# SOCIAL WORK

What can I do with this degree?

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<th>AREAS</th>
<th>EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC WELFARE</strong></td>
<td>Public welfare agencies</td>
<td>Public welfare is designed to provide services and support for poor, disabled, ill, elderly, or juvenile clients. Volunteer at homeless shelters, soup kitchens, battered women homes, literacy programs, or other social service agencies to get experience.</td>
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<td>Administration and Planning</td>
<td>Private social service agencies</td>
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<td>Case Management</td>
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<td>Program Evaluation</td>
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<td>Policy Setting</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CRIMINAL JUSTICE CORRECTIONS</strong></td>
<td>Prisons and correctional facilities</td>
<td>Social workers in corrections focus on rehabilitation of clients. Obtain experience by volunteering at a corrections facility or victims program such as a rape crisis center.</td>
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<td>Counseling/Therapy</td>
<td>Courts</td>
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<td>Probation</td>
<td>Probation offices</td>
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<td>Parole</td>
<td>Victim services organizations</td>
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<td>Victim Assistance</td>
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<td><strong>SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK</strong></td>
<td>Elementary and secondary schools</td>
<td>School systems may employ social workers to help students cope with and resolve emotional, developmental, or educational difficulties. Gain experience with children at daycare centers, camps, or Scouts.</td>
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<td>Clinical Social Work</td>
<td>School districts</td>
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<td>Pupil Personnel Services</td>
<td>Head start centers</td>
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<td>Early intervention programs</td>
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<td>Instruction</td>
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<td><strong>CHILD WELFARE</strong></td>
<td>Public and private child welfare agencies</td>
<td>Child welfare social workers strive to ensure the safety and well-being of children through treatment of the whole family. Volunteer at daycares, child shelters, camps, YMCA, Scouts, or other agencies that aid youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Management</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Foster care organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Child daycare</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GERONTOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>Gerontology involves working with older adults, healthy or ill, and their families. Get involved with programs or organizations designed for senior citizens.</td>
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<td>Advocacy/Intervention</td>
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<td>Programming</td>
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<td>Public Policy</td>
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### AREAS

#### CLINICAL
- Counseling
- Therapy

#### ADMINISTRATION
- Management
- Policy Development
- Planning

#### RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
- Research
- Teaching

#### OCCUPATIONAL
- Counseling
- Education
- Wellness Promotion
- Employee Assistance
- Organizational Development
- Human Resources

#### DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
- Case Management
- Program Planning and Evaluation
- Research
- Policy Development

### EMPLOYERS

- Community mental health centers
- Psychiatric hospitals
- Residential and day treatment hospitals
- Employment assistance programs
- Schools
- Family service agencies
- Private practice

- Family service agencies
- Child welfare departments
- Social service agencies
- State mental health departments
- Employee assistance programs
- Probation departments
- Public welfare agencies
- Public interest groups
- Local, state, and federal government

- Colleges and universities
- Research institutes
- Local, state and federal government
- Advocacy organizations

- Businesses
- Corporations
- Employee assistance programs
- Labor unions

- Community residential homes
- State and local agencies
- Medical facilities
- Schools

### DESCRIPTIONS/STRATEGIES

- Clinical social workers are found in a variety of settings that provide therapeutic counseling to clients.
  - Master of Social Work (MSW) is required.

- Administrators are involved with planning, budgeting, public relations, marketing, supervising, operations management, fund raising, and other crucial responsibilities that keep an organization functioning.
  - Obtain an MSW and gain management experience.

- Research provides data and statistics important in program implementation and policy development.
  - Doctor of Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required.

- Occupational social workers help employees to be more productive and satisfied.

- Social workers in this area help people with disabilities to adjust and to lead productive lives.
  - Volunteer at special needs camps, daycares, schools, or hospitals to gain experience.
### AREAS

**HEALTH CARE**
- Case Management
- Counseling
- Program Development
- Administration
- Research

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**
- Program and Community Development
- Advocacy
- Politics
- Education
- Planning

### EMPLOYERS
- Hospitals
- Community health centers
- Outpatient clinics
- Public health programs
- Health maintenance organizations (HMOs)
- Nursing homes
- Group homes
- Hospice
- Veterans Administration hospitals

In health care, social workers facilitate medical and emotional treatment of patients. Choose volunteer settings such as hospitals, the American Red Cross, or AIDS agencies to get experience.

Social workers in this area work with existing organizations to improve conditions for specific groups, enhance quality of living, and involve community members in the political process. Get involved with grassroots causes and community agencies.

### GENERAL INFORMATION
- Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) prepares individuals for entry-level direct practice.
- Master of Social Work (MSW) is necessary to provide therapy and for advancement to supervisory or administrative positions.
- Doctorate in Social Work (DSW) or Ph.D. usually required for positions in teaching, research, and administration. Desirable for some clinical positions and private practice.
- Complete a degree from a college or university program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Programs include practical field experience.
- Most states require licensure, certification, or registration.
- The field practicum is used to determine suitability for this profession and to provide exposure to various practice settings and clients.
- Candidates should possess empathy for others, an appreciation for diversity, and an interest in social change.
- Social workers serve a range of client systems (individuals, families, groups, communities) as they attempt to enhance social functioning.
- Social work is unique given its dual focus on the person and the environment.

Note: Much of this information was adapted from *Choices: Careers in Social Work* by the National Association of Social Workers.

Prepared by the Career Planning staff of Career Services at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. (1998, Revised 2003)

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