

**School of Social Work
College of Health and Human Sciences
Georgia State University
Atlanta, Georgia**

**BSW and 1st-Year MSW
Competencies and Practice Behaviors**

Competency 1: Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

- Advocate for client access to the services of social work
- Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
- Attend to professional roles and boundaries
- Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
- Engage in career-long learning
- Use supervision and consultation

Competency 2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

- Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice
- Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW Code of Ethics
- Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts
- Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

Competency 3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

- Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom
- Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

Competency 4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.

- Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power
- Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups
- Recognize and communicate understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
- View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants

Competency 5: Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination
- Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice
- Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

Competency 6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

- Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry
- Use research evidence to inform practice

Competency 7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

- Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation
- Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

Competency 8: Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

- Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being
- Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action

Competency 9: Respond to contexts that shape practice.

- Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
- Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services

Competency 10: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Competency 10a: Engagement

- Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
- Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes

Competency 10b: Assessment

- Collect, organize, and interpret client data
- Assess client strengths and limitations
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives
- Select appropriate intervention strategies

Competency 10c: Intervention

- Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
- Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities
- Help clients resolve problems
- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients
- Facilitate transitions and endings

Competency 10d: Evaluation

- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions