THE NONLICENSED SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE

ANALYSES OF THE 2024 SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE SURVEY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study examines the characteristics of the nonlicensed social work workforce, using a sample of 1,625 respondents from the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey. The first report in this series, which used data from the U.S. Census Bureau's household surveys, found that more than half of those in the U.S. social work workforce were nonlicensed. Of these, 70% were estimated to be bachelor's-level social workers, and 30% were master's-level social workers. Many of these nonlicensed social workers are expected to be generalist or macro practitioners whose work involves fewer regulatory requirements and, depending on the state, may not require licensure.

The nonlicensed sample from the **2024 Social Work Workforce Survey** primarily consisted of younger, U.S.-born, White, female social workers. The survey was part of the 2024 Social Work Census conducted by the Association of Social Work Boards with the leading social work organizations that formed the Social Work Workforce Coalition. The nonlicensed social workers who responded were either in the licensing process at the time of the survey or held positions that did not require a license. Despite statistical weighting, this sample may not be representative of all nonlicensed social workers in the country when compared to self-identified social workers from the U.S. Census Bureau's household surveys. As a result, readers may need to be careful when interpreting the findings presented in this report. Nevertheless, the overall findings indicate that a social work degree and licensure serve as important stepping stones for many nonlicensed social workers' career development.

The analyses found that nonlicensed social workers often work in individual and family services settings, which prefer a social work degree but do not require licensure. While both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers focused on providing mental and behavioral health services in individual and family services agencies, more bachelor's-level social workers than their master's-level counterparts were in a generalist practice setting. Master's-level social workers were involved in more diverse practice functions and settings. Nonlicensed social workers' involvement in macro functions and roles was limited. About half of nonlicensed social workers worked with people with limited incomes, and most served clients from minoritized backgrounds in terms of racial and sexual identities, immigration status, and primary language. While a higher share of master's-level social workers were direct service providers, mentors, or administrators/program managers, more bachelor's-level social workers were case managers. The median annual gross earnings of the bachelor's- and master's-level social workers were $48,410 and $63,860, and

master's-level social workers had better access to employer-provided benefits than bachelor's-level social workers. Many nonlicensed social workers sought to pursue further education, training, and new opportunities within the social work field. Few reported planning to leave the profession.

Below are some more detailed findings from the study.

1. What were the key demographic characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce?

- The nonlicensed social work workforce was predominantly U.S.-born women at both the bachelor's and master's levels. The median ages of bachelor's-level (31 years old) and master's-level (39 years old) social workers suggest that the nonlicensed sample from the workforce survey was much younger than the self-identified social workers analyzed in the first report.

- About 69% of bachelor's-level and over 54% of master's-level social workers identified as White.

- About 7% of master's-level and 12% of bachelor's-level social workers reported having a work-limiting health condition, higher than the self-identified social workers from the first report.

2. What were the educational backgrounds of nonlicensed social workers? What percentage of bachelor's- and master's-level social workers majored in social work? What percentage of bachelor's-level social workers were pursuing a graduate degree?

- Nearly 50% of nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers majored in social work, followed by 21.41% majoring in psychology. Nearly 89% of master's-level social workers had an MSW. Unlike self-identified nonlicensed social workers from the U.S. Census Bureau's household surveys, most from the workforce survey sample had a social work degree.

- More than half (51.70%) of bachelor's-level social workers were enrolled in a graduate program. Of those enrolled, only 22.13% were enrolled in an in-person graduate program.

- About 8% of master's-level social workers were enrolled in a graduate program, 2.32% in a doctoral program, and 0.90% in a PhD program. More than half of the enrolled were enrolled in an online or hybrid program.

3. How did the employment characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce vary by education? What percentage of nonlicensed social workers worked in settings that required or preferred a social work degree or license?

- Nearly 90% of master's-level and 80% of bachelor's-level social workers reported that their positions either required or preferred a social work degree.

- About 52% of master's-level and 32% of bachelor's-level social workers stated that their positions either required or preferred a social work license.
- Both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers were predominantly employed by nonprofit and government agencies.
- About 24% of master's-level social workers and 22% of bachelor's-level social workers had more than one job, higher than the estimated 6% among U.S. female workers.

4. What were the reasons for not having a license?

- For bachelor's-level social workers, the reasons for not having a license were that a license was unnecessary (28.86%) or not required (34.05%) or that they did not have a social work degree (25.43%). About 23% were in the licensing process at the time of the survey.
- For master's-level social workers, the main reasons were being in the licensing process at the time of the survey (37.85%), not being required to have a license (36.85%), and failing to pass the licensing exam (33.64%). Many were pursuing licensure despite not being licensed at the time of the survey.

5. How did the practice characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce differ by education? How prevalent were the macro functions and roles among nonlicensed social workers?

- More than 45% of bachelor's-level social workers worked in individual and family services settings. Master's-level social workers were employed in a wider range of settings, such as hospitals (8.78%), psychiatric hospitals (4.28%), and educational institutions like K–12 schools (10.98%) and universities (9.06%).
- Both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers most commonly worked in individual and family services agencies, but their second most common settings varied. Bachelor's-level social workers often worked in outpatient centers, community services, and schools, while master's-level social workers were more likely to work in schools, colleges, hospitals, and outpatient centers.
- Both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers provided mental and behavioral health services and family and children's services, but master's-level social workers were more likely to engage in medical, advocacy, and school social services. In contrast, bachelor's-level social workers more frequently provided advocacy, child welfare services, and substance abuse services.

- Bachelor's-level social workers were more likely to work with children and families, especially clients with limited incomes. Both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers worked with clients from historically marginalized backgrounds (in terms of racial and sexual identities and immigration status), and many had clients whose primary language was not English.

- The most common roles for nonlicensed social workers were case managers, direct service providers, mentors, and supervisors. However, a higher percentage of master's-level social workers served as direct service providers and mentors, while bachelor's-level social workers were more likely to be case managers. Additionally, more master's-level social workers took on administrative or program management roles.

- Both groups reported using electronic practice, with about 3–8% using it 100% of the time. A higher percentage of master's-level social workers (17.40%) worked primarily online compared to bachelor's-level social workers (12.62%).

- Less than 10% of nonlicensed social workers — about 9.54% of bachelor's-level and 6.24% of master's-level social workers — reported engaging in community organizing functions. Few nonlicensed social workers' major roles — even at the master's level — were macro practice administrators or program managers (5.55%), advocates (3.01%), evaluators or researchers (0.49%), and community organizers (0.58%).

6. What was the amount of student loan debt incurred by nonlicensed social workers? How much did they earn from their primary job, and how did their earnings differ by education level? What employer-provided benefits were available to nonlicensed social workers?

- Approximately 42% of master's-level social workers had debts exceeding $75,000, compared to 20% of bachelor's-level social workers. By graduation, 73% of master's-level social workers had at least $30,000 in debt, while 62% of bachelor's-level social workers had similar debt amounts.

- The median earnings of bachelor's-level and master's-level social workers were $48,410 and $63,860, respectively. Master's-level social workers had better access than bachelor's-level social workers to employer-provided benefits such as health and dental insurance, retirement savings plans, and flexible work schedules.

7. What career and education plans did nonlicensed social workers have for the next two years? How did the career plans or goals indicate that they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the profession? What share of nonlicensed social workers plan to leave the social work field?

- Most of these nonlicensed social workers planned to seek education, licensure, training, and more opportunities within the social work field. A larger share of bachelor's-level social workers (63%) planned to seek new opportunities or promotions compared to 47% of master's-level social workers.

- Nearly 52% of both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers intended to pursue a social work license.

- Only about 4% of nonlicensed social workers — 4.18% of master's-level and 4.44% of bachelor's-level social workers — reported plans for leaving the social work profession.

INTRODUCTION

As presented in the first report of this series, it was estimated that more than half of self-identified social workers were not licensed, and it was noted that not all social work positions require licensure. According to the 2017–2019 national study of social work graduates, about 35% of graduates had a job that required an MSW but not licensure (Salsberg et al., 2020). With this context, this third report in the workforce study series focuses on college-educated social workers, most of whom have a social work degree but are not licensed. The first report of the workforce study series shows that more than 69% of the college-educated, nonlicensed social work workforce are bachelor's-level social workers, as shown in Table 1. The proportion of nonlicensed social workers is expected to be far higher at the bachelor's level than at the master's level because many states do not offer licensure for bachelor's-level social workers.

Table 1

Estimated Size and Educational Composition of Self-Identified Nonlicensed Social Work Workforce With at Least a Bachelor's Degree

	N	%
All nonlicensed social workers	425,197	100.00
Bachelor's	295,303	69.45
Master's	129,894	30.55

Source: Author's estimation using the 2023–2024 U.S. Census Bureau & U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023, 2024). Current Population Survey—Basic Monthly Survey data file.

According to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2025), a **Bachelor of Social Work** (BSW) is the minimum requirement for most social work positions. The BSW degree prepares individuals for generalist practice positions, and the primary functions of those who hold the BSW may include case management, administrative support, or advocacy. Accredited BSW programs require a minimum of 400 hours of supervised practicum. Bachelor's-level social workers typically work in entry-level positions in some settings, such as family and children's services, schools, community organizations, and health care agencies.

A **Master of Social Work** (MSW), on the other hand**,** prepares graduates for work in their field of specialization and includes developing skills required to perform clinical assessment, manage large caseloads, take on supervisory roles, engage in policy-level advocacy, and explore new ways of drawing on social services to meet the needs of clients and communities. MSW programs require a

minimum of 900 hours of supervised practicum. Master's-level social workers have a broader scope of practice and advanced practice, including mental and behavioral health services and advanced case management in many settings, including health care agencies, psychiatric hospitals, and K–12 schools (Birkenmaier & Berg-Weger, 2017).

The fields of practice for the social work profession differ not only by education level but also by **licensure requirement.** State licensure laws and regulations often govern the scope of practice, types of services, and practice settings. Both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers who do not provide direct or clinical intervention are not usually required to be licensed because the potential risk of posing a threat to the public is lower. This generalist practice is the core of social work education at the BSW and the foundation MSW levels (Reisch, 2016). The level of practice may not require licensure, and it is inconsistently licensed throughout the country. Furthermore, social workers outside a clinical setting do not engage in services that are billable for insurance reimbursement. Likewise, fields such as administration, management, community development, advocacy, research, or policy development usually do not require licensure. This means that nonlicensed social workers generally fulfill roles and functions that involve fewer regulatory requirements. However, it does not mean that their roles and functions are less essential to the public or professional identity.

According to the most recent laws and regulations database compiled by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB, 2025), 11 states do not license bachelor's-level practice, and six states license neither master's nor master's advanced generalist level practice. All states offer licensure in the Clinical category. For example, in New York, social workers are not licensed at the bachelor's level. In another large state, California, Clinical licensure is the only available category of social work licensure. That is, California social workers who are not involved in clinical work are not licensed. Table 2 summarizes social work license categories and the regulating jurisdictions (50 states and the District of Columbia) that make the license categories available to their social workers.

As bachelor's-level social work practice is not consistently regulated across the country, entry-level social work jobs and positions are open to non–social work graduates. Empirical research on this issue, however, is limited (Donaldson et al., 2014). For example, as the analyses presented in the first report of this series showed, only about 20% of bachelor's-level self-identified social workers were estimated to hold a BSW. The analyses were based on the American Community Survey microdata, which does not contain information about license status. Therefore, it was not possible to examine the educational background of bachelor's-level social workers by license status.

Furthermore, since there has not been a systematic effort to examine how nonlicensed social workers differ from their licensed counterparts, little knowledge is available in the literature about their demographic, practice, and employment characteristics. Overall, the lack of workforce knowledge limits the profession's understanding of how licensure and regulations affect its workforce. This critical gap can undermine the profession's capacity to plan for workforce development and self-advocacy. This study aimed to address this significant gap in the literature with the data collected by the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey.

Table 2

Social Work License Categories and Regulating Jurisdictions[1]

License Category	Number of Jurisdictions	State Abbreviations
Associate	6	MA, MI, NH, OH, SD, WI
Bachelors	40	AL, AK, AZ, AR, DE, DC, HI, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NC, ND, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WV, WI, WY
Masters	42	AL, AK, AZ, AR, CO, CT, DE, DC, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MN, MS, MO, MT, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WV
Masters Advanced Generalist	17	DC, FL, MD, MI, MN, MO, NE, NV, NM, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, WA, WV, WI
Clinical	51	All states and DC

[1] Note that Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands also regulate social work. However, the four jurisdictions were not included in this table because the empirical analyses in this study could not include them due to the small number of respondents from those territories.
Source: Author tabulation of the ASWB's laws and regulations database (ASWB, 2025).

THE NONLICENSED SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE

Because little information about the social work workforce is available by license status, it is important to highlight the findings presented in the first report in this series, which showed the characteristics of the nonlicensed social work workforce by education. The report showed findings from the analyses of the Current Population Survey microdata to understand the nonlicensed social work workforce. The median age of the nonlicensed **bachelor's-level** social work workforce was 39 (the mean was 41). About 80% were female, 50% were White, 86% were U.S.-born, and nearly 45% lived in the Midwest and West regions. More than 36% of them worked in an individual and family services setting, and nearly 20% worked for the administration of human resources programs. Nearly 44% of the bachelor's level workforce were employed by the federal, state, or local governments, and 55% were employed by private agencies. Over 82% worked full-time, and 7.38% had more than one job.

