



BACHELOR of SOCIAL WORK Program Student Handbook

Program Mission:

The Bachelor of Social Work program aspires to prepare students with the values, skills, and knowledge necessary to be generalist social work practitioners in today's world.



Welcome to the WSU BSW Social Work Program!

We are excited to have you join us for your social work education journey. The program will prepare you for career opportunities across the social work spectrum from child welfare to aging services. Our faculty designed the program to meet your preferred learning needs through both a traditional face-to-face option in Winona and a hybrid option in Rochester.

I am happy to talk with you about the WSU BSW Program. Please reach out to me at ceaton@winona.edu.

Charissa Eaton

Charissa Eaton, PhD, MSW
Professor, Department Chair, and BSW Program Director

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Part I. General Information

MISSION

The Bachelor of Social Work program aspires to prepare students with the values, skills, and knowledge necessary to be generalist social work practitioners in today's world.

VISION STATEMENT

The Bachelor of Social Work Program prepares generalist practitioners to work in entry-level settings with any population. The program educates students to be lifelong learners and active participants in a global society. The program prepares students with interpersonal, critical thinking, and leadership skills necessary for addressing social change through a trauma informed lens. The program focuses on community engagement and commitment to needed social change to alleviate poverty, discrimination, and oppression.

The program models learning through active involvement in local and global communities and engaged learning that promotes social work values of worth and dignity of the person, integrity, importance of human relationships, social, environmental, and economic justice, and competence as evidenced by the NASW Code of Ethics and the 2022 CSWE EPAS.

BSW PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The BSW program goals arise out of the program's mission statement and are intended to operationalize the values imbedded in the program mission. These program goals (the same across all options) are as follows:

1. The program will prepare students to practice as generalist social workers with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
2. The program will prepare students to utilize self-awareness and reflection to continually enhance practice.
3. The program will prepare students to practice in a manner that is culturally responsive to support diversity, equity, and inclusion.
4. The program will prepare students to understand the interrelationships among people and systems to dismantle unjust systems for social change.
5. The program will prepare students to advocate with and for people who are vulnerable, disenfranchised, oppressed, and underrepresented.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Winona State University Bachelor of Social Work program is dedicated to learning about and understanding diversity and inclusion. Our definition of diversity includes but is not limited to people with diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds, religious diversity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, gender, political beliefs, and/or immigration status. Our definition of inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity – in people, in the curriculum, and in communities in which individuals might connect.

The department is determined to actively recruit both faculty and students from diverse backgrounds. Faculty work to incorporate content that addresses issues faced by diverse and oppressed groups in classroom materials. The impact of individual and institutional oppression, and the need for social justice/social change are woven throughout the curriculum. Faculty work to create a welcoming environment and to meet the needs and special interests of all diverse students within the BSW program.

OVERVIEW OF THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

Winona State University's Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Program has been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1985. The BSW Program serves students on both the Winona and the Rochester (Hybrid) campuses. The BSW office is in Maxwell Hall 255 (507-457-5420).

Students who declare a social work major will be assigned a faculty advisor in the BSW Program. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor on a regular basis during the school year. After completing a series of pre-program foundation courses, declared majors can apply for admission into the BSW Program. Acceptance into the BSW Program is a prerequisite to enrolling in core social work courses. Once an application has been approved, **declared** social work majors then become social work majors who have been **formally accepted** into the program.

FIELD – THE SIGNATURE PEDAGOGY

The BSW Program requires 600 hours of fieldwork. This entails 120 hours of Field Experience (pre-program) and 480 hours of Practicum in entry-level social work practice completed in the last semester prior to graduation. Field Experience and Practicum are opportunities to integrate practice with theoretical concepts and determine readiness to enter the profession of social work. The CSWE expects each social work student to have demonstrated certain social work competencies and practice behaviors upon completion of the BSW degree (See Council on Social Work Education content).

FACULTY

Dr. Ruth Charles, Professor and Child Welfare Coordinator
Maxwell 269, 507-457-5674, and rcharles@winona.edu

Dr. Charissa Eaton, Professor, Department Chair, and BSW Program Director
Maxwell 267, 507- 457-5563, and ceaton@winona.edu

Dr. Mary Kirk, Associate Professor and Rochester Hybrid Coordinator
Maxwell 265 and Rochester ST 131, 507- 457-5432 and mkirk@winona.edu

Dr. Ann Lichliter, Assistant Professor and Rochester Hybrid Field Coordinator
Rochester ST 131, 507-285-7419, and ann.lichliter@winona.edu

Dr. Robert (Jay) Palmer, Professor
Maxwell 275, 507-457-5562, and rpalmer@winona.edu

Dr. Anne Vande Berg, Associate Professor and BSW Field Director
Maxwell 260, 507-457-5401, and avandeberg@winona.edu

More information on Winona State BSW faculty can be found at
<https://www.winona.edu/socialwork/faculty.asp>.

STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The Student Association of Social Workers (SASW) is a pre-professional student club for all students interested in the field of social work with chapters on each campus. Members are encouraged to be active participants in the Social Work's program development as well as campus and community activities. SASW offers peer support, community service, public speaking and educational engagements, fund-raising events, and social activities. These experiences form a foundation for entering into the professional field of social work. Anyone wanting information on becoming involved can obtain contact information from the BSW office at 507-457-5420 or ask your advisor.

The SASW on each campus assign student representatives to the social work department to attend departmental meetings. If there are concerns or questions regarding the policies and procedures of the social work program, students may go through the SASW executive board to place their concerns. Students are encouraged to use these representatives and allotted time to voice their concerns for policy change or implementation.

PHI ALPHA TAU NU HONOR SOCIETY

The purpose of Phi Alpha Honor Society is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and promote humanitarian goals and ideals. Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have attained excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work.

Winona State University Social Work chapter – Phi Alpha Tau Nu is open for application to all social work majors on the Winona and Rochester campuses who meet the following requirements:

- Admitted to the Social Work Program
- Completed 9 semester hours of required social work courses and at least 37.5% of the total hours/credits required for the degree, whichever is later achieved, and
- Rank in the top 35% of their class.

