

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Business Process: Student Intern Program

I. Policy

The Student Intern Program at the Child and Family Services Agency (“CFSA”) is designed to provide undergraduate and graduate level students with an opportunity to develop practice skills within various disciplinary studies. It is the policy of CFSA to provide undergraduate and graduate student interns with a supervised field instruction experience that presents structured opportunities for integrating and applying the theory and practice skills of the student’s discipline.

II. Procedures

A. Oversight of Student Interns

CFSA carefully selects eligible employees to function as field instructors to help oversee the progress of each student intern according to the appropriate administration of placement. Oversight of the Student Intern Program is the responsibility of CFSA’s Child Welfare Training Academy (“CWTA”) staff.

1. Employees who are interested in becoming a field instructor must have been employed by CFSA for at least two years, with the exception of CFSA social workers who were previously employed by contracted agencies and managed CFSA cases.
2. Employees must also receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor.
3. If applicable, the prospective instructor must present evidence of completion of any educational and licensing requirements needed to supervise an intern.

B. General Roles and Responsibilities

1. CWTA Administrator
 - a. Ensure that the Student Intern Program follows CFSA policy, as well as, the guidelines and standards established by the university or college where the student is currently enrolled (host university).
 - b. Provide guidance (as needed) to the student intern coordinator to carry out responsibilities and secure necessary resources.
 - c. Coordinate orientation and training for the program.
 - d. Conduct an evaluation of the program at the end of each semester.
2. Student Intern Coordinator
 - a. Function as a liaison between CFSA and the student’s host university.
 - b. Complete the following actions prior to the beginning of the fall semester:
 - i. Recruit field instructors from CFSA staff and communicate directly with the supervisor and program manager of interested employees.

- ii. Coordinate selection of field instructors within each administration.
 - iii. Schedule interviews between selected field instructors and prospective student interns.
 - iv. Disseminate an orientation and training schedule to student interns prior to placement.
- c. Facilitate problem resolution, if necessary, between interns and field instructors.
- d. Review student applications and assess the needs of the student in relationship to the host university's identified competencies.
 - When a university does not have clearly defined competencies, the student intern coordinator, faculty liaison, and the field instructor shall determine these competencies.
- e. Ensure that the student meets the appropriate qualifications for the placement.
- f. Determine appropriate assignment based on the student's major area of interest.
- g. Determine the intern's assignment schedule.
- h. Meet with the student intern and field instructor if needed to resolve any assignment issues.
- i. Send a confirmation of assignment letter (see Attachment A) to the student intern prior to the beginning of the semester, including the following information:
 - i. Program area of placement
 - ii. Name and contact information of field instructor
 - iii. Start date
 - iv. End date
 - v. Orientation schedule
 - vi. Training schedule
- j. Interview all students.
- k. Ensure that all students successfully complete required background checks.

3. Expectations of the Host University

The Host University will:

- Offer a program description of the educational program in which the student intern is enrolled; this may be accessed by a web link.
- Outline the general expectation of the placement and include learning objectives, expected experiences to be made available to the student, and the timeframes for the placement.
- Make information available concerning any training that is available for field instructors.

4. Field Instructor

- a. Attend the university-sponsored orientation and relevant training provided by the Agency and the host university.
- b. Review and facilitate the achievement of student intern "learning contracts" (i.e., agreements between the host university and students that detail performance expectations, according to the student's individual academic discipline).
- c. Orient the student intern to the Agency, including facilitating introductions to appropriate

administrators, staff, and consultants.

