

## Stipends and Paid Placements

The foundation of the social work placement in social work education revolves around the dynamic of the student's learning process being "at the center" of the experience. Payment of any kind (i.e., stipend, hourly, per diem, gas/travel expenses not otherwise covered, etc.) can tempt this dynamic to look more like employment than student learning. Therefore, a shared knowledge of payment creates the opportunity for intentional discussion and possible planning so that the sacredness of "being a student rather than an employee" remains intact.

Any placement agency that will be offering payment of any kind (stipend, hourly, per diem, gas/travel expenses to and from the site, etc.) to a social work student during the dates of the formal internship must submit a statement to the Field Education Coordinator prior to the confirmation of the student intern. This statement shall include the amount, the payment process, and the agency policy/practice that accompanies this decision.

If this is a placement working with undergraduate (BSW) or Foundation (1<sup>st</sup>) year MSW students, it will be important for the Field Instructor to talk with the Field Education Coordinator to discuss the complexities of this practice. Unlike Specialized Practice (2<sup>nd</sup>) year MSW students who all have an opportunity to apply and be accepted to a paid placement, these students do not have a choice in placement. This invites a cautionary stance, as it sets up a situation where some students would be picked for a "paid" placement and others would not.

When the Field Education Coordinator becomes aware of a placement that offers payment (stipend, hourly, per diem, gas/travel expenses to and from the site, etc.), opportunities for students to apply to the paid placement will be made available to all eligible students as soon as possible before the beginning of the students' placement application process. The Coordinator will forward all eligible applicants to personnel at the placement site, who would then be responsible for choosing both which candidate(s) to interview and to whom they would ultimately like to offer the placement. Students who applied but were not offered the paid placement would work with the Field Education Coordinator using the existing student matching protocols (see the "Student Matching" policy on the UVM Department of Social Work [Field Education](#) website) to secure a placement.

Students may request of the Field Education Coordinator to complete a social work internship at their place of employment by utilizing the Application for Placement Within Student's Current Place of Employment which can be found under the Students/Applications tab on the UVM Department of Social Work [Field Education](#) website. The Field Education Coordinator will make a concerted effort to honor the student's request for such a placement, but approval is contingent upon the placement meeting required eligibility criteria. All Placement-at-Employment proposals must be approved prior to the academic year or semester the internship is slated to begin.

All field students who receive payment from their placement agency (including Placement-at-Employment scenarios) must inform their Faculty Field Liaison about this and put the details of this arrangement in their Learning Agreement and Learning Agreement Addendum assignments.