Applications are accepted once per year in the Spring Semester. The Phi Alpha Tau Nu Advisor on both Winona and Rochester campuses will send out application notices via WSU email to all senior level students.

STUDENT STEWARDSHIP WITHIN THE BSW PROGRAM

Social work students are encouraged to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs of the department through SASW who are invited to attend departmental meetings. However, students with a question, concern, or need assistance regarding departmental policy are encouraged to share this information with their assigned academic advisor, the department chair, and/or program coordinator. The student will be asked to place their concerns or the assistance they seek in writing and the faculty member working with the student will bring the issue forth to the entire department at a faculty meeting.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

The BSW faculty encourage students to foster a global perspective. The Center for Global Education offers a variety of global experiences, both short-term and semester-long. The Social Work faculty also offer travel study courses focused on social justice issues. Additionally, the BSW program collaborates with Augsburg University's semester-long Mexico program. For more information, contact Dr. Jay Palmer and talk with your advisor if you are interested in exploring other opportunities.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS CODE OF ETHICS

The BSW program abides by the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics and expects students to use the Code of Ethics as a guide as well.

The Code of Ethics is intended to serve as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of social workers. The Code of Ethics was adopted by the NASW Delegate Assembly of August 1996 and includes four sections.

1. **Preamble** summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
2. **Purpose** provides an overview of the Code's main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice.
3. **Ethical Principles** presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values that inform social work practice.
4. **Ethical Standards** includes ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.

Current Code (2018) also identifies five social justice priorities that serve as guiding principles for NASW's national office and Chapters: 1) Voters rights; 2) Criminal justice/Juvenile justice; 3) Environmental justice; 4) Immigration; and 5) Economic justice.

NASW is committed to social justice for all. It is to be noted that social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the U.S. and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

The charge set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics, "Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society," is not limited to certain social workers practicing in certain contexts, such as advocacy, policy, government, or community organization. This charge applies to all social workers in all practice settings. The revised Code of Ethics also includes 19 changes that address ethical responsibilities when using technology.

All students in the WSU Social Work Program are expected to access a copy of the NASW Code of Ethics, available online at <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics>

and develop a solid knowledge of the ethics that guide the profession. As indicated on the application to the BSW Social Work Program at WSU, students must affirm and agree to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics.

COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

The BSW Program at Winona State University has been fully accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the national accrediting body for social work education since August of 1985. The Program's last reaffirmation with CSWE was in Academic Year 2021/2022. The next reaffirmation cycle will be in Academic Year 2028/2029.

In 2008, 2015, and again in 2022, CSWE revised the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to define the skills, values, and knowledge necessary to effectively practice social work through competency-based education. The updated 2022 EPAS competencies listed below are utilized as learning outcomes that are introduced and reinforced throughout the social work program. During the final semester practicum, students are assessed for demonstrated competence in all these areas.

The nine Social Work Competencies are:

- Competency 1 - Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Competency 2 - Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 3 - Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
- Competency 4 - Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- Competency 5 - Engage in Policy Practice
- Competency 6 - Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 7 - Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 8 - Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Competency 9 - Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

The BSW program also utilizes the competencies for program evaluation and program improvement processes. The complete 2022 EPAS is available at:

<https://www.cswe.org/getmedia/8d7dade5-2683-4940-9587-5675f6ef5426/2022-EPAS.pdf>.

Part II. Admission

BSW PROGRAM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

While students can declare the Social Work major as early as their first year, students must apply and be accepted into the BSW program. The BSW program admits students each semester for both the Winona face-to-face option and the Rochester Hybrid option.

To be eligible for admission, students must meet the below requirements or be completing them the semester applying to the program.

1. Enrolled or have applied/been accepted to WSU.
2. An overall university GPA of 2.0 or higher prior to admission to the program.

3. A GPA OF 2.50 in social work foundation courses and a C or better in all foundation courses.
 - a. Statistics is not calculated in the social work foundation GPA. A “C” or better in Statistics is required.
 - b. Completion of SOCW350 Social Work Field Experience with satisfactory midterm and final evaluations.
4. Completion of a minimum of 60 credits the semester applying for the BSW program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. If not currently enrolled at Winona State University, please go to <https://www.winona.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply.asp> to complete the application.
2. If not already a declared social work major, please complete the declaration of major form at <https://www.winona.edu/registrar/majordeclaration.asp>
3. To complete the online application click here: [Social Work Application](#).

The Winona face-to-face option and the Rochester Hybrid option admit students every semester.

The online application will ask you to answer questions and upload items. Please see the Appendix for specific information.

4. Failure to submit a complete application packet could delay admission consideration for another semester.
5. An admission decision will be made by the BSW faculty after a review of the application packet within a timely manner. Admission letters sent to applicants could indicate 1) acceptance without conditions, 2) accepted pending completion of all requirements before the end of the semester requesting to start the BSW program, 3) placed on a wait list, or 4) not accepted to the BSW program at this time. Students on the wait list or not accepted should meet with their social work advisor to discuss future academic planning and the potential for reapplication to the BSW program.
6. Every student has the right to appeal the admission decision to the BSW faculty. (Please see the appeal process below.)

DUE DATES

BSW Social Work Program admission materials are due online by 3:30 pm the first Tuesday in October for following spring admission and third Tuesday in February for the following fall admission.

Priority Consideration

Current WSU students and students transferring directly into the BSW program from another institution (meaning no credits completed at WSU) must apply by:

- Fall semester start: third Tuesday in February by 3:30pm.

- Spring semester start: first Tuesday in October by 3:30pm.

Secondary Consideration (if space is available)

If our programs can accept more students, rolling admissions for students transferring directly into the BSW program from another institution will be considered only until:

- Fall semester start: third Tuesday in April by 3:30pm.
- Spring semester start: second Tuesday in November by 3:30pm.

February 20, 2024

October 1, 2024

February 18, 2025

October 7, 2025

APPLICATION OPTIONS

Students must designate on the application which program option they prefer on the top of the application form. The options for both fall and spring admission are the traditional face-to-face program in Winona or the hybrid program offered in Rochester. Once a student begins the BSW program, they will be required to complete the program in the option they selected.

