

Employee Educational Work Release Program (EEWRP)

Management Directive, 26-03 | Date: 10/05/2026

Overview

This Management Directive provides protocol and guidance for the implementation of the Employee Educational Work Release Program (EEWRP). It applies to all staff of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services who seek to participate in the program.

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Version Summary

This is a new management directive that outlines the eligibility criteria and provides guidelines for participation in EEWRP.

POLICY

Statement of Purpose

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) encourages and supports the professional development of staff by assisting eligible employees to participate in part-time educational pursuits that relate to Public Child Welfare.

Educational pursuits, for purposes of this Policy, are defined as practicum placement internships that are required as part of the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW)/Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) senior year practicum or Master of Social Work (MSW) from an accredited program that prepares social work students for careers in Public Child Welfare.

Participation in EEWRP requires employees to attend a BASW/BSW or MSW program that is part-time, locally based and has an enacted agreement with DCFS, as per the Los Angeles (LA) County Board of Supervisor's motion #21, dated June 26, 2012.

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Program Description

EEWRP is designed to support employees enrolled in part-time accredited social work programs to complete the university's practicum education requirements.

Part-time MSW programs are generally three (3) year programs requiring educational practicum placement internships during the last two (2) academic years. In BASW/BSW programs, an educational practicum placement internship is required during the senior year.

Participation in EEWRP is through an application process and requires management approval.

EEWRP allows employees to be released from their current work assignment and location for a specific number of hours each week (work release), to participate in a practicum placement internship on paid County time, as part of their regular work week.

- The total combined hours (including internship and work assignment) for employees participating in EEWPR is forty (40) hours per week.
 - All policies related to overtime apply, including the [requirement of obtaining pre-approval for overtime](#) when conducting non-urgent business outside of an employee's scheduled work hours.
- Employees may utilize work release to participate in practicum placement internship for up to eight (8) hours per day and twenty (20) hours per week with the approval of the Regional Administrator/Division Chief and Deputy Director.
- Internship hours should be approved based on the university's program requirements.
 - Exceptions can be made based on operational need and/or administration's discretion.
- If an employee goes on an [extended leave](#), the employee's direct supervisor shall notify the EEWPR Coordinator immediately.

The hours authorized under EEWPR are strictly for participation in the practicum placement internship. They are not for the purpose of completing other school-related activities such as, but not limited to the following:

- Class attendance
- Travel time
- Registration
- Study time
- Thesis research

Furthermore, EEWPR participants are reminded of their responsibility to stay up to date with the [County Policy of Equity \(CPOE\) training requirements](#) and to [report](#) any incidents that involve violations of the CPOE or other County policies and procedures.

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Eligibility Criteria and Requirements

To participate in EEWPR, employees must:

- Have permanent employment status and work full-time.
- Be employed by DCFS for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to beginning internship.
- Show satisfactory work performance for the past two (2) years and be in good academic standing.
- Show verification of enrollment in an accredited social work part-time program that is locally based and offers in-person instruction.

- Be enrolled in a university with a current affiliated agreement on file with LA County DCFS.

In addition:

- Employees who do not hold a CSW position (or above) must pass an interview and obtain any necessary background clearances required by the County to participate in a practicum placement internship at a DCFS location.
- Employees approved under EEWRP must work a 5/40 work schedule.
- Employees assigned to Emergency Response (ER) units may opt to remain in ER at the discretion of their management team.
- Employees on an [extended leave of absence](#) while approved to participate in EEWRP are required to obtain approval to continue participating in EEWRP upon their return to work.

The Department will consider staffing needs and the overall workload impact to determine whether to approve an employee's request for participation in EEWRP.

Each year, the Regional Administrator/Division Chief (RA/DC) has discretion to approve participation in EEWRP for up to three percent (3%) of their CSW staff and up to three percent (3%) of other job classifications.

- The RA/DC may approve additional staff at their discretion.

The RA/DC shall consider the following to determine the number of employees who may be approved for EEWRP:

- Staffing needs and the overall workload impact
- The total number of employees that will meet the work release allocation
- Prioritize approval for current first-year EEWRP participants reapplying for their second year of EEWRP participation. Determine the remaining number of employees who may be considered for EEWRP approval.
 - Priority should be given to employees who submitted their notification of acceptance within thirty (30) days of being accepted to the program.
 - If necessary, consider DCFS seniority when approving staff for EEWRP, then office seniority.

Work release under the program is granted for one (1) academic year and may be renewed for an additional academic year, provided the employee:

- Maintains an overall Performance Evaluation rating of 'Competent' or higher; and
- Maintains compliance with Departmental conduct standards; and
- Maintains satisfactory academic performance, which is defined as earning passing grades in all coursework and meeting the university's standards for continued enrollment.

