

**Office of Field Education**  
**Temporary Policy Modifications Related to COVID-19 Response**  
**Effective Thru 5.31.23**

**Modification of Minimum Required Field Placement Hours – Temporary Thru 5.31.23**

Based on guidance from the Council on Social Work Education, our accrediting body, the Office of Field Education has modified the required minimum number of hours to be completed in field placements in order to best support students and agencies while navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. The following adjustments for student field requirements apply to students completing field placements during the Fall 2021-Spring 2022 and Fall 2022-Spring 2023 academic years:

<b>Student Level</b>	<b>Previous Field Hours Required</b>	<b>Modified MINIMUM Field Hours Required</b>
BSSW / MSW Foundation	240 per semester	200 per semester
MSW Concentration	300 per semester	250 per semester

The required minimum number of internship hours has been decreased to reflect increased stressors and constraints on both students and agencies. However, it is recognized that some agencies will request that students complete the previous hour requirements due to the nature of learning opportunities for students within their agency. During the application and interview process, we recommend students and agency contacts engage in conversations around the expectations for internship hours and how best to meet the needs of all parties during the internship while responding to ongoing safety and CDC public health guidelines. It is our hope that the continued modification to the hour requirement supports those that need the additional flexibility in their scheduling of field hours while still allowing continued engagement in exceptional experiential based learning opportunities.

**Employment-Based Field Placement (EBFP) Update – Temporary Thru 5.31.23**

This temporary addendum to the Department of Social Work Field Education Manual aligns with the CSWE and Commission on Accreditation Statement in response to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to prioritize the safety of students, educators, social workers, and their clients and communities. These temporary guidelines are in effect through May 31, 2023.

This temporary addendum specifically addresses “Employment-Based Field Placement” (Section IV. B. g. on pages 31- 33) in the Department of Social Work Field Education Manual.

- A. The agency must agree to provide an educational experience that aligns with the nine social work competencies and the student’s professional learning goals. Students can meet the learning requirements in one of two ways:
  - 1. **OPTION ONE:** Under existing guidelines, the student and agency will work together to identify learning activities new to the student and separate from existing employment duties. The student will submit an Employment-Based Field Placement Application to clearly outline this differentiation between employment duties and internship learning activities.

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2. OPTION TWO: CSWE has issued a temporary COA update due to COVID-19 through the end of May 31, 2023. Under these temporary guidelines, CSWE states that student field assignments and employment tasks may be the same and counted toward field hours **as long as the tasks have clear linkages to the nine social work competencies.**
    - a. Under these temporary guidelines, students employed in a social work setting and/or role **do NOT need to differentiate** between employment duties and internship activities.
    - b. The student will submit an Employment-Based Field Placement Application to clearly outline the proposed plan to meet all the competencies.
    - c. If not all nine competencies can be met through the student’s existing employment duties, the student and agency will work together to identify new learning activities to meet the remaining competencies.
    - d. Students will be in the field placement for 30 weeks from the start of the fall semester (mid-August) until the end of the spring semester (mid-May). Students who qualify under this temporary guideline are expected to remain in their field placement for the full duration of the academic year, even if they accrue more hours than the required hours. NOTE: The required hours are a minimum number. Please refer to “Hours Requirements” (Section II. B. a. on pages 8-9) and “Time in the Field Placement” (Section IV. B. f. on page 31) for additional guidance.
    - e. Due to the Social Work Department’s concurrent enrollment policies, students who qualify under this temporary guideline are expected to participate in Field Seminar for the full duration of each semester. They will follow the same timeline, assignments, due dates as all other students enrolled in Field Seminar.
- B. Other EBFP guidelines outlined in the Field Manual remain in place:
1. The agency must be approved by the Office of Field Education and assume all the responsibilities required of any other Field Agency.
  2. Supervision requirements for Employment-Based Field Placements remain the same. The Field Instructor MUST be a different person than the student’s current employment supervisor.
  3. Students must have an appropriate field placement for their student level. BSSW and MSW Foundation year students’ field placements should provide a generalist experience while MSW concentration level placements should reflect advanced social work practice.

To set up an Employment-Based Field Placement, students should first attend an EBFP Info Session to learn more about the application process. Students who believe they may qualify to use “Option Two” under CSWE’s temporary guidelines should directly contact Assistant Director of Field Education, Stevie Noll (snoll3@msudenver.edu), who is available to provide support with this process as needed.