APPEAL

Every student has the right to appeal an admission decision. Students who apply to the BSW program, but are not admitted to the program may take the following steps for appeal:

1. Meet with a faculty advisor to discuss how you may improve upon the application for a future semester or to discuss other possible majors the student may wish to pursue. Student may ask the faculty advisor for reasons why he or she was not accepted.
2. Students who have not been accepted but believe the circumstances for denial are not correct may appeal the decision of the faculty. Students who wish to make a formal appeal for reconsideration should:
 - a. Make an appointment with the Social Work Department Chairperson or Campus BSW Coordinator to discuss their circumstances for reconsideration. Submit copies of supporting documents that should be considered.
 - b. The Department Chairperson/BSW Coordinator will bring the student issues before the BSW faculty at a regularly scheduled program meeting. Faculty will discuss the student's circumstances and respond accordingly to the student within a timely manner.
 - c. The decision of the faculty is final and will no longer be considered by the program faculty. Students who believe the situation warrants further consideration may request an appointment with the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences to discuss their concerns. The Dean of the College would respond to the student accordingly after consulting with the Social Work Department Chairperson/BSW Coordinator.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND STUDY

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 245C requires that any person who provides services that involve direct contact with patients and residents of a health care facility must complete and successfully pass a background study conducted by the State. Therefore, all students applying to the social work program must fill out an online Minnesota Department of Human Services

(DHS) Background Study form and be fingerprinted and photographed at a DHS-sanctioned fingerprinting site. **This must be done specifically for the WSU College of Nursing and Health Sciences. If you have completed the MN DHS background study for another agency, you must do it again for this program.** Students are then responsible for printing off a copy of the results from the DHS website and submitting the results letter to the BSW office. Students are responsible for payment for the background check and fingerprinting process. The department will advise students on a case-by-case basis regarding their criminal background and legal obligations. Further information about the Minnesota background study process, see [MN DHS Background Study Information](#). Additional information about completing the Background Study can be found in the Appendix. **Please note students who completed the background study for the WSU SOCW 350 Field Experience do not need to complete a new background study. The same document may be used for the application to the BSW program.**

Part III. Advising

ADVISING

Students will be assigned to a social work faculty for advising purposes once they declare Social Work as their major. The purpose of advising is to assist students in academic planning for graduation through the social work program, as well as personal and professional development. Students are expected to set up a time to meet with their advisor each semester to receive an access code and to discuss their academic progress. Students are also invited to connect with other social work faculty other than their advisor and take advantage of the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge of all social work faculty. If a student does not yet have a faculty advisor, the student should first complete the online Declaration of Major form at <https://www.winona.edu/major/declare-major.asp> and they will then be assigned to a faculty person.

If a student is a transfer student who has not yet been formally admitted to Winona State University but would like to talk with a faculty member, please contact the Social Work Program office to be connected to a faculty member.

SOCIAL WORK IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FILE

At times, there are documents that you will need in the future while you are in the program, as well as after graduation. For you to have continuous access, we encourage you to save an electronic copy of the following documents:

- Field Experience Mid-semester and Final Evaluation (your copy)
- Hard copy of the Letter of Admittance into the BSW program.
- Any letters/memos from social work faculty.
- Current Degree Auditing Reporting System (DARS)
- Hard copy of your completed Minnesota DHS background study results
- Hard copy of your final completed Learning Agreement, once you have finished practicum

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

All courses in the BSW program must be taken on a grade-only basis. Students must earn a C or better in all core courses, and failure to do so will result in a review of academic and professional performance and delay progression in the program. Internships (SOCW350 and SOCW475) are taken as a Pass/No Credit. Descriptions of individual courses can be found in the catalog at https://catalog.winona.edu/social_work.

REQUIRED SOCIAL WORK FOUNDATION COURSES

Required Foundation Courses (or their equivalent) to be Taken Prior to Admission to the Program:

ENG 111 English (4)

CMST 191 or 192 Introduction to Public Speaking/CMST 192 Introduction to Speech Communication (3)

BIOL 117 Human Biology (3)

PSY 210 Intro to Psychological Science (3)

PSY 250 Developmental Psychology (3)

SOC 150 Introduction to Sociology (3)

SOCW 340 Introduction to Social Work (3)

SOCW 350 Social Work Field Experience (3)

STATS 110 Fundamentals of Statistics (3) or PSY 231 Psychology Statistics (3)

Note: PSY 231 Statistics does not meet the University General Education Math Requirement.

Core Courses Once Admitted to the Bachelor of Social Work Program

First Semester

SOCW 365 Practice I (3)

SOCW 370 Human Behavior and the Social Environment (3)

SOCW Diversity Requirement – one is offered each semester on each campus (3)

Second Semester

SOCW 380 American Social Welfare Policy (3)

SOCW 385 Practice II (3)

SOCW390 Social Work Research

Third Semester

SOCW 400 Practicum Preparation (4)

SOCW 410 Social Welfare Policy Analysis (3)

SOCW 415 Practice III (3)

Fourth Semester

SOCW 475 Practicum (12) (480-hour Senior-Level Internship)

SOCW 480 Integrative Seminar (3)

Note: WSU graduation requires at least 120 completed credit hours. Generally, social Work courses must be completed through WSU (see WSU catalog for more details).

POLICY ON INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Social Work program does not accept or offer independent study courses for the required social work courses, which includes SOCW340 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, SOCW350 Field Experience. Individual faculty may be willing to consider elective options for independent study.

POLICY ON CREDIT FOR PRIOR EXPERIENCE

The Bachelor of Social Work Program at Winona State University does not evaluate or consider credit for life or work experience as a substitution for any social work course work.

TRANSFER POLICY AND CREDIT EVALUATION

The purpose of this policy is to ensure non-duplication of course work while asserting that the expected content within the BSW Program and as specified by the CSWE Education and Policy Accreditation Standards (EPAS) is included in every student's educational experience.

