

Empowering today's students to
become tomorrow's leaders.

practicums.dcf.ks.gov



The DCF
Practicum
Experience


Work with Us
Believe with Us
Thrive with Us



Why DCF Student Services?

Letter From the Secretary

The Student Services Team at the Kansas Department for Children and Families is a program built on the vision of empowering today's students to become tomorrow's leaders. At our agency, we believe that meaningful learning happens through real-world experiences. That's why we are proud to offer practicum and internship opportunities designed to inspire growth, foster leadership and shape the next generation of professionals in public service.



Our mission is to recruit and empower students who embody ambition, compassion, confidence, responsibility and accountability. Through hands-on learning and mentorship, our program supports the development of valuable skills and knowledge as well as the insight and passion needed to make a lasting, positive impact in the lives of others.

I invite you to explore practicum and internship opportunities at DCF to see how your talents could enrich the communities we serve and help shape the future we are building together.

Warm regards,

Laura Howard

Laura Howard
Secretary
Kansas Department for Children and Families



About Us...

Established in August 2022 as a statewide initiative, DCF's Student Services Team supports up to **80 paid social work practicums** and **internships** across the state each year. Supervisors provide weekly supervision, support and opportunities for students, tailoring and enhancing each student's learning experience. Learn more about our mission at practicums.dcf.ks.gov.

What We Believe:



People have the capacity to progress, succeed, grow and do well in life.



People are the experts on their lives and have their own voices, choices, needs, strengths and life stories.



We value communities and the people who make them unique.



We lead with authenticity, curiosity and respect. We care about each other, our work and the people we serve.



More Than an Education...

Let's work together to customize an internship option that works for you!

Practicum positions are available within Child Protection Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (CPS) and Independent Living (IL) with cross training available in the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC), Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services and additional program areas.

Students will have an opportunity to round out their social work education by working with clients, community partners, service providers and other program areas within DCF.

Additional internship positions are available for Human Service-related degrees such as Sociology, Psychology, Criminal Justice and Child and Family Services. DCF's Student Services team is willing to work with you to customize an internship option that works for you!

Ready to apply? Visit practicums.dcf.ks.gov and click the "Contact Us" button to email DCF Student Services.

Student experiences include:



Ethical Decision Making



Evidence-Based Practices



Professional Documentation



Direct Client Contact



Shadowing Opportunities



Engagement, Interviewing and Assessment Skills



Policy and Practice



Available Resources



Social workers at the Kansas Department for Children and Families answer the question "What does being a social worker mean to you?" during National Social Work Month in March.

What's Different About the DCF Practicum Experience?

At DCF, we believe in helping to shape the future workforce by offering comprehensive practicum and internship opportunities that provide hands-on experience in a variety of fields! Whether you are a social work student looking to round out your education, wanting more experience as you pursue a master's degree or are looking for a more customized option, DCF's paid positions are the perfect place to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and career readiness.

Read what current and former students had to say about how their experience at DCF helped shape their skills, confidence and future goals. Learn more about practicum opportunities and internships at practicums.dcf.ks.gov.

#WorkBelieveThrivewithDCF

"My internship experience with DCF has furthered my understanding of the child welfare field and has allowed me to continue with a position that allows me to help children and families. The people and culture at DCF are so welcoming and supportive."

-Serenity Xiong, DCF employee and former practicum student.



Passion Into Purpose

DCF Practicum Student Q&A



Elizabeth

Walden University
Master of Social Work

Why did you want to go into social work?

"I have always wanted to help people and advocate for those that cannot speak for themselves, especially in the mental health field."

Why did you choose to complete your practicum at DCF?

"DCF was one of the few agencies that provided a hands-on approach to practice. I liked that it was not just shadowing and the paid internship helped support my family financially."



Abigail

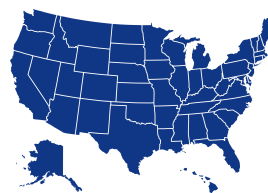
Emporia State University
Bachelor of Humanities and Social Sciences

What advice would you give to students considering an internship or practicum?

"Don't be afraid to ask questions. The more you ask the more knowledge you will gain in this field."

What have you learned during your experience with DCF?

"DCF is often the bridge between other agencies and communication is important. I also learned to keep an open mind and to understand boundaries."



DCF has hosted students from over 30 universities across Kansas and the US.



DCF Practicum students and supervisors attend the NASW-KS Legislative Education Advocacy Day (LEAD) in March.

Real World Practice, Professional Growth

Stepping into a practicum or internship with our Student Services team gives students a deeply enriching learning experience rooted in real-world application, intentional mentorship and reflective growth.

Classroom Theory to Meaningful Impact

Student experiences are designed to integrate academic knowledge with real-world experience to develop transferable skills and enrich their knowledge of the social service field.

Guided by Mentorship and Supervision

Each student is paired with a Student Services supervisor who helps create learning objectives tailored to the students' desired academic and professional goals.

Building Confidence and Networking Opportunities

Students form professional relationships with staff from DCF and other partner agencies in the community. These networks can support the student's future career goals.

Work, Believe and Thrive with Us!

DCF is dedicated to creating a workplace where our students and employees can grow, succeed and make a difference.




Work with Us


Believe with Us



Thrive with Us

Beyond the Classroom...

Events, Awards and Nominations



Students attend Social Work Advocacy day at the Statehouse, one of the many opportunities offered during a practicum program.

Recognizing remarkable dedication to the social work profession and excellence in field education.

Supervisor Awards:

Serena Casteneda: KU Margo Award Nominee 2025

Yesenia Ceja Ramirez: KU Margo Award Nominee 2025

Megan Reiss: FHSU Outstanding Field Instructor Award BSW 2023

Dawn Roads: FHSU Outstanding Field Instructor Award BSW 2025

Tina Abney: Excellence in Supervision Outstanding Supervisor Award 2023

Student Awards:

FHSU Outstanding Student Award 2023

KU Student Margo Award Winner 2023



DCF Practicum students had a chance to attend advanced skills trainings from social workers serving in the Kansas legislature during LEAD.



An Excellent Foundation

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICUMS



Connect with Us

To learn more about our practicum and
internship opportunities:



[*practicums.dcf.ks.gov*](https://practicums.dcf.ks.gov)

