



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

CSWE and Commission on Accreditation Statement

March 25, 2020

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

1. **Student safety.** Accreditation Standard (AS) 2.2.7 of the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) requires that field education programs specify policies for supporting student safety in field. Programs are encouraged to safeguard student safety during the COVID-19 pandemic to the greatest extent possible, including suspending or delaying field education placements when necessary for student safety.
2. **Reduction in field hours.** 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 impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, students who have completed 85% of the required placement hours (i.e., 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 requirements. This option for reduced hours is for students whose field completion dates occur by December 31, 2020. Students whose field placement completion dates occur after December 31, 2020, will be expected to complete the full 400 or 900 hours in compliance with AS 2.2.5. Remote field activity, as well as field supervision and field seminar hours, may be counted toward the accrual of field hours.
3. **Remote field activity.** Although AS 2.2.4 requires field education through "in-person contact," the COA will broaden 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.
4. **Candidacy or reaffirmation materials that are due in spring or summer 2020.** Extensions will be granted for programs whose submission of materials has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. If your program needs an extension, please request an extension by e-mail to MKurfess@cswe.org and copy your accreditation specialist. Please include a brief description of the program's situation. The accreditation specialist will respond with the approved extension date.
5. **Program site visits.** Reaffirmation and candidacy site visits will be conducted through virtual meetings, instead of on-site meetings, through December 31, 2020. The virtual meeting directive may be extended as the COVID-19 situation warrants.
6. **Assessment.** Programs are encouraged to continue with their assessment plans to the extent possible. The COA recognizes that assessment outcomes will probably be affected by disruptions to class instruction and field. Programs that are in the process of reporting assessment outcomes as part of their candidacy or reaffirmation self-studies are encouraged to provide context relative to the impact of COVID-19. Programs may also address the impact of COVID-19 on their assessment plans

(EPAS 4.0) with regard to implications for program renewal and program changes to the explicit curriculum and implicit curriculum.

For more detailed information on the subjects summarized in this statement, [please see the accreditation team response to COVID-19 FAQs and field guidance](#).