According to the first report, the nonlicensed **master's-level** social work workforce was older than their bachelor's-level counterparts, with a median age of 43 and a mean age of 44. About 81.6% of them were female, 50% were White, 86% were U.S.-born, and nearly 32% and 29%, respectively, lived in the South and Northeast regions. About 35% of them worked in an individual or family setting, followed by 16% of those in the administration of human resource programs. About 53% of them were employed by private for-profit or nonprofit agencies, and nearly 44% worked for federal, state, or local governments. Approximately 79% worked full-time, and 4.64% had multiple jobs. Despite small differences, the overall characteristics of bachelor's- and master's-level nonlicensed social workers appeared similar.

The median weekly earnings of the nonlicensed bachelor's-level and master's-level social workers were $1,107 and $1,312, respectively. The median earnings would be $55,350 for bachelor's-level and $65,600 for master's-level social workers if they worked full-time (at least 35 hours per week) year-round (at least 50 weeks a year). Although these findings provide a good foundation and reference for the nonlicensed workforce, they were derived from publicly available U.S. Census/U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) household survey data that do not allow researchers to examine the extent to which the self-identified social workers were individuals with a social work degree but without a license.

Despite the lack of research on the social work workforce by licensure status, some notable studies are available on macro social workers, who tend to be nonlicensed or licensed inconsistently

across the country. The studies commonly voice concerns that macro practice has been marginalized within the profession. Some argue that the profession's focus on licensure diverts social workers from macro practice that addresses structural and social justice issues (Birkenmaier & Berg-Weger, 2017). Others note that licensure is irrelevant and unnecessary to macro practice and does not enhance the credibility of macro practitioners (Donaldson et al., 2014). This divide between clinical and nonclinical social work over licensure has created tension within the profession (Apgar, 2020; Donaldson et al., 2014; Fisher & Corciullo, 2011; Liddell & Lass, 2019; Lightfoot et al., 2016; Zerden et al., 2016). Given the importance of the concern, this study intends to examine the roles and functions of nonlicensed social workers to document the extent to which they are engaged in direct services or macro functions/roles in their practice. It is important to understand how the practice of nonlicensed social workers differs from that of licensed social workers.

Research on the social work workforce has also commonly noted financial challenges faced by a majority of the workforce, such as student loan debts and moderate salaries (Hughes et al., 2018; Salsberg et al., 2020; Whitaker, 2008; Yoon, 2012). According to CSWE's Annual Survey of Social Work Programs (CSWE, 2024), 71.3% of Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) graduates had student loan debt, averaging $26,593 at the time of graduation. In comparison, 76% of Master of Social Work (MSW) graduates had student loan debt, averaging $37,472 in 2020–2021. Although the financial conditions of social workers and their positions were often discussed by education level, they were seldom examined by license status. As licensure is known to affect earnings among professionals, including social workers (Kim et al., 2023), it is important to examine student loan debts and earnings of nonlicensed social workers, especially given that there is little empirical investigation.

Finally, according to the 2007 survey by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), social workers cited high workloads and inadequate compensation as two major stressors in their jobs, leading to burnout, decreased performance, health issues, and high turnover among social workers (Arrington, 2008; Whitaker, 2008). Since the 2007 report, no national study on social workers' career satisfaction has followed up on the 2007 findings. Although it may be possible that job satisfaction and career goals are related to license status, the topic has not received adequate attention as a research topic. It is essential to understand how nonlicensed social workers perceive their positions and plan for their careers. Therefore, this study aims to explore the job satisfaction and career plans of nonlicensed social workers.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Due to a lack of information about the nonlicensed social work workforce in the literature, this study aimed to create a foundational national profile by examining data from the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey. It analyzed the demographic, employment, and financial characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce based on social workers' education levels, along with detailed practice characteristics, to provide information about their practice settings, functions and roles, and the client groups they serve. It also aimed to examine the career and educational plans of nonlicensed social workers. One of the main goals of this study was to explore how master's-level social workers differed from bachelor's-level social workers within the nonlicensed workforce in terms of the job market expectations of social work degrees and licensure and how they might be related to compensation for the workforce.

With these broad topics in mind, some of the more specific research questions were as follows:

1) What were the key demographic characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce?

2) What were the educational backgrounds of nonlicensed social workers? What percentage of bachelor's- and master's-level social workers majored in social work? What percentage of bachelor's-level social workers were enrolled in a graduate program?

3) How did the employment characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce differ by education? What percentage of nonlicensed social workers worked in settings that required or preferred a social work degree or license?

4) What were the reasons for not having a license?

5) How did the practice characteristics of the nonlicensed workforce differ by education? How prevalent were the macro functions and roles among nonlicensed social workers?

6) What was the amount of student loan debt incurred by nonlicensed social workers? How much did they earn from their primary job, and how did their earnings differ by education level? What employer-provided benefits were available to nonlicensed social workers?

7) What career plans or goals did nonlicensed social workers have for the next two years, and did these plans vary by education level? How did the career plans or goals indicate that they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the profession overall? What share of nonlicensed social workers plan to leave the social work field?

METHODS

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey instrument was developed through a collaborative process. The author drafted the survey instrument based on reviews of previous workforce studies and survey instruments in social work and other behavioral health care professions — such as marriage and family therapists, registered nurses, licensed professional counselors, and health service psychologists — to identify common and essential survey question items. The draft instrument was then revised based on multiple rounds of discussions and comments from ASWB and the Social Work Workforce Coalition. The coalition was composed of representatives from all major stakeholder organizations to ensure that all inputs were considered. Some of the stakeholder organizations included in the coalition were the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD), Latino Social Workers Organization (LSWO), National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW), National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD), Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA), and Canadian social work organizations.

Additionally, based on the literature review and other professions' workforce studies, much effort was made to include the minimum data elements recommended for a workforce survey, such as demographics, education, licensure (certification), employment, and practice characteristics of a workforce (Beck et al., 2016; Gerolamo et al., 2022; Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute, 2023). More specifically, the survey included questions about the following five topics:

- Education: Degrees, the field of study and concentration, year of graduation, and current enrollment in degree programs
- Licensure: Licensure status and reasons for not having a license
- Employment: If their current or recent social work position required a social work degree and a license, number of years employed in social work, type of employer, size of employer, weekly hours and annual weeks of work, number of jobs, annual gross earnings from the primary job in 2023, employer-provided benefits offered, and future career and educational plans or goals
- Practice: Primary practice setting, function of the practice setting, client population group, primary role, and use of electronic practice

- Demographics: Year of birth, race and ethnicity, gender, state of residence, language used at home, health conditions, immigration and citizenship status, and parental status

The instrument draft was piloted with a small number of social workers and finalized after addressing any potential concerns.

The finalized survey instrument was put on an online platform in three languages: English, French, and Spanish. Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) collected and housed the data on behalf of ASWB. The workforce survey was part of the 2024 Social Work Census, funded and launched by AWSB (2024) between March 1 and June 31, 2024. The Social Work Census was the most comprehensive study in the history of the profession that targeted both U.S. and Canadian social workers, featuring two national surveys: (1) the workforce survey that collected data on social workers' demographic, employment, and practice characteristics and (2) the practice analysis survey necessary for building the blueprints of the next round of licensing exams. The data collection was done online, and survey participation was promoted by taking a comprehensive approach, using digital, social, and face-to-face strategies. First, a series of email campaigns was launched using the email list of past ASWB examinees and exam registrants to reach more than 514,000 social workers. Subsequently, multiple rounds of targeted outreach efforts were made via paid and organic social media posts and in-person engagements at professional conferences and workshops. Finally, ASWB also collaborated with state regulatory boards to increase survey participation among licensed social workers. Nearly 85,000 individuals participated in the census, and 52,471 completed the workforce survey.

DATA PREPARATION AND ANALYSES

This study selected 1,625 nonlicensed social workers from the respondents of the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey who met the following eligibility criteria: (1) held at least a bachelor's degree, (2) were employed or self-employed in a social work position for pay, (3) and did not hold a social work license. Respondents who had missing or invalid demographic information (e.g., gender, age, state of residence, race and ethnicity, and education) were excluded from the analyses. In addition, a small number of respondents from the U.S. territories were also excluded because numbers were too small to form an independent category for analyses by state or region. To verify the sample selection, various factors, including licensure status, education level, employment status, and state of residence, were cross-referenced to ensure that only eligible respondents were included

in the analysis. The sample of nonlicensed social workers was further grouped into bachelor's-level (N=382) and master's-level (N=1,243) social workers based on their education level.

It was necessary to weight the survey data to ensure that the sample of nonlicensed social workers could represent the population of nonlicensed social workers in the country. However, creating a weight variable was a major challenge because of the lack of a sampling frame for the nonlicensed social work workforce. The 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey's primary sampling frame was the lists of licensees or those who have ever taken or registered to take the social work license exams. While those who were licensed or had taken the licensing exams received email invitations to participate in the survey, nonlicensed social workers were invited to the survey through paid and organic social media advertisements, in-person events, and word of mouth. This suggests that licensed and nonlicensed social workers had different chances of participating in the survey. As a result, nearly 95–96% of the workforce survey respondents were licensed social workers, while fewer than 2,000 nonlicensed social workers had valid responses.

In the absence of an appropriate sampling frame, this study used a simple post-stratification weighting method using the microdata from the 2023–2024 Current Population Survey–Basic Monthly Survey (CPS–BMS) to adjust the sample characteristics based on the known characteristics (i.e., state location and education level) of the population of nonlicensed social workers nationwide (Kulas et al., 2018; Little, 1993; Royal, 2019). As presented and discussed in the first report in this series, the nationally representative microdata from the CPS–BMS allow one to approximate the license status of self-identified social workers by their education level and estimate the number of nonlicensed social workers at the bachelor's level and master's level in each state. Because some states had a very small number of survey respondents at the bachelor's level, the estimated number of nonlicensed social workers in the CPS–BMS was aggregated into nine regional divisions for each education level (bachelor's and master's) to create a total of 18 (9 times 2) categories of nonlicensed social workers. A weight variable was calculated for each regional division and education level by dividing the estimated number of nonlicensed social workers by the number of survey respondents for the corresponding category (Kulas et al., 2018; Little, 1993; Royal, 2019). This method ensured that the contribution of the 18 categories to the survey findings was proportional to the population of nonlicensed social workers nationwide.

It is important to note that because the data weighting was solely based on two known characteristics of the population of nonlicensed social workers, it might not have fully addressed other potential sources of sample biases, such as race and ethnicity, resulting in less accurate and

comprehensive data adjustment. Although all descriptive analyses presented below were weighted to make the findings nationally representative of the nonlicensed social work workforce, readers should keep this data limitation in mind when interpreting the findings. Of particular importance is the small sample size of nonlicensed social workers at the bachelor's level, as shown in Table 3.

Of the 1,625 nonlicensed social workers in the sample, only 382 (23.51%) were bachelor's-level social workers, and the remaining 1,243 (76.49%) were master's-level social workers. This percentage breakdown between bachelor's and master's degrees was contrary to the expected composition of the two groups based on the analyses of the CPS–BMS discussed in the first report of this series. While the CPS–BMS estimates suggested that the majority of the nonlicensed social work workforce consists of bachelor's-level workers, the workforce survey sample indicated otherwise, suggesting that the nonlicensed sample is unlikely to be nationally representative despite the weighting procedure that attempted to correct for the sample bias based on educational composition. (Please see the weighted N in Table 3.) As discussed later, the bachelor's-level social workers in the nonlicensed sample were found to be noticeably younger (and mostly enrolled in a master's program) than the self-identified nonlicensed social workers analyzed in the first report of this series. Readers of this study should keep this data limitation in mind.

Table 3

The Estimated Size and Composition of the Nonlicensed Social Work Workforce With at Least a Bachelor's Degree

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Total	1,625	100.00	310,512	100.00
Bachelor's level	382	23.51	219,790	70.78
Master's level	1,243	76.49	90,722	29.22

Additionally, this study did not examine the geographic distribution and density of the nonlicensed social work workforce because of the small sample size available for the analyses. All of the findings presented below are weighted descriptive statistics.

FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Chart 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of nonlicensed social workers for master's- and bachelor's-level social workers. Table A1 in the Appendix presents detailed percentage distributions for all of the demographic characteristics analyzed for the sample. Nearly 88–89% of master's- and bachelor's-level social workers were **women**, and 9–10% were men. Slightly more than 2% of both groups responded that they were nonbinary or other gender. These gender breakdowns were different from the CPS-based estimates, which showed that 80% of bachelor's-level and 82% of master's-level social workers were women. According to Table A1, the **median ages** of bachelor's- and master's-level social workers were 31 and 39, suggesting that the respondents of the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey were much younger than the nationally representative sample from the CPS data. The first report of this series showed that nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers had a median age of 39, while their master's-level counterparts had a median age of 43.

