

UConn

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MSW PROGRAM - BACKGROUND CHECKS AND IMMUNIZATION FAQ SHEET

Welcome to the UConn School of Social Work. The following are field education requirements in keeping with University-wide policy for programs with practicums or internships. Our staff and faculty are committed to working with all students to promote their success in the MSW program. We believe in second chances and have developed resources to assist students with a criminal record to navigate the difficulties that may arise while working towards earning a MSW degree from UConn.

FIELD PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS:

In order to successfully complete the MSW degree and graduate, you must complete all required field practicum experiences. All MSW students, regardless of their concentration, are required to complete a background check and immunization monitoring. This is a UConn requirement to ensure that students are ready and able to meet a Facility's basic requirements and to begin a field practicum on time. A full list of student responsibilities in field practicum education can be found in the School's Field Education Manual on our website: <https://ssw.uconn.edu/about-msw-field-education> (click on "For Students – Internship Requirements" section).

In order to participate in any field practicum you will be required to:

- 1) **Complete a background check screening.** Background check screenings will include checking state and federal criminal records and sex offender registries. If your background screening shows that you have a criminal record ("CR") or that you are listed as a sex offender ("LSO"), you may not be able to secure a field practicum.

Once admitted as a graduate student to UConn, will a CR/LSO prevent me from earning my MSW?

- The SSW's Field Education Department is committed to assisting students find a field placement for all enrolled students. A CR/LSO will most likely limit a student's ability to secure a field placement. Students who are unable to secure a field placement will not be able to earn a MSW.

How much choice will I have in my field placement if I have a CR/LSO?

- Unfortunately, there may not be a lot of choice. Some agencies may not be able to offer you an internship. We will work with you to find a field placement, but it will really depend on each agency's requirements and policies. While some agencies have accepted MSW interns with a CR/LSO in the past, there is no guarantee that a particular student can be placed at an agency that has previously accepted students with a CR/LSO.
- Students who wish to learn how to maximize their chances of securing a field placement should contact the Office of Clinical Placement Coordination in Storrs at clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu.

Can a CR/LSO preclude a person with a MSW degree from becoming licensed in the State of Connecticut?

- A CR/LSO may preclude a person with a MSW degree from becoming licensed in the State of Connecticut. For more information you should contact the Connecticut State Department of

Public Health licensing board: <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Practitioner-Licensing--Investigations/Socialworker/LCSW-Licensing-Requirements>

- A CR/LSO may also preclude a person with a MSW degree from becoming licensed in another state. For more information you should contact the individual state's licensing body.

2) **Demonstrate that you are current with immunizations** (i.e., tuberculosis; measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR); varicella; and influenza). A record of previous immunizations is not sufficient to fulfill these requirements. If you are unable to demonstrate through written documentation that you are current with your immunizations, you may not be able to secure a field practicum. It has been UConn's experience that students will be denied a field practicum placement if they fail to provide such proof (religious exemptions are very rarely accepted in lieu of proof of immunization).

Do I have to pay for the background checks and immunizations?

Yes, each student is financially responsible for the cost of completing such screenings.

- Background check costs typically are as follows through Complio, however, more checks may be required by some agencies (all costs are subject to change and the cost of the background checks will vary depending on the number of states and countries in which you have resided):
 - *(Required)* Basic Background Check: \$28.40 (additional fees may apply if the student has an alias/maiden name or residential history).
 - *Additional fees may include (if an agency requires these to be done):*
 - ◆ 10 Panel Drug Screen \$32.00
 - ◆ FACIS Level 3: \$7.00 (particularly if placed in a medical setting).
 - ◆ OFAC Search: \$4.00
 - ◆ Motor Vehicle (DMV) check: \$3.00
 - ◆ International Criminal Background Check: \$50.00 (additional fees may apply if the country has additional criminal search fees). Students who have studied abroad will also need to have an International Criminal Background check completed.
 - ◆ E Fast Fingerprinting \$59.00
- The cost of tracking immunizations and ensuring that students are compliant through Complio is: \$15.00 for 12 month tracking (signing up for "UConn Tracking" in the Complio system). Students are responsible for this fee. If students must see their physician for documentation, students are also responsible for those services and fees.

What is the deadline for completing the background checks and immunizations?

All MSW students are required to complete a background check and immunization monitoring by the following deadlines:

- March 15 – for IGFP students seeking to do a field practicum in the summer of that year;
- June 5 – for all other MSW students who are going into a field practicum during the next Fall semester, **including those entering their second year of field who have not already demonstrated compliance in Complio with the background check and immunization requirements.**
- You will need to meet the requirements and demonstrate compliance in Complio before you can start a field placement.

Is it Required to Create a Complio Account with American Data Bank?

Yes, this is required. UConn has an approved contracted vendor, American Data Bank, which will be used for this purpose. All MSW students are required to create a Complio account

(<https://uconn2.complio.com/default.aspx>) with American Data Bank and purchase and complete the basic background check and the UConn Tracking (immunizations monitoring).

ADDITIONAL FIELD PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:

All required field practicum experiences must be completed at a UConn School of Social Work-approved facility (“Facility”). The School will assist you with securing a field practicum placement. Each Facility has its own requirements that must be met before accepting a student for a field practicum. You are responsible for meeting a Facility’s requirements.

In addition to the above requirements, some Facilities require the successful completion of other types of screenings. The most common of those is drug screening. If you test positive for drug use, you may not be able to secure a field practicum at a Facility or may be removed from a field practicum. This includes, but is not limited to, testing positive for prescribed medical marijuana or opiates. Students who have any question regarding drug screenings should contact the Office of Clinical Placement Coordination in Storrs at clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu.

Other types of screenings include fingerprinting, debarment list screenings, and Motor Vehicle Records checks. It is also possible that a Facility may require a student to redo a screening that they may have already successfully completed in the past before being placed.

Occasionally, the costs associated with these additional screenings are covered by the Facility, but most of the time you will be responsible for the cost of such screenings.

Each Facility has its own requirements that must be met before accepting a student for a field practicum placement. You are responsible for meeting *all* of the Facility’s requirements. The School is not responsible for securing field practicum placements for students who are unable to meet a Facility’s field practicum placement requirements. No Facility field practicum placement will be confirmed until *all* field practicum placement requirements have been met. You will not be able to start any field practicum until you have demonstrated that you have successfully completed all requirements required for a field practicum placement at a Facility.

If you are not able to meet these requirements, you will most likely not be able to complete the School’s field practicum requirements.

RESOURCES AT THE SSW AND UCONN TO TALK WITH ABOUT MY SITUATION

Should I let the field education placement staff know if I think there may be a problem with my background check, drug screening or immunizations?

Yes, students should discuss their concerns with field placement staff prior to the start of the placement process in order to optimize their chances of obtaining a field placement. Field staff are committed to working with each student to find them a placement agency that will welcome them. Field staff, with a student’s consent, may consult with the Office of Clinical Placement Coordination in Storrs (clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu) to work through questions and issues for the best outcome for the student. The field education staff can answer questions about field placements.

Is there anyone at UConn that I can privately discuss my situation with in regards to background checks, immunizations or drug screens?

Yes, within the University system, students may contact the Office of Clinical Placement Coordination in Storrs (at clinicalcasemanager@uconn.edu) with any questions regarding background checks or drug screenings. These communications will be kept private and will not be shared with SSW without your consent. For all other inquiries, including regarding immunizations, please contact the Field Education Department at sswfielded@uconn.edu or 959-200-3636.

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