

**CSWE and Commission on Accreditation Statement
Update October 9, 2020, Alexandria, Va.**

The safety of students, educators, social workers, and their clients and communities are paramount to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and its Commission on Accreditation. In response to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission on Accreditation offers this update to social work education programs as follows:

1. **Reduction in field hours: Deadline extended from May 31, 2021 to May 31, 2022.**
Under AS 2.2.5, field education programs provide a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and a minimum of 900 hours for master's programs. Due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, students who have completed 85% of the required placement hours (i.e., equivalent to 340 hours for baccalaureate programs and 765 hours for master's programs) to a satisfactory level may, at program discretion, be evaluated as having met the field placement requirement. This reduction in field hours may be applied to field placement courses that are fully or partially completed by May 31, 2022. Field placement courses that are partially completed by May 31, 2022 may continue to apply the 15% reduction in hours until the specific field course is completed, even if the completion date is after May 31, 2022. New field placement courses that begin after May 31, 2022 will return to the full hours requirement. Remote field activity, as well as field supervision and field seminar hours, may be counted toward the accrual of field hours.
2. **Remote field activity: Deadline extended from May 31, 2021 to May 31, 2022** Although AS 2.2.4 requires field education through "in-person contact," the Commission on Accreditation has broadened, its interpretation to include remote-based field activity. Remote field activity can include engagement such as field-related assignments, trainings, and virtual meetings. Client-related virtual meetings should be in accordance with field site policies for secure communications.
3. **Employment-based Field Placements: Deadline extended from May 31, 2021 to May 31, 2022.** Although AS 2.2.11 requires that, for field placements in an organization in which the student is employed, student assignments and field education supervision may not be the same as those of the student's employment, the Commission on Accreditation will continue to modify its interpretation of this standard through May 31, 2022. For field placements in an organization in which the student is employed, student field assignments and employment tasks may be the same and counted toward field hours as long as the tasks *have clear linkages* to the nine social work competencies and their concomitant behaviors as well as any competencies added by the program.
4. **Virtual program site visits: Extended from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2021.**
Programs and site visitors have the option to conduct reaffirmation and candidacy site visits through virtual meetings, instead of on-site meetings, through December 31, 2021.

These extensions are in recognition of continued disruption to social work education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission will continue to remain vigilant in supporting social work education programs and in providing additional guidance as the situation warrants.

On behalf of the CSWE Commission on Accreditation and Department of Accreditation Services,

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