Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS)
Policy Statement

Policy Chapter:	**Training**
Policy Number:	**15.03.01**
Policy Name:	**Field Education for Students**

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Approved By:	Richard B. Werner

PURPOSE: To provide general guidelines for the field placements at Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) for students who are enrolled in academic programs approved by the Council of Social Work education (CSWE).

SCOPE: This policy applies to students, either employed or not employed, by CCDCFS who seek field education experiences at CCDCFS.

POLICY

I. CCDCFS will provide opportunities for field education for students enrolled in programs that are approved by CSWE. The students will be assigned activities that promote the integration of school work and practice.

II. The placement, supervision and evaluation of the students' field education will be coordinated by the Senior Manager of the Training Department.

PROCEDURES

I. Students Who Are Employed By CCDCFS:

A. Students who successfully complete the enrollment process in a school approved by the CSWE are required to contact the Senior Manager of the Training Department at least 2 weeks prior to the start date of the scheduled field experience, according to the field education calendars of the school and make a formal request for a field placement.

B. The student submits a portfolio to the Senior Manager of the Training Department. The portfolio includes: the student's current resume, copy of the field practicum proposal, a statement of purpose that addresses the student's short and long term career goals and his/her area of interest and a letter or e-mail from the student's supervisor or senior manager acknowledging their awareness of the student's enrollment in the academic program and the student's interest in pursuing an internship with the agency.

C. The student schedules a face to face interview with the Senior Manager of the Training Department or his/her designee. At that time, the student completes an application for field placement. The student's signature on the application verifies his/ her willingness to comply with basic agency policies and engage in regular supervision. The initial conversation with the student focuses on gathering information about the student's academic standing, declared concentration, areas of interest for direct practice, learning style, micro versus macro practice.

D. The final decision to accept or reject the student's application is made by the Deputy Administrators after reviewing the recommendation of the Senior Manager of the Training Department.

E. The acceptance or rejection is documented in writing, with an original letter to be sent to the student and copies to be forwarded to the student's record, the university representative, the student's supervisor and the student's senior manager.

F. The student is assigned a field instructor at the start of the field placement. The supervisor must have credentials and experience required by the CSWE. If the assigned field instructor is absent for 2 weeks or more, a back-up field instructor is assigned to provide guidance and support.

G. When a field instructor is not available for direct supervision in a specific department, a task supervisor is assigned. The task supervisor is an agency supervisor whose area of practice coincides with the student's selected area of practice and who agrees to provide hands on supervision to the student.

H. The student, the assigned field instructor and task supervisor (if applicable) develop a learning contract that stipulates specific learning goals and objectives. The contract is signed by both the student and the agency field instructor and is submitted to the university representative for final approval.

I. The assigned supervisor provides regular weekly individual supervision for at least one hour. Guidance and specific feedback is provided on various activities. Assessment of progress relative to the learning contract is provided on an on-going basis.

J. Students who successfully completed their probationary period prior to the beginning of the academic year in which the field placement will occur may be eligible (with Deputy Administrator approval) for 8 hours release time/week from their regular jobs.

K. The 8 hours/ week time release is available only to the students who are full time employees of the agency and who choose to complete their internships with the agency.

L. Use of time release by the agency students implies an understanding that field assignments and field hours are utilized to address organizational needs. Examples of activities that would qualify for time release include, but are not limited to: Regional Training Center (RTC) workshops, agency events, meetings with the agency collabs, committee and/or workgroup meetings and activities, interviews and other activities in preparation for research projects, etc.

M. The student's direct supervisor has the right to request the revocation of the release time for a period of time for reasonable cause, such as poor performance, failure to comply with the agency's policies and standards of operation or disciplinary issues. Documentation of inappropriate performance is required to implement this restriction. The decision to revoke the release time is made jointly by the agency direct supervisor, the senior supervisor and the student's field instructor. The documentation becomes part of the student's record. The time release provision can be reinstated at the request of the student, by providing sufficient evidence that the problem that caused it is no longer in existence. The decision to reinstate this provision is also made by the agency's direct supervisor and the student's field instructor.

N. At least once during each semester the student, the supervisor and the university representative meet to review the learning contract and address any areas of concern.

O. If problems arise, they are identified and discussed with the student, the field instructor, the task supervisor (as appropriate) and the university representative. A corrective action plan (CAP) is then developed in an effort to resolve the problem. Specific time lines are identified and recorded on the CAP.

