CWEB Information Handbook
2006-2007

Social Work Education
for
Child Welfare Practice in Pennsylvania

Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates
School of Social Work
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
# CWEB STUDENT HANDBOOK

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I. INTRODUCTION and WELCOME

Welcome to the CWEB program. Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) is a child welfare education program which is governed by federal Title IV-E regulations and is implemented through a cooperative effort among the United States Administration for Children and Families, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and fourteen undergraduate social work programs in Pennsylvania that are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The following academic and work requirements are necessary for maintaining compliance with state, federal and university regulations. Certain procedural guidelines are also necessary to help assure we are able to serve you efficiently.

The CWEB program is designed to recruit and enroll upper class undergraduate students in Council on Social Work Education accredited programs in Pennsylvania with a child welfare emphasis. As a student in the CWEB program you will complete child welfare coursework, fieldwork and competency based training; make any necessary civil service applications; and prepare for immediate employment into a county child welfare agency upon graduation. The purposes of this program are to (1) strengthen services to Title IV-E children and families in Pennsylvania; (2) recruit new workers for public child welfare in Pennsylvania from among upper class university students; (3) provide a child welfare focused undergraduate social work major at widely dispersed locations throughout Pennsylvania; (4) assist in addressing the vacancy and turnover rates among public child welfare employees and the recruitment and retention problems in Pennsylvania; and (5) contribute to the development of an educational and professional career ladder for child welfare workers in Pennsylvania.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. The CWEB Academic Coordinator is:

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Our toll-free phone number is: 1 (866) 275-2935.
II. APPLICATION

An application for the CWEB program can be obtained from the director of your social work program at one of the 14 programs eligible for participation, by calling the CWEB toll-free number or on the web at http://www.pitt/~pittssw/Cwel/cweb.html. Please fill out your application as clearly and neatly as possible, giving careful attention to your e-mail address; if possible, type your application. Note that you need to send your résumé with the application. Also, your social work program faculty will need to complete a recommendation and send a copy of your transcripts for you to participate in the program. Additionally, a two to three paragraph essay on your interest in child welfare is required. Should you change your address, phone number or e-mail address, you must notify the CWEB program immediately.

Processing your application:

Once the program has received your application, it will be reviewed by the CWEB faculty. If approved for admission, a contract will be prepared and additional information will be requested, including the following:

- **Social Security Card** – If you do not have your original Social Security card, you must make an application for a replacement card. You may send CWEB a photocopy of the receipt showing you have made application as temporary proof of a card. However, as we must have a photocopy of your signed card on file, you **must** send us a photocopy once you receive your new card.
- **Driver’s License** – Following standard federal employment practices, we must have a photocopy of your driver’s license for identification purposes.
- **Employment Verification (I-9) Form** – This standard federal form is required by the United States government before you can be added to the payroll.
- **Demographic Data Sheet** – This form allows us to report the makeup of our program’s participants.
- **Direct Deposit Information** – Most students receive the stipend by direct bank deposit. To receive your payments this way, send a voided check (accomplished by writing “void” across a blank check) for the account in which you wish to have your stipend deposited. If you plan to use a savings account, you may send a personalized, voided deposit slip. This must be a slip issued by your bank with your name, address and account information printed on it. A receipt from a deposit or ATM transaction is not acceptable. If you do not wish to receive your stipend via direct deposit, we will mail a paper check to you at the end of each month. However, as postal delivery time and reliability varies, we strongly recommend the direct deposit option for timely receipt of funds.

**These items must be returned before any CWEB payments can be made.** Once you receive this request in the mail, you will have **two weeks** to return all items to the CWEB office.
III. CONTRACT

When you are accepted into the program, you will receive a contract delineating the details of the program and your personal responsibilities and obligations under this legal agreement. You will receive three (3) copies of the contract. Sign each copy in front of a witness, have the witness also sign the contract in the space provided, and return two (2) signed copies to Dr. Cynthia Bradley-Pugh, the CWEB Coordinator. The third copy is for your records. Your witness does not need to be a notary public, but should be a responsible adult of legal age who knows you well and who will always know where to find you. Once a contract is returned, we will arrange for payment of your tuition and stipend.

