



Title IV-E Social Work Field Instruction Initiative

A Path to Practice Excellence in Public Child Welfare

OVERVIEW

What is CalSWEC's Field Instruction Initiative?

A collaboration of stakeholders from public child welfare agencies, universities, and community-based and tribal organizations dedicated to developing, implementing, and evaluating ground-breaking models of field instruction to educate and train an effective workforce that supports core child welfare practice and promotes better outcomes in safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families, and their communities.

What is the Initiative's goal?

To promote best practices in the field of child welfare and social work by providing students with the opportunity to have a well-rounded educational experience that teaches social work content and values while at the same time providing realistic job experiences and a broad perspective of child welfare.

What is the potential solution?

A shift in the focus of field instruction to models that promote university-agency cooperation that ensures students have the skills, values, experience, and professional qualities to work effectively in the public child welfare agencies in California.

What's next?

The careful development and testing of models at pilot sites throughout California that informs the execution of a statewide, systematic, and sustainable structural change that, in turn, creates high-quality field placement opportunities in public child welfare, and community-based and tribal organizations serving Title IV-E children and families.

What is needed to get there?

The engagement of agency directors, university faculty, and community-based and tribal organizations to examine regional needs and resources that informs the development and testing of the efficacy of the field placement models with the goal of creating mutual responsibility, ownership, and investment.



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KEY MESSAGES

CalSWEC has developed a set of key messages to aid in communicating with others about the *Field Instruction Initiative*. The following three points provide a message framework for sharing the value of this effort and the importance of CalSWEC and stakeholders from agencies, universities, and community-based and tribal organizations working together.

The CalSWEC Field Instruction Initiative is:

1 COLLABORATIVE

- **For students**—By working together, better outcomes are achieved for the families we serve by providing future employees with a high-quality field work experience where they gain the exposure and the opportunity to develop practice effectiveness.
- **For agencies, and community-based and tribal organizations**—By leveraging resources and strengthening partnerships, we achieve the shared program goals of increasing (a) the number of well-qualified, ethnically diverse professional social workers who use their education and agency and community resources well and (b) workforce retention.
- **For universities**—Increasing collaborative efforts aids in informing curriculum and faculty of practice issues and needs that, in turn, benefits the students' educational experience and job readiness.

2 COORDINATED

- **Increased resources**—When we coordinate our efforts, we leverage resources and strengths from all involved partners.
- **Less duplication**—We decrease the duplication of efforts and students benefit from coordinated field instruction planning and implementation.
- **Team effort**—A coordinated team approach to working with students benefits the field instruction experience among all involved entities. All parties have more resources available to troubleshoot issues or areas needing further attention.

3 CRUCIAL

- **Shared success**—Our workforce is well prepared to serve clients and be productive in their professional pursuits.
- **Working efficiently**—Time and staff resources are saved in the long run by working collaboratively with all partners. Otherwise, we may fail to use available resources to support the future workforces in their acquisition of skills and knowledge.
- **In tight budget times**—It is more important than ever—when social service funding is especially limited—to engage agency directors, university faculty, and community-based and tribal organizations to examine regional needs and resources that inform the development and testing of the efficacy of the field placement models with the goal of creating mutual responsibility, ownership, and investment.

