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# CALSWEC CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

FOR PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE  
IN CALIFORNIA

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**2017**



## INTRODUCTION

*“Competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker’s critical thinking, affective reactions and exercise of judgment.”*

–2015 Council on Social Work Education,  
Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

### *History*

The [Council of Social Work Education \(CSWE\)](#) sets national standards for the identification and assessment of competencies in the education of social work students through the periodic publication of [Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards \(EPAS\)](#), from [Bureau of the Census \(1968\)](#) to [The National Commission on the Future of Social Work Education \(1992\)](#) to [The National Commission on the Future of Social Work Education \(2002\)](#) to [The National Commission on the Future of Social Work Education \(2015\)](#).

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## COMPETENCY 1: DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice.

### CSWE EPAS BEHAVIORS FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE COMPETENCY 1

Social work students should:

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**COMPETENCY 2: ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE****CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES**

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors, including, but not limited to, age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and Tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.

**COMPETENCY 2 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)**

- b. Be aware of and take responsibility for your own biases, missteps, and mistakes.

**II. ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIORS**

- 4. *Demonstrate an interest in connecting with the child, youth, young adult, and family, and help them identify and meet their goals.*
  - e. Show your interest in learning about the family and their culture, community, and Tribes.
  - g. Honor the role of important cultural, community, and Tribal leaders the child, youth, young adult, and family have identified.
- 6. *Support and facilitate the family's capacity to advocate for themselves.*
  - c. Incorporate the family's strengths, resources, cultural perspectives, and solutions in all casework.

**III. ASSESSMENT BEHAVIORS**



## COMPETENCY 3: ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.

### CSWE EPAS BEHAVIORS FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE COMPETENCY 3

Social work students should:

- Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

## COMPETENCY 3: CALSWEC BEHAVIORS FOR SPECIALIZED PRACTICE

### PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE COMPETENCY 3 (CW3)

Social work students should:

- CW3.1 Clearly articulate the systematic effects of discrimination, oppression, and stigma on the quality and delivery of child welfare services, and identify and advocate for policy changes needed to address these issues.
- CW3.2

**COMPETENCY 3 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)**

**V. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY BEHAVIORS**

**12. *Work with the family and their team to build a plan that will focus on changing behaviors that led to the circumstances that brought the family to the attention of the child welfare agency and assist the child, youth, young adult, and family with safety, trauma, healing, and permanency.***

- d. Encourage and support the participation of children, youth, young adults, family, Tribe, and team in identifying culturally sensitive services, supports, visitation activities, and traditions that address family members' unique underlying needs even if this means accepting practices that may be unfamiliar to the social worker.

**COMPETENCY 4: ENGAGE IN PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH AND RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE**

**CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES**

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multidisciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

**CSWE EPAS BEHAVIORS FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE COMPETENCY 4**

Social work students should:

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

**COMPETENCY 4: CALSWEC BEHAVIORS FOR SPECIALIZED PRACTICE**

**PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE COMPETENCY 4 (CW4)**

Social work students should:

- CW4.1 Demonstrate the ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate the benefits and limitations of various evidence-based and evidence-informed treatment models as they influence child welfare practice.
- CW4.2 Engage in critical analysis of research findings, practice models, and practice wisdom that inform child welfare practice, including how research practices have historically failed to address the needs and realities of exploited and/or disadvantaged communities, and how cross-cultural research practices can be used to enhance equity.
- CW4.3 Clearly communicate research findings, conclusions, and implications, as well as their applications to child welfare practice across a variety of professional interactions with children, youth, young adults, families, and multidisciplinary service providers.
- CW4.4 Apply research findings to child welfare practice with individuals, families, and communities and to the development of professional knowledge about the field of child welfare.

**COMPETENCY 4 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

NONE





## COMPETENCY 6: ENGAGE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of huma

**COMPETENCY 6 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)**

e.