- d. Ensure that the student intern understands the requirement to adhere to all CFSA policies, particularly child-specific policies (e.g., [Confidentiality](#) and [Unusual Incident Related to Children and Youth](#)), in addition to undergoing training in, but not limited to, the following topics:
 - i. Applicable federal laws and regulations
 - ii. Applicable District laws, regulations, policies, procedures and codes
 - iii. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
 - iv. District's Code of Ethics specific to privacy and confidentiality of client information
 - v. Penalties for non-compliance with laws, regulations, or codes
 - e. Ensure that the student intern has access to client files, records, and information necessary to fulfill job functions.
 - f. Provide case management support and coverage when the student intern is not available.
 - g. Provide evaluative feedback for undergraduate and graduate interns during weekly supervision (at least 1 hour), addressing (at a minimum) the following areas of the student's progress:
 - i. Progress based on the student's learning contract and any additional requirements determined by the host university
 - ii. Student intern's performance, including strengths and any weaknesses, if applicable
 - iii. Support in case planning and management for case-carrying student interns
 - iv. Completed evaluations based on the student intern's mid-semester, end of the semester, and final grade performance
 - g. Maintain a file folder for each student intern, including a file copy of the learning contract, mid-semester evaluation, final evaluation, and final grade.
 - h. Seek to resolve any issues or disputes the student intern has regarding field assignment.
 - i. Apprise the student coordinator of the student's last day of assignment.
5. Faculty Liaison (selected by the host university)
- a. Serve as the liaison between the host university and the Agency.
 - b. Meet (at a minimum) once per semester with the student intern's assigned CFSA field instructor to ensure the following objectives are being met:
 - i. The student intern is making appropriate progress as outlined in the learning contract
 - ii. CFSA is meeting the standards mandated by the host university
 - c. Provide information as necessary to both the student intern and the field instructor.
 - d. Participate as necessary in problem resolution between the student intern and the field instructor (*see Procedure G below*).
6. Student Intern
- a. Participate in the program's orientation and training.
 - b. Fulfill the objectives set forth in the learning contract.
 - c. Maintain the highest ethical standards outlined by the program and the District of Columbia's child welfare system.

- d. Adhere to all CFSA policies, in particular the confidentiality requirements set forth by CFSA's [Confidentiality Policy](#), including submitting a signed *Confidentiality Agreement* (see *Attachment B*).
- e. Demonstrate a readiness to learn and be involved with appropriate aspects of the field experience.
- f. Contact the student intern coordinator and field instructor if there are any changes to the work schedule.
- g. Maintain a record of hours worked at CFSA.
- h. Adhere to all time frames regarding submission of evaluations to the host university.
- i. Provide professionally sound and competent services to clients.
- j. Consult with the field instructor and the faculty liaison regarding areas of disagreement or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the field placement.
- k. Apprise the field instructor and student coordinator of last day of the field assignment.

C. Student Placement

CWTA determines the appropriate field placement for students based on the host university's learning objective and the availability of a CFSA placement. The host university forwards the following items to the student intern coordinator:

- 1. A list of prospective student interns
- 2. Student's objectives for placement
- 3. Student's current resume

D. Orientation and Training

Orientation and training is administered by CWTA staff and students are enrolled in one of two Groups, either Group A or Group B.

- 1. Orientation classes for Group A are held on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- 2. Orientation classes for Group B are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- 3. Classes are held either the week before or after FACES training and the training is scheduled based on the availability of the FACES trainers.
- 4. Orientation and training occurs once during September and once during January. If an intern begins in the summer, he or she is required to take FACES training with new social workers. Intern orientation for the summer is held once during June.
- 5. Orientation and classes for Groups A and B consist of two three-hour trainings.
- 6. The orientation shall address the following areas:
 - a. Introduction to the Agency
 - b. Clarification of field assignment requirements
 - c. Introduction to child abuse and neglect
 - d. Confidentiality laws and requirements
- 7. Training topics includes but is not be limited to the following areas:
 - a. FACES.net
 - b. Pre-service and in-service training information
 - c. Ethical Child Welfare Practice including Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of

1996 (HIPAA)

- d. Case planning
- e. Legal aspects of child welfare
- f. Other training, as necessary