Chart 1
Percentage Breakdown for Gender, Race, Citizenship, Language, and Health Conditions

	Female	White	Native-born citizens	Spanish at home	Work-limiting conditions
Master's	87.98	54.25	89.9	12.92	6.76
Bachelor's	88.93	68.56	95.06	14.04	11.83
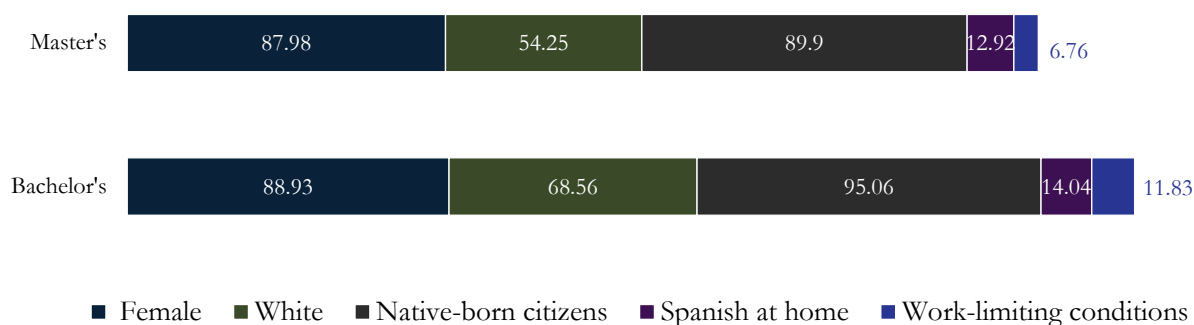
Compared to the CPS-based estimates that showed that only about half of nonlicensed bachelor's- and master's-level social workers were White, those who participated in the workforce survey — particularly bachelor's-level social workers — were less racially and ethnically diverse. Over 54% of master's-level social workers identified as White, while 24.9% identified as Black, 17.02% as Hispanic/Latino, and 2.8% as Asian/Pacific Islander. However, of the bachelor's-level

social workers who responded, 68.56% were White, with Black and Hispanic/Latino social workers making up about 28% of the group. Relatedly, approximately 90% of master's-level and 95% of bachelor's-level social workers were U.S.-born citizens, which is higher than the 86% U.S.-born social workers estimated based on the CPS microdata. Although not shown graphically, about 65% of master's-level and 70% of bachelor's-level social workers did not have any children.

Chart 1 also presents the percentages of social workers who used Spanish at home. Approximately 13% of master's-level and 14% of bachelor's-level social workers reported speaking Spanish at home. According to the chart, 6.76% of master's-level and 11.83% of bachelor's-level social workers reported having a health condition that limits the amount and type of work that they do. More detailed findings presented in Table A1 in the Appendix suggest that a considerably high percentage of social workers, particularly bachelor's-level social workers, have physical or mental health conditions. Of master's-level social workers, 14.36% and 25.12% reported having any physical or mental health conditions, respectively. Of bachelor's-level social workers, 16.37% and as high as 36.91% had a physical or mental health condition. These high rates of health conditions are in line with the findings from some previous studies reporting that helping professionals like social workers are disproportionately affected by mental health and behavioral health issues (Straussner et al., 2018).

Table A1 in the Appendix also shows the distribution of master's- and bachelor's-level social workers in the nine U.S. regional divisions. The highest percentage of master's-level social workers was in the Middle Atlantic (24.02%), followed by the South Atlantic (18.98%) and Pacific (18.56) divisions. The highest percentage of bachelor's-level social workers was also in the Middle Atlantic (23.75%), followed by the Pacific (18.14%) and South Atlantic (13.90%) divisions.

EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

In the first report of this series, the ACS-based estimate of bachelor's-level social workers indicated that only about 20% of them majored in social work, indicating that most bachelor's-level social workers do not have a social work education. However, most respondents of the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey — even those nonlicensed — had a social work education. As Chart 2 shows, nearly 50% of nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers majored in social work, followed by 21.41% majoring in psychology. Criminal justice and sociology were two other majors that more than 4% of bachelor's-level social workers studied for their undergraduate degree. Unfortunately,

most (77.82%) master's-level social workers did not answer the undergraduate major question, but 12.40% responded that they majored in social work for their undergraduate degree.

Chart 2
Percentage of Top Five Undergraduate Majors for Bachelor's-Level Social Workers

Major	Percentage
Human services and community organization	1.98
Sociology	4.32
Criminal justice or criminology	4.29
Missing	14.6
Psychology	21.41
Social work	49.94
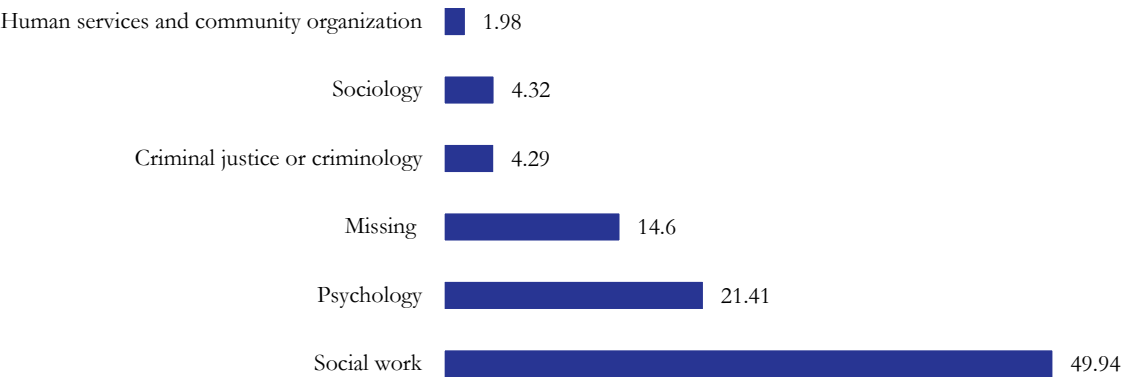
According to Chart 3, which shows graduate majors for master's-level social workers, **89.44% held an MSW**, and 2.81% had a major other than social work (7.75% did not answer the graduate major question). Although not presented in a chart, Table A2 in the Appendix shows that 2.62% and 4.10% of master's-level social workers held a doctoral degree or PhD degree, respectively.

Chart 3
Percentage of Graduate Majors for Master's-Level Social Workers

Other , 2.81
Missing, 7.75
Social work, 89.44
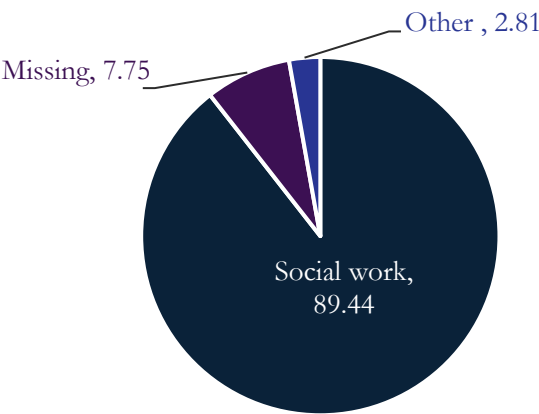
Chart 4 presents findings on the type of degree programs (i.e., in-person, online, or hybrid) that the respondents attended. Over 59% of nonlicensed master's level social workers earned their master's degree from in-person programs, 19.26% from online programs, and 16.66% from hybrid programs. These findings suggest that the use of online and hybrid programs is prevalent for graduate degrees. For bachelor's-level social workers, about 30% obtained their bachelor's degree from online or hybrid programs. Although not shown in a chart here, Table A2 in the Appendix shows that 93.54% of bachelor's-level social workers attended their undergraduate program full-time and 6.28% attended part-time. Nearly 75% of master's-level social workers attended their graduate programs full-time, while about 20% attended part-time (5.42% of master's-level social workers did not answer the full-time/part-time attendance status question).

Chart 4
Percentage of Program Type for the Highest Degree Earned
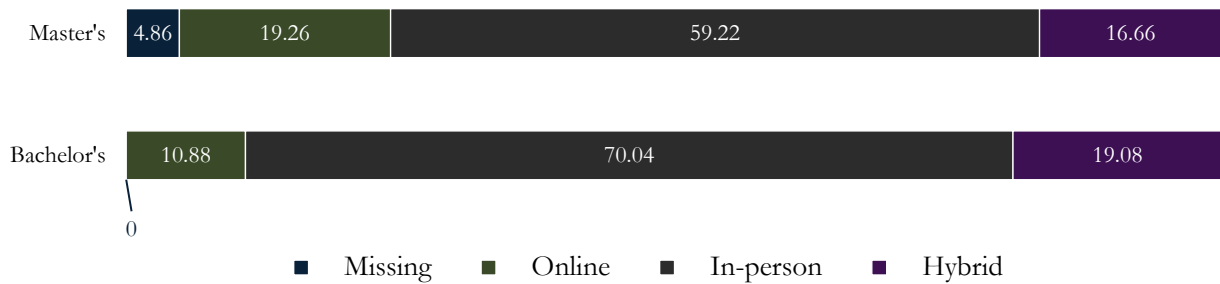
The workforce survey included a question about the concentrations of master's-level social workers in their graduate programs. The findings for nonlicensed social workers are summarized in Chart 5. Although nearly 47% skipped the question, 11.66% responded that their concentration was in clinical or direct practice, 9.70% in children, youth, and families, and 5.60% in mental health. As discussed in the literature, a relatively small percentage responded that their concentration was in management or administration (4.11%) and community development and social systems (4.10%).

Chart 5
Percentage of Top Five Concentrations in MSW Programs

Concentration	Percentage
Community development and social system	3.47
Management or administration	4.11
Mental health	5.6
Children, youth, and families	9.7
Clinical or direct practice	11.68
Missing	46.94
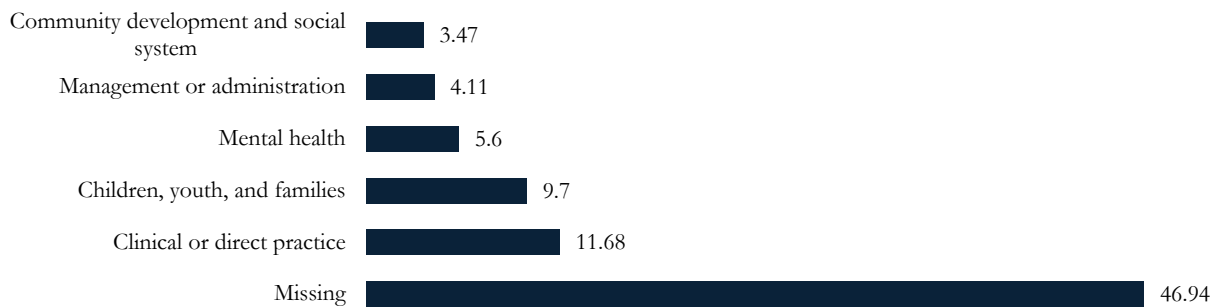
Table A2 in the Appendix presents findings about nonlicensed social workers' **current enrollment in degree programs**. More than half (51.70%) of bachelor's-level social workers were enrolled in a graduate program. Of those enrolled, 67.06% were enrolled full-time and 32.94% part-time. Again, of those enrolled, only 22.13% were enrolled in an in-person graduate program. The remaining social workers were enrolled in either an online (49.63%) or hybrid (28.24%) graduate program, suggesting that online and hybrid graduate programs are popular. Some master's-level social workers were also enrolled in a degree program. About 8% were enrolled in a graduate program, 2.32% in a doctoral program, and 0.90% in a PhD program. Of those enrolled master's-level social workers, more than 54% were enrolled in an online or hybrid program (38.28% in an online and 16.01% in a hybrid graduate program).

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Some of the most important questions included in the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey were whether social workers' current positions required or preferred social work degrees and licenses. As seen in the second report of this study series, nearly 95% of licensed social workers responded that their positions required or preferred a social work degree. Chart 6 and Table A3 in the Appendix present the equivalent findings for nonlicensed social workers. Among master's-level social workers, 55.7% responded that their positions required a social work degree, while 33.84% indicated that their positions preferred the degree. Only 9.27% said their position neither required nor preferred the degree (1.19% did not answer the question). Among bachelor's-level social workers, however, only 25.2% said that their positions required a social work degree, while 55.02% indicated that their positions preferred the degree. Nearly 18% responded that their position neither

required nor preferred the degree (2.16% did not answer the question). These findings suggest that while most of the nonlicensed social workers held job positions that valued social work degrees, this was particularly true for master's-level social workers compared to their bachelor's-level counterparts.