**COMPETENCY 6 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)**

c. Talk to childre



## COMPETENCY 7: ASSESS INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

### CSWE EPAS BEHAVIORS FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE COMPETENCY 7

Social work students should:

- Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

## COMPETENCY 7: CALSWEC BEHAVIORS FOR SPECIALIZED PRACTICE

### PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE COMPETENCY 7 (CW7)

Social work students should:

- CW7.1 Identify, understand, and implement appropriate child welfare screening and assessment tools.
- CW7.2 Include assessment data from all relevant parties and systems to inform appropriate and comprehensive assessment of intervention needs, while considering the voluntary/involuntary nature of family interactions. Relevant parties/systems may include, but are not limited to, children, family systems, community systems, public child welfare systems, school/educational systems, juvenile justice, criminal justice, and court systems, Tribal systems, behavioral health care systems, and medical care systems.
- CW7.3 Engage in effective and ongoing critical analysis of child welfare assessment data that:
- Reflects child, youth, young adult, family, and support systems' strengths and desires;
  - Acknowledges the effects of intervention on family and community members;
  - Addresses the impacts of trauma, adverse health conditions, and co-occurring disorders; and
  - Culminates in assessments that incorporate principles of safety, permanency, and well-being within the framework of teaming and respectful engagement.
- CW7.4 Document and maintain all child welfare assessment data responsibly and balance the need for such data with child, youth, young adult, and family privacy concerns, recognizing the nature of mandated services and the need for accurate assessment data.

### COMPETENCY 7 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

*Related California Child Welfare Core Practice Model Practice Behaviors:*

[II.5.a.-d.](#); [II.6.a.](#); [III.7.a.-f.](#); [IV.8.a.-d.](#); [IV.9.a.,b.](#); [IV.10.a.,b.](#); [V.12.a.,b.,d.,e.,h.](#) (see [Appendix](#))

#### II. ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIORS

5. *Identify and engage family members and others who are important to the child, youth, young adult, and family.*
  - a. Ask questions about relationships and significant others early and often.
  - b. Search for all family members, including fathers, mothers, and paternal and maternal relatives through inquiry, early and ongoing Internet search, and review of records.

**COMPETENCY 7 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)**

- c. Work quickly to establish paternity and facilitate the child or youth's connection with paternal relationships.
- d. Contact family, cultural, community, and T

## COMPETENCY 8: INTERVENE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing, and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client

**COMPETENCY 8 RELATED CA CW CPM PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

***Related California Child Welfare Core Practice Model Practice Behaviors:***

[II.5.b.-d.](#); [II.6.a.](#); [IV.8.a.b.e.](#); [IV.9.a.-f.](#); [IV.10.a.-c.](#); [V.12.a.-h.](#); [VI.13.a.b.](#) (see [Appendix](#))

**II. ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIORS**

- 5. *Identify and engage family members and others who are important to the child, youth, young adult, and family.***
  - b. Search for all family members, including fathers, mothers, and paternal and maternal relatives through inquiry, early and ongoing Internet search, and review of records.
  - c. Work quickly to establish paternity and facilitate the child or youth’s connection with paternal relationships.
  - d. Contact family, cultural, community, and Tribal connections as placement options, team members, and sources of support.
- 6. *Support and facilitate the family’s capacity to advocate for themselves.***
  - a. Coordinate with the family’s formal and informal advocates to help the family find solutions and provide ongoing support.

**IV. TEAMING BEHAVIORS**

- 8. *Work with the family to build a supportive team.***
  - a. With the family’s permission, contact family, cultural, community, and Tribal connections, and ask them to serve as team members as early as possible.
  - b. Ask initially and throughout the family’s involvement if they would like a support person or peer advocate on their team.
  - e. Facilitate development of a mutually supportive relationship between the parents and caregivers.
- 9. *Facilitate the team process and engage the team in planning and decision-making with and in support of the child, youth, young adult, and family.***
  - a. Make sure team members have the information they need.
  - b. Facilitate critical thinking, discussion, mutual exploration of issues, and consensus building toward the goal of shared decision-making.
  - c. Help the team recognize that differences will occur and assist them to work through conflicts.
  - d. Develop a shared understanding about safety, permanency, and well-being issues to be addressed with the team.
  - e. Ensure that all team members understand that legal, regulatory, and policy constraints may limit shared decision-making options available to address the family members’ needs, including placement options, reunification, and service options.
  - f. Build connections to identified services and supports by designating a team member to follow-up with that referral.
- 10. *Work with the team to address the evolving needs of the child, youth, young adult, and family.***
  - a. Facilitate dialogue about how supports and visitation plans are working.
  - b. Explore with team members what roles they can play over time to strengthen child safety and support the family.
  - c. Help the team adapt to changing team member roles.