The acceptance of course credits outside of the program's course offerings is the responsibility of the registrar's office as per its equivalency policy. Students requesting such transfer credit approval are referred to the WSU Admissions office for this review.

<https://www.winona.edu/admissions/undergraduate/transfer-credits.asp>

To get a sense of how your credit will transfer, check for course equivalencies in [Transferology](#). You can also find many [tools and resources for transfer students online](#).

WSU students who have attended other schools within the Minnesota State Colleges and University System are able to process a copy of transcripts electronically. Students are asked to complete the online request form. If a student has a hold on an account, they must clear up the hold before a transfer request can be processed. Any questions about this process or the status of a transcript evaluation should be directed to the Warrior Hub at <https://www.winona.edu/warrior-hub/> or 507-457-2800.

It is the responsibility of each student to ensure credits taken at other colleges and universities are transferred to Winona State University to ensure timely approval for admission to the social work program. Students should take the necessary steps to notify the university when courses are taken at other institutions as well as when the grades are available for transfer. The Social Work Department cannot evaluate student records for admission consideration to the major until the transfer has been reflected for the student on the Degree Audit Report (DARS). As with any major at Winona State University, transfer students must complete at least 30 credit hours at WSU and 40 credits hours at the 300-400 (upper division level) to be eligible for graduation with a degree from Winona State University.

Course credits for courses offered within the BSW program will only be given for substantially equivalent courses taken in other CSWE accredited social work programs. If students believe that they have completed a course that meets the requirements for one of the social work program courses, they must complete the following steps:

- Submit course syllabi and description of course requirements to their advisor.
- Discuss with their advisor why they believe this course meets program requirements.

Students with their advisor will document that the course/s submitted for substitution substantially meet all content requirements of the program course, particularly the content that is covered in relation to the CSWE EPAS. Students must also establish that the course submitted for substitution was taught by an MSW social worker if the course was taken as an undergraduate course and was completed within five years of the request.

Student requests for course substitutions must then be submitted for a full faculty review. A majority of the reviewing faculty must approve all course substitutions.

BSW TRANSFER

Transfer students who have completed at least 24 credits at a nationally accredited college or university with a 2.4 GPA or higher will generally be admitted into Winona State University.

If a student's cumulative college GPA is between 2.2 and 2.39, a transfer specialist will conduct a personal interview and review your application.

To transfer into the BSW program, students should do the following:

1. Be admitted to WSU
2. Students should make an appointment with a BSW faculty member for advising
3. See Admissions process in this handbook.

MINNESOTA PATHWAYS OPTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE WSU BSW PROGRAM

WSU and Minnesota State Universities and Colleges offer collaborative "paths" for obtaining a BSW at Winona State University. The Minnesota Pathways ensures that students taking all social work foundation courses including SOCW340 and SOCW350 from the agreeing community and/or technical college will have the classes to meet the prerequisites for the BSW program. Students interested in the Minnesota Transfer Pathways to a BSW degree should consult with their college advisor.

MINNESOTA BSW IV-E CHILD WELFARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The BSW Program at WSU offers the IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program. Winona State University is a Minnesota BSW Child Welfare Consortium member school, under the umbrella of the University of Minnesota School of Social Work's Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. The primary goal of the IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program is to strengthen the preparation and education of the BSW social worker who will work in Title IV-E eligible public child welfare agencies in Minnesota. Graduates are typically employed at county agencies, though tribal and state positions are also possible.

For application, deadlines and additional information about the IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program, visit: <http://www.winona.edu/socialwork/childwelfarestipend.asp>

FIELD EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICUM

SOCW 350 Field Experience

This course must be completed or in progress prior to be admitted into the Social Work program and consists of 120 hours of service at an agency that has been approved by the Field staff. Students are placed at the agency by the Field staff (see the Field Experience Manual for the application process) and typically spend eight hours a week at their field experience site for the duration of the semester. Students must plan for entering the field experience well in advance – at least six weeks before the beginning of the semester that the

student is planning to enroll in the course. Field experience sites and practicum sites typically are different populations and/or settings.

SOCW 475 Practicum

The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in the BSW program in which the student completes a 480-hour practicum internship as the final step before completing the program and graduating. The student is placed in an agency setting as a practicing professional (student) worker with intensive educational supervision by the agency and the school faculty liaison representative or the field coordinator. Students register for SOCW 480 Integrative Social Work Seminar, concurrently with SOCW 475.

Part V. Policies

BSW PROGRAM STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

WSU BSW faculty expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner, consistent with our profession's Code of Ethics.

Preamble of the NASW Code of Ethics:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values.

These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons. While the values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics, we feel that the following additional standards of behavior are to be exhibited as well by all students enrolled in our program:

1. **Accountability** – Attend class, arrive on time, return from breaks in a timely manner • Participate in activities and assignments in a level comparable to peers • Complete work in a timely fashion according to directions • Be prepared and engaged in the learning process.

2. **Respect** – Treat your peers, instructors, and all other persons with dignity and respect at all times • Listen while others are speaking • Give constructive feedback when appropriate • Approach conflict in a cooperative manner • Use positive and nonjudgmental language.
3. **Confidentiality and Boundaries** – Treat any personal information that you hear (or read) about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential • Maintain information shared in class as confidential • Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a personal nature in the classroom (Class time is not therapy or treatment – seek a referral if you need it) • Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information • Exercise clear and appropriate boundaries between yourself, other students, your instructors, and in other professional relationships.
4. **Competence** – Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness • Meet deadlines given by your instructors • Constantly strive to learn and improve your abilities • Come to class prepared • Seek appropriate support when having difficulties • Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignments • Strive to achieve greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.
5. **Diversity** – Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds that you are not familiar • Embrace diversity • Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, stereotyping, etc. • Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons • Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.
6. **Integrity** – Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors • Constantly strive to improve your abilities • Commit yourself to the academic discipline of citing other people’s work properly • Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed • Accept and benefit from constructive feedback.
7. **Communication** – Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as those skills are the benchmark for effective professional practice and helping relationships • Demonstrate appropriately assertive communication with peers and instructors • Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal) with peers, instructors and all other persons.

