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CFS Social Worker
Internship Program
for Existing EHSD Employees

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I. POLICY

This policy applies only to full-time permanent employees of Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) who are interested in pursuing a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) in an approved Title IV-E Child Welfare Program through the Children & Family Services (CFS) Social Work Internship Program ("the Program"). The Title IV-E Child Welfare Program is a federally-funded initiative designed in part to provide financial assistance to social work graduate students (via stipends) to educate and prepare students for careers in child welfare.

The Program allows an approved EHSD employee to be released from his/her regular work assignment for the school's required internship hours and continue in their full-time paid status. The ultimate decision for an employee's involvement in the Program is at the discretion of the EHSD Director or designee. This policy does not cover EHSD employees who: 1) are taking classes for certification; 2) are earning a degree toward a non-social work related profession; or 3) are not in an EHSD approved Title IV-E program.

II. CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO THE CFS SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Prior to acceptance into the Program by EHSD, the employee must be accepted into an MSW graduate school with a Title IV-E/CalSWEC Program previously approved by EHSD.

- 1) The following criteria must also be met by the EHSD employee:
 - a) Must be employed full time by EHSD for at least 18-months minimum at the time of application to the Program. The employee's initial probation period may be counted towards the 18-months requirement.
 - b) Must be in good standing in current position at EHSD. "Improvement needed" status is not acceptable.
 - c) Must submit all required documents.
 - d) Must demonstrate the potential and commitment to working as a social worker in Contra Costa County Children & Family Services (CFS).
- 2) All employees will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 3) Employees classified as provisional, temporary, emergency, contracted, part-time, and retirees/services-as-needed are not eligible to participate in the Program.
- 4) It is expected that selected employees will be on full-time paid status during their participation in the Program.
- 5) Employees who already have a Master's degree in a closely related field may not be eligible to apply to the Program.

As a Title IV-E/CalSWEC intern, the employee must complete two years of internships within CFS, which typically occur during the last two years of the MSW program. The Title IV-E/CalSWEC MSW program is typically two to four years long.

- 1) If the employee is already a CFS Social Worker II/III, the internship must be completed within a different division of EHSD and/or an assignment other than the employee's current one. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.
- 2) Each intern must complete two different internships during their academic program.
- 3) Failure to complete the Program could require the employee to make financial repayment to the university's Title IV-E/CalSWEC Program.
- 4) The employee must sign a contract with their graduate school stating that:
 - a) If the employee is a current CFS Social Worker II/III: The employee will continue working for two years full time post-graduation as a Social Worker II/III within Contra Costa County CFS; or
 - b) If the employee is not employed as a CFS Social Worker II/III: The employee must apply for a CFS Social Worker II/III position at the first opportunity post-graduation and work for two years in a CFS Social Worker II/III position within Contra Costa County.

III. CFS SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM REVIEW TEAM

EHSD has a CFS Internship Review Team (CFS IRT) that considers all applicants for the Program and makes formal recommendations to the EHSD Director or designee. Acceptance into the Program will result in a Letter of Support issued by the EHSD Director or designee. Applications are reviewed by the CFS IRT after admission into the graduate school program; this usually occurs between March 1st and May 31st.

The CFS IRT is composed of the following individuals:

- a) The CFS Intern Coordinator or CFS designee
- b) Division Manager from Aging & Adult Services
- c) Division Manager from Workforce Services
- d) A representative from EHSD Personnel
- e) Division Manager from EHSD Staff Development
- f) Other individuals as needed or requested by the EHSD Director

The CFS IRT is also responsible for making internship program recommendations regarding existing policy and practice.

IV. INITIATING THE CFS SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

Once the employee has received acceptance into their MSW graduate approved school and approved Title IV-E/CalSWEC Program, the employee must seek approval from the CFS IRT.

- 1) The employee is required to submit the following documents via email to ehsdinternship@ehsd.cccounty.us
 - a) EHSD/CFS Employee Social Worker Internship Program Application
 - b) Professional Resume
 - c) Copy of Personal Statement submitted to school for application to MSW Program (only if required by the school). This must address why the applicant wants to become a social worker in child welfare.

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- d) A minimum of one letter of recommendation dated within the previous 1-3 years from an individual or agency qualified to speak to the employee's competency. Note: These may be copies of letters submitted to the MSW Program.
 - e) Recommendation from the employee's current Division Manager on the [CFS Internship Letter of Recommendation DM](#) form, which must address:
 - i. Support for release time from the employee's current assignment for a specified timeframe to complete their required internship hours in CFS.
 - ii. A proposed work schedule during the internship, to include consideration for how work will get done while the employee is at their internship e.g., coverage, timely processing of work, etc.
 - f) Recommendation from employee's current Supervisor on the [CFS Internship Letter of Recommendation Supervisor](#) form.
- 2) Applications to the CFS Social Work Internship Program will be reviewed for approval on a case-by-case basis by the CFS IRT.
 - 3) The Department retains the right to limit the number of employees accepted into the Program based on operational needs and availability of approved field instructors.
 - 4) If the employee has an adjusted work schedule (e.g. 9/80, 4/10), they must forfeit this schedule and work regular hours while participating in the Program.

V. CFS SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

- 1) The EHSD employee will be subject to regular county performance evaluations and personnel regulations.
 - a) The employee must remain in good standing on performance evaluations throughout the Program.
 - b) Serious violations of ethics or policies and procedures may result in termination from the Program.
- 2) Participation in a Title IV-E MSW program may involve a need for additional time off. Approval for time off beyond internship hours as well as any class hours taken during regular work hours must be approved in advance by the employee's work supervisor. The employee must use accrued time off for these purposes.

V. REFERENCES

[DM 14-005 Continuing Training/Direct Benefit Training](#)
[DM 14-007 Career Training/Indirect Benefit Training](#)
[Contra Costa County Class Specification Bulletin: EHSD Social Worker II/III](#)
[CFS Social Work Internship Fact Sheet and Application](#)
[CFS Internship Letter of Recommendation DM](#)
[CFS Internship Letter of Recommendation Supervisor](#)

Contact the CFS Intern Coordinator or designee at ehsdinternship@ehsd.cccounty.us with any questions regarding the CFS Social Worker Internship Program.