

Social Work Core Competencies

Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- Manage personal and professional value conflicts and effective reactions;
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior; and
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes.

Competency 2 – Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice

Competency 3 – Engage Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Practice

- demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and
- demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

Competency 4 – Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and
- Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice

- Use social justice, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lenses to assess how social welfare policies affect the delivery of and access to social services; and
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 6 – Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Competency 7 – Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- 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; and

- demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing mutually agreed-on goals.

Competency 8 – Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidenced-informed interventions to achieve mutually agreed-on plans and increase the capacities of clients and constituencies; and
- incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate, with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.

Competency 9 – Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- select and use culturally appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.