

LMSW Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

- 1. A young woman with a history of drug abuse shows symptoms of agitation, anxiety, sweating, and restlessness. What might the social worker suspect?**
 - A. A drug overdose.**
 - B. A possible drug withdrawal syndrome.**
 - C. A pre-psychotic episode.**
 - D. Intoxication.**
- 2. A woman is referred to a community mental health agency by the local hospital. She was tested twice for AIDS. Though the test results were negative, she requested additional tests and continues to ask for more AIDS tests. She asks the social worker to intervene with the hospital on her behalf. The social worker should assess**
 - A. her AIDS risk behavior**
 - B. her current mental health diagnosis**
 - C. how to advocate on her behalf with the hospital**
 - D. the reasons for her concern**
- 3. What is a commonly cited reason for keeping therapy group sizes relatively small?**
 - A. Reduced disruption and conflict**
 - B. Enhanced clinical outcomes**
 - C. Improved logistic management**
 - D. Non-attendance and client turnover allowance**
- 4. Most clinicians who treat clients with alcohol dependency emphasize a treatment goal of**
 - A. controlled drinking**
 - B. gradually lengthening periods of sobriety**
 - C. substituting benign medications for alcohol**
 - D. total abstinence**

- 5. What is the first action for a social worker who finds a Cambodian child with cerebral palsy being kept in isolation by the family?**
- A. Call the Cambodian community agencies and the Buddhist priest.**
 - B. Report the situation to the child protective service agency.**
 - C. Suggest that the mother ask her father to live elsewhere.**
 - D. Try to relate to the family, including the grandfather, to determine more about their values.**
- 6. The most important contraindication for marital therapy is**
- A. one partner's acting out behavior, e.g., infidelity, noncompliance with agreements**
 - B. paranoid reactions by a marital partner**
 - C. the fragility of one marital partner's defense**
 - D. the therapist's inability to prevent a marital partner from using sessions for aggressive, hostile and destructive purposes against his or her mate**
- 7. The best response for a social worker when a lawyer client believes he was denied promotion because two senior associates dislike him is**
- A. "How could you believe something for which you have no evidence?"**
 - B. "That is the way law firms are."**
 - C. "Yes, you are probably too aggressive for them."**
 - D. "You may be right, but they offered to reconsider you."**
- 8. What is typically informed to clients at the start of treatment regarding their right to confidentiality with respect to child and elder abuse or serious threats of harm?**
- A. Clients have a right to confidentiality that is limited by the need to report or act upon child and elder abuse and serious threats of harm to self or others.**
 - B. There are numerous risks to treatment that the client should accept.**
 - C. The agency may arbitrarily terminate treatment.**
 - D. Fees may rise during the course of treatment.**

- 9. Harry's social work career ended due to engaging in a sexual relationship with a client but he now wants to return to the field. The director should:**
- A. consult with the Board and secure their informed support before moving ahead**
 - B. go ahead and hire Harry if he believes he can do the job**
 - C. not consult with the Board and simply go ahead and hire Harry**
 - D. not hire Harry at all due to his past record**
- 10. What major issue might a couple be facing if the wife describes her husband's feelings and behaviors, and the husband smiles when she agrees with him?**
- A. Depression**
 - B. Enmeshment**
 - C. Role confusion**
 - D. A dystonic marital relationship**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. A**
- 3. D**
- 4. A**
- 5. A**
- 6. A**
- 7. C**
- 8. A**
- 9. A**
- 10. B**

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Explanations

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1. A young woman with a history of drug abuse shows symptoms of agitation, anxiety, sweating, and restlessness. What might the social worker suspect?

A. A drug overdose.

B. A possible drug withdrawal syndrome.

C. A pre-psychotic episode.

D. Intoxication.

The symptoms described—agitation, anxiety, sweating, and restlessness—are commonly associated with drug withdrawal rather than intoxication or overdose. In cases of withdrawal, the body reacts to the absence of a substance it has become dependent on, which can manifest as physical and psychological symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms can vary depending on the specific substance, duration of use, and individual factors, but they frequently include anxiety and restlessness, as well as physical signs like sweating. Given the context of the young woman's history of drug abuse, these symptoms align well with withdrawal syndrome, suggesting that her body is reacting to a lack of a previously used substance. In contrast, an overdose would typically present with more severe symptoms and potential life-threatening complications, while intoxication could lead to similar behavioral changes, but would often include signs of impairment rather than the agitation and anxiety characteristic of withdrawal. A pre-psychotic episode usually involves other symptoms like hallucinations or severe delusions, which are not mentioned here. Therefore, the most fitting interpretation of her symptoms is consistent with drug withdrawal syndrome.

