

Foundations: Summary of the Advisor Role and Field Work

What is a Foundations Advisor?

Staff designated by your county agency to support new hires completing the Foundations Series. Advisors and new hires schedule time together throughout the Foundations series to complete a total of eight (8) field work assignments. Field work modules are structured assignments that include discussion questions and practice scenarios. Advisors work with each new hire to complete these structured assignments in E-Learn. While meeting together, the new hire logs in to the field work module in E-Learn and together with their advisor, documents key discussion points. New hires receive training credit for completion of their field work assignments, which are required modules to obtain direct service worker certification.

What is Foundations Field Work?

Field work promotes the opportunity for new child welfare professionals to transfer learning from training sessions to the field and county/agency specific practices while working toward their direct service worker certification. The Foundations advisor plays a crucial role in supporting this transfer of learning and is involved in all eight field work assignments.

Field work modules are completed in E-Learn (e-learn.pitt.edu). Each module has two components: (1) individual work completed by the new hire, and (2) an assignment that must be completed together between the advisor and new hire. The advisor and the participant must meet together (in-person or remotely) to complete each field work assignment.

Additional Advisor and Field Work Highlights

- Your county must designate an advisor for each new hire completing Foundations.
 - Your county may designate the same advisor for all new hires, a different advisor for each new hire or each field work module, or some combination to best meet the needs of your new hires. Advisors may be supervisors, senior caseworkers or other designated staff.
- First time advisors must learn about the advisor role by completing *Foundations: Advisor Role Overview*.
 - Advisor codes needed to access each field work assignment are included in this course.
 - Email cwtpreg@pitt.edu to access this course.
- The timeframe for completing field work modules is flexible. Field work modules can be completed by the new hire and advisor throughout the series during times most convenient for the advisor and the participant. Important timing notes:
 - *Foundations Module 2: Introduction to Engagement* field work must be completed prior to participants attending the first in-person/Zoom session (Foundations Module 2: Introduction to Engagement simulation).
 - All other field work modules must be completed with the advisor prior to participants accessing and completing *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development* (the final module and field work assignment in the series).
- All field work assignments and meetings between advisors and Foundations participants may be completed remotely. Tips for remote completion are included on the following pages.
- Contact your CWRC Regional Resource Specialist (RRS) for support. Find contact information here: <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/OE-RT.htm>

Summary of Foundations Field Work Modules

Module 2: Introduction to Engagement

Module 2: Introduction to Engagement, is a two-hour online module that informs child welfare professionals about the skills needed to engage, build rapport, and foster helping relationships with children, youth, and families (1 hour), and asks child welfare professionals to discuss the use of engagement skills with the children, youth, and families in their counties with their advisors (1 hour). This module introduces child welfare professionals to the following engagement skills: effective use of authority, tone of voice, body language, cultural humility, and active listening.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 1: Introduction to Child Welfare Practice* (online module in E-Learn).
- Participants must complete this module before attending *Foundations Module 2: Introduction to Engagement Simulation* (Instructor-led session).

Advisor Note: If completing this field work remotely, ask the participant to log in to the module in E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Module 4: Safety Assessment

Safety Assessment Field Work provides an opportunity to practice completing an In-Home Safety Assessment Worksheet based on the family from the *Module 4: Safety Assessment Simulation*. This module will provide guidance for completing the worksheet and will provide advisors an opportunity to step through the worksheet with their staff to provide feedback and recommendations to be incorporated into case work practice. This online field work builds on the competencies of Engagement and Assessment and supports the child welfare professional to ensure their work is well-documented.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 4: Safety Assessment Simulation* (Instructor-led session).
- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development* (online module in E-Learn); however, participants will benefit by completing this field work prior to attending *Foundations Module 5: Risk Assessment* (Instructor-led session).

Advisor Note: Ask the participant to email their completed safety assessment to you and review the document prior to meeting together. Have the safety assessment document with you when meeting with the participant. If meeting with the participant remotely, ask the participant to log in to E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Module 5: Risk Assessment

Assessing risk of maltreatment is a basic case work task that directly informs the implementation of child welfare services. *Module 5: Risk Assessment Field Work* is a continuation of *Module 5: Risk Assessment* and provides an opportunity to practice completing a Risk Assessment Worksheet based on the family case from the *Module 4: Safety Assessment Simulation*. This module provides guidance for completing the Risk Assessment Worksheet and provides advisors an opportunity to step through the worksheet with their staff to provide feedback and recommendations to incorporate into case work practice. This online fieldwork supports the child welfare professional to ensure skilled assessments are well-documented to support effective service implementation.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 5: Risk Assessment* (Instructor-led session).

- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development*.

Advisor Note: Ask the participant to email their completed risk assessment to you and review the document prior to meeting together. Have the risk assessment document with you when meeting with the participant. If meeting with the participant remotely, ask the participant to log in to E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Module 7: Introduction to Dependency Court Practice

This field work is a 2-hour online module which provides participants a structure through which to observe an adjudicatory court hearing. Participants will receive a checklist of information to complete while observing a dependency hearing. Participants will then complete the checklist online in E-learn and review with their advisor.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 7: Introduction to Dependency Court Practice Simulation* (Instructor-led session).
- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development*.

Advisor Note: Participants may observe an in-person or a remote dependency court hearing. Advisors may wish to meet with the participant in preparation for their observation and must meet with the participant after the observation. If meeting remotely following the observation, ask the participant to log in to E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Module 9: Achieving Permanency

Case management for families with children in out-of-home care requires the child welfare professional to be skilled at teaming with families to plan and coordinate services and monitor those services for effectiveness. It also requires the ability to know when and how to respond to a child, youth, and family's changing needs and circumstances. Adjustments to plans must be implemented with adherence to law and policy, application of the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Practice Model, and with a unity of effort towards outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being. This module provides participants an opportunity to shadow an experienced child welfare professional during case activities for a child in out-of-home care. The participant will identify what new information was discovered and apply critical thinking skills to decide, hypothetically, if adjustments to the plan are necessary. Then, the advisor and participant will meet to discuss service coordination and how decisions are made to adjust plans and services for families with children in out-of-home care. Guidance is provided to the advisor to help assess the decision-making skills of their staff and provide feedback to enhance their ability to know when adjustments to plans are needed.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 9: Achieving Permanency* (Instructor-led session).
- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development*.

Advisor Note: Participants may observe an in-person or a remote home visit. Meet with the participant after the home visit to complete the field work module in E-Learn. Ask the participant to log in to E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Personal Safety

Child welfare professionals engage with children and families daily, often while involved in highly emotional and stressful situations. For example, families may be upset with the referral to the county children and youth agency and the caseworker arriving at their home to talk about their children. Families and caregivers might be experiencing stress or trauma, which can lead to adverse reactions. This online module addresses the importance of effectively engaging families within this often emotionally charged context and provides strategies to increase personal safety in child welfare practice through Engagement, Planning, Law and Policy, and Monitoring and Adjusting (2 hours). The field work module provides a structure for a discussion between a child welfare professional and an advisor about agency and child welfare professional specific safety strategies (1 hour).

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 1: Introduction to Child Welfare Practice*.
- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development*.

Advisor Note: The participant should complete the first two hours of this module individually. The final section (approximately 1 hour) will be completed together between the participant and the advisor. If completing this field work remotely, ask the participant to log in to the module in E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Self-Care

Foundations: Self-Care Field Work is a one-credit-hour module to be taken following the online module *Foundations: Self-Care*. This field work module is designed to allow participants to have a structured conversation with their advisor to identify potential strategies to use to enhance their professional well-being. In this module, participants and advisors will discuss potential situations that may occur in the field and how to manage these situations including: removing a child from a home, testifying in court, managing disclosures of trauma, and working with colleagues and team members in a productive way.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing *Foundations Module 1: Introduction to Child Welfare Practice*.
- Participants must complete this module before *Foundations Module 10: Professional Development*.

Advisor Note: If completing this field work remotely, ask the participant to log in to the module in E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Screen sharing using Skype, Zoom or another platform is ideal. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.

Module 10: Professional Development

Professional Development reviews the ten child welfare competencies and explores the importance and benefits of professional development. The module provides participants the opportunity to consider their competency strengths and needs to support competency growth for their current position as well as to support longevity in the field of child welfare. This module also provides fieldwork activities for the participant and guidance for the advisor to facilitate the completion of the Individual Needs Assessment (INA). It encourages the advisor and participant to apply learning and collaborate to create a professional development plan to support the participant's longer-term career goals.

- Participants receive access to this module after completing all other online, field work and instructor-led modules in the Foundations series.
- This is the final module that participants must complete in the Foundations Series.

Advisor Note: Ask the participant to email their completed INA to you and review prior to meeting together. When meeting with the participant, have the INA document available for reference, ask the participant to log in to the field work module in E-Learn and share their screen (if possible). Skype, Zoom or another platform with screen sharing is ideal for meeting with the participant. If screen sharing is not possible, ask the participant to verbally share the instructions and discussion questions on each slide in the E-Learn module.