

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policy Number: GA-9

Effective Date: January 1, 2013

Version: 2.0

**POLICY TITLE: BSW SCHOLARS IV-E PRACTICUM**

**OVERVIEW:** The BSW practicum provides educationally-directed practice experience under the direct supervision of an approved Agency-Based Field Instructor which prepares students for employment with DCS as a Family Case Manager (FCM). A practicum provides opportunities for the application and integration of classroom concepts and principles for the development social work skills. Learning opportunities emphasize the values and ethics of the profession, fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge, and promotes the development of professional competence.

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

- a. Practicum: Educationally-directed practice experience under the direct supervision of an approved Agency-Based Field Instructor.
- b. Field Liaison: Provides consultation to Agency-Based Field Instructors and student to ensure integration between classroom and field. The field liaison enhances communication regarding curriculum matters, field learning opportunities, new developments and demands of practice, and new projects undertaken by the School of Social Work.
- c. Agency-Based Field Instructor: Provides field instruction and practice supervision to the practicum student at their placement site. The Agency-Based Field Instructor also evaluates the student's performance and level of competency on practice behaviors.
- d. Off-Site Field Instructor: Provides educational supervision to the practicum student when there is not an Agency-Based Field Instructor available.

### **II. REFERENCES**

None

### **III. POLICY**

- a. To be accepted into the practicum program, practicum students must be enrolled in the Title IV-E BSW program;
- b. Practica must not have an adverse effect on DCS operations. The educational needs of the practicum student must be met without compromising the business needs of the work unit;
- c. Practicum students, can make recommendations but not decisions relating to DCS casework. Examples of activities that practicum students **may conduct** include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Write and submit court reports to the Family Case Manager (FCM)/Supervisor for approval,

**Note:** All reports must be submitted to court under the name of the assigned FCM not the practicum student.

- ii. Conduct visits under the supervision of the assigned FCM or supervisor,
- iii. Complete Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) data entry,
- iv. Set up and conduct Family Case Conferences/ Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs) under supervision of the assigned FCM or supervisor,
- v. Conduct interviews under close supervision of the assigned FCM or supervisors,
- vi. Make recommendations to the assigned FCM or supervisor on cases/assessment, and
- vii. May provide transportation for case management related functions,

**Note:** Prior to providing any transportation for a child the practicum student must be introduced by the FCM and establish a rapport with the child/family.

- d. Practicum students are prohibited from **making** any decision that may affect the safety and/or well being of children. Examples of prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Making decisions on the removal of a child/children from a home,
  - ii. Making decisions on the placement of a child/children,
  - iii. Making decisions or recommendations on Termination of Parental Rights,
  - iv. Providing court testimony or reports directly to the court, and
  - v. Conducting formal assessments of families/children, including home studies.
- e. Practicum students cannot have cases assigned in MaGIK;
- f. DCS staff will mentor the practicum students and treat them as co-workers in training;
- g. A prospective practicum student must pass applicable background checks, including a Criminal History check, prior to the start of the engagement; and
- h. Upon graduation and being offered employment by DCS, new hires must complete three (3) weeks on the job training prior to receiving full access to MaGIK.

#### IV. PROCEDURE

The practicum student will:

- a. Submit practicum tasks to the School of Social Work to be evaluated/approved;
- b. Work under the supervision of a Agency-Based Field Instructor during work-based practicum;
- c. Participate in practicum activities that do not have adverse effect on DCS operations;

The DCS Agency-Based Field Instructor will:

- a. Ensure that all activities in the practicum are clearly defined as learning opportunities for the practicum student;
- b. Collaborate with the employee's supervisor to provide feedback to the employee that meets the educational needs of the school and work performance of DCS.
- c. Communicate with the practicum student as follows:

- i. Via face-to-face meeting every week,
- ii. Include discussion regarding the delineation of roles,
- iii. Provide professional model of generalist social work practice within the agency that is consistent with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics,
- iv. Individualize student learning tasks and activities based on student learning needs, Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) social work practice behaviors, and the mission of the practicum agency,
- v. Provide guidance and assistance to students in completing the Learning Evaluation Tool (LET),
- vi. Orient students to agency policy and procedures as it relates to work management including dress code, attendance, record keeping, intake and referral, transfer, and termination of clients,
- vii. Facilitate student understanding and adherence to responsible and ethical conduct at the practicum,
- viii. Actively assist the students in understanding DCS' general liability, risk management, health, and safety policies,
- ix. Provide educational supervision. It is expected that the Field Instructor will meet with each student for a minimum of one (1) hour per week to review work performed, assist the student in conceptualizing the issues inherent in learning experiences, articulate thoughts and reactions, and facilitate the integration of classroom and field learning experiences,
- x. Provide feedback on student process recordings and other written products produced in the field,
- xi. Inform the field liaison immediately in the event concerns arise in the student's performance and provide the appropriate documentation,
- xii. Attend and participate in the field orientation and in periodic trainings with other Field Instructors organized by the MSW Program,
- xiii. Confer periodically with the field liaison, and
- xiv. Assess students' progress in achieving competency by completion of evaluative methods provided by the LET.

DATE: January 1, 2013  
John Ryan, Director  
Department of Child Services

A signed copy is on file.