Management may rescind approval for participation in EEWRP at any time based on the employee's unsatisfactory work performance. Unsatisfactory work performance includes, but is not limited to, receiving an overall Performance Evaluation rating below 'Competent,' or failure to comply with Departmental performance or conduct standards.

EEWRP participation is specific to an employee's office assignment and duties at the time of RA/DC approval.

- If the employee obtains a promotion or another assignment within the office, the RA/DC has discretion to maintain or rescind approval of EEWRP participation.
- If the employee obtains a transfer or promotion to a different office or program, it is incumbent upon the employee to inquire and obtain authorization from the new administration to continue participation in EEWRP.

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Internal Appeal Process

If an employee is not approved for EEWRP, they can submit an appeal within ten (10) business days of receiving the denial letter.

With the appeal, the employee should submit the original application for EEWRP with a written statement to the designated Deputy Director, explaining the basis for the appeal.

Upon receiving the appeal, the Deputy Director will review the appeal and make a decision within ten (10) business days from receipt of the appeal. The Deputy Director will notify the employee, the employee's administration, and the Professional Advancement Section in writing on DCFS Letterhead of the outcome of the employee's appeal.

The Deputy Director's decision is final.

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Timecard Coding and Internship Hours

Employees are responsible for accurately recording the number of hours of participation in practicum placement internship and regular work assignment on eCAPS using the appropriate codes.

Any time off taken for practicum placement, for any reason, must be reported to the respective DCFS supervisor and coded accordingly on eCAPS.

As part of DCFS's required time-reporting structure, Code 023 is the designated eCAPS code used specifically to record practicum placement internship hours. Practicum hours may only be recorded using Code 023 after the employee has received the official Approval Memo issued by the Professional Advancement Program Manager.

In addition:

- When not participating in a practicum placement (i.e., school break), employees must return to their regular work assignment and complete their regular 40-hour work week

- Employees on leave from their regular work assignment may not attend their practicum placement internship on paid County time.
- A new application packet is required for employees to participate in EEWRP after returning from an [extended leave of absence](#)

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Caseload Reduction

Employees with caseload requirements at their regular DCFS assignment will have their caseload reduced proportionately to the number of hours the employee is on work release. The reduction should be based on the union-negotiated yardstick caseload limits for the employee's assigned program.

Absent exigent circumstances, the caseload for employees shall be reduced by:

- Forty percent (40%) for employees in practicum placement sixteen (16) hours per week
- Fifty percent (50%) for employees in practicum placement twenty (20) hours per week.

Employees on work release may not be called back to work on caseload assignments during practicum placement hours.

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MSW Program

First Year

Employees enrolled in MSW programs and approved to participate in EEWRP will spend the first (1st) year of their practicum placement in an agency selected by their university. Employees are reminded that they must adhere to the County's conflict of interest policies when participating in practicum placement internships outside of DCFS.

"At no time are DCFS employees to engage in practices where there exists a reasonable possibility that the employee's outside activities may be incompatible with or create a conflict of interest as a result of their employment with DCFS" ([HL - L.A. Co. Personnel Manual \[issued 5-25-2016\] Chapter 8.300](#)).

Second Year

Employees enrolled in MSW programs will perform the second (2nd) year practicum placement within DCFS.

- The assignment will be at a DCFS location other than the employee's usual work site and in a program different from the employee's regular work assignment.
- Employees who do not currently hold the title of CSW or higher complete an internship in direct practice.
- Employees who currently hold the title of CSW or higher participate in a macro social work internship.

Continuous MSW Program

A “Continuous MSW Program” is a part-time MSW program that includes an internship that occurs outside of the traditional academic year (August – May). For example, an internship may begin in the fall of an academic year and continue through the end of summer. Employees who participate in EEWRP and are enrolled in a continuous program complete their internship at DCFS.

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BASW/BSW Program

Employees enrolled in BASW/BSW programs and approved for EEWRP must complete their practicum placements in a direct service capacity within DCFS at an appropriate site different from their regular work site.

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PROCEDURE

Employee’s Intent to Participate in EEWRP

Employee Responsibilities

1. Employees enrolled in a BASW/BSW program: Notify the corresponding Regional Administrator/Division Chief (RA/DC) in writing of their intent to apply for EEWRP for the senior year at the beginning of the junior year.
 - The notice must indicate the anticipated dates of participation and must include a copy of the acceptance letter from the university.
2. Employees pursuing an MSW: Notify the corresponding RA/DC in writing of their intent to apply for EEWRP within thirty (30) days of acceptance to an MSW program.
 - The notice must indicate the anticipated dates of participation and must include a copy of the acceptance letter from the university.

Regional Administrator/Division Chief (RA/DC) Responsibilities

1. Establish and maintain a tracking system to plan for employees’ participation in EEWRP utilizing the employees’ written notice of intent to participate in EEWRP.