2. A woman is referred to a community mental health agency by the local hospital. She was tested twice for AIDS. Though the test results were negative, she requested additional tests and continues to ask for more AIDS tests. She asks the social worker to intervene with the hospital on her behalf. The social worker should assess

A. her AIDS risk behavior

B. her current mental health diagnosis

C. how to advocate on her behalf with the hospital

D. the reasons for her concern

The correct approach in this scenario is to assess the reasons for her concern about her AIDS test results. While evaluating her AIDS risk behavior is important to understand her background and any specific risk factors she may have, determining the underlying reasons for her persistent anxiety about testing is crucial. This assessment could reveal psychological factors, such as anxiety or health-related fears, that may be influencing her ongoing requests for testing. By understanding her concerns more deeply, the social worker can better address her emotional state and provide appropriate support, possibly including counseling or referrals to mental health resources, which may aid in alleviating her anxiety about the situation. This understanding can also inform how to advocate effectively with the hospital if necessary.

3. What is a commonly cited reason for keeping therapy group sizes relatively small?

- A. Reduced disruption and conflict**
- B. Enhanced clinical outcomes**
- C. Improved logistic management**
- D. Non-attendance and client turnover allowance**

Keeping therapy group sizes relatively small is commonly associated with the allowance for non-attendance and client turnover, which is a crucial factor in maintaining the effectiveness and cohesion of the group. Smaller groups can accommodate such changes more easily without significantly disrupting the therapeutic process. When a group is small, the dynamics remain manageable, allowing for continuity and a stable environment even if some members are unable to attend regularly. This flexibility can help ensure that participants continue to benefit from the group experience, as the therapist can more readily adjust to changing group compositions. In contrast, larger groups may struggle more with the impact of individual absences or turnovers, potentially leading to fragmentation of the therapeutic process. This can complicate the maintenance of therapeutic alliances and contributions from each member may become less individualized. While other reasons like reduced disruption, enhanced clinical outcomes, and improved logistics are important considerations in group therapy, the ability to handle non-attendance and turnover effectively is a distinct advantage of smaller group sizes.

4. Most clinicians who treat clients with alcohol dependency emphasize a treatment goal of

- A. controlled drinking**
- B. gradually lengthening periods of sobriety**
- C. substituting benign medications for alcohol**
- D. total abstinence**

Clinicians who treat clients with alcohol dependency may initially encourage controlled drinking as a treatment goal. Gradually lengthening periods of sobriety may not be a feasible goal for certain individuals who struggle with alcohol dependency. Substituting benign medications for alcohol may not address the root cause of the dependency and may not lead to long-term success. Total abstinence may be an ultimate goal, but it may not be the immediate focus of treatment as it can be challenging to achieve and maintain. Therefore, the most common and reasonable treatment goal for clients with alcohol dependency is controlled drinking.

5. What is the first action for a social worker who finds a Cambodian child with cerebral palsy being kept in isolation by the family?

- A. Call the Cambodian community agencies and the Buddhist priest.**
- B. Report the situation to the child protective service agency.**
- C. Suggest that the mother ask her father to live elsewhere.**
- D. Try to relate to the family, including the grandfather, to determine more about their values.**

The most appropriate first action for the social worker in this scenario would be to report the situation to the child protective service agency. This is because the child's isolation may indicate a level of neglect or abuse, and the welfare of the child should be prioritized. Reporting to child protective services ensures that professionals who are trained in handling such situations can assess the risk factors involved and take necessary actions to promote the child's safety and well-being. In cases of suspected neglect, particularly with a child who has a disability, it is crucial to involve the appropriate authorities who have the resources and legal authority to intervene as needed. This action aligns with the ethical responsibilities that social workers have to protect vulnerable populations, especially children. Engagement with the family, understanding their values, or contacting community resources are important steps in the broader process of culturally competent practice, but these should occur after ensuring that the child is safe. If neglect or harm to the child is suspected, addressing those concerns must take precedence over community engagement or familial mediation.

6. The most important contraindication for marital therapy is

- A. one partner's acting out behavior, e.g., infidelity, noncompliance with agreements**
- B. paranoid reactions by a marital partner**
- C. the fragility of one marital partner's defense**
- D. the therapist's inability to prevent a marital partner from using sessions for aggressive, hostile and destructive purposes against his or her mate**

The most important contraindication for marital therapy is one partner's acting out behavior, such as infidelity or noncompliance with established agreements. This type of behavior often creates significant barriers to effective communication and trust within the relationship. When one partner is engaging in infidelity or similar actions, it not only undermines the foundational trust required for a successful therapeutic process but also can lead to emotional harm and increased conflict during sessions. Marital therapy relies heavily on both partners being committed to the therapeutic process and willing to work on their issues collaboratively. If one partner is engaged in acting out behavior, it can shift the focus away from resolving the underlying relational difficulties and instead foster an environment of blame, resentment, and defensiveness. This can hinder progress and create further complications in the therapeutic process, making it crucial to address such behaviors before engaging in joint therapy sessions. In contrast, while paranoid reactions, fragility in defense mechanisms, or hostile behaviors pose challenges to therapy, they do not inherently prevent the parties from working towards reconciliation or improving communication, provided that the individuals are committed to the process. Thus, addressing acting out behaviors is critical for setting a healthier context for marital therapy.

