



MSW Field Placement – Orientation Checklist

Complete within the first two weeks of practicum start

Introductions & Orientation

Agency Field Instructor (AFI)

- Notify staff ahead of time that a student will be joining; explain student's role as a learner, kind of tasks they will be involved in, and weekly schedule
- Introduce student to all staff at your site/agency, across programs, not only those who are actively involved in field education
- Give a tour of the physical layout of the agency/organization
- Provide a work space that includes a computer, a phone, and a place to keep confidential information
- Review important logistical details like dress code, bathroom location, staff room, lunch breaks, parking, mailboxes, and the need for any identification or name tags
- Share electronic communications expectations including: how frequently to check e-mail and expected timeliness of response; personal use of email, cell phones, and social media
- Teach student telephone protocol: how to answer, use voicemail system, etc.
- Review safety procedures and emergency protocols for both the workplace and any community-based work or home visits
- Provide overview of how paperwork and documentation are handled, including time frames and deadlines
- Provide specific information about confidentiality and potential disclosures of confidential information. If in a clinical setting, HIPPA regulations should be described

Student

- Introduce yourself to staff in all positions, across programs, not only those who are actively involved in field education
- Share your name, office location, and placement schedule with key staff members
- Learn how paperwork and documentation are handled, including time frames
- Ask for clarification or additional information about any of the orientation items listed above that the AFI conveys to you, or other areas you identify as helpful to you in becoming familiar with the organization

Organization Overview

Agency Field Instructor

- Provide a brief description of the organization's staffing patterns and roles, services offered, populations served and funding sources

Student:

Agency & AFI:

Date:

- Share agency mission, organizational chart, policies, procedures, and program budget overview

Student

- Find the answers to the following: What is this organization's purpose? Who does it serve and who is eligible for services? What is the role of a social worker? What is the role of the social work student? What is the community context for this work? How is the agency funded?
- Have your field instructor help you identify other people in the organization who they believe would be good for you to get to know or interview
- Consider creating a map that illustrates how people flow through the organization and begin to picture your role – where you are in the picture – and who you might need to learn more about
- Ask your AFI about readings or materials to review that would be relevant to the field placement

Organizational Culture & Agency Norms

Agency Field Instructor

- Review organizational norms, rules and regulations regarding: dress code, hours, sick time, other time off, social media use, who and when to call if student will be late or out unexpectedly

Student

- Ask your AFI: What are the professional and cultural norms for the organization? How are interns expected to demonstrate these norms?

Field Placement Logistics: Supervision, Meetings & Documentation

Agency Field Instructor

- Schedule your weekly supervision times, staff meetings, and any other standing commitments with student
- Begin conversation about supervision structure and how you plan to collaborate on documenting supervision, setting an agenda and determining content

Student

- Schedule your weekly supervision times, staff meetings, and any other standing commitments with Field Instructor/Task Supervisor
- Begin conversation about supervision structure and how you plan to collaborate on documenting supervision, setting agenda and determining content
- Start drafting your Learning Agreement and discuss learning activities for each competency and practice behavior with your AFI and get their input (the Learning Agreement is due by week 4 of the semester)