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Requesting Approval to Participate in EEWRP

Employee Responsibilities

1. Email your Immediate Supervisor and RA/DC to request a letter of recommendation no less than thirty (30) days before the EEWRP deadline specified by the Professional Advancement Section (typically the end of March).
2. Submit a completed EEWRP application packet to RA/DC for approval thirty (30) days prior to the EEWRP deadline.

- a. Employees participating in a continuous internship must inform their Regional Administrator/Division Chief (RA/DC) that their internship will require participation outside of the traditional academic year and provide the expected dates of the internship.
 - b. Verify that the letter of recommendation provided by the RA/DC for the employee's approval of completing a continuous internship reflects their acknowledgment of the employee's internship schedule.
3. Upon receipt of approval from the RA/DC, submit the completed EEWRP application packet to the Professional Advancement Section [DCFS Release Time Inbox](#) by the EEWRP deadline.
 - Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
 - Submit a new EEWRP application packet request for each year of internship.

Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Ensure the employee meets the [eligibility criteria](#).
2. Write the Letter of Recommendation addressed to the Professional Advancement Section Manager within ten (10) business days from receipt of the employee's request, if appropriate.
3. Forward the Letter of Recommendation to the ARA for approval and signature.
4. Upon approval from ARA, forward letter to Employee.

Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA) Responsibilities

1. Ensure the employee meets the [eligibility criteria](#).
2. Review and sign the Letter of Recommendation within five (5) business days, if appropriate.
3. Return the Letter of Recommendation to the Immediate Supervisor.

Regional Administrator/Division Chief (RA/DC) Responsibilities

1. Review packet submitted by employee.
2. Consider the following to determine the number of employees that may be approved for EEWRP:
 - Staffing needs and the overall workload impact.
 - The total number of employees that will meet the work release allocation.
 - Prioritize the number of existing first (1st) year EEWRP participants who will reapply for EEWRP approval for their second (2nd) year practicum placement.
 - Determine the remaining number of employees who may be considered for EEWRP approval.

- Priority should be given to employees who submitted their notification of acceptance within 30 days of being accepted to the program.
 - If necessary, consider DCFS seniority when approving staff for EEWRP, then office seniority.
3. If approving EEWRP participation, draft an approval letter on DCFS Letterhead addressed to the Division Chief who oversees EEWRP. The letter shall be provided within ten (10) days of request receipt, and no later than the EEWRP deadline.
- Include the number of hours per week the employee is approved to participate in work release. (e.g., “The employee is approved to participate in their internship for 16 hours per week.”)
 - If the employee is enrolled in a continuous MSW program, the RA/DC letter shall include written acknowledgement of the employee’s internship schedule outside of the traditional academic year. (e.g., “The employee is approved to participate in internship from January through December.”)
 - Employees may be approved to participate in work release for up to eight (8) hours a day and either sixteen (16) or twenty (20) hours per week.
 - For employees attending a [Continuous MSW Program](#), document approval for the specified dates of internship in the body of the letter. [e.g. “The employee is approved to participate in their MSW internship from (start date) through (end date).”]
4. If denying EEWRP participation, provide a letter on DCFS Letterhead explaining the reason for the denial and informing the employee of their right to appeal.
- Provide notification via email within ten (10) business days of receipt of request for a letter of recommendation, but no later than the EEWRP deadline. For more information, refer to the [Internal Appeal Process](#).

Professional Advancement Section Responsibilities

1. The Professional Advancement Section will receive, review and track all applications.
2. The Professional Advancement Section Manager will forward the names of all qualified applicants to the Deputy Directors for final consideration.
3. The Professional Advancement Section will notify the employee of final EEWRP determination.
4. Upon notification an employee approved for EEWRP has returned from a [leave of absence](#), the Professional Advancement Section will work with the employee and all appropriate parties to determine if EEWRP approval shall continue.

Deputy Director Responsibilities

1. Review the list of EEWRP applicants provided by the Professional Advancement Section Manager and consider the applicants for EEWRP approval.
2. Notify the Professional Advancement Section Manager of the decision to approve or deny EEWRP participation by the deadline set by the Professional Advancement Section (generally mid-late May).

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Prior to Participating in EEWRP

Following preliminary approval, the Professional Advancement Section will forward the Professional Advancement B9-Agreement along with a request for additional information.

