

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>16-158</p>	Subject/Title	Revised Child Welfare Staff Qualification
	Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Informational Memorandum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Guide
	Issuance Date	10/17/2016
	Obsolete Date	
	Contact Name	Renee Kalich
	Email	KalichR@Michigan.gov
	Phone	517-373-1125
Due Date		
Due to		
Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

This updates previously released communication *CI 15-162 Revised Child Welfare Staff Qualifications* regarding required degree and experience qualifications for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors.

Child Welfare Caseworkers

The Implementation, Sustainability, and Exit Plan (ISEP) states within the Structures and Policies that the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) will maintain a policy regarding Caseworker Qualifications. ISEP Commitment 5 states that entry-level MDHHS and private agency child welfare caseworkers in CPS, foster care, adoption and licensing must have at least a bachelor's degree in social work or a related human services field.

Child Welfare Supervisors

MDHHS continues to maintain the requirement that MDHHS and private agency child welfare supervisors must hold:

1. A master's degree from an accredited college or university in a human behavioral science and three years of experience in a child welfare agency, a child caring institution, or in an agency performing a child welfare function, or
2. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a human behavioral science and four years of experience in a child welfare agency, a child caring institution, or in an agency performing a child welfare function.

Accepted Degrees

The revised list of accepted degrees for child welfare workers and supervisors includes:

- Behavioral Science
- Community Services
- Counseling (Psychology)
- Criminal Justice (Administration)
- Early Childhood Studies
- Family Ecology
- Family Life Education- Spring Arbor University
- Family Studies
- Family and/or Child Development
- Guidance/School Counseling
- Human Development and Family Studies- Michigan State University
- Human Services
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Sociology

Verification of Qualifications

Prior to commencement of training for all new private agency child welfare caseworkers and supervisors in foster care, licensing and adoption, the new hire's transcript (workers) or transcript and resume (supervisors), must be emailed to: MDHHSStaffQualifications@michigan.gov.

When documents are submitted to the mailbox, please ensure that the following is addressed:

1. The new hire's name and position (worker or supervisor) being hired for are indicated.
2. The agency name is indicated.
3. If submitting one email to the mailbox with multiple individuals' documentation, please separate the scanned documents for each individual. Resumes and transcripts submitted in the email can be attached separately or together per new hire.

Note: Candidates for State of Michigan child welfare positions, also known as services program specialists and managers, must meet education and experience requirements established by Civil Service, child welfare licensing rules and the ISEP. Applicants seeking employment for these positions submit applications through the automated NEOGOV system. The application must provide sufficient evidence that the applicant meets these requirements. Further degree and experience qualification reviews of services program manager applicants are completed by MDHHS' Office of Human Resources and Child Welfare Field Operations (CWFO).

Exceptions

MDHHS and private agencies must recruit and hire child welfare workers and supervisors that satisfy all established and aforementioned qualification requirements. However, in rare circumstances, public and private child welfare agencies may be unsuccessful in acquiring a suitable, qualified candidate with one of the approved degrees and required work experience. In these unique situations, a request for exception to the child welfare degree requirements can be considered.

If the proposed candidate for hire/promotion does not possess a qualifying degree or the required years of experience as previously listed, an exception request must be submitted **prior to** hiring/promoting the individual. In the event an employee is hired or promoted and it is discovered later that the educational and/or experiential requirements were not met, the matter is not available for review as an exception; rather, the information will be referred to the MDHHS' Division of Child Welfare Licensing (DCWL) as a contract and/or licensing rule violation.

MDHHS and private agencies seeking exception must submit the following documentation to MDHHSStaffQualifications@michigan.gov:

1. Documentation of diligent efforts to hire fully qualified candidates. Diligent efforts include no less than three employment postings which resulted in no qualified and acceptable candidates. Documentation must include information regarding the number and location of the postings.
2. Information on the resulting candidate pools, including degree and experience, which summarizes why each candidate was not qualified and/or acceptable for hire/promotion.
3. Documentation of the proposed candidate's degree requirements, including transcripts that demonstrate all coursework that could be considered in assessing applicable human behavioral science coursework.
 - a. The coursework must minimally satisfy Child Placing Agency Rule 400.12205 which allows a degree to be considered qualified if the individual has at least 25 percent of course credits earned towards the degree in human behavioral sciences.
4. Documentation of the proposed candidate's child welfare experience, including a current employment history detailed by month/year.

MDHHS will convene the Qualifications Committee, comprised of representatives from the Children's Services Agency (CSA), Office of Human Resources, and Bureau of Organizational Services, to review the request for exception. The final determination will be returned in writing to the agency with a copy to DCWL and MDHHS' Office of Human Resources, as appropriate, within 10 business days of receipt of a completed exception request. The committee's decisions are final and there are no further opportunities for appeal.

Protocol for Updating Accepted Human Behavioral Science Degrees

The child welfare workforce may encounter new degrees from accredited colleges and universities that may meet Civil Service, DCWL and ISEP requirements and be added to the list of accepted human behavioral science degrees.

In the event MDHHS is notified of a degree that may be considered qualifying and an MDHHS or private agency has identified a candidate, the committee will conduct a review of the degree (not the individual's transcripts and coursework) to evaluate the appropriateness of the degree's inclusion on the list of accepted degrees.

Questions regarding a child welfare worker or supervisor's qualifications should be directed to your assigned Business Service Center (BSC)/CWFO child welfare analyst, or the staff qualifications mailbox for review prior to hiring or promotion, commencement of training, and most crucially, the assignment of any child welfare responsibilities.