

Overview of Employment-Based Placements

What is an employment-based placement?

An employment-based placement is an internship at your place of employment where there are designated hours for your internship separate from your hours of employment. The placement must offer different learning opportunities, and also a different supervisor who is designated for practicum learning purposes only. Practicum education is a fundamental component of social work education; it provides the opportunity to integrate classroom knowledge and practice. It is very important that an employment-based placement not be viewed as a job but as a learning experience providing a setting for the acquisition of knowledge and skills and a professional social work identity. **A placement arranged in the student's employing organization is the exception rather than the norm.** Employment-based placements allow students to complete a required internship while remaining employed.

What is the process for getting an employment-based placement approved?

These placements are approved when it is determined that new knowledge and skills can be achieved in the student's workplace. Arrangement and approval of employment-based placements require the participation of the student/employee, job supervisor, an agency administrator, potential Practicum Instructor, and the Practicum Education Department. Extra attention is necessary to assure that the planned placement meets all of the school's requirements and learning objectives and does not duplicate current job tasks and responsibilities.

The student/employee must be allowed the time and opportunity to become involved in discrete learning activities with specific learning objectives, which are related to the school's learning objectives. Structural changes will likely be necessary to protect the learning environment from employment demands. For example, a student may be an employee for two days and a student for three days. The student must have a qualified Practicum Instructor who meets all of the criteria of the school and is not the student's current supervisor.

Who can serve as a Practicum Instructor?

The Practicum Instructor must have an LICSW, and must have completed (or be willing to register for) the Seminar in Practicum Instruction (SIPI), a supervision seminar offered by the School. On occasion, if an LICSW is not available, other licenses may be considered if approved by the Practicum Education Department. Discuss with your Faculty Placement Advisor in advance of submitting the application. The Practicum Instructor must also agree to supervise the student for one hour a week and review weekly Process Recordings, complete Evaluations, and participate in site visits. The Practicum Instructor cannot be the student's job supervisor. If the agency does not have a qualified Practicum Instructor on staff they may look to other

qualified social workers associated with the agency such as contract staff, volunteers, or board members. If an off-site supervisor is selected, the student should have an on-site task supervisor who, again, is not the supervisor for the employment portion of the experience.

What are the benefits of an employment-based placement?

Because the student/employee already knows and is oriented to the agency, the learning curve may not be as steep at the start of placement. The student/employee brings new learning back to the agency from the school which can enhance agency practice. The agency demonstrates commitment to professional development and retains a quality employee and protects its investment in the employee.

What are the challenges of an employment-based placement?

It can be difficult to maintain the separation of student and employee roles. It can be challenging for the student, and fellow staff, to navigate the shifting roles the student/employee occupies. A disruption in a student's job may also disrupt placement and vice versa.

What are the optimal conditions for an employment-based placement?

The most successful employment-based placements are in agencies that are supportive of social work education and workforce development, and large enough to accommodate the student's/employee's current job and a different setting for their placement. employment-based placements work best when the agency is committed to retaining the student and the student has been employed in the agency for a significant length of time (preferably more than 2 years) and has demonstrated a commitment to the agency.

APPLICATION INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYMENT-BASED PLACEMENT AGENCY AGREEMENT AY'2024-2025

Application Process

Students must meet with a Faculty Placement Advisor in the Practicum Education Department during the placement process to discuss the feasibility of an employment-based placement. Once discussed, the student will email the completed application to their Faculty Placement Advisor by the due dates outlined. Students should include a copy of the proposed Practicum Instructor's resume with the application. Or, students should request the proposed Practicum Instructor email the resume directly to the student's Faculty Placement Advisor.

Application Checklist

Before proceeding, students must review the following checklist for eligibility.

- Students must be in good academic standing. The student should not be a probationary employee or the subject of disciplinary action within the agency.
 The identified Practicum Instructor must be an LICSW* who is not currently the employee supervisor for the student and has not previously supervised the student. The Practicum Instructor must complete the [Practicum Instructor Profile online](#).

**On occasion, if an LICSW is not available, other licenses may be considered if approved by the Practicum Education Department. Discuss with your Faculty Placement Advisor in advance of submitting the application.*

- The Practicum Instructor must agree to provide a minimum of 1 hour of individual supervision each week. They must have an educational focus and incorporate process recordings as a learning tool. Group supervision is encouraged; however, it cannot replace the required one hour of clinical supervision/practicum instruction.
- The Practicum Instructor should attend an Orientation offered by the Simmons University School of Social Work in late August/early September. If not previously completed, the Practicum Instructor must also participate in a [Seminar in Practicum instruction \(SIPI\) series](#) during the upcoming academic year and download and review the Simmons Campus-Based [Practicum Education Manual](#).
- The student must be assigned to a different department or program from student's job and have the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills in new methods, modalities, interventions, and populations. The student cannot provide the same services to the

same clients that they are serving in the role of employee and the role of intern during the internship.