**V. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY BEHAVIORS**

- 12. *Work with the family and their team to build a plan that will focus on changing behaviors that led to the circumstances that brought the family to the attention of the child welfare agency and assist the child, youth, young adult, and family with safety, trauma, healing, and permanency.***
  - a. Describe how family strengths, safety threats, and priority needs will be addressed in the plan.
  - b. Describe strengths in functional terms that can support the family members in completing their plan.
  - c. Share information about agency programs, providers, resources, and supports.
  - d. Encourage and support the participation of children, youth, young adults, family, Tribe, and team in identifying culturally sensitive services, supports, visitation activities, and traditions that address family members’ unique underlying needs even if this means accepting practices that may be unfamiliar to the social worker.



## COMPETENCY 9: EVALUATE PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

### CSWE EPAS COMPETENCY CONTENT AND PROCESSES

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

### CSWE EPAS BEHAVIORS FOR GENERALIST PRACTICE COMPETENCY 9

Social work students should:

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
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# APPENDIX



## CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE CORE PRACTICE MODEL PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

<a href="#">CW6</a>	c. Reach out to children and families in ways that are welcoming, appropriate, and comfortable for them, and make a special effort to engage fathers and paternal relatives to build connections and engage them as family members and team members.
<a href="#">CW6</a>	d. Affirm the unique strengths, needs, life experience and self-identified goals of each child, youth, young adult, and family.
<a href="#">CW2</a> <a href="#">CW6</a>	e. Show your interest in learning about the family and their culture, community, and Tribes.
<a href="#">CW6</a>	f. Ask global questions followed by more descriptive questions that encourage exchange.
<a href="#">CW2</a> <a href="#">CW3</a> <a href="#">CW6</a>	g. Honor the role of important cultural, community, and Tribal leaders the child, youth, young adult, and family have identified.
	<b>5. <i>Identify and engage family members and others who are important to the child, youth, young adult, and family.</i></b>
<a href="#">CW6</a> <a href="#">CW7</a>	a. Ask questions about relationships and significant others early and often.
<a href="#">CW6</a> <a href="#">CW7</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	b. Search for all family members, including fathers, mothers, and paternal and maternal relatives through inquiry, early and ongoing Internet search, and review of records.
<a href="#">CW6</a> <a href="#">CW7</a>	





<a href="#">CW1</a> <a href="#">CW7</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	b. Explore with team members what roles they can play over time to strengthen child safety and support the family.
<a href="#">CW1</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	c. Help the team adapt to changing team member roles.
<a href="#">CW1</a>	<b>11. <i>Work collaboratively with community partners to create better ways for children, youth, young adults, and families to access services.</i></b>

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE CORE PRACTICE MODEL PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

**V. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY BEHAVIORS**

<b>Related CalSWEC CW Bx</b>	<b>12. <i>Work with the family and their team to build a plan that will focus on changing behaviors that led to the circumstances that brought the family to the attention of the child welfare agency and assist the child, youth, young adult, and family with safety, trauma, healing, and permanency.</i></b>
<a href="#">CW7</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	a. Describe how family strengths, safety threats, and priority needs will be addressed in the plan.
<a href="#">CW7</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	b. Describe strengths in functional terms that can support the family members in completing their plan.
<a href="#">CW8</a>	c. Share information about agency programs, providers, resources, and supports.
<a href="#">CW1</a> <a href="#">CW2</a> <a href="#">CW3</a> <a href="#">CW7</a> <a href="#">CW8</a>	d. Encourage and support the participation of children, youth, young adults, family, Tribe, and team in identifying culturally sensitive services, supports, visitation activities, and traditions that address family members' unique underlying needs even if this m