

SOCIAL WORK

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES

PUBLIC WELFARE

Administration and Planning
Case Management
Program Evaluation
Policy Development
Research

Public welfare agencies
Private social service agencies
Local, state, and federal government including:
Department of Human Services
Department of Education
Veterans Administration
Indian Health Services
Administrative agencies
Job Corps
Head Start
State legislatures

Public welfare is designed to provide services and support for poor, disabled, ill, elderly, or juvenile clients.

Volunteer at homeless shelters, soup kitchens, battered women homes, literacy programs, or other social service agencies to get experience.
Four out of ten social workers work for the government.
Learn about the government application process and apply early as the process can take at least four to six months.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE/CORRECTIONS

Counseling/Therapy
Rehabilitation
Probation
Parole
Youth Services
Victim Assistance
Drug Prevention

Prisons and correctional facilities
Courts
Police departments
Probation offices
Victim services organizations
Private treatment facilities

Social workers in corrections focus on rehabilitation of clients.

Obtain experience by volunteering at a corrections facility or victims' program such as a rape crisis center.
Gain experience as a juvenile probation officer; many states allow reputable citizens to serve as volunteer officers.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

Counseling
Case Management
Pupil Personnel Services
Student Advocacy
Instruction
Assessment
Referral

Elementary and secondary schools
School districts
Head start centers
Early intervention programs

School systems may employ social workers to help students cope with and resolve emotional, developmental, or educational difficulties.

Gain experience with children at daycare centers, camps, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the like.
Volunteer with organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters.
Must obtain state certification for work in a school.
Check with each state to learn about requirements.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES
<p><u>CLINICAL</u> Therapy Assessment Case Management</p>	<p>Community mental health centers Psychiatric hospitals Behavioral health systems Drug/alcohol rehabilitation centers Residential and day treatment hospitals Employee assistance programs Schools Family service agencies Private practice</p>	<p>Clinical social workers are found in a variety of settings that provide therapeutic counseling to clients. Master of Social Work (MSW) is required. Obtain licensure as an LCSW since many employers require licensure to practice.</p>
<p><u>ADMINISTRATION</u> Management Policy Development Planning Supervision Fundraising Budgeting Grant Writing</p>	<p>Family service agencies Child welfare departments Social service agencies State mental health departments Employee assistance programs Probation departments Public welfare agencies Public interest groups Local, state, and federal government Residential and outpatient hospitals/treatment centers</p>	<p>Administrators are involved with planning, budgeting, public relations, marketing, supervising, operations management, fund raising, and other crucial responsibilities that keep an organization functioning. Obtain an MSW and gain management experience. Consider a minor in business during undergraduate education.</p>
<p><u>RESEARCH AND EDUCATION</u> Research Teaching Grant Writing Supervision</p>	<p>Colleges and universities Research institutes Research hospitals Local, state, and federal government Advocacy organizations</p>	<p>Research provides data and statistics important in program implementation and policy development. Doctor of Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required. Some teaching and administration positions may be available to MSW's. Gain research experience as an undergraduate by assisting professors with their work.</p>
<p><u>VOCATIONAL</u> Counseling Education Wellness Promotion Organizational Development Assessment Human Resources</p>	<p>Larger corporations Employee assistance programs Labor unions Local, state, and federal government: Department of Labor Community agencies</p>	<p>Occupational social workers help employees to be more productive and satisfied. Gain experience in a university or community career center while in school. Earn a relevant certification such as Certified Employee Assistance Professional or Global Career Development Facilitator.</p>

