

“Request to Utilize Employment for Field Education”
(Work Variance Form)

Guiding Principles

The policy of the School of Social Work is that an employment setting may be used as a field placement if all the regular School requirements are met. Students must follow all requirements for Requests for Approval as outlined in the Field Manual Handbook, SWK 712.

A request for using employment for field education or (Work Variance Request), must follow the Council on Social Work Education’s requirements. According to the Council (Interpretive Guideline 6.4):

“If the student is also employed in the agency where the field practicum takes place, the availability of release time for course and field instruction should be ensured. Student assignments and fieldwork supervision should differ from those associated with the student’s employment. It should also be demonstrated that there is no diminution of the program’s established requirements in class and field practicum and that field instruction is educationally focused rather than solely centered on agency services.”

The Work Variance Request should clearly demonstrate that the field practicum component differs from the student’s employment. Students must document the distinctions, **including separate supervision**, responsibilities, and appropriate learning experiences.

The Work Variance Request must include the following materials:

1. The “Request to Utilize Employment for Field Education” Form (Work Variance Form).
2. A letter, from student, requesting approval and briefly describing the student’s assignments that are different from the student’s employment.
3. A current job description.
4. Complete the “Proposed Field Learning Activities at Place of Employment” form.
5. A resume of the MSW person that will serve as the field instructor (**must be different than the current supervisor**).
6. A letter from the current supervisor or director of the agency that clearly states that the student’s field education requirements will be ensured by the agency.

If the agency where you are employed is not currently affiliated with the School, affiliation material must also be included.

All six pieces of the above documentation must be submitted at the same time in order to be accepted by the Field Education Office.

The proposal must be submitted at least **eight (8) weeks prior** to the semester for which the request is being made