The Bachelor of Social Work program also expects students to abide by the Winona State University Student Conduct Code, found at <https://www.winona.edu/sld/studentconductcode.asp>. As an academic community, WSU is committed to providing an environment of learning. It has a vested interest in the safety and well-being of members of the University community, and in the promotion and protection of the University’s educational mission.

Students are members of both WSU and the local community and are expected to be respectful citizens who are responsible for their behavior.

The University’s Student Conduct of Code is designed to promote attitudes conducive to learning; hold students accountable for violating University standards; and protect the due process rights of those charged with Student Conduct Code violations.

All students are expected to comply with the Student Conduct Code. The University has an obligation to investigate conduct that interferes with the rights of others, threatens University property, or interferes with the University’s educational mission. The University also supports local, state, and federal laws.

This policy applies to all conduct that occurs on university premises; at university-sponsored activities whether on or off-campus and to certain off-campus conduct, identified below. Consequences for failing to comply with the Student Conduct Code could result in sanctions from the University.

The Conduct Code is based on mutual respect and understanding. In this community of learners, student conduct issues will be addressed with an educational approach. Sanctions will be designed as educational opportunities which promote personal responsibility.

BSW PROGRAM ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL REVIEW POLICY

Evaluation of Academic and Professional Performance Policy: Winona State University's Bachelor of Social Work Program's policy for evaluating student academic and professional performance. Students admitted to all BSW program options are expected to follow the expectations below:

Academic Performance

- Maintain a 2.5 GPA within the Social Work major and earn a C or better in all social work program required courses,
- Maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 (university requirement), and
- Maintain a course completion rate of 67% or higher (university requirement).

Professional Performance

- Uphold the BSW Program Student Code of Conduct
- Behave in accordance with the current NASW Code of Ethics

Procedures for Evaluation of Academic and Professional Performance: BSW students are evaluated for academic and professional performance through two mechanisms:

1. Each semester via the academic advising process, faculty review with each student their academic performance.
2. The BSW faculty are continuously evaluating BSW program student academic and professional performance.

If an issue of academic or professional performance arises faculty follow the below process. The Department Chairperson/Coordinator and BSW faculty will share pertinent information with each other and, if necessary, with agency field supervisors for the purpose of identifying student issues and enhancing problem solving about concerns. Some situations, due to their seriousness, may warrant moving straight to a Level Two or Level Three review. Further, the BSW faculty also follow the Winona State University Student Code of Conduct Procedures as appropriate.

LEVEL ONE REVIEW

A Level One Review involves a faculty member or adjunct in the Social Work Department and a student. When a faculty member or adjunct has concerns about a student enrolled in courses within the Social Work program, whether related to professional behavior or academic performance in class or in Field, that faculty member will:

- Discuss those concerns with the student directly and work with the student to resolve those difficulties.
- Apprise the Chairperson/Program Coordinator, the Field Director, or other Social Work Faculty of the concerns in order to identify issues or patterns related to the student.

- Document dates and content of meetings with the student.

Problems that arise during SOCW350 Field Experience will be discussed between the agency field supervisor, field experience faculty, and the student. The field experience faculty will notify the Field Director/Field Coordinator, if necessary. Problems that arise during the SOCW475 Practicum Placement will be discussed between the agency field instructor, faculty field liaison, and the student. The faculty field liaison will notify the Field Director/Field Coordinator, if necessary. In many instances, Level One meetings between the faculty and student resolve the concerns and do not necessarily lead to further reviews.

LEVEL TWO REVIEW

A Level Two Review involves a faculty member or adjunct in the BSW program, a student accepted in the program, and the Chairperson/Program Coordinator. The faculty member and the chairperson/program coordinator will meet with the student when the student does not meet or follow program or university standards, policies, and procedures or when concerns have not been resolved at Level One Review. If a problem arises in the field, the agency field supervisor, field faculty liaison, and Field Director/Coordinator will conduct the review with the student. The Chairperson/Coordinator may be invited to the Level Two review if needed. The Chairperson/Program Coordinator, in conjunction with other faculty, will determine the nature of the concern and gather the information necessary to develop a plan of action that addresses the concern. The student may be provided written instructions outlining student expectations. This process is designed to help the student address the identified concerns that have a direct impact on performance in the Bachelor Social Work Program. The Chairperson/Coordinator or Field Director/Coordinator will assess the nature of these concerns and consult with the BSW faculty. The Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences will be consulted as needed. If the problem is not resolved, a Level Three Review may be instituted. Written documentation will be placed in the student file.

LEVEL THREE REVIEW

A Level Three Review involves a faculty member or adjunct in the BSW program, a student who has been accepted in the program, the Department Chairperson/Coordinator, and any faculty who have had direct experience with the student in the classroom or field. A Level Three Review is called when problematic patterns are identified with a student or when the issues are serious to require formal consultation with additional BSW faculty. A Level Three Review is frequently the result of unresolved issues from prior reviews, when issues are related to that student not meeting the criteria for academic and professional performance, or when the student is being considered for suspension or dismissal from the Bachelor of Social Work Program. When a Level Three Review is called, the BSW faculty will ask the student to prepare a statement in writing addressing the issue. The faculty will then convene a meeting to review and discuss the student's written statement.

Based upon the Level Three Review meeting, the faculty will make a recommendation, which could be any one of the following:

- *Continue on in the Social Work program with No Conditions:* In these situations, the concern has been addressed and no further action by the student or the department is required.
- *Establish Formal Conditions for the Student's Continuance in the BSW Program:* In this situation, specific conditions must be met in order for the student to remain in the program. Actions may include: goals with timeline and measurable objectives, reduced course load or

delay of entrance into the practicum experience, or recommendation to withdraw from the program with an option to reapply at a later date.

- *Advise Student to Change Majors/Degrees and/or Discontinue the Student in the Program:* In some situations, it will be recommended that the student no longer remain in the Social Work program. The student will be counseled to voluntarily change majors or degrees. If the student does not wish to voluntarily change majors or degrees, the student will be formally notified that (s)he is being dismissed from the program. The student will be provided with written documentation regarding the specific reasons for dismissal.

