

This template was developed by the Coalition for Social Work and Health, www.socialworkandhealth.org, in response to the Department of Education's proposed rulemaking, Reimagining and Improving Student Education, affecting graduate student loans. Please tailor at least the yellow highlighted areas. You can read more about this issue [here](#) and [here](#).

Please (1) copy the template below, then (2) click this link and paste your submission:
<https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/ED-2025-OPE-0944-0001>.

March 1, 2026

The Honorable Chris McCaghren
Acting Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education Programs
Office of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100

RE: Docket ID ED-2025-OPE-0944

Department of Education — Reimagining and Improving Student Education

Dear Assistant Secretary McCaghren,

I am reaching out in a personal and professional capacity concerning the proposed rule that would not recognize a master's degree in social work (MSW) as a "professional degree", despite the degree being a required component of independent clinical licensure. The proposed policy would result in students pursuing clinical social work roles being capped at receiving \$20,500 in federal student loans per year, only half of the annual [cost of a typical MSW program](#).

Removing the ability to draw enough loans to cover an MSW program would be detrimental because **[think about the affordability of the degree]**.

I personally benefitted from access to federally-backed loans covering the full cost of education because **[how?]**.

Moving forward with the proposal will be damaging to future MSW students because an advanced degree is necessary to do clinical work. At my employer, **[insert hiring eligibility or personal anecdote that speaks to needing master's-level preparation]**.

I can personally speak to the workforce shortages in my line of work. In my [setting/organization], there are more people who seek [type of services] than we have the ability to provide because of our capacity. [Insert quick anecdote].

I respectfully urge that the Department of Education categorize MSWs as a recognized professional degree and that you do not exacerbate workforce shortages that will worsen healthcare delivery in acute hospital settings, prisons, and treatment facilities for persons living with disabilities. We need more ways to increase the [specific workforce] and social work participation, not fewer!

Thank you for your consideration and time,

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(include your name, degree, licensure, current title/affiliation, academic training and year, and email in case they have any clarifications)