

SOCIAL WORK

What can I do with this degree?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES

PUBLIC WELFARE

Administration and Planning
Case Management
Program Evaluation
Policy Setting
Research

Public welfare agencies
Private social service agencies

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.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE/CORRECTIONS

Counseling/Therapy
Rehabilitation
Probation
Parole
Youth Services
Victim Assistance

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

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.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

Clinical Social Work
Pupil Personnel Services

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

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

Gain experience with children at daycare centers, camps, or Scouts.

CHILD WELFARE

Case Management
Advocacy
Intervention

Public/private child welfare agencies
Adoption agencies
Foster care organizations
Child daycare

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.

GERONTOLOGY

Advocacy/Intervention
Counseling
Case Management
Programming
Public Policy

Hospitals
Nursing homes
Senior centers

Gerontology involves working with older adults, healthy or ill, and their families.

Get involved with programs/organizations designed for senior citizens.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES
<u>CLINICAL</u> Counseling Therapy	Community mental health centers Psychiatric hospitals Residential and day treatment hospitals Employment assistance programs Schools Family service agencies Private practice	Clinical social workers are found in a variety of settings that provide therapeutic counseling to clients. MSW is required.
<u>ADMINISTRATION</u> Management Policy Development Planning	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	Administrators are involved with planning, budgeting, public relations, operations management, fund raising and other crucial responsibilities that keep an organization functioning. Obtain an MSW and gain management experience.
<u>RESEARCH AND EDUCATION</u> Research Teaching	Colleges and universities Research institutes Local, state and federal government Advocacy organizations Colleges and universities	Research provides data and statistics important in program implementation and policy development. DSW or Ph.D. usually required.
<u>OCCUPATIONAL</u> Counseling Educating Wellness Promotion Employee Assistance Organizational Development Human Resources	Businesses Corporations Employee assistance programs Labor unions	Occupational social workers help employees to be more productive and satisfied.
<u>DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</u> Case Management Program Planning and Evaluation Research Policy Development	Community residential homes State and local agencies Medical facilities Schools	Social workers in this area help people with disabilities to adjust and to lead productive lives. Volunteer at special needs camps, daycares, schools or hospitals to gain experience.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES

HEALTH CARE

Case Management
Counseling
Program Development
Administration
Research

Hospitals
Community health centers
Outpatient clinics
Public health programs
Health maintenance organizations (HMOs)
Nursing homes
Group homes
Hospice
Veterans Administration hospitals

Social workers in health care facilitate medical and emotional treatment of patients.
Choose volunteer settings such as hospitals, the American Red Cross, or AIDS agencies to get experience.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Program and Community Development
Advocacy
Politics
Education
Planning

Advocacy organizations
Development corporations
Community centers
Local, state, federal government
Associations

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.

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/administrative positions.
- Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required for positions in teaching, research, and administration. Desirable for some clinical positions and private practice.
- Must 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 field practicum is used to determine suitability for this profession and to provide exposure to various practice settings/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.
- Note: A large amount of this information was adapted from [Choices: Careers in Social Work](#) by the National Association of Social Workers.