Chart 6
Percentage Reporting That Their Job Required or Preferred Social Work Education

	Required	Preferred
Master's	55.7	33.84
Bachelor's	25.2	55.02

■ Required ■ Preferred
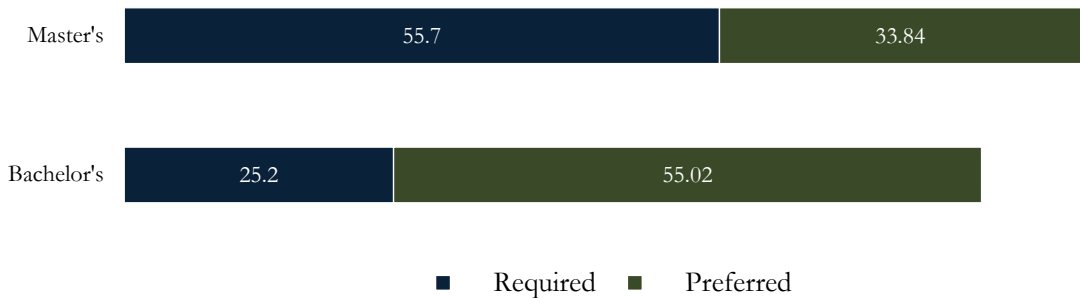
Chart 7
Percentage Reporting That Their Job Required or Preferred Social Work Licensure

	Required	Preferred
Master's	15.8	36.48
Bachelor's	6.39	25.19

■ Required ■ Preferred

Chart 7 shows another interesting set of findings. Almost 16% of master's-level social workers said that their positions required a social work license, and 36.48% responded that their positions preferred the license. Among bachelor's-level social workers, 6.39% and 25.19% responded that their positions required or preferred a social work license, respectively. These findings echo those presented by the 2017–2019 national study of recent social work graduates (Salsberg et al., 2020). Salsberg et al. (2020) reported that some social work graduates hold a job that requires them to obtain a license within a fixed time. The findings shown in Chart 7 provide valuable insights into the share of social workers who found themselves in a similar position. Many

nonlicensed social workers — though not currently licensed — were employed in positions that required or preferred a social work license.

Chart 8 presents findings about the **type of employers** that nonlicensed social workers worked for. Contrary to licensed social workers seen in the second report, a relatively smaller share of nonlicensed social workers were self-employed — 4.86% of master's-level social workers and 2.58% of bachelor's-level social workers. For both master's- and bachelor's-level social workers, private nonprofit employers were most common at 42.89% for master's-level social workers and 51.28% for bachelor's-level social workers. Government agencies — federal, state, and local — were another type of popular employers for nonlicensed social workers. Nearly 37% of master's-level and 33.33% of bachelor's-level social workers worked for government agencies.

Chart 8
Percentage Distribution of Employer Type
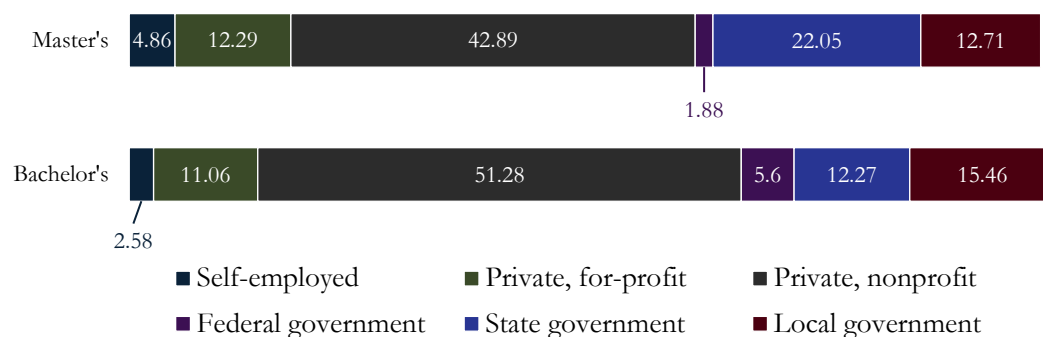
Table A3 in the Appendix also presents findings about the **size of employers** that nonlicensed social workers worked for. Although not displayed in a chart, the findings indicate that a higher percentage of master's-level social workers were employed by larger employers compared to bachelor's-level social workers. Specifically, about 22% of bachelor's-level social workers were employed by organizations with at least 1,000 employees, but 40.34% of master's-level social workers worked for such large organizations.

As seen in the second report of the series, a relatively higher percentage of nonlicensed social workers held more than one job. Chart 9 presents the findings that 23.69% of master's-level social workers and 22% of bachelor's-level social workers reported that they held more than one job. (Note that 3.50% of master's-level social workers and 1.14% of bachelor's-level social workers did not answer the question.) These rates of **holding multiple jobs** seem higher compared to the

U.S. workforce, given that less than 6% of employed adult women were estimated to hold multiple jobs in 2023 (U.S. BLS, 2024). While it may not be appropriate to directly compare the BLS figures with the findings presented in Chart 9 due to the data and measurement differences, it is important to note the high percentage of nonlicensed social workers who hold multiple jobs.

Chart 9
Percentage Holding Multiple Jobs

Master's	23.69
Bachelor's	22

Chart 10 shows the percentage distribution of **weekly work hours** for master's- and bachelor's-level social workers. A small percentage of each group did not answer the question, but 73.78% of master's-level and 68.96% of bachelor's-level social workers worked full-time (35–40 hours) per week, and 13.13% of master's-level and 11.95% of bachelor's-level social workers worked more than 40 hours per week. On average, master's-level social workers worked longer hours than bachelor's-level social workers — 38.72 hours versus 36.92 hours — per week.

Chart 10
Percentage Distribution of Weekly Work Hours

	<=20	21-34	35-40	40 +	Missing
Master's	5.11	6.02	73.78	13.13	1.96
Bachelor's	11.57	6.55	68.96	11.95	0.97

With respect to **the number of weeks worked,** a considerable share of respondents — 12.44% of master's-level and 7.99% of bachelor's-level social workers — did not answer the question. As Chart 11 shows, more than 65% of master's-level social workers and 78.38% of bachelor's-level social workers worked year-round (50–52 years). Of those who answered the questions, the mean number of weeks worked per year was 48.48 weeks for master's-level social

workers and 49.84% for bachelor's-level social workers. This indicates that both groups of nonlicensed social workers worked (almost) year-round.

Chart 11
Percentage Distribution of Annual Work Weeks

	<=25	26-49	50-52	Missing
Master's	2.24	20.1	65.21	12.44
Bachelor's	1.36	12.28	78.38	7.99
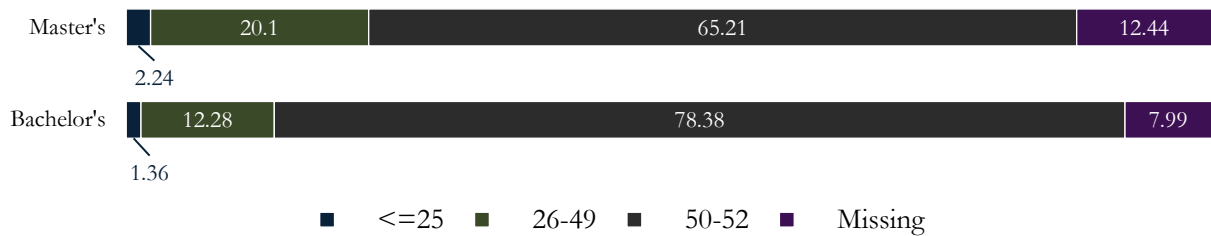
The bottom rows of Table A3 in the Appendix also present findings on **the number of years of social work experience** among nonlicensed social workers. As expected by the age difference between bachelor's- and master's-level social workers, a greater percentage of bachelor's-level than master's-level social workers had fewer than five years of social work experience (55% versus 33.08%). Furthermore, while the median year of social work experience was five years for bachelor's-level social workers, the median was nine years for master's-level social workers, as seen in Chart 12.

Chart 12
Number of Years of Social Work Experience

	Median year	Mean year
Master's	9	11.95
Bachelor's	5	7.89
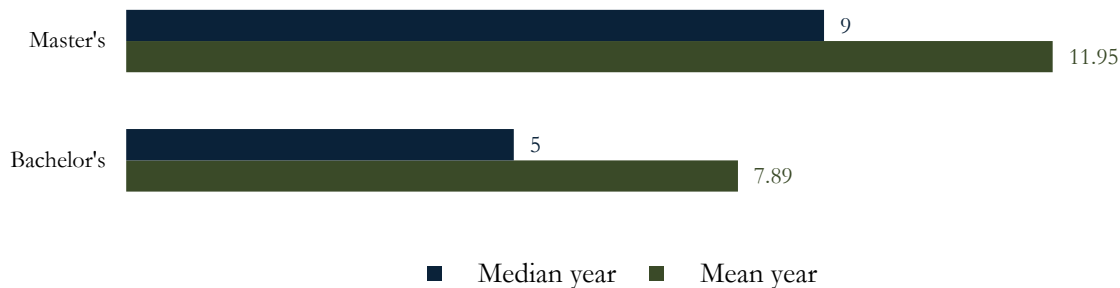
Table A3 also shows the **number of years the social workers worked with their current employers**. Most social workers reported having worked less than five years. Specifically, 77.53% of bachelor's-level and 67.16% of master's-level social workers had worked for their current employers

for less than five years. The median number of years with the current employer was three years for master's-level social workers and two years for bachelor's-level social workers.

REASONS FOR NOT BEING LICENSED

The workforce survey asked nonlicensed social workers why they did not have a license. Table A4 in the Appendix presents detailed findings, and Charts 13 and 14 show these findings separately for bachelor's- and master's-level social workers. Respondents were allowed to choose multiple options. The top three reasons nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers lacked a license were that a license was either unnecessary (28.86%) or not required (34.05%) or that they did not have a social work degree (25.43%). Almost 23% of bachelor's-level social workers reported currently being in the licensing process.

Chart 13
Percentage of Reasons for Not Having a License: Bachelor's-Level Social Workers, All That Apply

Reason	Percentage
I do not value having a license	3.28
I have been unsuccessful on the licensing exam	4.88
Licensure fees are too high	7.88
I do not have enough time or resources to complete the…	10.94
My position is exempt from licensure	13.69
Currently in the licensing process	22.71
I do not have a social work degree	25.43
Licensure is not needed where I practice	28.86
My employer or job does not require a license	34.05

According to Chart 14, the top three reasons nonlicensed master's-level social workers did not have a license were that they were currently in the licensing process (37.85%), that a license was not required (36.85%), or that they were unsuccessful on the licensing exam (33.64%). These findings suggest that a considerable share of both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers in the sample were in the licensing process even though they were not licensed at the time of the survey.

Chart 14
Percentage of Reasons for Not Having a License: Master's-Level Social Workers,
All That Apply

Reason	Percentage
I do not have a social work degree	2.64
I do not value having a license	5.26
My position is exempt from licensure	11.58
I do not have enough time or resources to…	14.71
Licensure fees are too high	18.87
Licensure is not needed where I practice	28.27
I have been unsuccessful on the licensing exam	33.64
My employer or job does not require a license	36.85
Currently in the licensing process	57.85
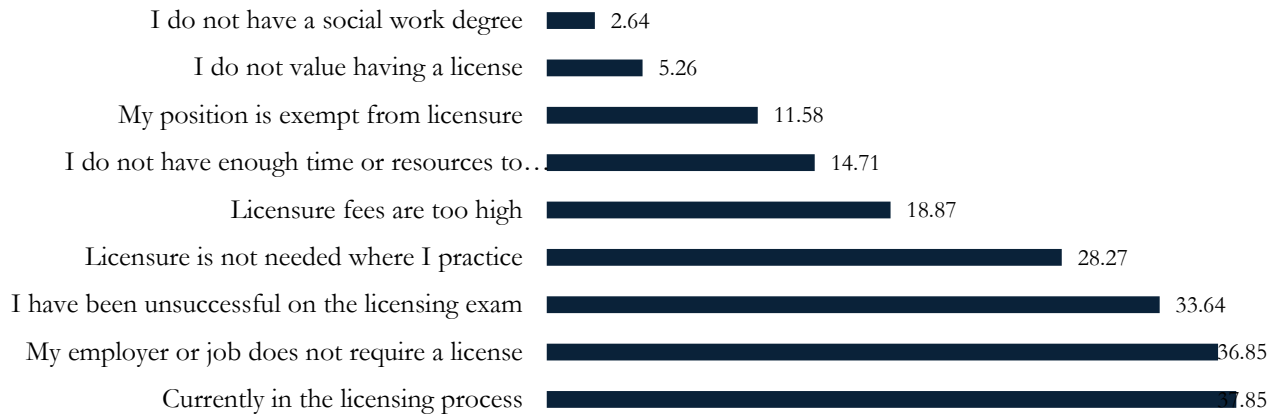
PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

The workforce survey included detailed questions about social workers' practice, including the setting, function, role, client groups, and use of electronic practice. Because the most prevalent **practice settings** differed between master's-level and bachelor's-level social workers, the findings are presented separately in Charts 15 and 16 and side by side in Table A5 in the Appendix. For both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers, the most common practice setting was individual and family services agencies, where 24% of master's-level and 45.13% of bachelor's-level social workers were practicing. However, the next most common practice settings varied for the two groups. For bachelor's-level social workers, the common practice settings were (1) outpatient centers (7.8%), (2) community services agencies (5.98%), (3) elementary and secondary schools (5.83%), and (4) other health care services agencies (4.21%). On the other hand, for master's-level social workers, the settings were (1) elementary and secondary schools (10.98%), (2) colleges and universities (9.06%), (3) hospitals (8.78%), and (4) outpatient centers (5.76%).