7. The best response for a social worker when a lawyer client believes he was denied promotion because two senior associates dislike him is

- A. "How could you believe something for which you have no evidence?"**
- B. "That is the way law firms are."**
- C. "Yes, you are probably too aggressive for them."**
- D. "You may be right, but they offered to reconsider you."**

The most appropriate response for the social worker in this scenario reflects an understanding of the client's emotions and perspective. Acknowledging that the client may be perceived as "too aggressive" recognizes the complexities of workplace dynamics, especially in high-pressure environments like law firms. It validates the client's feelings and experiences without dismissing them outright. By responding in this way, the social worker helps the client feel heard and understood, which is crucial in building trust and rapport. Such validation can encourage the client to explore their feelings further and consider constructive ways to address their situation. This response opens up a dialogue about interpersonal relations in the workplace, allowing for a discussion about the client's behavior and how it might affect their relationships with colleagues, rather than simply focusing on the perceived unfairness of the situation. Other options do not effectively support the client's emotional state or promote constructive dialogue. For example, questioning the client's belief without acknowledging their perspective can come off as dismissive, while a statement that implies acceptance of the status quo does not encourage growth or resolution. Additionally, suggesting that the client's behavior is entirely to blame could discourage the client and does not foster a positive conversational environment. The chosen response allows for a more balanced exploration of the situation while taking the client's feelings into account.

8. What is typically informed to clients at the start of treatment regarding their right to confidentiality with respect to child and elder abuse or serious threats of harm?

- A. Clients have a right to confidentiality that is limited by the need to report or act upon child and elder abuse and serious threats of harm to self or others.**
- B. There are numerous risks to treatment that the client should accept.**
- C. The agency may arbitrarily terminate treatment.**
- D. Fees may rise during the course of treatment.**

Clients are informed at the start of treatment that their right to confidentiality is not absolute and is specifically limited in cases involving child and elder abuse or serious threats of harm to themselves or others. This is crucial because it emphasizes the ethical and legal obligations of social workers and mental health professionals to protect individuals who may be at risk. By clearly communicating this limitation, clients understand that if there are disclosures of imminent danger—such as abuse or the potential for self-harm or harm to others—practitioners are required to act, which may involve reporting to relevant authorities. This transparency helps build trust in the therapeutic relationship while ensuring that vulnerable populations are safeguarded.

9. Harry's social work career ended due to engaging in a sexual relationship with a client but he now wants to return to the field. The director should:

A. consult with the Board and secure their informed support before moving ahead

B. go ahead and hire Harry if he believes he can do the job

C. not consult with the Board and simply go ahead and hire Harry

D. not hire Harry at all due to his past record

The most appropriate course of action in this scenario is to consult with the Board and secure their informed support before making any decisions regarding Harry's potential re-employment. This approach emphasizes the importance of professional accountability and adherence to ethical standards in the field of social work. Engaging in a sexual relationship with a client is a serious violation of ethical guidelines, as it compromises the integrity of the therapeutic relationship and the welfare of the client. By consulting with the Board, the director ensures that they are taking a responsible and informed approach to Harry's re-entry into the profession. This step allows for a thorough evaluation of the circumstances surrounding Harry's previous conduct and considers any relevant regulations or recommendations from the Board regarding his fitness to practice social work again. Additionally, obtaining support from the Board serves to protect clients and the reputation of the social work profession as a whole. It underscores the commitment to uphold ethical standards and promote accountability, thereby fostering a safe environment for clients and maintaining the trust placed in social work professionals.

10. What major issue might a couple be facing if the wife describes her husband's feelings and behaviors, and the husband smiles when she agrees with him?

A. Depression

B. Enmeshment

C. Role confusion

D. A dystonic marital relationship

Enmeshment is a situation that occurs when there are blurred boundaries within a relationship, often characterized by a lack of autonomy among partners. In this context, the wife's description of her husband's feelings and behaviors suggests that she may be internalizing his emotions and mirroring his responses, which indicates they may not have distinct individual identities. When the husband smiles in agreement, it signifies approval of her reflection, further reinforcing the interconnectedness in their emotional states rather than fostering individual perspectives. In an enmeshed relationship, partners often experience difficulty with independent decision-making, as one partner may overly rely on the other for emotional cues and validation. The scenario implies that the couple might struggle with their autonomy, leading to a dynamic where one person's feelings dominate the relationship, thus causing tension and a lack of individual growth. This familial pattern can be detrimental to healthy communication and relationship satisfaction, making enmeshment a significant issue in the couple's interactions.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://lmsw.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!