

FAQS for Becoming an Internship Site for MSW Students

Thank you for considering hosting MSW interns at your organization. Interns bring energy, enthusiasm, and a desire to learn to a variety of agencies and organizations that serve vulnerable populations. Here are some questions that agencies often ask:

How many hours per week will the intern be at my agency?

There are different hour requirements for various programs. Most students are required to be at their internship for a minimum of 16 hours per week. They generally begin internships in late August/early September, and finish their internships in early May.

What are the expectations for an agency that has MSW interns?

Agencies provide MSW interns with tasks that help them develop skills in some or all of the nine competencies set by the Council on Social Work Education. Those competencies are: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; Engage diversity and difference in practice; Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice; Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice; Engage in policy practice; Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

What kinds of tasks does an MSW intern do?

Interns can do a variety of tasks, as long as those tasks help to prepare them to be master's level social workers. Some typical activities include: case management, intakes/assessments, individual therapy, group therapy, documentation, community outreach, event planning, collaborating with outside agencies, attending community meetings, event planning, program development, and advocacy, grant research/writing.

What qualifications does the Field Instructor need?

The Field Instructor must have an MSW degree and be at least two years post graduation. They are also required to complete a field instruction training course (CEUs are provided). New Field Instructors may attend the training concurrently in the fall when they are assigned a new student. Field Instructors can be certified by most schools of social work. On-line courses are also available.

What are the Field Instructor's responsibilities?

The Field Instructor meets weekly with each student for one hour of supervision, reviews the students' weekly Educationally Based Recordings (process recordings), works with the student to develop a Learning Agreement, completes semester evaluations (available on-line), and meets with the student and CSUN Field Liaison once per semester for a site visit (which can be done via Skype if needed).

What if my organization doesn't have an MSW on staff to serve as Field Instructor?

In some cases, the agency or university can identify an MSW in the community who can serve as a Consultant Field Instructor. In that case, the agency provides a Preceptor, a staff person who oversees the intern's day-to-day learning activities. Preceptors are also used in agencies that have MSW Field Instructors on staff to provide additional support and supervision.

What kind of support will we have from the University?

Every student is assigned a University Field Liaison. The Liaison is there to support student success and is someone the agency Field Instructor can consult with throughout the internship if questions or concerns arise.

How does my agency become and approved internship site?

If an agency meets our requirements for student learning activities, has a qualified field instructor to provide supervision and executes an affiliation agreement with CSUN, they can then be approved to host MSW interns.