Chart 15

Percentage of Top Five Practice Settings for Bachelor's-Level Social Workers
(Excluding Those Self-Employed)

Setting	Percentage
Other health care services agency	4.21
Elementary or secondary school	5.83
Community services agency	5.98
Outpatient care center	7.8
Individual and family services agency	45.13
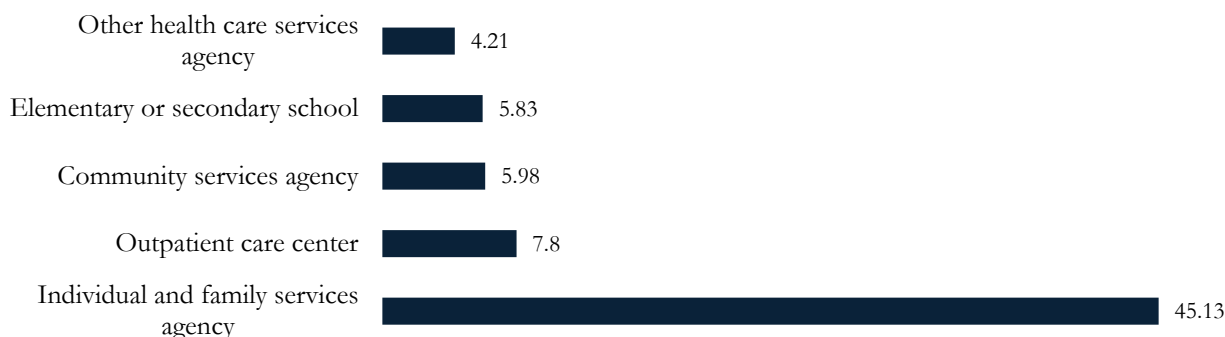
Chart 16

Percentage of Top Five Practice Settings for Master's-Level Social Workers
(Excluding Those Self-Employed)

Setting	Percentage
Outpatient care center	5.76
General medical and surgical hospital or specialty hospital	8.78
College, university, or professional school, including junior/community college	9.06
Elementary or secondary school	10.98
Individual and family services agency	24
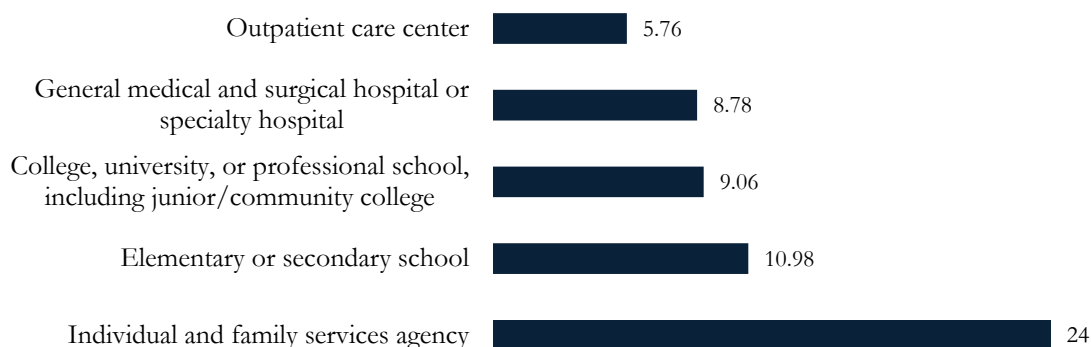
Table A5 in the Appendix also shows that both groups of nonlicensed social workers practiced in various other settings, including psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals, public administration agencies, and organizations administering human resources programs.

Table A6 in the Appendix presents detailed findings about nonlicensed social workers' **practice functions.** Charts 17 and 18 show the five most common practice functions separately for bachelor's- and master's-level social workers. While the two most common practice functions for both groups of social workers were mental and behavioral health services (42.58% for bachelor's-level and 39.72% for master's-level social workers) and family and children's services (35.68% for bachelor's-level and 22.59% for master's-level social workers), the next most common practice functions differed. For master's-level social workers, those functions were (1) medical, hospital, or

health services (20.51%), (2) advocacy (19.9%), and (3) school social services (14.21%). For bachelor's-level social workers, those functions were (1) advocacy (29.76%), (2) child welfare services (20.39%), and (3) substance abuse or addiction services (19.78). These findings indicate that although both groups offer mental and behavioral health services, as social workers' education level increases from bachelor's to master's, a smaller percentage of nonlicensed social workers provide family and children's services and engage in advocacy. According to Table A6 in the Appendix, nonlicensed social workers perform many important functions beyond the top five presented in the charts below, including psychiatric services, elder services, domestic violence services, and adoption or foster care services. As discussed in the literature, a small share of nonlicensed social workers — only about 9.54% of bachelor's-level and 6.24% of master's-level social workers — reported engaging in **community organizing**.

Chart 17
Percentage of Top Five Practice Functions for Bachelor's-Level Social Workers,
All That Apply

Function	Percentage
Substance abuse/addiction service	19.78
Child welfare service	20.39
Advocacy	29.76
Family/children's service	35.68
Mental/behavioral health service	42.57
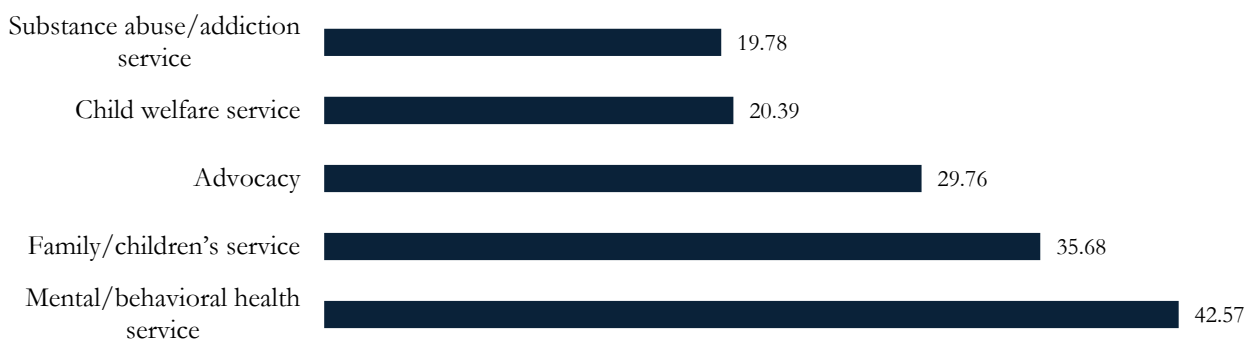
Chart 18
Percentage of Top Five Practice Functions for Master's-Level Social Workers,
All That Apply

Function	Percentage
School social service	14.21
Advocacy	19.9
Medical, hospital, or health service	20.51
Family/children's service	22.59
Mental/behavioral health service	39.72
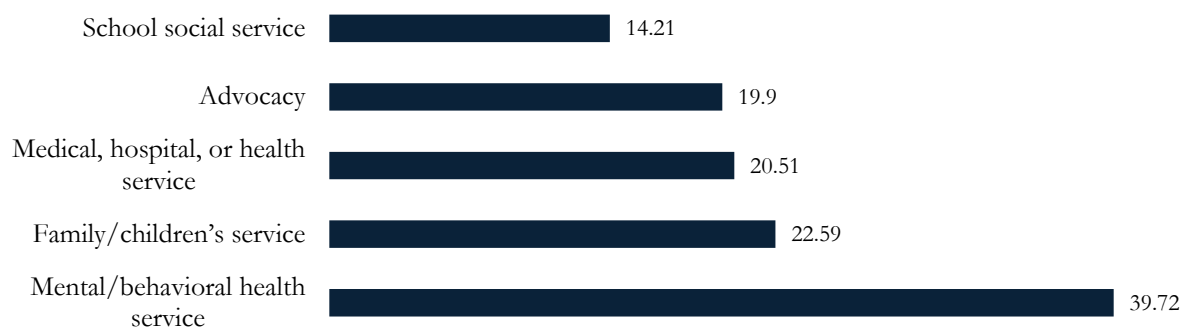
Charts 19 through 22 present findings about the client groups that nonlicensed social workers worked with. Table A7 in the Appendix presents detailed findings. According to Chart 19, a higher percentage of bachelor's-level social workers, compared to their master's-level counterparts, worked with children and families. While similar proportions of both bachelor's- and master's-level social workers assisted clients from various backgrounds — such as individuals from racially or sexually minoritized groups, immigrants or refugees, and those living in poverty — slightly larger percentages of bachelor's-level social workers worked with clients who had limited incomes or were eligible for Medicaid.

Chart 19
Percentage Serving Clients by Client Age Group,
All That Apply

	Children	Adolescents	Adults	Older adults
Master's	42.23	47.93	66.83	40.73
Bachelor's	50.25	58.24	69.43	41.45

■ Children ■ Adolescents ■ Adults ■ Older adults
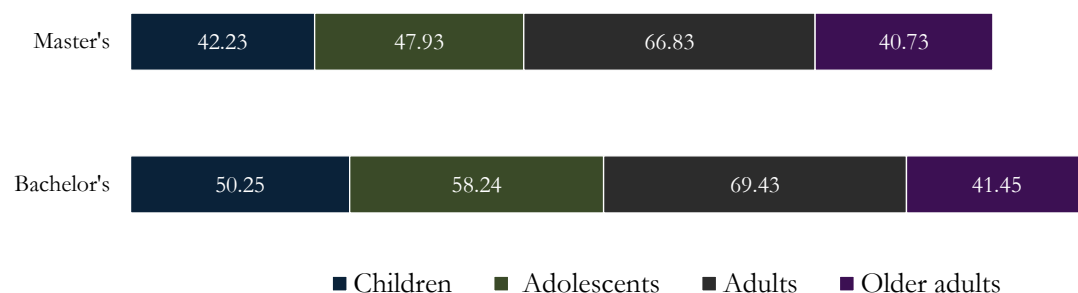
Chart 20
Percentage Serving Clients by Client Characteristics,
All That Apply

	Racially minoritized group	Immigrants/refugees	Sexually minoritized group	Poor	Medicaid eligible
Master's	35.92	23.27	17.8	46.88	26.97
Bachelor's	33.83	23.72	20.05	51.46	32.09

■ Racially minoritized group ■ Immigrants/refugees ■ Sexually minoritized group ■ Poor ■ Medicaid eligible
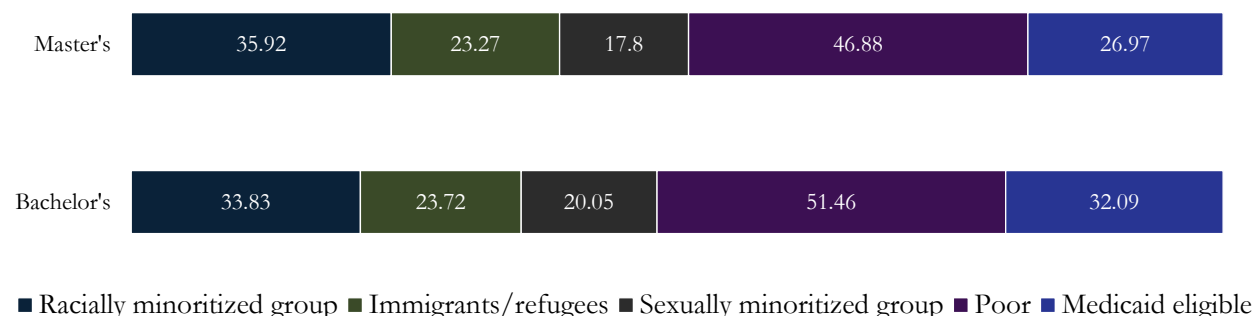
Chart 21 below shows that a quarter of nonlicensed social workers worked with clients whose primary language was Spanish. Also, over 11% of master's- and bachelor's-level social workers served clients whose primary languages were not English, French, or Spanish. These

findings suggest that nonlicensed social workers work with clients from diverse language backgrounds.

Chart 21
Percentage Serving Clients by Client Language,
All That Apply

Master's	3.52	23.94	11.51
Bachelor's	3.47	27.15	11.43

■ People whose primary language is French
■ People whose primary language is Spanish
■ People whose primary language is not English, French, or Spanish
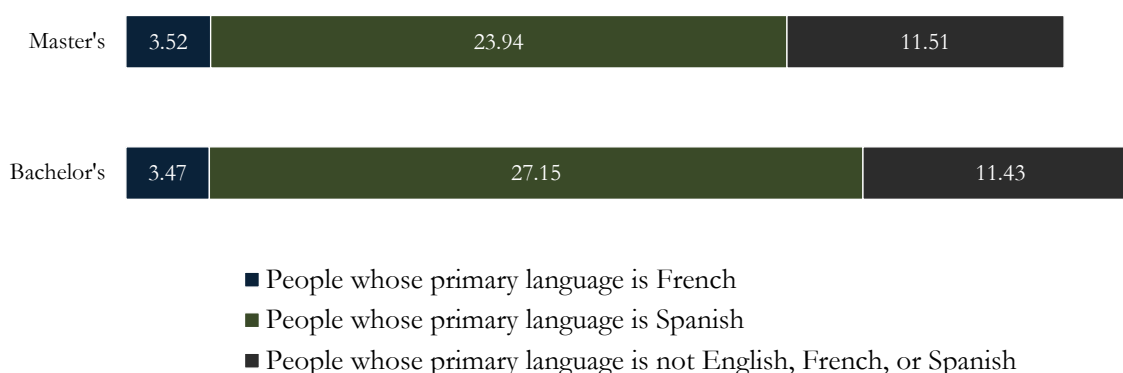
As shown in Chart 22, nearly 48% of master's-level social workers and more than 55% of bachelor's-level social workers served clients with mental health disorders. High proportions of both groups also worked with clients with substance use disorders. About a quarter reported working with clients who need assistance with daily living activities.

