



Field Program COVID Policies

2020-2021

The SHSSW is committed to safe, high quality field education in partnership with our community.

Toward that end, all interns have the option for remote field. All SHSSW interns are required to wear masks at agency sites and to follow additional agency protocols in keeping with updated medical guidelines. Students may be removed from an internship if the agency is not in compliance with its own policies or current medical guidelines. The school will coordinate closely with agencies and students regarding service delivery models including remote and onsite, knowing that this will be a limiting factor in internship matches.

Hours:

For the fall, BSWs are required to complete 400 hours and MSSW first fielders are required to complete 200. For the spring, BSWs are required to complete 400 hours, MSSW first fielders 200, and MSSW final fielders 500 hours (spring or spring/summer).

This reduces the number of hours/week: BSWs, 28 – 30 hrs/wk, MSSW first fielders 13 – 15 hrs/wk, and MSSW final fielders 33-35 hrs/wk (or 20-22 hrs/wk).

A student who is exposed to COVID-19 during the semester is expected to immediately:

1. Communicate with their field instructor and faculty liaison regarding the circumstances and their needs;
2. Remove themselves from onsite field and quarantine for 10 days; and
3. Meet to assess exposure with FI, FL, and ADFE and to review alignment of individual COVID preparedness assignment, agency, UT, current CDC policies

Similarly, agencies are expected to report exposures immediately and coordinate with the students, field instructors, and faculty liaisons to make plans for service delivery and educational progress.

Options available for continuing to progress in field during the 10-day isolation period include:

1. Reduced required hours in compliance with CSWE's guidance;
2. Additional remote responsibilities for the agency;
3. Approved remote training opportunities identified by the agency and/or available on the SHSSW website at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/field/forms/>; and
4. In some cases, a student may need to be placed in a 100% remote internship.

Students must get the approval of their faculty liaison and field instructor to return to field and must have completed 10 days away from the site.

The goal is to protect the health and recovery of the student as well as persons in the internship environment. Similarly, if a field instructor, faculty liaison, or agency site tests positive for COVID-19, the expectation is that all parties would communicate as soon as able and then consult regarding plans to safeguard people's safety, well-being, educational, and agency needs.

Students are responsible for full and truthful disclosure related to keeping their colleagues safe from potential COVID exposure. **Student failure to adhere to SHSSW COVID policies may lead to suspension from field and investigation into academic integrity.**

The SHSSW will follow current medical practices related to isolation and testing in coordination with other schools of social work, professional units on campus, and community-based agencies.

Additional guidance and supports for navigating COVID-19 challenges in field may be found at:

The University of Texas: <https://protect.utexas.edu>;

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work: <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/featured/covid-19-resources-and-information-for-steve-hicks-school-students/>;

CDC guidelines after exposure:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>; and

The Council on Social Work Education's policy regarding required field hours:

<https://cswe.org/About-CSWE/Responding-to-Coronavirus>.