Following this faculty meeting and following the determination of recommendations, the Department Chair/Coordinator and/or Field Director/Field Coordinator will notify the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences of the situation and faculty determination.

BSW Program Grievance Policy

The Grievance Policy provides a means for students to raise a concern about the outcome of BSW programmatic decisions.

Grievance Procedures

The BSW Grievance Procedures are described below:

Step I

Whenever any student or group of students has a grievance, she/he or they should first meet with the BSW faculty member involved or the Chair/BSW Program Director (depending on the grievance issue) to discuss and attempt to resolve the grievance.

Step II

Whenever any student or group of students has a grievance which remains unresolved after Step I, they should send a formal written account of their grievance to the Chair/BSW Program Director. The Chair/BSW Program Director will consult with the BSW faculty on the written grievance. A response based on the BSW faculty consultation will be sent in writing to the student. If the grievance cannot be resolved within the BSW Program, the student will be informed of their right to take their grievance to the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The Chair/BSW Program Director will give the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences a courtesy notification regarding an unresolved grievance.

Please note that the BSW faculty make every attempt to resolve student grievances within the requirements of the program, university, and CSWE accreditation standards.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

All written deliberations shall be considered confidential and placed in the student's file in the Social Work Office (Maxwell 255 in Winona) unless the student requests otherwise. All materials submitted by students who are denied admission, withdraw, or are dismissed from the Program will be kept for at least one year.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The Bachelor of Social Work program expects students to abide by the Academic Integrity Policy of Winona State University. The University requires that work produced by students represents their personal efforts and requires that they properly acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others.

Following are examples of behaviors considered unacceptable and viewed as violations of the academic integrity policy include cheating, deception or misrepresentation, enabling academic dishonesty, fabrication, multiple submissions, and plagiarism.

The instructor and the student most often address consequences for academic violations at the time of the violation. The instructor's determination is final unless appealed to the dean of the college. Further information about this policy can be found at [WSU Academic Integrity Policy](#).

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The BSW program adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act and works with Access Services to support students. A qualified student will not, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Social Work program. A student seeking academic accommodations can work with the University Access Services office on the Winona and Rochester campuses. For further information, see www.winona.edu/accessservices.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

Winona State University does not tolerate sexual misconduct or sexual violence of any kind in any context. We are committed to empowering students who experience sexual assault or other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) to pursue disciplinary, criminal, and civil action if they choose to do so. If you are a member of the Winona State University community and have experienced sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, dating/intimate partner or domestic violence, harassment based on gender nonconformity, stalking, cyber-stalking, or retaliation, you have options for support, and resources can be found at <https://www.winona.edu/sexual-violence/>.

POLICY ON INTERRUPTION OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

The Social Work Department in Winona and Rochester makes every attempt to admit full cohort groups each semester. It is challenging for the department to alter the student's time schedule of courses once admitted to the major. If an accepted social work student would like to stop taking classes for a semester or more, they must submit a written request to the social work faculty. This request must ask for the social work faculty to hold a seat for them in the semester when they will return and the reason for the request. This request will not guarantee a seat, but will allow faculty to plan for the student's return. The student must be in good academic standing upon return to the program.

POLICY ON MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

Students who are serving in the US military and are deployed during their participation in the program will be guaranteed a seat when they return from deployment.

POLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION

Equal opportunity for students and employees. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities has an enduring commitment to enhancing Minnesota's quality of life by developing and fostering understanding and appreciation of a free and diverse society and providing equal opportunity for all its students and employees. To help effectuate these goals, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in employment and education.

Nondiscrimination. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in, programs, services, and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. In addition, discrimination in employment based on familial status or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law is prohibited. More information can be found here: [Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education Policy Statement.](#)

Procedure for Report/Complaint of Discrimination/Harassment Investigation and Resolution. This procedure is designed to further implement Minnesota State Colleges and Universities policies relating to nondiscrimination by providing a process through which individuals alleging violation of Board Policy 1B.1.1

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education may pursue a complaint. This includes allegations of retaliation, or discrimination or harassment based on sex, race, age, disability, color, creed, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance. In addition, discrimination in employment based on membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law is prohibited. More information can be found here: [System Procedure 1B.1.1 Report/Complaint of Discrimination/Harassment Investigation and Resolution](#)

Part IV. Licensing Information

SOCIAL WORK LICENSING IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota law requires that all persons either 1) practicing social work based on a social work degree accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or 2) representing themselves as a “social worker” **must be licensed, except when practicing in an exempt setting.** Persons may not begin social work practice where licensure is required until they hold a valid license or temporary license.

Minnesota Statutes Section 148E.010 subdivision 11 defines social work practice as **working to maintain, restore, or improve behavioral, cognitive, emotional, mental, or social functioning of clients, in a manner that applies accepted professional social work knowledge, skills, and values, including the person-in-environment perspective,** by providing in person or through telephone, video conferencing, or electronic means one or more of the social work services described.

Important: A license may still be required even if the job does not require direct client contact, the job title is not social worker, or if the employer does not require licensure. It is on YOU, the person with the BSW who is working in a social work practice setting, to obtain licensure! Practicing without a license can be grounds for disciplinary action by the Minnesota Board of Social Work.

Information about the licensure process can be obtained at www.socialwork.state.mn.us.

Minnesota Board of Social Work
2829 University Avenue S.E. Suite 340
Minneapolis, MN 55414-3239

612-617-2100
Toll free: 888-234-1320
TTY: 800-627-3529
Fax: 612-617-2103
Email: social.work@state.mn.us
Website: www.socialwork.state.mn.us

Action Steps for Applying for Minnesota Licensure:

Submit your application for license and pay the application fee

- 1.) Complete the fingerprint-based criminal background check
- 2.) Register for, take, and pass the ASWB Exam
- 3.) Submit the required supporting documentation following graduation (official transcript, ASWB passing score documentation)
- 4.) Apply for a temporary license, if you are employed right away, but still waiting on final transcripts
- 5.) Pay the initial License fee

Tips for Students:

You can apply for licensure before you graduate!