Chart 22
Percentage Serving Clients by Client Needs,
All That Apply

Master's	47.96	38.19	28.98	23.23
Bachelor's	55.26	43.65	41.99	25.51

■ Mental health disorders   ■ Substance use disorders
■ Child welfare issues   ■ Assistance with activities of daily living
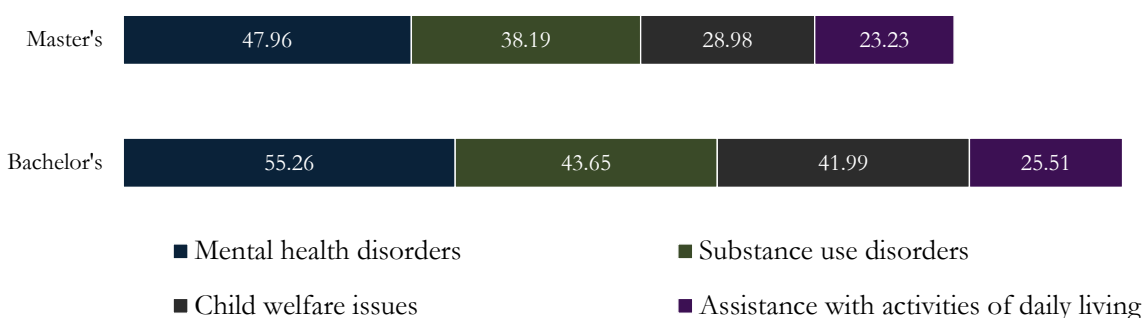
Charts 23 and 24 demonstrate that the four most common roles that nonlicensed social workers fulfill at both the bachelor's and master's levels are those of case managers, direct service providers, mentors, and supervisors. Table A8 in the Appendix provides the detailed findings.

However, notable differences emerged in the prevalence of these roles based on the social workers' level of education. A higher proportion of master's-level social workers, compared to bachelor's-level social workers, served as direct service providers (29.63% versus 14.62%). In contrast, nearly 38% of bachelor's-level social workers identified as case managers, while only about 20% of master's-level social workers reported this role. Furthermore, a higher percentage of master's-level social workers, compared to their bachelor's-level counterparts, identified as mentors (29.63% versus 14.62%). According to Table A8 in the Appendix, nearly 12% of master's-level social workers reported being administrators or program managers, but only 5.55% bachelor's-level social workers reported this role.

Besides these most common roles, nonlicensed social workers fulfilled various other roles, such as being advocates, trainers, foster care workers, mediators, and community supporters. However, the proportions reporting these roles were lower than 4–5%, indicating that those roles were not the primary roles of most nonlicensed social workers. Very few nonlicensed social workers — even those with a master's degree — reported engaging in roles relevant to **macro practices**, such as serving as administrators or program managers (5.55%), advocates (3.01%), evaluators or researchers (0.49%), community organizers (0.58%), policy analysts (0.19%), mediators (2.47%), or community supporters (2.47%). These findings echo the findings of previous studies that highlight the marginalized status of macro practice in the social work workforce.

Chart 23
Percentage of Top Five Primary Roles for Master's-Level Social Workers

Role	Percentage
Supervisor	8.69
Administrator/program manager	11.85
Case manager	19.91
Mentor	29.63
Direct service provider	29.63
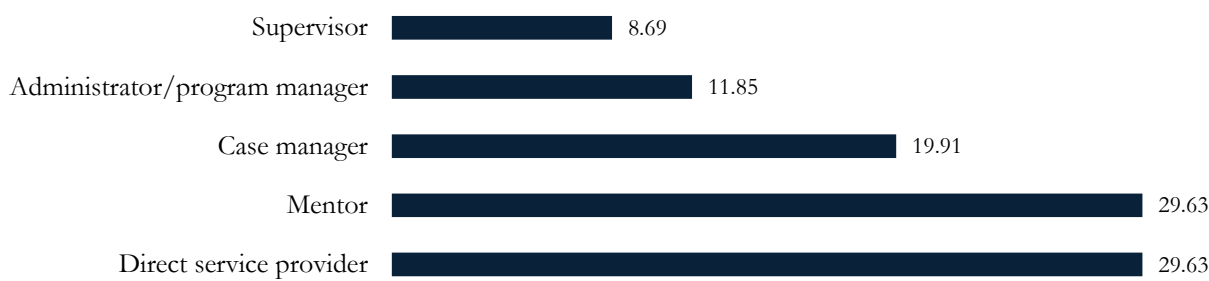
Chart 24

Percentage of Top Five Primary Roles for Bachelor's-Level Social Workers

Role	Percentage
Service coordinator	6.33
Supervisor	6.73
Mentor	14.62
Direct service provider	14.62
Case manager	37.57
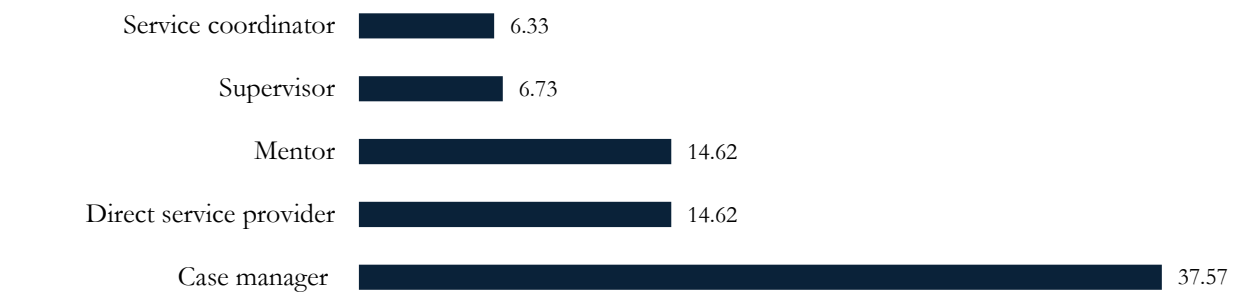
Table A9 in the Appendix and Chart 25 summarize findings about nonlicensed social workers' use of **electronic practice**. For both master's-level and bachelor's-level social workers, less than 10% reported never using it, and 3.88% of bachelor's-level social workers and 8.39% of master's-level social workers reported using it 100% of the time. Similar proportions of the groups used electronic practices for at least 50% of their work: 34.14% of bachelor's-level and 35.74% of master's-level social workers.

Chart 25

Percentage of Time Using Electronic Practice

	Never	1–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–99%	100%
Master's	9.69	32.45	17.87	15.32	12.03	8.39
Bachelor's	9.03	35.63	19.79	18.62	11.64	3.88

Legend: ■ Never   ■ 1–25%   ■ 26–50%   ■ 51–75%   ■ 76–99%   ■ 100%
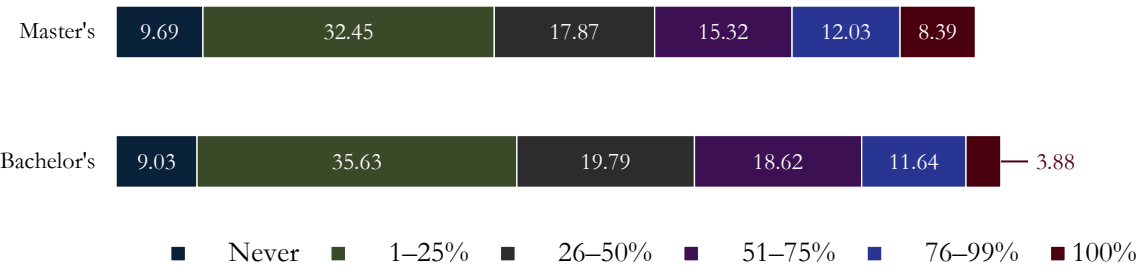
Chart 26

Percentage Working Primarily Online

	Yes	No	N/A
Master's	17.4	65.89	16.72
Bachelor's	12.62	79.01	8.37

Legend: ■ Yes   ■ No   ■ N/A
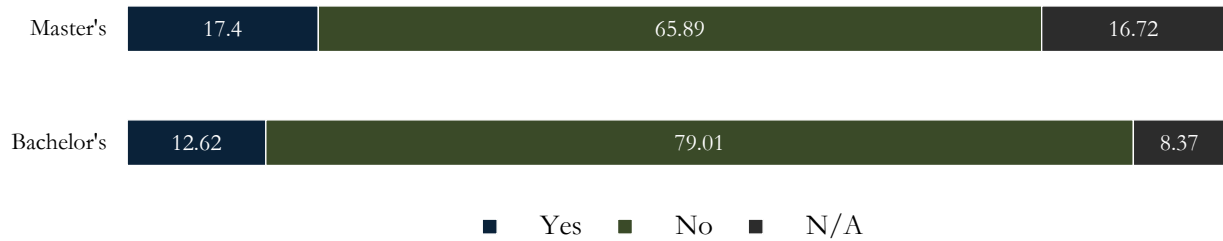
Chart 26 illustrates that around 17% of master's-level social workers and 12.62% of bachelor's-level social workers reported that they primarily practice online. In contrast, nearly 66% of master's-level social workers and 79% of bachelor's-level social workers reported that they did not primarily work online.

FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Given ongoing concerns about the earnings and compensation of the social work workforce, the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey collected information on social workers' student loan debts, gross earnings from primary jobs, and access to employer-provided benefits. Student loan debt amounts were collected in categorical amounts, but gross earnings were collected as the dollar amount earned in 2023. Detailed findings from the analysis of this information can be found in Table A10 in the Appendix.

Chart 27 shows the percentage distributions of the **student loan debt categories**. About 12% of master's-level social workers and 16.54% of bachelor's-level social workers reported that they had no student loan debt at the time of graduation with their highest degree. As expected, a higher proportion of master's-level social workers (42.22%), compared to bachelor's-level social workers (20.13%), had loan amounts exceeding $75,000, probably because they had more years of education. Similarly, nearly 73% of master's-level social workers had at least $30,000 in student loan debt by the time they graduated with their master's degrees, while about 62% of bachelor's-level social workers incurred at least $30,000 in debt when graduating from undergraduate programs.

Chart 27

Percentage Breakdown of Student Loan Debt Amount Upon Graduation With the Highest Degree
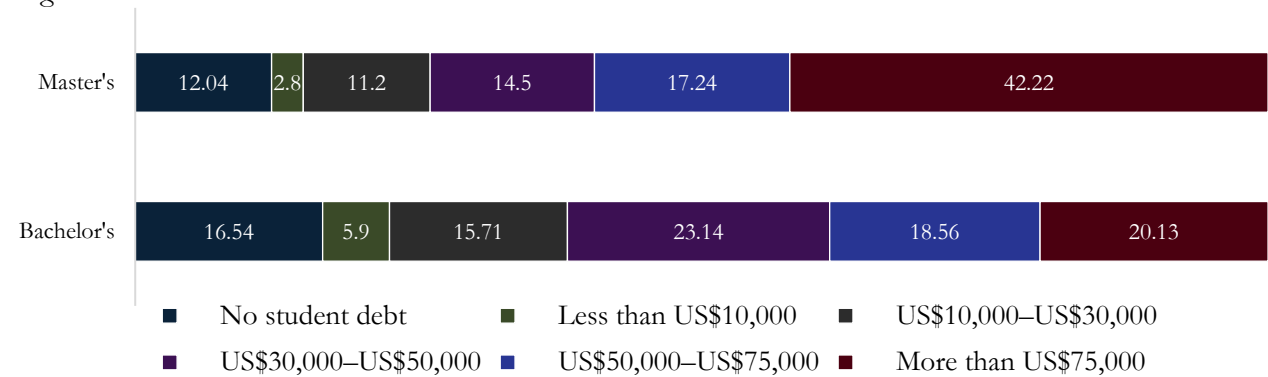
Chart 28 shows nonlicensed social workers' annual gross earnings from their primary job at the 10th, 25th, 50th (median), 75th, and 90th percentiles. Please note that, as Table A10 in the Appendix indicates, not all respondents answered the question about earnings, and some provided invalid answers. It is important to note that only 91.62% of (350 out of 382) nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers and 92.92% of (1,155 out of 1,243) nonlicensed master's-level social workers provided valid earnings data. Although the findings were weighted, it is important to note that the number of bachelor's-level social workers may be too small to generate nationally representative earnings estimates.

The **median earnings** of master's- and bachelor's-level social workers in 2024 were $63,860 and $48,410, respectively. These numbers indicate that master's-level social workers earned more than 30% more than bachelor's-level social workers within the nonlicensed workforce. The earnings difference may not be surprising, as master's-level social workers are typically expected to earn more than bachelor's-level social workers. Furthermore, the unique characteristics of the nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers who participated in the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey also provide additional contexts for the earnings difference. As discussed earlier in this report, these social workers were substantially younger than their master's-level counterparts, with median ages of 31 versus 39, respectively. Moreover, more than half of them were enrolled in master's degree programs. The 75th percentile annual gross earnings were $60,858 for nonlicensed bachelor's-level social workers and $82,400 for nonlicensed master's-level social workers.