E. Field Placement for Employment-Based Interns¹

CFSA employees who are pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies may need to meet a field-assignment requirement outside of the Agency. The CFSA employee who is interested in pursuing a field assignment at CFSA must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Receive approval for the field assignment from his or her supervisor or program manager.
2. Upon approval, the prospective employment-based intern must contact the student intern coordinator at least 90 days prior to the beginning of the semester to initiate the assignment process.
3. The prospective employment-based intern must draft a field assignment proposal (see Attachment C) that complies with the following criteria:
 - a. Appropriate to the student's discipline
 - b. Significantly differs from current job function as noted by position description
 - c. Outlines the additional professional skills to be learned
4. The employment-based intern must submit the proposal to the student intern coordinator 90 days prior to the beginning of the semester, verifying that he or she satisfies the following criteria:
 - a. Employment at the Agency full-time
 - b. Employment at the Agency for at least one year (e.g., permanent employment status versus probationary status)
 - c. Employment status in good standing (e.g., a performance rating of satisfactory or above)
5. Once the proposal is submitted, the intern coordinator reviews the proposal and determines whether or not the proposal meets the appropriate criteria established by the host university and CFSA.
6. The intern coordinator identifies a field instructor.
7. After the field instructor is selected, the prospective employment-based intern is required to meet with his or her immediate supervisor and with the field instructor to discuss and document the field assignment and the work schedule.

F. Educational Flex-Time Procedure for Employment-Based Interns

1. The request for flex-time must be reviewed by the employment-based intern's supervisor, program manager and program administrator. Approval is based on the following criteria:
 - a. Employment at the Agency for at least one year (e.g., permanent employment status versus probationary status)
 - b. Satisfactory work performance, including good attendance
 - c. Recommendation from his or her supervisor

¹ Private agency employees who are working with CFSA clients, and are pursuing studies that require a field placement, must follow the policies and procedures of their employing agency.

- d. Length of service (preference will be given to more senior staff)
 - e. Staff management and coverage needs for the Agency
2. Once the request has been approved, the following program criteria is required:
- a. A work schedule is devised between the field instructor and student during the beginning of each semester. *Note: modifications to the schedule require a two-week notification.*
 - b. The employee must work a 40-hour, five-day work week.
 - c. The maximum number of hours to be flexed must not exceed six hours per week.
 - d. The starting time must be no earlier than 7:00 am and not later than 9:30 am; the departure time must be no earlier than 3:30 pm and not later than 6:00 pm.
 - e. Notification of arrival and departure times must be provided to the supervisor.
 - f. The sign-in sheet must accurately reflect the number of hours an employee worked.
 - g. Management must support the approved schedule.
 - h. Employees can adjust their work schedule during certain situations (e.g., an emergency or Family Court hearing).
 - i. Employees can adjust work schedules during holidays. For example, a workweek with a holiday must be adjusted so that the employee is scheduled for eight hours of holiday time and 32 hours of work over the remaining four days.

G. Problem Resolution

The following steps provide some instructive guidelines for student interns to resolve any problems that may arise during their tenure at CFSA:

1. The student intern must first articulate the issue or dispute to the field instructor, discussing possible satisfactory resolutions.
2. If the issue or dispute cannot be resolved between the student intern and field instructor, the student intern must request a meeting with both the field instructor and the student intern coordinator.
 - a. Although the student intern coordinator acts as mediator in assisting the student intern and field instructor in resolving the problem or dispute, the coordinator may invite the training administrator or designee to attend this or subsequent meetings, if deemed appropriate.
 - b. If necessary, the faculty liaison from the host university may be included in any meeting related to problem resolution.
3. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be met after a formal meeting with all parties, and if all parties agree, another field assignment may be coordinated for the student intern.
4. If an assignment is discontinued, the field office at the host university may secure another assignment for the student intern.

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Student Intern Placement Confirmation Letter

(Date)

Dear _____:

The purpose of this letter is to confirm your placement as a student intern at the Child and Family Services Agency. You have been placed in (*name of unit*) and your field instructor is (*name of field instructor*). Field instruction shall begin on (*start date*) and shall end on (*end date*). Please report to your field instructor at (*start time*) on (*start date*) at the designated location of (*cubicle or office number*). Once you begin placement, please submit a copy of your field schedule to me. Any changes to the schedule shall be reported to me at the beginning of each semester. You are required to attend mandatory student intern orientation and training which will occur on (*date of orientation and training*). Please make arrangements with me if you are unable to attend the orientation and training. Should you have any questions regarding your placement, please feel free to contact your field instructor at (202) ____ - _____. You may also contact me at (202) 727-5283. I appreciate your time and consideration and welcome you to the Agency.