P. If the issue is not resolved after the implementation of the CAP, the agency has the option of revoking the student's release time and/ or requesting termination of the field placement.

Q. The termination of the field placement may also be imposed as a consequence for major infractions or employee misconduct, as stipulated in the Cuyahoga County Department of Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual, as well as violations of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.

R. No intern may replace a paid staff position.

S. All interns must notify the agency within 24 hours of any charge or conviction of any criminal offense listed in the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5101:2-5-09. Failure to do so results in the immediate dismissal from the internship program at CCDCFS. Conviction of any crime listed in 501:2-5-09 results in immediate dismissal from the internship program at CCDCFS.

T. The students' records are kept in a locked cabinet, separate from other agency records.

II. Students Who Are Not Employed By The Agency:

A. All inquires from students interested in completing their internships with the agency are directed to the Senior Manager of the Training Department. If the student is participating in the UPP program, the referral is made by the university representative and preliminary information is shared over the phone, mail or electronic communication with the Senior Manager of the Training Department. The students may be enrolled in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program or Master of Social Work (MSW) programs.

B. The student, whether BSW or MSW, is asked to submit a portfolio to the CCDCFS Senior Manager of the Training Department. The portfolio includes: the student's current resume, a copy of the filed practicum proposal and a statement of purpose describing his short and long term career goals.

C. All students are required to complete a police background check (BCI), a drug screen and a SACWIS clearance. The BCI and the SACWIS clearances are completed 30 days prior to the internship start date. The drug screening is completed within 48 hours from the start date. The students are given specific instructions in regards to the dates, times and locations for the drug screen and BCI by the Senior Manager of the Training Department. All SACWIS clearances are completed by the Senior Manager of the Training Department or his/her designee.

D. The student has a face to face interview with the CCDCFS Senior Manager of the Training Department or his/her designee. At that time, the student is asked to complete an application for field placement. The student's signature on the application verifies his/ her willingness to comply with basic agency policies and engage in regular supervision. The student also signs a confidentiality agreement with the agency. The initial conversation with the student focuses on gathering information about the student's academic standing, declared concentration, areas of interest for direct practice, learning style, micro versus macro practice.

E. The decision to accept or reject the student's application is made by the Senior Manager of the Training Department and is contingent upon the results of the initial screening, the feedback from the interview and the availability of UPP placements within the agency.

F. The acceptance or rejection is documented in writing, with an original letter sent to the student and copies to be forwarded to the student's UPP record and the university representative.

G. If accepted in the program, the BSW student is assigned to a task supervisor for shadowing in a specific area of the agency. All BSW students conduct their field placement utilizing a learning agreement and oversight of a university representative and the Senior Manager of the Training Department.

H. The student is assigned activities that will facilitate the integration of school work and practice. The assignments focus on improving communication (verbal and written), developing interviewing and assessment skills, professional use of self, valuing a diverse world, supporting and advocating for social justice, social work practice applications, etc.

I. BSW students may be coached on some of their assignments by MSW students. Such arrangements are approved by the Senior Manager of the Training Department.

J. The task supervisor of the BSW students provides monthly feedback on the performance of the BSW student assigned to their department. The reports become part of the student's internship records. The students also are evaluated by the Senior Manager of the Training Department or his/her designee using the formal, written instrument provided by the respective university. Students are asked to rate themselves and their ratings are compared with those of the field instructor.

III. MSW Students Not Employed By the Agency

A. If accepted in the program, the MSW students are assigned a field instructor at the start of the field placement. The field instructor must have the credentials and social work experience required by the CSWE. If the assigned field instructor is absent for 2 weeks or more, a back-up field instructor is assigned to provide guidance and support.

B. When a field instructor is not available for direct supervision of a MSW student in a specific department, a task supervisor is assigned. The task supervisor is an agency supervisor whose area of practice coincides with the student's selected area of practice and who agrees to provide hands on supervision to the student.

C. The MSW student and the assigned field instructor or task supervisor develop a learning contract that stipulates specific learning goals and objectives. The contract is signed by both students and agency field instructor and is submitted to the university representative for final approval.

D. The assigned supervisor for the MSW student provides weekly individual or small group supervision for at least one hour. Guidance and specific feedback is provided on various activities. Assessment of progress relative to the learning contract is provided on an on-going basis.