



CSWE Principles for Social Justice Policy

Social justice is the principle of fair and just relations among people and their institutions, as measured by the distribution of wealth, equal treatment under the law, opportunities for financial livelihood, safety and security, education, and free of discrimination and bias. Social workers play many different roles in our nation's society, but central to each of them are the execution of social justice. Social workers provide services to individuals to assure respective needs are met with equitable resources and as a result, remain a critical part of our communities. Both directly and indirectly, social workers seek to mitigate factors which make leading a full and productive life a challenge for many by addressing poverty, discrimination, racism, lack of political power, oppression, and unequal opportunity. Cognizance and consideration of the contexts which contribute to these issues is a critical component of social work education. CSWE supports the following principles in legislative efforts to support social justice:

- Diversity in perspective, culture, and experience is crucial in all aspects of society and with the social work workforce. CSWE supports education that applies and communicates these values as this is a critical part of shaping individual life experiences.
- CSWE recognizes and calls for rectifying the disparities in social, economic, racial and environmental justice that lead to inequities in access to education, healthcare, political representation, and other opportunities.
- Every person regardless of status in society has rights to freedom, safety, privacy, access to adequate health care, economic opportunity, and education. As a result, CSWE supports legislation and understands the strategies needed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure the rights listed above are fulfilled.
- Environmental justice issues are tied to social justice issues and legislation that ensures no group and/or community are excluded from pertinent environmental policy decisions, suffers from a disproportionate impact from environmental hazards, and/or lacks access to available environmental resources is critically needed.
- The adult and juvenile criminal justice systems have been used as tools to control people of color, especially Black communities. Policies and legislation are needed to reform entry into the system, enhance and improve prevention efforts and conditions of confinement, reform sentencing, and improve reentry.
- To accomplish the mission of child welfare in addressing child protection, in-home family preservation, foster care, and adoption, more attention and support is needed to ensure a professional child welfare workforce. This includes expanded support for Title IV-E child welfare projects, support for basic and applied research, collaborations, and increasing funding for programs serving children and families.
- Voting is a fundamental and critical civil right, which is under threat. Strategies and legislation are needed that support the right to vote and improve access to voting for all communities, particularly communities of color and other communities who have experienced voter discrimination.

CSWE is a national association of social work education programs and individuals that ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice that promotes individual, family, and community well-being, and social and economic justice.



- Vital support and reaffirmation of the human rights of immigrants is needed immediately. Family separation, abdication of the DACA program, and policy changes like the public charge rule are just some of the most egregious threats immigrants and others have faced. Comprehensive reform of the immigration system is needed to address these and other injustices (e.g., persecution, unlawful detention) experienced by the immigrant community.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact CSWE's government relations Otto Katt (otto@lewis-burke.com).

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