Chart 28
Annual Gross Earnings ($) from the Primary Job (2024 Dollars)
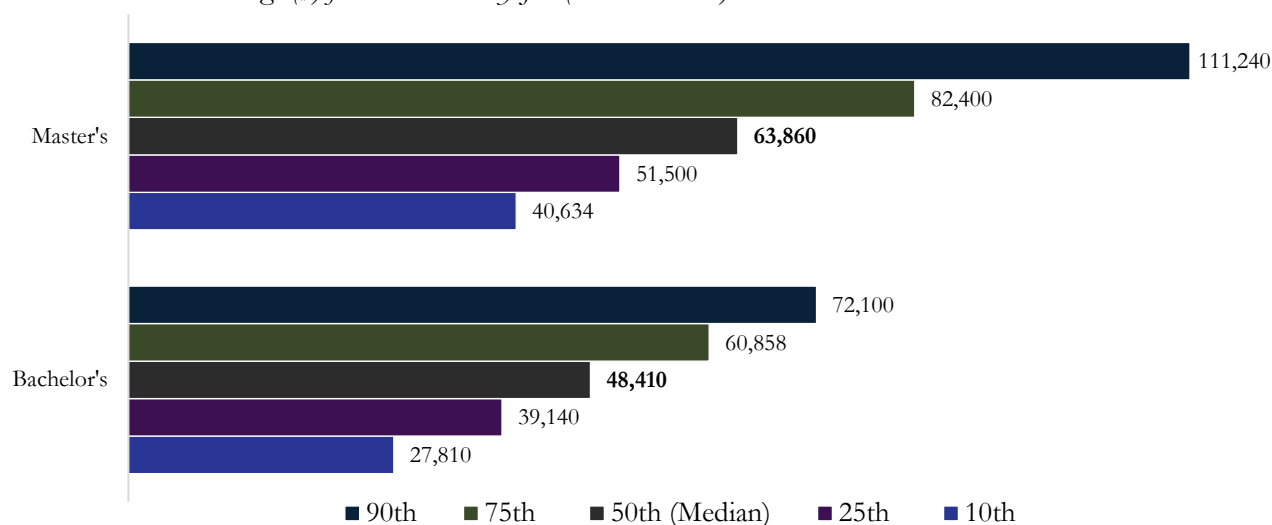
The bottom rows of Table A10 present the percentage of nonlicensed social workers who worked as employees and were offered **employer-provided benefits**, such as health, dental, and life insurance plans; retirement savings plans; and family and medical leave. Chart 29 summarizes the major findings. In general, a higher share of master's-level social workers than bachelor's-level social workers received employer-provided benefits, except for employers' contribution to retirement savings plans. To help contextualize these findings, Table 4 shows the percentages of U.S. workers whose employers offered similar benefits based on the BLS's National Compensation Survey (NCS). The proportions of nonlicensed social workers offered employer-provided benefits were higher than those of all civilian U.S. workers. While 75% of civilian workers were offered a health insurance plan and 45% a dental insurance plan by their employers, more than 88% and 71% of bachelor's- and master's-level social workers were offered the same benefits. The percentage of master's-level and bachelor's-level social workers offered a retirement savings plan was 81.7% and 77.86%, respectively, both surpassing the 75% rate for U.S. civilian workers. Additionally, Table A10 in the Appendix also shows that 66.12% of master's-level social workers and 68.04% of bachelor's-level social workers had their employers contribute to their retirement savings plans.

Chart 29

Percentage With Employer-Provided Benefits (Excluding Self-Employed),
All That Apply

| Master's | 93.28 | 77.26 | 81.7 | 66.12 | 71.43 |

| Bachelor's | 88.59 | 71.57 | 77.86 | 68.04 | 64.95 |

- ■ Health insurance
- ■ Life insurance
- ■ Retirement savings plan
- ■ Employer contribution to retirement savings plan
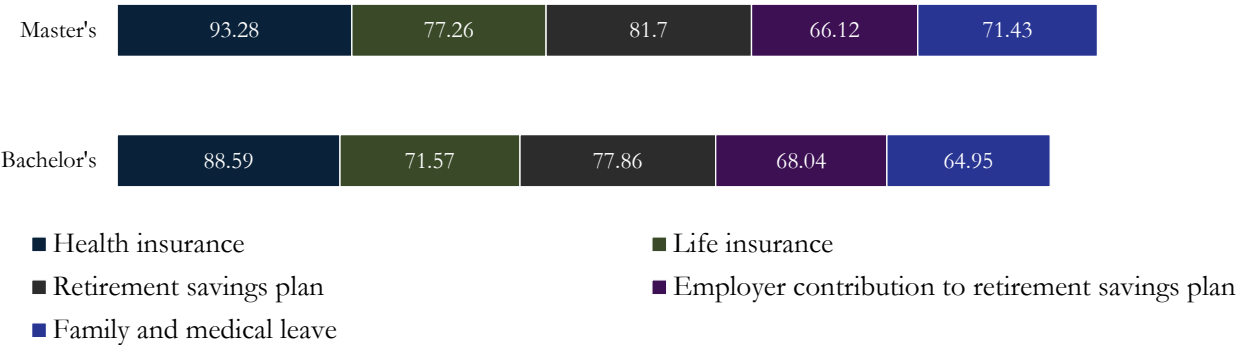- ■ Family and medical leave

Table 4

Percentage of U.S. Workers With Access to Employer-Provided Benefits, 2024

	Civilian workers	Private industry workers	State and local government workers
Health insurance	75	73	89
Dental insurance	45	43	60

Life insurance	62	58	83
Retirement savings plan	75	72	92
Unpaid family leave	90	90	94
Paid medical leave	81	79	92

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024).

However, only 71.43% of master's-level social workers and 64.95% of bachelor's-level social workers reported being offered family and medical leave. These rates were lower than 90% for unpaid family leave and 81% for paid medical leave among civilian workers. It is important to note that direct comparisons of these numbers may not be appropriate because of differences in the NCS and the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey. Although not shown in Chart 29, Table A10 also shows that over 31% of both groups of nonlicensed social workers reported that their employers provided tuition reimbursements. Furthermore, almost 44% of master's-level social workers and 51% of bachelor's-level social workers reported having access to flexible work schedules provided by their employers.

CAREER AND EDUCATIONAL PLANS

Charts 30 and 31 display the percentage distributions of career and educational plans or goals for nonlicensed social workers over the next two years. The workforce survey allowed respondents to select multiple options for their plans or goals. Detailed findings from the analyses can be found in Table A11 in the Appendix. According to Chart 30, about 54% of master's-level social workers and 36% of bachelor's-level social workers planned to remain in their current positions. Similar to licensed social workers, high shares of nonlicensed social workers — 63% for bachelor's-level and 47% for master's-level social workers — responded that they planned to seek new opportunities or promotion as social workers. As already suggested in the high rate of enrollment in a graduate program, more than 35% of bachelor's-level social workers responded that they planned to pursue further training in social work. Nearly 32% also expressed a plan to pursue a social work degree. Over 26% of master's-level social workers also indicated plans for further training in social work. Interestingly, nearly 52% of both nonlicensed groups intended to pursue a social work license. This finding echoes the finding reported by Salsberg et al. (2020), which noted that nearly 80% of new MSW graduates intended to become licensed clinical social workers in the next five years.

Chart 30
Percentage With Plans That May Signal Satisfaction With the Profession,
All That Apply

Master's	54.09	46.85	26.56	2.46	51.67

2.46

Bachelor's	36.37	63.02	35.3	31.92	52.21

- Remain in current position
- Seek new opportunity or promotion as a social worker
- Pursue further training in social work
- Pursue a social work degree
- Pursue a social work license
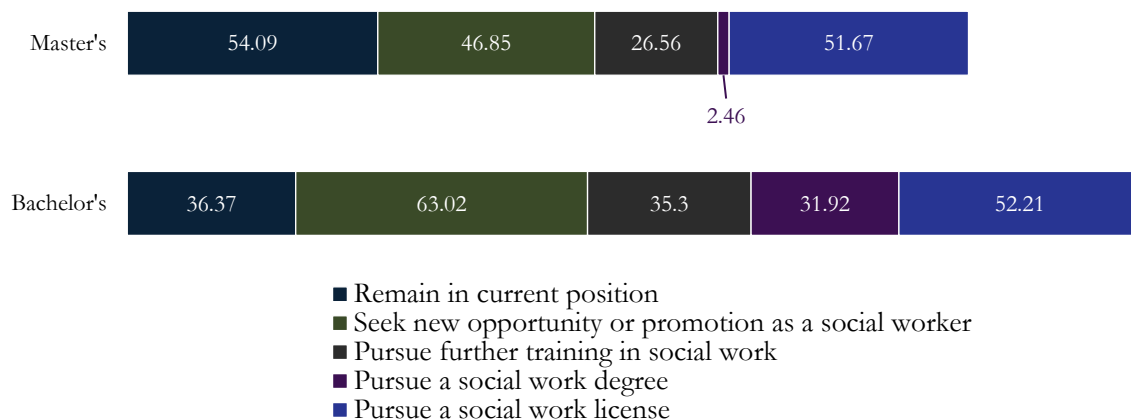
Chart 31
Percentage With Plans That May Signal Dissatisfaction With the Profession,
All That Apply

Master's	4.27	4.18	2.88	3.4	0.88

Bachelor's	4.93	4.44	1.42	2.39	0.68

- Decrease work hours as a social worker
- Leave social work field but continue working
- Retire
- Pursue a non-social work degree
- Pursue a non-social work license

Chart 31 above presents findings about nonlicensed social workers' plans or goals that may suggest their dissatisfaction with the profession. Most important, only about 4% of nonlicensed social workers — 4.18% of master's-level and 4.44% of bachelor's level social workers — expressed plans to leave the social work profession. About 3% and 1.42% of master's- and bachelor's-level social workers expressed plans to retire in the next two years. A small share of nonlicensed social workers — 3.4% of master's-level and 2.38% of bachelor's-level social workers — stated that they planned to pursue a non–social work degree. Less than 1% of the social workers reported plans to pursue a non–social work license in the future. The findings, overall, suggest that most of these nonlicensed social workers planned to seek education, licensure, training, and more opportunities within the social work field rather than leaving the profession.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide rarely available information about nonlicensed social workers. Nonlicensed social workers who participated in the 2024 Social Work Workforce Survey consisted of those who were either in the licensing process at the time of the survey or were employed in positions where a social work license was not needed. The findings suggest that most of them were U.S.-born, White females, much younger than the self-identified or licensed social workers from the first and second reports of this series. The small sample size and lack of an appropriate sampling frame, other than the Current Population Survey–Basic Monthly Survey, made it difficult to generalize the findings of this study to the population of the nonlicensed social work workforce across the country. Nevertheless, the overall findings of this study offer some basic insight into the nonlicensed social work workforce and how social work degrees and licensure shape its role and function in the social, human, and health services industries where nonlicensed social workers are employed. Most nonlicensed social workers were employed in social and human services settings where they assist individuals and families with limited incomes and marginalized identities. Many of them provide a broad range of basic, supportive, and protective services to improve their clients' well-being. Master's degrees allow them to be involved in more diverse settings and functions, including health services in large hospitals. However, unlike their licensed counterparts in mental and behavioral health services, they were less likely to be involved in direct service and care.

Building on previous studies, this study explored the extent to which nonlicensed social workers were engaged in macro functions or roles in their practice. Analyses revealed that only about 9.54% of bachelor's-level and 6.24% of master's-level social workers were involved in community organizing. Very few nonlicensed social workers primarily served as macro practitioners, such as administrators or program managers (5.55%), advocates (3.01%), evaluators or researchers (0.49%), community organizers (0.58%), policy analysts (0.19%), or mediators (2.47%). These findings reflect the prevailing concerns about diminishing macro practice within the workforce and call for more systematic and rigorous research to validate the findings. This study also explored any indications that nonlicensed social workers were dissatisfied with the social work field and were planning to leave the profession for jobs in other fields. Analyses found that only about 4% of nonlicensed social workers planned to leave the profession but also found that many sought more training, licensure, opportunity, and promotion within the field as social workers.

Education, training, and licensure for the social work workforce in human and social services may receive less attention than for those in mental and behavioral health services. However, it appears that social work education is essential to preparing the workforce, as indicated by the percentage of nonlicensed social workers who said that a social work degree was required or preferred. Although not required, many nonlicensed social workers responded that their positions and employers preferred a license. Indeed, while many nonlicensed social workers seek additional training, opportunities, and promotion as social workers, they seem to use an advanced social work degree and a license as stepping stones in their career paths within the field. This is indicated by the percentage of those who are enrolled in a graduate program, are already in the licensing process, or are planning to be licensed in two years. It appears that an MSW and a license in advanced practice categories are promising career pathways that offer clear specialties, leadership roles, opportunities for self-employment, and the potential for higher earnings.

