

University at Buffalo, School of Social Work Field Education - Coronavirus Protocol and Individualized Work Plans

This protocol can also be followed when other local or national emergencies occur.

Student Rights and Services

Students have a right to safety, and should know that protocols are in place for assisting students with the completion of placement hours in order to successfully obtain their degree.

Students should never be coerced to put themselves at perceived risk to satisfy a program need, however, they are expected to follow the guidelines established by the UBSSW and their placement setting which should adequately consider the safety and security of students and staff.

In the event that someone is too ill to complete alternative assignments remotely, a plan can be made and discussed with the Field Office upon student recovery. Students may be assigned an incomplete until field hours are completed.

Student Support

If a student is ever experiencing distress as a result of the anticipation or impact of a pandemic or disaster, they should contact [Student Counseling](#) at the University.

Protocol

1. Student discusses situation with Field Educator and Faculty Liaison. If the student and/or Field Educator believe there is a need for an individualized work plan, the student should contact the Field Office.

2. Student contacts the Field Office to request the option of working remotely for some or all of their remaining field placement hours. Field Faculty or Staff hears concerns and provides student with information regarding the process for the approval of individualized work plans (see below). Field Representative should assess the student's:

- Rationale for working remotely as this time
- The student's individual circumstances
- A doctor's note if the disruption is related to a medical condition
- The agency where the student is placed and circumstances of the Field Educator/Task Supervisor
- The length of time the student is requesting

2) Field Office Representative contacts Field Educator, Task Supervisor and Faculty Liaison to discuss the student request. Field Office Representative provides consultation on possible tasks for individualized work plans, keeping the following in mind:

- Based on the individual student circumstances, how long does the student believe they will need to work remotely?

- How many hours does the student need to complete the field education course? Does the student have access to the technological means (computer/reliable Wi-Fi) to work remotely?
- What is the current assessment of student progress? If an assessment of the student's attainment of competencies were to be completed today, would the student receive a rating of Competence on each required competency? If not, which competencies still need to be developed?
- Currently, Is the student at risk for receiving a score lower than Competent on any of the required competencies? Is there a Focused Learning Agreement in place? If Field Educators need additional time with the student to ensure ratings of Competence on any of the competencies, a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be assigned for the field course. Students may be given additional time in field to be able to demonstrate competency.
- Does the agency have a plan for continuing service delivery if their employed social workers must work remotely? If so, what is the plan?
- Is it possible for the student to continue to engage with agency services, current clients/work product teams, remotely?
- What is the plan for the student to continue to receive weekly supervision from the field instructor/task supervisor?
- How will the student terminate relationships with clients/work groups, if needed? What will be the plan for completing the final field visit? Competency assessment?

3) Student and Field Educator meet (face-to-face or remotely) to agree on an individualized work plan using the suggested tasks. Priority should be given to tasks where competence needs to be developed.

4) Student submits final individualized work-plan to Field Representative and Field Educator/Task Supervisor. Work plan is approved in writing by a Field Representative.

5) Individualized work plans must prioritize tasks where the student needs to develop competence. Each task should include:

- a written component/product so that competence and work completion is demonstrated
- approximate timeframe
- number of hours expected for completion
- frequency of written reports on progress

6) Students will send written products to Field Instructor/Task Supervisor and upload written products to Taskstream.

7) Field Faculty Liaisons monitor completion of the work plan and renegotiate, as needed.