



# Student Intern Field Placement Guide

# National Association of Social Workers North Carolina Chapter

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## Mission

The National Association of Social Workers North Carolina (NASW-NC) is a membership organization with a dual mission to: 1) Promote, develop and protect the practice of social workers; and 2) seek to enhance the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families and communities through its work and advocacy. Our mission is to be experts and leaders in creating and sustaining systemic change through ethical social work practice.

## Vision

NASW-NC's vision is to be a vital part of every professional social worker in North Carolina.

## INTRODUCTION

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### Fieldwork

- An invaluable component of education designed to enhance the student's achievement of competency in areas of specialization and to provide opportunities for the integration of knowledge, values and skills
- A collaborative partnership between the NASW-NC, the social work program, the community, social work professionals and students that allows the connection of education and practice
- An opportunity to prepare students to face the challenges of effective service delivery

NASW-NC provides a unique macro experience in administrative and policy work with a significant focus on advocacy for the profession and for those we serve. The field experience is individually tailored around the discipline and specialization of the student, the focus of the association, requirements of the social work program and student interests. Qualified field instructors are committed to providing new and challenging experiences in an effort to maximize student learning.

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FIELD INSTRUCTOR

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**Key Role:** To provide structure, support, and guidance to the student with the central focus of professional development.

The field instructor is responsible for establishing a supervisory teaching relationship with the student, clearly setting standards and evaluating performance with a strong focus on professional development.

Responsibilities include the following:

1. Having a clear knowledge and understanding of the social work program's educational objectives.
2. Assisting the student intern in defining, designing, and implementing field learning experiences that meet the outlined educational objectives of the social work program.
3. Assisting the student intern in establishing mutual goals that are clear, measurable, and realistic.
4. Providing an orientation to NASW-NC through interviewing, shadowing, observing, and reading material.
5. Providing support and educational assessment through weekly supervision to
  - a. Review goals and benchmarks,
  - b. Provide on-the-job training,
  - c. Problem solve,
  - d. Define areas to be developed,
  - e. Identify and address any special needs, and
  - f. Ensure progress of work.
6. Communicating on a continuing basis with the field liaison regarding the student intern's performance and completing quarterly evaluations.



## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT INTERNS

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**Key Role:** To fully utilize the field experience to strive for professional proficiency under the guidance of an experienced professional.

Responsibilities include the following:

1. Maintaining association membership. All student interns and staff are required to be NASW members. It is only through membership that we are able to accomplish our mission.
2. Adhering to the *NASW Code of Ethics*.
3. Adhering to the policies and procedures of NASW-NC.
4. Starting the internship with a working knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, and Publisher.
5. Attending and participating in statewide events developed and coordinated by NASW-NC, unless the field instructor excuses the student intern, such as Fall Conference, Ethics Conference or Social Work Advocacy Day.
6. Maintaining oral and written communication that is professional and effective. The student intern has the opportunity to write articles for NASW-NC newsletters, and/or the NASW-NC blog, as well as lead a Student Liaison orientation.
7. Fostering relationships between NASW-NC and community partners by attending coalition meetings. The student intern will regularly attend meetings organized by a coalition of organizations NASW-NC is in partnership with and keep record of issues discussed.
8. Planning or assisting in the planning of at least one NASW-NC event.
9. Participating fully in the development of the field placement goals and objectives. Each student intern will craft an individualized plan, according to his or her social work program requirements. All plans will include engagement in membership retention and recruitment, advocacy for the profession and those we serve, and involvement in agency management. Through this field placement, student interns will develop skills to engage social workers and social work students in understanding the value of NASW membership and the importance of advocacy.
10. Actively engaging in learning through self-study.
  - a. The student intern is expected to read material published by NASW, including emails and newsletters. Student interns must have knowledge of programs and services offered by the NASW-NC and National offices when speaking with members and potential members. Knowing this information will also provide the student intern with an understanding of how his or her work aligns with the overall services of the association.
  - b. The student intern is required to become familiar with the NASW-NC and National websites to have a general knowledge of materials, services, and programs provided through the website and to know how to access those materials.
  - c. The student intern is expected to gain an understanding of the local and state advocacy process, since effective advocacy is part of a social worker's ethical responsibility to the broader society according to the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

11. Actively engaging in learning through supervision and activities as requested by the field instructor. The work of NASW evolves from the association's mission, with specific projects and tasks based on relevant opportunities, local and statewide issues impacting the profession, political climate, and activities outlined in the strategic plan. At times, this requires flexibility and rapid response, providing student interns with unique opportunities. It is NASW-NC's expectation that the student intern participate in these learning activities, as his or her schedule permits.
12. Assuming responsibility for one's own schedule and accounting for all field placement hours in a time sheet that the student intern will submit to the social work program. The student intern is responsible for notifying the field supervisor and acquiring permission if there is a need to change the field schedule. The field instructor may occasionally approve working outside the office. The student intern is responsible for sending the field instructor the dates and times worked outside the office and the specific details of the work.