Sincerely,

Student Intern Coordinator
Child Welfare Training Academy

cc: Faculty Liaison

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency**



Student Intern Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the Child and Family Services Agency's policy and procedures regarding confidentiality of client information and have discussed any questions or concerns that I may have regarding the policy with my field instructor. In accordance with the policy, I agree to safeguard the confidentiality of information regarding client records and program material that I may acquire during my internship experience. I understand that failure to safeguard confidential information may result in administrative, civil or criminal action or the assessment of fines against me.

Student Signature

Date

Field Instructor Signature

Date

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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Proposal for Employment-Based Intern Form

I, _____, present this proposal for an employment-based internship at the Child and Family Services Agency. I understand that the objective of this proposal is to provide the Agency with evidence that my proposed internship will include sufficient educational objectives and experiences to satisfy both my university expectations and work requirements. I understand that in order to qualify for an employment-based internship, I must meet the following criteria:

- ♦ Be employed at the Agency full-time
- ♦ Be employed at the Agency for at least one year
- ♦ Maintain employment status in good standing
- ♦ Obtain approval from my Program Manager

I understand that, along with this proposal, I must submit supporting documentation verifying that I satisfy the aforementioned criteria.

Furthermore, I understand that proposed field instruction assignments shall differ significantly from my previous employment or field instruction experiences at the Agency and my proposed field instructor shall differ from my immediate work supervisor. Lastly, I am aware that I may utilize flex-time for educational purposes, and that I have an obligation to make up all work hours lost to internship if placement is to occur at an agency other than CFSA.

Once this document is complete, please submit it to the following address:

Child Welfare Training Academy
Child and Family Services Agency
200 I Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Please complete the following information regarding your proposed employment-based internship. It is required that you consult with your immediate supervisor, program manager, and proposed field instructor when completing this document. Submit the completed document to the CWTA at least 14 days prior to the beginning of the semester.

1. This section shall be completed by the prospective employment-based intern.

Student Information

Name		Host University	
Address		City	State
			Zip Code
()	()		
Home Telephone	Work Telephone	Email	

Employment Information

Agency Name

Job Title and Program Area

Program Manager and Contact Telephone Number

Immediate Supervisor and Contact Telephone Number

Employment Start Date and Length of Time Employed

Number of Hours Employed Each Week

[For Agency Use Only]

Proposed Field Instruction Information

Agency Name

Program Area

Proposed Field Instructor and Contact Telephone Number

Program Manager and Contact Telephone Number

Proposed Start and End Date/Total Internship Hours Each Week

Previous Internship Placement (if applicable)

2. This section shall be completed by the prospective employment-based intern's immediate supervisor.

Please list the prospective employment-based intern's current job responsibilities.

Please list a detailed description of your plan for accommodating the prospective employment-based intern (e.g., caseload reduction, flexible time scheduling).

3. This section shall be completed by the prospective employment-based intern's field instructor.

Please list the responsibilities that the prospective employment-based intern shall assume when he/she begins the position.

Please list any special educational assignments that will be given to the prospective employment-based intern that are not normally required of employees (e.g., written assignments, readings, videos, field trips, analyses, process recordings, training, special projects).

4. This section shall be completed by the prospective employment-based intern (if applicable).

Describe your plan for making up work hours lost to internship (if placed at an agency other than CFSA).

Please provide a proposed schedule of your internship hours and work hours.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total Hours
Internship Hours								
Work Hours								

Once this document is completed, the training administrator or designee shall review your request for an employment-based internship and determine if it meets the appropriate criteria established by the host university, the Council on Social Work Education, and the Child and Family Services Agency. If this document is not complete, CWTA will send you a written request for additional information by the training administrator or designee. Once the proposal has been reviewed, CWTA will provide a written response to your internship proposal.

Prospective Employment-based Intern Signature

Date

I have reviewed and approve the employment-based internship proposal submitted by

Name of prospective employment-based intern

Supervisor Signature

Date

Program Manager of Supervisor Signature

Date

Proposed Field Instructor Signature

Date

Program Manager of Proposed Field Instructor Signature

Date