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES
<p><u>HEALTHCARE</u> Case Management Counseling Prevention and Education Program Development Administration Research Child Life Specialists Hospice Care</p>	<p>Hospitals Community health centers Outpatient clinics Public health programs Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) Nursing homes Group homes Hospice Veterans Administration hospitals Home healthcare agencies</p>	<p>Social workers in healthcare facilitate medical and emotional treatment of patients. They may focus on helping clients and their families cope with acute or terminal illnesses by providing psychosocial support. Choose volunteer settings such as hospitals, the American Red Cross, or AIDS agencies to get experience. Gain membership in the Association of Oncology Social Work or other relevant associations.</p>
<p><u>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION</u> Program and Community Development Advocacy Politics Education Planning</p>	<p>Advocacy organizations Development corporations Community centers Local, state, and federal government Associations</p>	<p>Social workers in this area work with existing organizations to improve conditions for specific groups, enhance quality of living, and involve community members in the political process. Get involved with grassroots causes and community agencies. Participate in local government and gain knowledge about city planning.</p>
<p><u>GERONTOLOGY</u> Advocacy/Intervention Counseling Case Management Programming Public Policy Administration</p>	<p>Hospitals Nursing homes Senior centers Assisted living Hospice Home healthcare agencies</p>	<p>Gerontology involves working with older adults, healthy or ill, and their families. Get involved with programs or organizations designed for senior citizens. Join the American Society on Aging. Gain Social Work credentials oriented toward gerontology.</p>
<p><u>CHILD WELFARE</u> Case Management Advocacy Intervention Supervision</p>	<p>Local, state, and federal government including: Department of Children's Services Public and private child welfare agencies Adoption agencies Foster care organizations Child daycare</p>	<p>Child welfare social workers strive to ensure the safety and well-being of children through treatment of the whole family. Volunteer at daycares, child shelters, camps, YMCA, Scouts, or other agencies that aid youth. Gain licensure as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) after graduating from a master's program in Social Work.</p>

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES
<p><u>DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</u> Case Management Program Planning and Evaluation Research Policy Development</p>	<p>Community residential homes State and local agencies Medical facilities Schools Colleges and universities</p>	<p>Social workers in this area help people with disabilities to adjust and to lead productive lives. Volunteer at camps for people with disabilities, daycares, schools, or hospitals to gain experience.</p>

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

<p>Humanitarian Services Advocacy Education Wellness Promotion Development: Economic and Community Disaster/Disease Relief Volunteer Coordination Program Administration Clinical Practice Policy Development Research</p>	<p>International Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) such as United Nations Economic and Social Council and the World Health Organization International Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) Federal government agencies with an international focus, e.g. Peace Corps and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Country-based service agencies International aid and relief organizations Foundation programs Nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations, .e.g Vital Voices or Habitat for Humanity Private voluntary organizations Humanitarian organizations, e.g. International Red Cross and CARE Religious organizations, e.g. World Vision Multi-national corporations</p>	<p>Social workers in the international arena identify social problems, make recommendations for social programs and implement change. They work on solutions to problems including educational, environmental, health, human rights injustices, business and agricultural. Learn one or more foreign languages. Plan to study, volunteer, or intern abroad more than one time if possible. Seek cultural experiences on campus and get involved with the international student population. Join relevant student organizations such as Amnesty International and gain leadership roles. Participate in an international service learning experience or go on a mission trip. Learn about federal job hiring procedures, and apply for a government internship to increase chances of finding a full-time position. Research the international organization's/agency's structure and function. Develop good working knowledge of international humanitarian law. Demonstrate your depth of dedication, willingness to adapt, and coping mechanisms to combat stress and difficult situations. Develop skills in the areas of organizing groups, efficiency, and the ability to calm people. Consider earning a graduate degree in Social Work or related area to open more advanced job opportunities.</p>
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GENERAL INFORMATION

- Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) prepares individuals for entry-level direct practice.
 - Master of Social Work (MSW) is necessary to provide therapy and for advancement to supervisory or administrative positions.
 - Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required for positions in teaching, research, and administration. Advanced degrees are desirable for some clinical positions and private practice.
 - Complete a degree from a college or university program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Programs include practical field experience.
 - Most states require licensure, certification, or registration.
 - The National Association of Social Workers offers many specialized credentials that Social Workers can earn. Research these options after choosing a speciality area.
 - The field practicum is used to determine suitability for this profession and to provide exposure to various practice settings and clients.
 - Candidates should possess empathy for others, an appreciation for diversity, and an interest in social change.
 - Social workers serve a range of client systems (individuals, families, groups, communities) as they attempt to enhance social functioning.
 - Social work is unique given its dual focus on the person and the environment.
 - Join a social work organization while in school and seek leadership positions.
 - Look for ways to impact your community and get involved with local organizations and issues.
 - Update your resume as you acquire new accomplishments, skills, knowledge, and interests.
 - Learn a second language to better communicate with immigrant or migrant populations (particularly helpful in certain areas of the United States).
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- Note: Much of this information was adapted from Choices: Careers in Social Work by the National Association of Social Workers.