

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		
Policy Number: GA-9	Effective Date: February 1, 2023	Version: 4.0
POLICY TITLE: BSW SCHOLARS IV-E PRACTICUM		
OVERVIEW: The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) practicum provides educationally directed practice experience under the direct supervision of an approved Agency-Based Field Instructor or Off-Site Field Instructor, which prepares students for employment with the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) as a Family Case Manager (FCM). The practicum provides opportunities for applying classroom concepts and principles, learning the values and ethics of the social work profession, and developing skills necessary for competence in the social work profession.		

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Agency-Based Field Instructor: This individual is a DCS employee who provides weekly field instruction and practice supervision to the Scholar at the Scholar's placement site; assists with planning and approving of the learning activities; and evaluates the student's performance and level of competency on behaviors related to the planned learning activities. This individual must have a BSW Degree with two (2) or more years of professional experience or a Master of Social Work Degree to serve in this role and meet the university criteria to serve in this capacity.
- B. Field Coordinator: The person at the Scholar's university who works with the Scholar to locate and approve an appropriate field placement. The Field Coordinator is the academic institution's point of contact for all matters related to the practicum.
- C. Field Liaison: This individual is the practicum course instructor of record who serves as the point of contact between DCS and the university when issues arise in the field. The Field Liaison provides consultation to the Agency-Based Field Instructor and the Scholar to ensure integration between classroom knowledge and field practice. The Field Liaison oversees the progression of learning throughout the practicum, reviews and approves planned learning activities developed by the Scholar and Agency-Based Field Instructor, plans and facilitates routine seminars, and plans and facilitates course evaluations in conjunction with the Scholar and Agency-Based Field Instructor to assign the course grade. The Field Liaison also addresses performance concerns and is the academic institution's point of contact for the practicum course.
- D. Off-Site Field Instructor: This individual provides educational supervision to the Scholar when there is not an Agency-Based Field Instructor available.
- E. Practicum: Educationally-directed practice experience under the direct supervision of an approved Agency-Based Field Instructor or Off-Site Field Instructor, as required by the School of Social Work.
- F. Scholar: A student that has been selected to participate in the Title IV-E Scholars program.

II. REFERENCES

- [Council on Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#)
- [DCS Administrative Policies](#)
- [DCS Child Welfare Policies](#)

- [DCS Code of Conduct](#)
- [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#)

III. STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

- A. To be accepted into the practicum program, Scholars must:
 1. Be enrolled in the Title IV-E BSW program;
 2. Pass applicable background checks, completed by DCS Human Resources (HR). These background checks, which must be passed by DCS employees, include a Limited Criminal History Check, Child Protective Services (CPS)/Child Protection Index (CPI) Check, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprinting, and drug test prior to the start of the practicum; and
 3. Sign the [DCS Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement](#).
- B. DCS staff will mentor the Scholars, treat them as co-workers in training, and ensure the Scholars' educational needs are met without compromising the business needs of the work unit.
- C. All practicum activities performed must not interfere with DCS operations.
- D. Scholars are encouraged to observe, make suggestions, and participate in the decision-making process; however, Scholars do not make decisions relating to DCS casework. Scholars may not:
 1. Have cases assigned to them in Casebook,
 2. Be left alone with children, or
 3. Transport children.
- E. Joint planning between the Social Work Program, the Scholar, and the DCS office is required to identify learning activities that are available at DCS that satisfy the practicum course requirements and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies.
- F. Practicum planning should begin when the Scholar begins the social work program. A meeting must be scheduled and include the:
 1. Scholar; and
 2. Field Coordinator assigned to work with the IV-E Scholar.
- G. The Scholar's practicum assignments must satisfy CSWE competencies and be supported by the Social Work Program's curriculum and assessment process.
- H. Upon graduation and being offered employment by DCS, new hires must complete on the job training prior to receiving full access to Casebook.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. The Scholar will:
 1. Submit practicum tasks to the School of Social Work for approval;
 2. Work under the supervision of an Agency-Based Field Instructor or Off-Site Field Instructor;
 3. Participate in practicum activities in a way that does not adversely impact DCS operations; and

4. Discuss the following with the Field Coordinator during the practicum planning meeting:
 - a. Learning activities needed to satisfy the practicum course requirements and CSWE competencies, and
 - b. The DCS office's ability to support the course work and practicum activities the Scholar needs to complete to meet the Social Work Program's requirements.
- B. The DCS Agency-Based Field Instructor or Off-Site Field Instructor will:
1. Ensure that all activities in the practicum are clearly presented as learning opportunities for the Scholar;
 2. Ensure the Scholar learns and utilizes the DCS Practice Model;
 3. Collaborate with the Scholar's Field Liaison to provide feedback to the Scholar;
 4. Communicate with the Scholar as follows:
 - a. Provide supervision to the Scholar for a minimum of one (1) hour per week to review and provide feedback on work performed and discuss the delineation of roles. This meeting may occur virtually or face-to-face,
 - b. Model professional behavior that is consistent with the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#),
 - c. Tailor learning tasks and activities to the Scholar's learning needs and ensure those tasks comply with the Scholar's learning needs, CSWE competencies, and the [DCS Code of Conduct](#),
 - d. Assist the Scholar in understanding [DCS Administrative Policies](#) and [DCS Child Welfare Policies](#),
 - e. Facilitate the Scholar's understanding and adherence to responsible and ethical conduct,
 - f. Document any concerns related to the Scholar's work and share those concerns with the Field Liaison and Field Coordinator,
 - g. Attend and participate in the field orientation and in periodic trainings with other Field Instructors organized by the BSW Program, and
 - h. Assess the Scholar's progress in achieving competency by evaluating and rating the learning activity outcomes of the Scholar's learning plan.

V. FORMS

[DCS Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement](#)

DATE: January 17, 2023

LaTrece Thompson, Deputy Director of Staff Development
Department of Child Services