IV. TUITION AND STIPEND PAYMENTS

Tuition and Fee Payment

Your university knows that the CWEB program covers your tuition and fees. You will still receive a bill each semester from your university, even though you are obtaining Title IV-E educational funds. We work closely with the contact person at each school regarding invoices and payments. Please note that each of the 14 schools has a different billing procedure. Most schools do not submit invoices until after the drop/add period. CWEB will pay your university directly. Tuition for the state universities is reimbursed at the in-state rate for all students.

Please keep in mind that we are dealing with large, complex university systems. The payment process is not automatic, and it takes an average of one month to process payments and credit accounts after final invoices have been received. The CWEB office will process invoices as rapidly as possible.

If you are a student at the University of Pittsburgh you must deliver your bill directly to Cynthia Bradley-Pugh, PhD, CWEB Coordinator, 2302 Cathedral of Learning, so that your payment can be made. We must receive your actual bill. There is no other way that we can make a payment for you without an original invoice. Invoices must be received at least one week prior to the due date. Pitt students are responsible for late fees, which are incurred if the CWEB office has not received invoices within this time frame.

Stipend Payments

You will receive stipend payments for each semester for which you are entitled to tuition payment. Your payment will be $680.00 for four months for each semester, a total of eight payments. Students who complete the Pennsylvania Civil Service Social Casework Internship and the 975 hours of placement it requires prior to graduation will receive a bonus stipend payment of $1560.00. Additional stipend payments will be processed the month following verification of completion of the 975 hours. Students at a few universities may have a slightly altered payment schedule based upon their internship schedule. Students utilizing the direct deposit system will receive stipend payments on the last working day of the month. Students opting out of direct deposit will receive their check in the mail sometime thereafter. In order for your stipend payment to be processed you must submit all of the items listed in section II above and a fully signed contract in a timely manner.
V.  INTERNSHIP AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Internship

Your fieldwork placement must be in a public (county) child welfare agency in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Your social work program will make the placement assignment. Field placement policies and procedures are based on the requirements for individual social work programs. You must complete a minimum of 400 internship clock hours, but you may complete as many as 975 clock hours of placement. As a CWEB student, you will have several options for the completion of your placement that will help you with your CWEB employment commitment.

A. Enroll as a Pennsylvania Civil Service County Social Casework Intern. To qualify, you must be enrolled as a full-time student with second semester junior standing, have satisfactorily completed at least fifteen (15) credit hours in sociology, social work/social welfare, psychology, or other related social sciences, and complete a two-part application to the State Civil Service Commission in Harrisburg. You need not be a legal Pennsylvania resident for either this Civil Service classification or to participate in the CWEB program. You will not be required to take a civil service examination. Applications are available from any State Civil Service office, from the CWEB office and from most universities participating in the program. Students who anticipate meeting the minimum requirements by the end of their junior year may apply. Counties will be able to appoint students to this official civil service position once the student receives a passing score based upon the written application. Though 975 clock hours of internship are required to complete the County Social Casework Intern program requirements, this can normally be accomplished between the end of the junior year and your graduation. Since completion of the 975 hours is not required for graduation from any of the participating universities, the hours can be completed after graduation if necessary; however, the student will not be eligible for additional payment after graduation.

There are a number of advantages to this arrangement.

1. Students will receive a larger stipend.
2. Those who complete the program can be appointed as a Case Worker II immediately without having to take a civil service examination.
3. Students will be much better prepared for child welfare practice and highly attractive to county agencies as employees.
4. Students will have the opportunity to complete much of the “core training” all Pennsylvania agencies require before being certified as child welfare caseworkers.

Your social work advisor and the CWEB staff can help you with this process.

The CWEB program strongly recommends this option.
B. Complete less than 975 hours and not participate in the State Civil Service Social Casework Intern program. If you select this option, you must take the Civil Service Exam for employment as a Social Caseworker I or II in one of the counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. You may take this exam 7 months prior to graduation. If you choose this option, we encourage you to take the examination at the earliest possible date to assure employment within sixty (60) days of graduation as required.

Whichever option you choose, your school field placement must be in a public (county) child welfare agency.

Child Welfare Course Requirement

All CWEB students must complete a child welfare course approved by their social work program. Each social work program designates this course for CWEB students. Your academic advisor can help you meet this course requirement. You will be reimbursed up to $85.00 for books and supplies for this course. For reimbursement, the CWEB program will need original receipts and completion of a Travel and Business Expense Request form. A sample form and instructions for completion are included in this manual.