Employee Responsibilities

1. Sign the Professional Advancement Section EEWRP Agreement and forward it to the Immediate Supervisor for signature.
 - Submit the signed Professional Advancement Section EEWRP Agreement to the Professional Advancement Section, within five (5) business days of receipt from the Professional Advancement Section.
2. Return to a 5/40 schedule by completing and submitting a [5/40 Work Schedule Agreement](#) to your RA/DC for approval, if applicable.
3. If applicable, accept reassignment from Emergency Response (ER) services to Continuing Services (CS).
 - Management shall exercise discretion for planning the employees' transfer from ER to CS to consider transition time to a new job function.
 - Should an employee and RA mutually agree, the employee may remain in their current work assignment.

Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Review and sign the Professional Advancement Section EEWRP Agreement.
2. Return the signed agreement to the employee.

Regional Administrator/Division Chief Responsibilities (RA/DC) Responsibilities

1. Reduce the employee's caseload proportionate to the number of hours the employee is participating in the EEWRP based on the current union-negotiated yardstick caseload limits for the employee's assigned program.
2. Review and approve the 5/40 Work Schedule Agreement, if employee is on an alternate work schedule.
3. Consider transferring employees assigned to Emergency Response units to Continuing Services units; provide a reasonable transition period when possible.

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Timecard Coding During EEWRP Participation

Employee Responsibilities

1. Submit the EEWRP timesheet to Practicum Instructor for signature.
2. Upload the signed EEWRP timesheet into eCAPS.
3. Accurately record the number of hours of participation in practicum placement internship on eCAPS using the appropriate code 023.

Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Ensure that the employee's EEWRP Timesheet is signed by the Practicum Instructor and uploaded into eCAPS, prior to approving eCAPS.
2. If an employee participating in EEWRP goes on an [extended leave](#), notify the EEWRP Coordinator immediately.

DCFS Practicum Instructor Responsibilities

1. Review and sign the EEWRP Timesheet and return to the employee.

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Rescinding Employee's EEWRP Participation

Immediate Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Notify the employee of any concerns that may lead to the rescission of EEWRP.
2. Report any situations that may lead to the rescission of an employee's approval to participate in EEWRP to the ARA.

ARA Responsibilities

1. Report any situations that may lead to the rescission of an employee's approval to participate in EEWRP to the RA/DC.

Regional Administrator/Deputy Chief (RA/DC) Responsibilities

1. Report any situations that may lead to the rescission of an employee's approval to participate in EEWRP to the Professional Advancement Section Manager.
2. Consult (or designee on RA/DCs behalf) with the Professional Advancement Section Manager prior to rescinding the employee's participation in EEWRP.
3. Rescind the employee's approval to participate in EEWRP at any time, based on:
 - The employee's documented unsatisfactory work and/or academic performance.
 - Promotion to a position for which EEWRP approval is not supported.
 - Transfer to another office.
4. Provide the employee with written notification on DCFS Letterhead specifying the reason(s) for the decision to rescind the approval of their participation in EEWRP.

- The decision to rescind EEWRP Approval cannot be appealed by the employee.

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APPROVALS

Immediate Supervisor Approval

- Professional Advancement Section EEWRP Agreement
- Letter of Recommendation

DCFS Practicum Instructor Approval

- Professional Advancement Section EEWRP Timesheet

DCFS Assistant Regional Administrator

- Letter of Recommendation

DCFS Regional Administrator or Division Chief Approval

- Rescission
- 5/40 work schedule agreement
- Letter of Recommendation

DCFS Deputy Director Approval

- Participation in EEWRP
- Appeal

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HELPFUL LINKS

Attachments

[Professional Advancement Section EEWRP – BASW/BSW Application](#)
[Professional Advancement Section EEWRP – BASW/BSW Checklist and Applicant Confirmation of Understanding](#)
[Professional Advancement Section EEWRP - MSW Application](#)
[Professional Advancement Section EEWRP - MSW Checklist and Applicant Confirmation of Understanding](#)
[Management Directive \(MD\) 09-13, Leave of Absence](#)

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References

[Los Angeles County Code of Ordinances, Title 5 Personnel Handbook](#) - Leaves of absence from regular duties, without pay, may be granted by the appointing power for recovery from a prolonged illness or injury or to restore health, military service, maternity, education or training, assisting another public jurisdiction, employment by a labor union or an employee organization, or for such other lawful purposes as are deemed by the appointing power to be in the best interest of the department. When such leave is for longer than 12 months, it must be approved by the director of personnel.

[Los Angeles County DCFS Human Resources Manual](#) - It is the policy of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) that all employees are aware of the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures governing the Human Resources Administration in this Department. The Human Resources Manual has been established to implement this policy and to serve as a working guide, as well as a reference, for all employees.

[Welfare and Institutions Code \(WIC\) Section 10900](#) – states in part, that the department shall, within the limits of funds made available, provide welfare personnel training courses and services, including in-service training, educational leaves or stipends, traineeships, internships, and the expansion of fieldwork training facilities within county departments for the use of colleges and universities in preparing students for employment in the administration of public social services programs.

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