

SOCIAL WORKERS generations STRONG

TYPES OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers hold more than 700,000 jobs in the United States

In thousands of ways, social workers help people help themselves. They assist people of every age and background, in every corner of the country – and in many different industries and settings.

Below, you'll find various kinds of social work.



Administration And Management Social Workers

- Social work administrators are proactive leaders in both private and public agencies that provide services to clients.
- They may oversee some aspect of an organization, such as governmental bodies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Many have strong backgrounds in business or management.
- Some 14 percent of social workers work in state and local government.



Social Work Advocacy and Community Organization

- Advocacy is one of the keystones of social work practice. Social work advocates champion the rights of individuals and communities with the goal of achieving social justice.
- Community organizing and advocacy work with many people to counterbalance wealthy and powerful groups and the means they have to protect and better themselves.
- Historically, community-organizing and social work were responses to the many forces that created inequality in our society.



Justice and Corrections Social Workers

- Justice and Corrections social workers can be found in courts, rape crisis centers, police departments, jails and prisons.
- They help inmates focus on rehabilitation by providing therapy, drug or alcohol treatment and life-skills trainings. This helps ex-offenders function once they go back to their communities.
- Social workers can be probation or parole officers. They can help arrange for services such as job training, finding a group home, child care and transportation.
- Social workers can be involved in restitution and victim assistance services.
- They can be expert witnesses in courts or work with attorneys.
- Social workers in police departments can help with domestic disputes or provide trauma and critical incident services to enforcement officers.



Social Work In Aging

- Social workers link older adults with services that help them live independently and with dignity, thereby maximizing their quality of life and participation in society.
- Social work with older adults focuses on the physical, psychological, social, and economic aspects of daily living.
- They also protect older adults from harm.



Mental Health and Clinical Social Work

- Clinical social workers are one of the nation's largest groups of mental health service providers.
- In rural areas social workers may be the only available licensed provider of mental health services.
- Most provide direct services to individuals, families and groups.
- Many work in solo or group private practices helping people experiencing relationship issues, anxiety, depression, and other disorders.
- Focusing on a person in their environment is central to the clinical social work practice.



Mental Health and Substance Use Social Workers

- Of the more than 125,000 social workers working in this area, many help individuals, families, and communities find ways to recover from substance use.
- They provide a much-needed ecological perspective to treatment that focuses on the client in relation to family and neighborhood environments, community support systems, cultural attitudes, and policies.
- They can be found doing case management, group and individual therapy, family counseling, advocacy for jobs and housing needs, community resource development, education, and policy making.



Occupational and Employment Assistance Program (EAP) Social Work

- Occupational social workers work corporations, businesses and associations to help them re-engineer their structure and methods to improve efficiency, reactivity, productivity and morale.
- They may also work for a union and be involved in job counseling and organizing.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) social workers have varied daily tasks. They can help an executive cope with the stress of an impending corporate takeover or counsel an anorexic young trainee.
- EAP social workers provide services in substance use, domestic violence, single parenting, and vocational rehabilitation issues.
- Many EAPs also manage mental health services for corporations.



Child Welfare Social Workers

- Child welfare social workers serve some of the most vulnerable children, youths, and families.
- They specialize in building on the strengths of families and help them provide a safe and nurturing environment for children.
- However, when families are unable to do this, social workers must intervene to protect children from harm.
- Child welfare social workers, of which there are nearly 340,000 nationwide, ensure that children and youths who have experienced abuse or neglect are supported through a range of services.



Policy and Planning Social Work

- Policy and planning social workers seek to have an influence on large numbers of people and solve a social problem.
- Social workers in this field address such issues as child abuse, homelessness, poverty, violence and racism.
- They analyze policies, programs and regulations to see what is most effective in addressing a social problem.
- They identify social problems, study needs and related issues, conduct research, propose legislation and even foster coalitions of groups with similar issues to address a problem.
- These social workers each day work with the media, policymakers, lawmakers and others to bring about change.



Developmental Disabilities Social Work

- Social workers help parents of children with developmental disabilities understand their legal rights.
- They help parents learn to be advocates and find special services that enable their children to be as independent as possible.
- They help parents form support networks so they can get encouragement from other parents, work more closely with their extended families in parenting, and develop methods of self-care.



Politics Social Work

- There is a natural progression in the careers of many social workers from activism to political leadership.
- Social workers possess skills that make them well suited to hold public office and build support for issues.
- The first Cabinet member in the 1930s was social worker Frances Perkins. The first woman elected to Congress was social worker Jeannette Rankin.
- Social workers are increasingly holding elective offices from school boards to city and county government to state legislations all the way to the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.
- There is a Congressional Social Work Caucus that enables social workers in Congress to focus on issues important to the profession.
- NASW has its Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) committee to promote candidates, including social workers, who support social work values.



Health Care Social Work

- Since the early 1900s, professionally trained social workers have helped people deal with personal and social factors that affect health and wellness.
- Some health care social workers, of which there are 180,500 nationwide, are in direct services and concentrate on individuals, families, and small groups.
- Others work in settings where the focus is on planning, administration, and policy.
- In the health care setting, social workers may conduct research, develop programs, and administer social work and other departments.



Public Welfare Social Work

- Social workers in public welfare help facilitate income and support services for some of society's most vulnerable people.
- These social workers may work with children, older adults and people living with chronic medical or disabling conditions.
- Social workers who work in public welfare help these populations meet basic human needs, either through direct services or as administrators, managers and program evaluators of the public welfare system.
- Public welfare social work entails planning, administering and financial programs; training and supervising staff; and setting and evaluating standards and criteria for service delivery.



International Social Work

- The functions of social work in international development are diverse.
- They include direct services in communities, refugee camps, orphanages, hospitals, and schools.
- Many may also work to support the efforts of national governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernment organizations to enhance social well-being.



School Social Work

- School social workers help students address troubles that could interfere with their learning.
- Social workers in schools act as a connection for school, home and community services to help children with emotional, developmental and educational needs.
- School social workers are often the first to spot a child may be confronting at home or in the community and first to intervene and find ways to stop more serious problems from developing.
- They help mitigate and prevent and resolve problems of drug and alcohol abuse, truancy and school dropout, teenage pregnancy and homelessness.
- Most school social workers work in public and private schools although a small percentage may work in social service agencies, preschool programs, or residential treatment centers for children who are emotionally disturbed.

WHETHER NEWLY IN THE PROFESSION OR SEASONED PROFESSIONALS,
SOCIAL WORKERS MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREERS.

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