These insights from the findings suggest that it is important to examine how an MSW and a license affect career advancement, earnings, and other indicators of labor market success for social work candidates. Understanding the career advancement of entry-level or generalist social workers, and how social work degrees and licenses help them navigate the social, human, and health services job markets, would provide valuable information for social work educators, employers, and aspiring social workers. The findings of this study also raise questions about the varying and inconsistent licensure and regulations of certain categories of social work practice across the country and how they may affect the workforce by influencing its practice setting, functions, and roles, as well as its compensation and career paths. Many more future studies are necessary to build upon this study and inform professional stakeholders and individual social workers about the effects of social work degrees, licensure, and regulations.

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APPENDIX TABLES

Table A1

Demographic Characteristics of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
	N=382	N=1,243
Gender		
Female	88.93	87.98
Male	8.98	9.82
Nonbinary	1.85	1.57
Other	0.24	0.63
Age		
Mean age (yrs)	*33.92*	*40.50*
Median age (yrs)	*31.00*	*39.00*
20s	44.31	22.31
30s	26.02	28.66
40s	18.98	27.01
50s	7.99	11.84
60s	2.52	8.37
70s	0.18	1.82
Education		
Bachelor's	100.00	0.00
Master's	0.00	93.28
PhD/Doctoral	0.00	6.72
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.55	2.80
Black	11.69	24.90
Hispanic/Latino	16.04	17.02
Other (including Native Americans)	2.16	1.04
White	68.56	54.25
Immigration/Citizenship		
Native-born citizen	95.06	89.90
Naturalized citizen	3.40	9.34
Noncitizen	1.54	0.77
Having children under 13		
Missing	1.02	0.78
0	69.78	64.63
1	14.42	16.78
2	10.91	13.53
3 or more	3.87	4.27
Language use at home (all that apply)		
English	98.79	99.01
French	0.49	0.73
Spanish	14.04	12.92
Other	2.27	3.90
Health conditions		
Physical health condition	16.37	14.36
Mental health condition	36.91	25.12
Other conditions	5.98	3.06
Any work-limiting conditions	11.83	6.76
Region of residence		

New England	5.27	5.83
Middle Atlantic	23.75	24.02
East North Central	13.16	10.38
West North Central	6.13	5.11
South Atlantic	13.9	18.97
East South Central	5.44	6.90
West South Central	6.86	5.66
Mountain	7.34	4.57
Pacific	18.14	18.56

Table A2

Educational Characteristics of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Undergraduate Degree Earned		
Top five majors		
Missing	14.60	77.82
Social work	49.94	12.40
Psychology	21.41	4.87
Criminal justice or criminology	4.29	0.40
Sociology	4.32	1.69
Human services and community organization	1.98	0.80
Full-time or part-time		
Missing	0.18	72.64
Full-time	93.54	25.92
Part-time	6.28	1.43
Program type		
Missing	0.00	72.70
Online	10.88	1.48
In-person	70.04	24.28
Hybrid	19.08	1.53
Graduate Degree Earned		
Majors		
Missing	--	7.75
Social work	--	89.44
Other	--	2.81
Full-time or part-time		
Missing	--	5.42
Full-time	--	74.76
Part-time	--	19.82
Program type		
Missing	--	4.86
Online	--	19.26
In-person	--	59.22
Hybrid	--	16.66
Top five concentrations		
Missing	--	46.94
Clinical or direct practice	--	11.68
Children, youth, and families	--	9.70
Mental health	--	5.60
Management or administration	--	4.11
Community development and social system	--	3.47
Educational Attainment		
Holding a doctoral degree	--	2.62
Holding a PhD degree	--	4.10
Current Enrollment		

Degree program enrolled		
Undergraduate	1.16	1.56
Graduate	51.70	7.95
Doctoral	--	2.32
PhD	--	0.90
Graduate program enrollment status (among enrolled)		
Missing	0	1.63
Full-time	67.06	74.98
Part-time	32.94	23.38
Graduate program type enrolled (among enrolled)		
Online	49.63	38.28
In-person	22.13	45.71
Hybrid	28.24	16.01

Note: -- indicates that data are unavailable.

Table A3

Employment Characteristics of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Social work degree required		
Required	25.20	55.70
Preferred	55.02	33.84
Neither required nor preferred	17.62	9.27
Missing	2.16	1.19
Social work licensure required		
Required	6.39	15.80
Preferred	25.19	36.48
Neither required nor preferred	61.80	44.59
Missing	6.62	3.12
Type of employer		
Self-employed: Private sole practice	0.21	1.26
Self-employed: Group practice	0.00	1.07
Self-employed: Independent contractor	2.37	2.53
Private, for-profit	11.06	12.29
Private, nonprofit	51.28	42.89
Federal government	5.60	1.88
State/rovincial government	12.27	22.05
Local government	15.46	12.71
Missing	1.75	3.32
Size of employer (excluding self-employed)		
1–9 employees	5.10	3.83
10–49 employees	15.35	10.74
50–99 employees	11.71	7.90
100–499 employees	35.85	24.43
500–999 employees	10.13	11.66
1,000 or more employees	21.48	40.34
Missing	0.38	1.09
Multiple-job-holding status		
No	76.87	72.81
Yes	22.00	23.69
Missing	1.14	3.50
Weekly work hours		
<=20	11.57	5.11
21–34	6.55	6.02
35–40	68.96	73.78
40+	11.95	13.13
Missing	0.97	1.96
Mean	36.92	38.72
Median	40.00	40.00
Annual work weeks		
<=25	1.36	2.24

26–49	12.28	20.10
50–52	78.38	65.21
Missing	7.99	12.44
Mean	49.84	48.48
Median	52.00	52.00
Years of social work experiences		
Less than 5	55.00	33.08
5–10	18.76	22.03
10–15	8.49	14.36
15–20	6.44	10.56
20–25	3.81	9.65
25–30	3.69	4.70
30+	2.08	4.54
Missing	1.73	1.07
Mean	7.89	11.95
Median	5.00	9.00
Number of years with current employer		
Less than 5	77.53	67.16
5–10	9.55	14.18
10–15	3.38	6.18
15–20	4.88	5.08
20+	4.01	6.58
Missing	0.65	0.83
Mean	4.40	5.84
Median	2.00	3.00

Table A4

Reason for Not Having a License (Check All That Apply), Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
I am currently in the licensing process.	22.71	37.85
My position is exempt from licensure.	13.69	11.58
Licensure is not needed where I practice.	28.86	28.27
My employer or job does not require a license.	34.05	36.85
Licensure fees are too high.	7.88	18.87
I have been unsuccessful on the licensing exam.	4.88	33.64
I do not have enough time or resources to complete the licensure process.	10.94	14.71
I do not have a social work degree.	25.43	2.64
I do not value having a license.	3.28	5.26
Other	22.21	14.58

Table A5

Practice Setting Among Nonlicensed Social Work Employees in the United States (Excluding the Self-Employed), Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Individual and family services agency	45.13	24.00
Agency for justice, public order, and safety activities	3.63	4.68
Administration of human resource program	2.02	1.94
Psychiatric and substance abuse hospital	1.38	4.28
Outpatient care center	7.80	5.76
Elementary or secondary school	5.83	10.98
Nursing care facility (skilled nursing facility)	1.71	2.82
Residential care facility, except skilled nursing facility	3.56	2.64
Civic, social, advocacy organization and grantmaking agency	3.19	4.79
General medical and surgical hospital or specialty hospital	3.33	8.78
Public administration, including executive office or legislative body	1.80	2.40
Community food and housing and emergency services agency	5.98	4.28
Home health care services agency	1.40	1.16
Other health care services agency	4.21	5.60
Insurance-related agency	0.64	0.89
Child day care services agency	0.13	0.14
College, university, or professional school, including junior/ community college	2.12	9.06
Vocational rehabilitation services agency	0.74	0.44
Office of physician(s)	1.60	0.48
Other	0.52	0.91
Missing	3.28	3.97

Table A6

Practice Function of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States (Check All That Apply), Weighted

Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Mental/behavioral health	42.57	39.72
Medical, hospital, or health services	15.02	20.51
Family and children's services	35.68	22.59
Advocacy	29.76	19.90
Substance abuse/addiction services	19.78	12.40
Psychiatric services	10.27	9.54
Elder services	10.44	10.84
Child welfare and child protective services	20.39	11.36
Homeless services	15.72	11.63
Public social services	17.71	10.47
School social services	7.89	14.21
Community organizing	9.54	6.24
Domestic violence services	12.66	4.76
Intellectual/development services	4.84	5.04
Hospice care	2.26	4.26
Rehabilitation services	4.22	4.15
Managed care	4.27	4.66
Adoption/foster care services	8.55	4.58
Residential treatment services	3.42	2.72
Veterans services	3.31	2.38
Adult protective services	3.11	3.05
Employee assistance services	2.03	1.48
Law enforcement or correction services	1.33	2.45
Higher education	2.43	9.34
Other	6.68	8.81
Missing	0.00	0.16

Table A7

Main Client Groups of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States (Check All That Apply), Weighted

Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Children (under 11)	50.25	42.23
Adolescents (12–17)	58.24	47.93
Adults (18–65)	69.43	66.83
Older adults (66 or older)	41.45	40.73
Racially minoritized groups	33.83	35.92
Immigrants and refugees	23.72	23.27
Sexually minoritized groups	20.05	17.80
People whose income is below the poverty level	51.46	46.88
People who are Medicaid-eligible	32.09	26.97
People with mental health disorders	55.26	47.96
People with substance use disorders	43.65	38.19
People involved with the child welfare system	41.99	28.98
People who need assistance with activities of daily living	25.51	23.23
People whose primary language is English	50.50	42.29
People whose primary language is French	3.47	3.52
People whose primary language is Spanish	27.15	23.94
People whose primary language is not English, French, or Spanish	11.43	11.51
Missing	0.49	2.09

Table A8

Primary Role of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Direct service provider (e.g., clinician, therapist, counselor)	14.62	29.63
Case manager or discharge planner	37.57	19.91
Administrator or program manager	5.55	11.85
Supervisor	6.73	8.69
Service coordinator	6.33	4.63
Consultant	0.82	1.96
Advocate	3.01	2.40
Educator or academician	0.21	6.32
Trainer, instructor, or facilitator	3.37	2.37
Investigator	3.84	1.62
Evaluator or researcher	0.49	1.08
Community organizer	0.58	0.14
Policy analyst	0.19	0.25
Speaker	0.00	0.06
Liaison	0.98	0.77
Assessor	0.64	1.01
Foster care worker	3.67	0.82
Forensic interviewer	0.55	0.54
Mediator	3.31	1.29
Community support	2.47	0.22
Mentor	14.62	29.63
Other	5.05	4.42

Table A9

Electronic Practice Among Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Percentage of time using electronic practice		
Never	9.03	9.69
1–25%	35.63	32.45
26–50%	19.79	17.87
51–75%	18.62	15.32
76–99%	11.64	12.03
100%	3.88	8.39
Not applicable	1.41	4.25
Work primarily online		
Yes	12.62	17.40
No	79.01	65.89
Not applicable	8.37	16.72

Table A10

Financial Characteristics of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States, Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Student loan debt total		
No student debt	16.54	12.04
Less than US$10,000	5.90	2.80
US$10,000–US$30,000	15.71	11.20
US$30,000–US$50,000	23.14	14.50
US$50,000–US$75,000	18.56	17.24
More than US$75,000	20.13	42.22
Student loan debt balance		
No student debt	20.23	13.14
Less than US$10,000	11.30	9.51
US$10,000–US$30,000	20.22	10.62
US$30,000–US$50,000	17.10	10.31
US$50,000–US$75,000	14.50	16.74
More than US$75,000	16.65	39.68
Annual gross earnings from the primary job (2024 dollars)		
(Unweighted N)	(350)	(1,155)
Mean	$49,649	$80,110
10th	$27,810	$40,634
25th	$39,140	$51,500
50th (Median)	**$48,410**	**$63,860**
75th	$60,858	$82,400
90th	$72,100	$111,240
Employer-provided benefits (excluding self-employed, all that apply)		
Health insurance	88.59	93.28
Dental insurance	84.44	88.92
Life insurance	71.57	77.26
Retirement savings plan	77.86	81.70
Employer contribution to retirement savings plan	68.04	66.12
Family and medical leave	64.95	71.43
Tuition reimbursement	31.21	31.51
Flexible work schedule	51.00	43.94
Other	3.62	5.13
No benefit offered	4.13	3.18

Table A11

Career and Educational Plans or Goals of Nonlicensed Social Workers in the United States (Check All That Apply), Weighted Percentage

	Bachelor's Level	Master's Level
Remain in current position	36.37	54.09
Seek new opportunity or promotion as a social worker	63.02	46.85
Increase work hours as a social worker	12.58	5.79
Decrease work hours as a social worker	4.93	4.27
Pursue a social work degree	31.92	2.46
Pursue a non–social work degree	2.39	3.40
Leave the social work field but continue working	4.44	4.18
Pursue a social work license	52.21	51.67
Pursue a non–social work license	0.68	0.88
Retire	1.42	2.88
Pursue further training in social work	35.3	26.56
Stop working	1.14	0.90
Other	6.75	5.49
No plans for change	3.49	4.30

Note:

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