibrating the weighting in the evaluation rubric.

The committee discussed and recommended updates to research policies for the ASWB policy manual.

Members also reviewed updates on ASWB research initiatives and research projects selected by the 2023 Regulatory Research Committee.

COMMITTEE-SELECTED RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATES

Western Kentucky University

Erin Warfel, DSW, MSS, MLSP, LCSW, Whitney Harper, Ph.D., MSW, April Murphy, Ph.D., CSW
Identifying Opportunities to Enhance Equitable Paths to Social Work Licensure: The study aims to address three research questions.

Qualitative and quantitative studies have been completed:

- Nine focus groups, 82 participants
- Quantitative survey received 3,585 responses
- Preliminary preview of survey results:
 - What factors impact disparity in pass rates for social work licensure?
 - Top rated response: *Social work education has a responsibility to prepare social work students for the social work licensure exam.*
 - What is the impact of disparity in licensure pass rate on the social work profession?
 - Top rated response: *Disparity in licensure pass rates for people of color negatively impacts the social work profession*
 - What are solutions to reduce disparity in pass rates for social work licensure?
 - Top rated response: *The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) licensure exam writers should be comprised of diverse individuals*

Delivery: Mid 2025

Rutgers University School of Social Work

Joy J. Kim, Ph.D., MSW Michael M. Joo, Ph.D., MSW

The Effects of Social Work Regulatory Rules on Public Safety and Social Workers' Earnings: The project will look at the effects of social work regulatory rules on (1) indicators of public safety and (2) social workers' earnings.

Five projects on clinical supervision are underway:

- Analysis of state statutes on clinical supervision regulations
- Effects of clinical supervision regulations and Clinical exam passage
- Survey of regulatory rules and enforcement

- Regulating clinical supervisor qualifications in social work: National standards vs. state variations
- State regulations of clinical supervision and adverse actions against clinical social workers: Analyses of national practitioner data bank 2000-2024

Delivery: Late 2025

Brigham Young University

Cole Hooley, Ph.D, LCSW, Katherine Marcal, Ph.D, MSW, Gabby Cunningham, Ph.D., MBA

Understanding the Impact Licensing Policies have on Scaling-up the Social Work Workforce and

Mitigating Harm: The project addresses two main questions: (1) What are the long-term impacts of licensure changes on the size of the social work workforce? (2) What potential impact will these policies have on mitigating public harm?

The researchers have obtained institutional review board approval, received ethical violation data from the state, defined causal variables, and are building their simulation model.

Delivery: Mid 2025

Future discussion topics and/or suggestions for 2025 charge

- Continue to monitor current research projects, including publication status. Recommend strategies for distribution of findings to members and the larger social work community.
- Finalize the RFP and matrix to be used in the next funding cycle.
- Recommend dates for next funding cycle to Board of Directors.