

Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) and JCC Social Work Program in Response to COVID -19 Pandemic on Field Education.

In keeping the program in compliance with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the social work program follows the nine-questions guide towards the goal of “in-person” contact through digital technologies and the use of field supervision.

1. Field Education Reduced Hours.

The required minimums are 450 hours of field education for JCC baccalaureate program. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, students who have completed 85% of the required placement hours (i.e., 340 hours for baccalaureate program). This reduction in field hours may be applied to all field placement courses until May 31, 2021.

2. Safety of Students and Supervision by Field Instructors?

The Field Manual include policies, procedures, and criteria in place for supporting student safety in field placements. For cases in which a credentialed field instructor is unavailable or unable to continue student supervision due to the field placement site closing, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective directly with the student. For example, the field seminar instructor may add additional supervision time to the end of the seminar class for students who do not have access to the credentialed field instructor.

3. What are programs to do when the institution or field agencies are closed?

In the case of a closed field agency, it is within the program's purview and policies to reinforce the social work perspective and provide a plan for students to complete field hours consistent with the EPAS. The Program should make every effort to place students at a field setting. However, students do not need to be connected to a field setting, should extenuating circumstances prohibit placement. Field students, whether connected to a field setting or not, should have opportunities for in-person contact with clients and constituencies (which may be facilitated via technology).

4. What if JCC close due to COVID-19?

The Social Work Program should contact their accreditation specialists. Waiving more than 15% of field hours due to placement, program, or institution closures during COVID-19 is not permitted. Student will be until April 30, 2020 to complete the course requirements and the 340 hours of field education.

5. Does CSWE have any suggestions regarding how students can meet field hours?

Yes! Field education programs must ensure that demonstration of social work competencies is through in-person contact, which refers to interpersonal interactions with clients and constituencies, and may include the use of digital technologies. The Educational Program Accreditation Standards allows for technology-based social work practice (e.g., telehealth, telework, phone contact with colleagues, clients, and constituents, remote access to platforms and projects). Field agencies may work with students to allow/support telework. For example, perhaps students can complete client case/paperwork on a secure server, call in for meetings, work on projects from home, engage in professional development activities,

and meet virtually with their field instructors. Of course, these ideas may not replace all field hours that may be missed due to a crisis, but perhaps they can help close the gap. Such telework solutions can be temporary until the program convenes to develop longer-term solutions. Components of student field education can be temporarily facilitated via technology.

Suggestions for learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic may include:

- students work on crisis response policies, procedures, notifications
 - education (e.g., handouts, PowerPoints, webinars, public service announcements, and e-mail blasts
 - create fliers with information about local services for basic needs and support groups that offered to help with healing
 - students worked with local religious congregations to organize bottled water collection and distribution
 - Help with public education about staying healthy
 - Connect clients to Medicaid/Medicare or other affordable health-care plans
 - Propose revisions to agency policies and procedures about safety
 - Contact clients to inform them of any changes to regularly scheduled services
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 - Work on projects or plans for future events or initiatives
 - Engage in virtual professional development to support the students' work at the placement (e.g., webinars, DSM review, informational interviews with partner organizations)
 - Develop awareness posts to be used on the placement's social media accounts
 - Write advocacy communications to elected officials about issues and legislation the agency is connected to or populations it serves
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- 6. Does CSWE have a limit on the number of virtual in-person contact hours students can count toward their field hours?**

No, it is within the program's purview to determine a limit (if any) on virtual in-person contact hours. The EPAS does not limit the number of virtual hours a student may count toward required field hours.

7. Do field seminar hours count toward accruing required field hours?

Yes, field seminar classroom hours, synchronous or asynchronous, may count toward field hours. Programs have the discretion to identify where, when, and how field-based seminars and field simulations are to be counted toward field hours. Field seminar is a separate class at JCC Social Work Program.

8. What are alternative ways students can continue supervision, and does this count toward field hours?

Yes, supervision can be counted toward field hours. There are no requirements regarding frequency (weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc.), modality (in-person, videoconferencing, telephone, additional time added to the end of field seminar, etc.), or individual versus group structure for field supervision by a qualified field instructor or through reinforcement by the program. If field instructors are unavailable or

unable to continue supervising students, it is within the program's purview and policies to reinforce the social work perspective.

9. Does CSWE require a certain number of field hours per each systems level (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities)?

No, it is within the program's purview to determine the systems levels students have in-person contact with (including via digital technologies) to complete the required field hours, as well as the number of hours per each systems level (if any). The EPAS does not require a specified number of field hours per each systems level.