VI. REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES

Students are allocated $85.00 for books and supplies for the child welfare course only. Field work and/or seminars do not qualify for the book/supply allotment. Students must purchase their books and supplies themselves and then submit reimbursement requests to CWEB. Supplies can include pens, notebooks, photocopies, printer paper, printer ink cartridges, computer disks, etc.

Original receipts are needed for reimbursement and must show the name of the vendor and the items purchased. Please make sure to request a receipt and save your receipts. Receipts must show the date of purchase in addition to the amount paid.

- Reimbursement requests for books and supplies must be submitted using University of Pittsburgh Travel and Business Expense (T & B) forms. Requests must be submitted at least six (6) weeks before the end of the term, and never later than May 30 each year (for any summer study).

- Late submissions for reimbursement have particular ramifications when crossing over a fiscal year. Please be advised that CWEB funds run from July 1 to June 30 each year. Submissions for expenses from a previous fiscal year cannot be honored once a new fiscal year has begun and the prior year's funds have been closed out. Don't find yourself absorbing expenses that could have been covered if submissions had been made on time!
Expenses for books/supplies are noted in the MISC* column on the T & B form. **If you have multiple expenses on the same day, enter the total amount you spent on these miscellaneous items in that column.** On the reverse side of the T & B form you must itemize these expenses individually and note an explanation for each. A sample form is attached.

Keep in mind that nothing over your total book/supply amount available can be reimbursed. Track your book account!

The CWEB program cannot reimburse students for the following expenses which may occur during the course of undergraduate studies:

- Application fee for any civil service examination.
- Any miscellaneous items such as backpacks, school clothing, cap and gown, or graduation announcements.
- Book/supply funds can not be used for large equipment purchases (e.g., computers).

**Please be sure to sign your submissions in the lower left corner of the front side.** Your rough draft is kept on file for auditing purposes, so having your signature on the form(s) is required. Unsigned reimbursement requests will be returned to the student for signature.

T & B reports are entered on-line by our administrative staff after they are approved. This saves time on our end, and also assures you the most prompt payment possible.

Remember to keep a copy of your T & B submissions and your receipts. Send your original submissions to Dr. Cynthia Bradley-Pugh.

Keep in mind that it takes anywhere between four and six weeks from the time we authorize your reimbursement request until you receive a check from the University of Pittsburgh. Reimbursement checks are processed by the University, not the CWEB program. We must go through our own university system to access CWEB funds.

**VII. EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT AND RECOUPMENT OF FUNDS**

All students are required to sign a legally binding contract requiring them to secure employment in a Pennsylvania public child welfare agency within sixty days after graduation. Employment may be in the agency at which you have completed your internship, but may be at any other Pennsylvania county agency willing to offer you employment. This provision is a strict requirement.

Additionally, all students who accept any CWEB funds will be contractually obligated to maintain their employment for one full calendar year. This requirement is not negotiable. Upon graduation, you will receive a letter from CWEB listing your commitment dates and obligations. **Students who fail to complete the field placement requirement, graduate from the social work program or to fulfill their commitment by accepting employment within a public**
child welfare agency in Pennsylvania and remaining there for one calendar year are obligated to repay the full amount of all tuition, fees, stipends and book/supply expenses paid to the student or on the student’s behalf during their enrollment in the CWEB program.

VIII. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The CWEB program, in consultation with participating county agencies, academic program partners, graduates, and current students, conducts an annual program evaluation and reports to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. The evaluation includes data on the success of recruitment, program completion, and retention efforts, as well as student employer, and school satisfaction.

Your input is needed to evaluate the CWEB program. We are most interested in feedback from our students and use that information to help assure future funding. Each year you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire. A high return rate is needed in order to effectively evaluate the program and to provide valid and reliable information to our state and federal regulators. Please take the time to complete and return your questionnaire each year. Your feedback makes a difference and has an impact upon the program.
IX. CWEB PROGRAM PERSONNEL

The following faculty and staff of the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work administer the CWEB program. The toll-free phone number for all CWEB faculty and staff is 1(866) 275-2935.

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