5. The student's educational goals should be the primary focus of the internship position.
6. Only one employment-based placement is allowed unless the student is a participant in an approved Simmons Educational partnership or has had prior approval from the Practicum Education Department.

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT-BASED PLACEMENT

DUE DATES:

- **April 1, 2024** deadline for Specialized Year (YR II) applicants and Extended Generalist Year (YR I) applicants
- **May 1, 2024** deadline for Generalist Year (YR I) applicants

Students should submit the completed application to their Faculty Placement Advisor. This is the Practicum Faculty member you met with during the placement process.

APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL UNTIL IT IS COMPLETED IN FULL

Student Name: _____

Employer: _____

Employer Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Agency Website: _____

Simmons Email: _____

CURRENT JOB: _____

How long have you been employed by this organization? _____

Have you satisfied your probationary period? _____

If applicable describe other positions held in this organization:

Briefly describe your current work duties below: Identify current title/position population served and interventions utilized.

CURRENT WORK SUPERVISOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Unit Name: _____

NAME OF PROPOSED PLACEMENT AND NAME OF PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT:

Physical Address: _____

Specify how proposed internship activities will differ from current/regular work responsibilities. Be specific when responding to the following prompts.

Proposed learning activities:

Describe what different intervention methods you will utilize?

If applicable, describe how the placement will entail work with a different population:
Who will be providing practicum instruction/supervision for the proposed internship?

Is the proposed Practicum Instructor a different supervisor than the work supervisor?

- Yes
- No

PROPOSED PRACTICUM INSTRUCTOR

Name: _____

Unit/Program Name: _____

Title: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

School and year MSW earned: _____

Does the Proposed Practicum Instructor have an LICSW?

- Yes (LICSW #: _____)
- No:

If no, when do you plan to take the examination?

Does the Proposed Practicum Instructor have additional certifications/licenses? (e.g. LCSW, SAC, etc.)

Has the Proposed Practicum Instructor completed a Seminar in Practicum Instruction (SIPI) for new Practicum Instructors?

- Yes (Name of school and year: _____)
- No

Note:

Practicum Instructor is required to submit the [Practicum Instructor Profile](#) form, and submit a resume.

PROPOSED WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

Specify planned hours in placement, work, and classes at Simmons University. Complete each section with specific times/hours, a check mark is not sufficient.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Placement							
Work							
Classes							

Typical placements start in September and end in May.*

- Year I placement days are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday for a total of 24 hours.
- Year II placement days are Monday and Thursday plus a 3rd day (excluding Tuesday) for a total of 24 hours.

* Some students request a 16 hour/week placement. These placements start in September and end the first week of August.

PLACEMENT HOURS WILL BE (CHECK THE OPTION BELOW):

- Paid by the agency/employer
- Over and above paid hours
- A combination of paid/unpaid time

**EMPLOYMENT-BASED PLACEMENT AGENCY AGREEMENT
(To be reviewed and signed by all parties)**

We have discussed the use of (Agency and Department/Unit)

_____ for (Student/Employee)
_____ as a Simmons School of Social Work
placement site during the 2024-2025 academic year. We agree that it is a feasible plan for this student/employee to complete an employment-based placement. The student will be released from regular work duties for 24-hrs/week, September-May (or 16-hrs/week; September-August, if approved) to fully attend to the internship. The student's internship time will focus on learning, not on the work demands of the agency. The Practicum Instructor/supervisor will be allowed adequate time to: attend to the student's supervision; attend the Orientation to Practicum Instruction at Simmons University School of Social Work; attend a Seminar in Practicum Instruction series (if needed); and other internship-related matters. The School's expectations can be met within this agency (for details, please refer to the attached Policy for Employment-Based Placement and the [Practicum Education Manual](#).)

REQUIRED SIGNATURES:

Agency/Program Director Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print name of Agency Director: _____

Email: _____

Phone _____

Student's Current Work Supervisor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name of Current Work Supervisor: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Student's Proposed Practicum Instructor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print name of Proposed Practicum Instructor: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Simmons Faculty Placement Advisor Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date Approved: _____

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Placement Faculty Advisor or the Practicum Education Department at sswogpracticum@simmons.edu or 617-521-3943.