

**University of Tennessee College of Social Work
BSSW Program**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK IN THE FIELD PRACTICUM

This document is designed to inform you of the potential risks associated with the field practicum. It is the BSSW Program's belief that you have a right to be informed of risks associated with this aspect of your educational and professional preparation and that with proper knowledge and preparation, risks can be minimized.

1. **Liability insurance.** Students are required to carry professional liability insurance. Every student must pay \$27.00 for malpractice coverage that is offered through the university before entering first year field and again before entering second year field. This policy provides \$1,000,000. per claim and \$5,000,000. per annual aggregate per student.

An important aspect of professional practice is knowing the limits of your knowledge and skills and avoiding helping situations that are not in your area of competence. Whenever you have a question about the handling of a particular case and whether or not a given intervention is appropriate, see your field instructor.

2. **Automobile liability insurance.** If you will be using your personal vehicle in field, it is recommended that you check with your insurance company for a clear understanding of your coverage. Ask specifically what coverage you have if something happens while transporting a client. Check with your field instructor to find out if the agency provides coverage for you if you use your vehicle to transport clients. Many agencies consider students "volunteers" and this allows them to provide some coverage through policies for volunteers. Whenever possible, use an agency vehicle to transport clients.
3. **Personal Safety.** You may encounter risks to your personal safety during the field practicum when dealing with angry or hostile clients making home visits, or being exposed to clients who have an infectious disease. It is important to learn what you can do to minimize the risks to your personal safety. Personal safety training is provided by the BSSW Program prior to beginning field practice. It is important that all students attend. You need to discuss personal safety issues with your field instructor early in the practicum so you can be informed of agency policies and procedures and any recommended courses of action.
4. **TB skin test.** The prevalence of TB in society has seen an increase in recent years. If you anticipate a field practicum setting that serves populations at risk for TB, it is recommended that you take this test prior to entering the field. Some settings may require this test. You can get this test through the student health clinic for no charge if you are a full time student.
5. **Hepatitis B vaccine.** If you anticipate a placement setting where there is the chance of being exposed to blood-borne pathogens, it is recommended that you get this vaccination. This involves a series of three injections over a six month period of time. The second injection is given one month following the first with the third coming five months later. You can obtain this series of injections through the student health center for a fee.

I have read the above and understand that the field practicum does present some risks. I also understand that prudent choices and exercising caution can minimize these risks. I further recognize that it is my responsibility to become informed of agency policy and practices regarding the above situations.

Student

Date

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