

## SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUM INFORMATION

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For non-school-based practicum placements, CastleBranch is now required for student clearance processing. This change is to create a more efficient, consistent, and secure process for verifying eligibility and ensuring compliance with site affiliation agreements.

Students must purchase the practicum placement management software (currently Tevera) and complete the practicum application. Once Practicum Directors confirm the placement, instructions will be sent about using CastleBranch. CastleBranch is mandatory. Students cannot start their practicum until this process is complete. Fees must be paid directly to CastleBranch (financial aid cannot be used). Students should watch for emails from the Compliance Office for important updates and next steps.

Students must begin the practicum placement process as soon as they obtain candidacy for the BSW program and immediately after confirming their course plan for the MSW program. If the clearance process is not completed, students are not permitted to attend the practicum experience. Failure to follow and complete this process may impact enrollment, course grade, financial aid and/or time to completion of their degree.

School-based practicum placements will supply their clearances and liability insurance to the Office of Clinical Experiences and Candidate Services.

The Educational Specialist, School Social Worker PK-12 certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education is an approved educator preparation program and therefore, requires a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice (PDE-430). This evaluation may be integrated into another assessment or evaluation within your academic department. All clinical experiences obtained by those planning to seek this certification must take place in the state of Pennsylvania in order to qualify for Pennsylvania Department of Education(PDE)-approved certification. If clinical experiences are not in Pennsylvania, students will be required to complete an additional practicum in Pennsylvania to qualify for certification.

In fact, PDE is requiring us to notify them of out of state placements in schools even if they are not seeking certification.

If there are specific criteria for your practicum experience, please work with your assigned Practicum Director for this process.