SOCIAL WORK LICENSING IN WISCONSIN

Department of Safety and Professional Services
4822 Madison Yards Way
Madison, WI 53705
608-266-2112 OR 877-617-1565
Email: dsps@wisconsin.gov
Website: <https://dsps.wi.gov/Pages/Professions/SocialWorker/Default.aspx>

LICENSURE EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Association of Social Work Boards
<https://www.aswb.org>

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Social Work Application Information

To complete the online application click here: [Social Work Application](#). Please note that you need to have a MinnState Star ID to access the application. To get a Star ID, please apply to Winona State University.

Both the Winona face-to-face and Rochester Hybrid options admit students every semester.

BSW Social Work Program admission materials are due online by 3:30 pm the first Tuesday in October for following spring admission and third Tuesday in February for the following fall admission.

Priority Consideration

Current WSU students and students transferring directly into the BSW program from another institution (meaning no credits completed at WSU) must apply by:

- Fall semester start: third Tuesday in February by 3:30pm.
- Spring semester start: first Tuesday in October by 3:30pm.

Secondary Consideration (if space is available)

If our programs can accept more students, rolling admissions for students transferring directly into the BSW program from another institution will be considered only until:

- Fall semester start: third Tuesday in April by 3:30pm.
- Spring semester start: second Tuesday in November by 3:30pm.

DUE DATES

February 20, 2024

October 1, 2024

February 18, 2025

October 7, 2025

The application is in three parts:

PART 1 asks if you are a transfer student, which program option (Winona or Rochester Hybrid) you are applying for, starting which semester, two references (one academic and one professional) with email addresses, and if you are interested in learning more about the Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program (for more information go to <https://www.winona.edu/socialwork/childwelfarestipend>).

Your academic reference should be someone who has taught you a college course. Please note that you cannot use any of the WSU BSW faculty or your Field Experience Supervisor.

Your professional reference should be someone who has supervised you in paid employment or volunteer work. Please note that you cannot use your Field Experience Supervisor.

PART 2 involves a meeting with your BSW advisor. Upon completion of part 1, you will receive an email instructing you to set up a meeting with your BSW advisor to discuss your academic readiness for starting the BSW program.

PART 3 asks you to upload some documents as **PDF files**. After your advisor completes part 2 with you, you will be notified about uploading the following documents:

- A PDF of your Application Essay.
Please submit a three to five-page, typed, double spaced application essay addressing the three areas listed below with emphasis on **experiences as a college student**. The essay will be used to assess the applicant's basic writing skills and readiness for the social work program.
 1. Discuss the major reasons for your interest in the profession of social work.
 2. Describe experiences you have had working with people (voluntary or paid). Please indicate the type of setting and the length of your experiences.
 3. Respect for diverse populations is a hallmark of the social work profession. Describe experiences you have had working with people from diverse populations (i.e., religious, racial, ethnic, ability, socio-economic, gender identity, and sexual orientation) and identify any challenges you anticipate working with people from diverse populations.
- A PDF copy of your MN Department of Human Services Applicant Background Study (see next page for instructions).
- A PDF copy of your Social Work Field Experience (SOCW350) midterm/final evaluations.
 - If currently enrolled in Field experience, turn in the midterm evaluation.
 - If you have completed an internship, practicum, or field experience-type course at another institution that counts towards and is "course substituted" for WSU SOCW 350 Field Experience, please include documentation of your performance from that course. The course could be related to a Human Services practicum or Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) practicum or internship for example.
- A PDF of your Current Resume.

APPLICANT BACKGROUND STUDY INSTRUCTIONS

You received this form because you applied for a position that requires a Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) background study. Follow the instructions below to submit your background study request to the provider. The provider will review and *may* submit your background study request to DHS. Provider means a facility, program, or agency initiating background study requests under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 245C.

Provider Name and License Number	Provider Number
WINONA STATE UNIV-COLL OF NUR & HEALTH SCIENCE (900085) 900085	9NNN6P

Instructions

- 1. Go to NETStudy 2.0 Applicant Portal**
<https://netstudy2.dhs.state.mn.us/Applicant>

- 2. Create an Account** If you have not created an account before:
 - a. Click "Register as a new user."
 - b. Enter your account information. Click "Register."
 - c. Check your email for the temporary password.

- 3. Login**
Your username is your email address. A temporary password was sent to the email account you used to register. When you login, you will be prompted to change your password and choose a security question.

- 4. Enter Application Information**
 - a. Click "Create Application" on the home screen
 - b. Enter 9NNN6P in the provider number field. Click Search. If the correct provider is displayed, click "Continue Application." If an incorrect provider is displayed, contact the provider that gave you this form.
 - c. Enter your demographic information. Click "Next" after you have completed the required fields on each screen. It is not required but highly recommended to use your Social Security number.
 - d. On the Payment Information screen click "Pay Now." After clicking "Complete Payment" a new tab with the DHS Electronic Payment System will open. Click "Pay without Registering" and complete the payment process.
 - e. After you have completed payment, return to NETStudy 2.0 and click "Continue." After reviewing the registry screen, click "Finish." Clicking "Finish" will submit your application to the provider.
 - f. Be careful to enter the information correctly. You will not be able to change it unless you contact the provider.

- 5. Retrieve the Fingerprint and Photo Authorization Form**
*After the provider submits your background study to DHS, you will receive an email that the *Fingerprint and Photo Authorization Form* is available. Login to NETStudy 2.0. On the home screen, locate the *Fingerprint and Photo Authorization Form* under "Forms" for the applicable provider.*

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the background study cost?

The background study fee is \$42, and the fingerprinting fee is \$9.50.

How can I pay?

The background study fee must be paid using the DHS Electronic Payment System through NETStudy 2.0. You can use a credit or debit card to make the payment... You can setup an account if you plan to use the DHS Electronic Payment System for other background studies or you can bypass the account setup by clicking, "Pay without Registering."

Will I be notified when I can be fingerprinted and photographed?

Yes. You will be notified by email that the provider submitted the background study to DHS. Log into NETStudy 2.0 to retrieve the *Fingerprint and Photo Authorization Form* on the home screen under "Forms" for the applicable provider. **You cannot be fingerprinted and photographed until the provider submits the background study request to DHS.**

What happens next?

The provider will review and verify your background study information. If the provider chooses to submit the background study request, you and the provider will receive a notice of your background study status. The notice will be mailed to you within three days of your fingerprints and photo being taken. The provider will receive the notice electronically.

Where do I find more information?

You can find information on the Background Study website at www.DHS.state.mn.us, select General Public; Office of Inspector General; Background Studies.

What if I have questions?

If you have questions about your background study status call (651) 431-6620. If you have questions about this notice or technical issues registering an account call (651) 431-6625.

BACKGROUND STUDY NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Because the Department of Human Services (DHS) is asking you to provide private information, you have privacy rights under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. This law protects your privacy, but also allows DHS to give information about you to others when the law requires it. This notice describes how your private information may be used and disclosed, and how you may access your information.

Why is DHS asking me for my private information?

A background study from the Department of Human Services (OHS) is required for your job or position. The private information is needed to conduct the background study.

How will I be notified that a background study was submitted on me?

DHS will mail you a notice within three working days after a request for a background study is submitted on you. The notice will contain the background study result or let you know that more time is needed to complete the background study. The notice will also identify the entity that submitted the background study request.

What information must I provide to complete the background study?

You are required to provide enough information to ensure an accurate and complete background study. This includes your:

- first, middle, and last name and all names you have ever been known by or used;
- current home address, city, zip code, and state of residence;
- previous home addresses, city, county, and states of residence for the last five years;
- sex and date of birth;
- driver's license or other identification number, and;
- fingerprints and a photograph.

How will the information that I give be used?

The information will be used to perform a background study that will include a check to determine whether you have any criminal records and/or have been found responsible for substantiated maltreatment of a vulnerable adult or child.

Background study data is classified as "private data" and cannot be shared without your consent except as explained in this notice.

What may happen if I provide the information?

You could be disqualified from positions that require a DHS background study if you are found to have committed certain crimes, been determined responsible for maltreatment of a vulnerable adult or child, or have other records that require a disqualification. If you do not have a disqualifying record, you will be cleared to work.

What if I refuse to provide the information?

You will be disqualified if you refuse to provide information to complete an accurate background study. You will not be able to work in a position that requires a DHS background study.

Who will DHS give my information to?

DHS will only share information about you as needed and as allowed or required by law. The identifying information you provide will be shared with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and in some cases the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). If there is reasonable cause to believe that other agencies may have information related to a disqualification, your identifying information may also be shared with:

- county attorneys, sheriffs, and agencies;
- courts and juvenile courts;
- local police;
- the Office of the Attorney General, and;
- agencies with criminal record information systems in other states.

What information will DHS share with the entity that requested my background study?

The entity that requested the background study will be notified of your background study determination.

If you are disqualified, the entity will not be told the reason unless you were disqualified for refusing to cooperate with the background study or for substantiated maltreatment of a minor or vulnerable adult.

What other entities might DHS share information with?

Information about your Background study may be shared with:

- the Minnesota Department of Health;
- the Minnesota Department of Corrections;
- the Office of the Attorney General, and;
- health-related licensing boards.

What if my disqualification is set aside?

If you request reconsideration of your disqualification and your disqualification is set aside, the entity that requested the background study will be informed of the reason(s) for your disqualification unless the law states otherwise. OHS will provide information about the decision to set aside your disqualification if the entity requests it.

Unless prohibited by law, your name and the reason(s) for your disqualification will become public data if your set aside is for:

- a child care center or a family child care provider licensed under chapter 245A, or;
- an offense identified in section 245C.15, subdivision 2.

For future background studies submitted by entities that provide the same type of services as the services you were set aside for, the set aside will apply unless:

- you were disqualified for an offense in section 245C.15, subdivision 1 or 2, or;
- DHS receives additional information indicating that you pose a risk of harm, or;
- your set aside was limited to a specific person receiving services.

In addition, those entities will be informed of the reason(s) for your disqualification unless prohibited by law.

Will my fingerprints be kept?

DHS and the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension will not keep your fingerprints. However, if an FBI check is required for your background study, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will keep your fingerprints and may use them for other purposes.

What information can the fingerprint and photo site view and keep?

The fingerprint and photo site can view identifying information to verify your identity. The fingerprint and photo site will not keep your fingerprints, photo, or most other information. The fingerprint and photo site can keep your name and the date and time your fingerprints were recorded and sent, for auditing and billing purposes.

Who can see my photo?

Your photo will be kept by DHS. If you provide your social security number to allow your background study to be transferable to future entities, your photo will be available to those entities to verify your identity.

What are my rights about the information you have about me?

- You may ask if we have information about you and

request in writing to get copies. You may have to pay for copies.

- You may give other people permission to see and have copies of private information about you.
- You may ask in writing a report that lists the entities that submitted a background study request on you.
- You may ask in writing that the information used to complete your background study be destroyed. The information will be destroyed if you have:

- (1) not been affiliated with any entity for the previous two years, and;
- (2) no current disqualifying

characteristic(s). Please send all written requests

to:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Background Studies Division
NETStudy 2.0 Coordinator
PO Box 64242
St. Paul, MN 55164-0242

How long will DHS keep my background study information?

DHS will destroy:

- your photo when you have not been affiliated with an entity for two years.
- any background data collected on a you after two years following your death or 90 years after your date of birth, except when readily available data indicates that you are still living.

What is the legal authority for DHS to conduct background studies?

Background studies are completed by DHS according to the requirements in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 245C. Background studies are authorized under Minnesota Statutes, sections 256B.0943, subdivision 5a; 256B.0659, subdivision 11(a)(3); 241.021, subdivision 6(a); 144.057, subdivision 1; 518.165, subdivision 4, and 524.5-118;

What if I think my privacy rights have been violated?

You may report a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated. If you think that the Minnesota Department of Human Services violated your privacy rights, you may send a written complaint to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Privacy Official at:

Minnesota Department of Human
Services Privacy Official
PO Box 64998
St. Paul, MN 55164-0998