

## Employment Based Practicum (EBP) Guidelines

As a core component of the social work curriculum, the practicum experience is intended to challenge students to apply new knowledge and develop core competencies in a field setting. Consequently, practicums at a student's existing site of employment can only happen after **prior discussion with and approval of the Director of Field Education** to ensure specific criteria are met.

### DOES MY EMPLOYMENT SITUATION QUALIFY FOR AN EMPLOYMENT-BASED PRACTICUM?

- I AM WORKING AT A SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY THAT MEETS ALL THE AGENCY REQUIREMENTS OF THE SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM PROGRAM.
- I HAVE WORKED AT THIS AGENCY FOR MORE THAN 6 MONTHS AND/OR HAVE MADE IT THROUGH MY PROBATIONARY PERIOD.
- I AM IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING AND IN GOOD STANDING AT MY EMPLOYING AGENCY.
- I HAVE DISCUSSED AN EBP WITH MY AGENCY AND SUPERVISOR AND HAVE THEIR SUPPORT.
- MY AGENCY/ SUPERVISOR AGREES TO SUBMIT A LETTER OF SUPPORT.
- PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES ARE EDUCATIONALLY FOCUSED AND SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE STUDENT/EMPLOYEE'S REGULAR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES.
- THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED THROUGH THE EBP ALLOW FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES AS PER THE PRACTICUM LEARNING AGREEMENT.
- MY PRACTICUM TASKS OCCUR DURING A CONSISTENT AND REGULAR WEEKLY SCHEDULE, E.G. PRACTICUM HOURS HAPPEN EVERY MONDAY 8-5PM
- ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS FOR ON SITE SUPERVISION WILL APPLY:
  1. The AFI holds an MSW degree from an accredited social work program and has two years of post-MSW work experience. **The AFI and the employment supervisor must be different people.**
  2. If the agency does not have a qualified MSW supervisor on staff, they must arrange for an off-site MSW supervisor to provide the required supervision and designate an on-site task supervisor to provide daily oversight and support. UMSSW Field Education Program will offer assistance to ensure identification of a qualified MSW supervisor.

- I HAVE COMPLETED BOTH THE PRACTICUM APPLICATION AND THE EBP APPLICATION IN MY SONIA ACCOUNT PROVIDING A DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND DISTINCT PRACTICUM RESPONSIBILITIES PLUS A WEEKLY PRACTICUM SCHEDULE AND PROPOSED SUPERVISION PLAN.
- I HAVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM MY AGENCY/ SUPERVISOR.

If above criteria apply to your situation, please follow the steps outlined below:

- 1) Contact the Director of Field Education as soon as possible and arrange a meeting/ call to discuss the feasibility & eligibility of an EBP at student's current employment site.
- 2) If preliminary approval is granted, students have to complete the EPB Application/ EBP Proposal Form via their personal Sonia account. **Applications/ Proposal Forms are due no later than 7/1 for fall start students and 7/31 for spring start students.**
- 3) As stated above, approval for an EBP requires a letter of support from the student's employer identifying the structures in place to separate job tasks from practicum tasks and explaining how supervision will be structured for both work and practicum.
- 4) Director of Field Education will review EBP application, contact employer for clarification if necessary, and inform student of final decision.

Should the UMSSW Field Education Program become aware that practicum tasks and/or MSW educational supervision are not occurring as planned, we reserve the right to terminate the placement and to ask the student to complete another field placement of full length at a different site. The agency and the student are strongly encouraged to discuss pay and benefits for an EBP and have a clear agreement in place. UMSSW is not responsible for enforcing agreements related to employment, only those related to field education standards.