## POTENTIAL PROJECTS

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- All interns will attend a NASW-NC Board of Directors meeting to understand our association leadership
- Attend and assist with March Ethics conference and Local Program Unit meetings
- Organize Advocacy Day at the North Carolina General Assembly during odd numbered years
- Attend legislative and Coalition meetings
- Manage the Student Liaison Program by being a liaison, finding liaisons, checking in with the schools, etc.
- Assist with a new grads/transitional member retention projects
- Research, collect data and assist in the development of documents related to policy issues and advocacy efforts, such as title protection, integrated care, etc.
- Research social workers with dual degrees to profile their experiences
- Maintain the [Social Work and Politics in North Carolina](#) ebook by interviewing and adding new social work lobbyists or elected officials
- Create new membership documents based on member needs and inquires
- Develop a Speakers Bureau that is member based
- Assist with carrying out fundraising for the Conference Scholarship program
- Create Private Practice Manual
- Manage association social media
- Provide feedback for and update association website
- Compile project manuals that provide an on-going record of intern's work during the placement
- Involvement in a variety of public policy activities
- Give public presentations
- Write articles for NASW-NC newsletter
- Work with Chapter lobbyist to advocate on issues of concern to social workers (examples: Medicaid, Social Work Licensure, Child Protective Services, etc.)
- Coordinate volunteers for election related activities during election years
- Assist with efforts to increase recognition of the social work profession

## THE EXPERIENCE

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### **The field experience will be unique to each student**

NASW-NC will strive to ensure that students are placed in areas of interest and provided a professional challenge to develop skills and increase knowledge. NASW-NC is a small office, providing students an opportunity to define his or her own objectives and take action to accomplish them. A student intern will need to be self-driven and motivated, able to direct his or her own work with little instruction, and be flexible.

### **Orientation & Job Training**

Student interns will be provided with an orientation that will cover the basics of office management, an overview of NASW membership, and other topics that will assist in getting started, ideally before placement begins. Job training is provided throughout the placement; there is no formalized process outside of orientation. A field placement at NASW-NC is a self-directed internship. Success is defined by the student intern's investment in his or her work.

### **Support and Assessment**

The field instructor will facilitate weekly supervision. During this time, each student intern is to create an agenda for the meeting and will provide project updates and feedback and discuss issues or concerns. Individual meetings will be scheduled when evaluations are due for the student intern's social work program.

### **Expectations**

A field placement at NASW-NC is not structured like a class nor will a syllabus be provided. Being flexible is the gateway to success. It is expected that when a student intern is at placement, he or she will not work on class assignments, unless directly related to NASW work.

There will be times when help with mundane tasks like filing, scanning, putting folders together, etc... will be required as meetings or events approach.

When attending meetings on behalf of NASW-NC, the student intern is expected to listen with intention. This means no cell phone or Internet use. The student intern should introduce him or herself as a representative of the NASW-NC and make an effort to talk to people before and after meetings. This is the best way to make professional contacts.

NASW-NC carries a large workload. It will be commonplace when in the field to have an extensive to-do list. Despite being a student, NASW-NC fully expects interns to multi-task each semester. Each student intern will be treated like members of the staff, while also understanding that the student is in the process of learning.

## CLOSURE

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Student interns are required to complete all assigned tasks, including written reports, prior to completion of his or her placement. It is the student intern's responsibility to make certain that all documentation needed by his or her social work program is provided to the field instructor with deadline information.

It is NASW-NC's earnest desire for all students to conclude the internship experience one step closer toward preparation for a successful and prolific professional future.



## APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE

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### **Step One: Submit Cover Letter & Resume**

NASW-NC will accept up to two students for field placement. All students referred to NASW-NC for field instruction must submit a request for placement that includes:

1. Interests of the student,
2. Relevant work and life experiences,
3. Specific challenges or needs in respect to the placement,
4. Computer skill level,
5. What the student hopes to achieve during placement,
6. Student's available times for field placement,
7. Contact information, and
8. Resume.

The request should be emailed to [membership.naswnc@socialworkers.org](mailto:membership.naswnc@socialworkers.org).

### **Step Two: Interview**

After receiving the field placement request, a representative of the NASW-NC staff will contact the student to schedule an interview. *It is strongly encouraged that the student becomes familiar with the association by reviewing NASW-NC's website ([www.naswnc.org](http://www.naswnc.org)) and National NASW's website ([www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)).* The interview will define goals and interests, explore previous experience, ask scenario-based questions to see how a student would perform in placement, provide the student with an overview of the placement, and answer any questions or concerns.

### **Step Three: Decision**

The decision to accept or decline the placement will be mutual; the student and the field instructor will need to determine if NASW-NC is an appropriate setting for the student.

It is NASW-NC's hope for all students to conclude the internship experience one-step closer toward preparation for a successful and rich professional future and social work career. Thank you for your interest in an internship/field placement at NASW-NC.

## CHAPTER DIRECTORY

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