

SOCIAL WORK TRAINEE SELECTION PROCESS

The Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Salt Lake City offers a rigorous and rewarding practicum experience for 2nd year/advanced standing MSW students. To select from the large pool of interested students, VA uses an application review and Performance-Based Interview (PBI) process. The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System has 15 stipends available annually to be distributed among students from all affiliated MSW programs.

Applications for paid positions are accepted during the months of January and February prior to the start of Fall placements during any given year. Applications for non-paid positions will be considered year-round based upon each students' eligibility and experience, as well as the availability of a placement. Contact the Social Work Training Director at (801)582-1565, Ext. 4272 or timothy.carr@va.gov for specific deadlines and information for the current year.

A complete application packet must contain:

Informational Sheet (sent upon request) – list of student preferences for available practicum positions for this year

Statement of Interest – Please be sure to address the following items:

- Goals for your practicum placement
- Primary reason(s) for your interest in social work
- Any specific experiences that have prepared you for a clinical practicum

Current Resume – Consider using one of the following links or other resources to develop a professional resume:

- USAJOBS.gov "Resume Writing" video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YX7o1PBoFk>

[watch?v=8YX7o1PBoFk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YX7o1PBoFk)

- Department of Workforce Services "Resume Critique Form": <https://jobs.utah.gov/jobseeker/oltools/resumecritique.pdf>

Letter of Reference – Although optional, submission of a letter of recommendation will improve your chances of being selected for an interview. This letter should be written by your first-year practicum instructor. (If you are an advanced standing student, the letter should come from your BSW practicum instructor.) Letters should address past social work experience/preparation and speak to your capacity to succeed in a clinically rigorous placement.

PLEASE NOTE: Completed application packets will be reviewed and the top applicants will be referred for an in-person interview. Those selected for an interview will be contacted to schedule an appointment. The VA uses a Performance Based Interview (PBI) process which provides an opportunity to share current or past experiences illustrating your knowledge, skills, and abilities regarding a specific question or topic. To prepare, you may want to visit <http://www.va.gov/PBI/index.asp>. You can also search the internet using the terms "Performance Based Interview " or "PBI."

For those ultimately invited to fill a VA practicum position, specific program placement will be based upon PBI scores. Students with the highest scores will have first choice of placements (selected by students from the Practicum Informational Sheet). While all students may not receive her or his first choice of placement, all practicum experiences will fully satisfy University requirements and expectations. VA practicum instructors will do everything possible to ensure students have a positive learning experience throughout the school year.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System