Date: April 21, 2020

To: All Accredited Human Service Programs

From: Dr. Yvonne Chase, CSHSE President

RE: Responses to COVID-19

With the onset of COVID-19, universities quickly moved to online courses and students (and faculty) were prohibited from being on campus. In a previous letter to all accredited programs, I indicated that institutional policies, state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards. Different approaches are being taken in various programs, depending on their resources and the extent to which technology is available. It is important for programs to document how they are responding and to include those details in their next self-study.

We have received several inquiries regarding the completion of field hours for this semester. Programs may use the following policy guidance from CSHSE:

Human Service programs may determine that hours to date for students are sufficient to count for completion of their field placement, as long as the instructor determines that the hours to date have addressed the expectations and student learning outcomes for this semester's work. Programs must document the number of hours completed by the student and criterion used to determine successful completion.

Date: March 10, 2020

To: All Accredited Human Service Programs

FROM: Yvonne Chase, President, CSHSE

RE: The Coronavirus

As universities make plans for the possibility of temporary closures due to the spread of the coronavirus, CSHSE is receiving inquiries regarding the possibility of students in field placements being unable to complete the number of required field placement hours before the end of the semester. Programs are asking if this could negatively affect their accreditation status.

CSHSE recognizes that colleges and universities are taking actions in preparations for a potential Covid-19 outbreak on campuses. Accredited programs should follow the CSHSE policy on Accreditation Standards and State and/or Local Laws Governing Human Services Education Programs Seeking Accreditation (Appendix H, July 2019 Member Handbook, p. 95)

Institutional policies, state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards. If your campus closes and CSHSE Standards cannot be met (e.g. fieldwork hours, curriculum instruction), the program should follow the institution's directives as to student makeup of credit, class, fieldwork, internship, practicum, or clinical hours. Programs should make every effort to comply with the CSHSE Standards as much as possible and should consider alternate ways of having students complete their field hours in this type of emergency (e.g., video conferencing with client simulated interactions, special case studies or other assignments that will reflect the learning process taking place in their field placements, etc.).
If your university puts these types of emergency measures in place, when the program submits the next accreditation cycle self-study, make note of this emergency and how the college and program handled the situation (within the self-study's introductory section where the program shares changes that have occurred over the past five years).

CSHSE will continue to follow the accreditation timelines as outlined in the July 2019 Member Handbook (pp 19-20). Site visits will be mutually arranged with the program, program’s institution, and site visitors. We will need to monitor the situation on a day-to-day basis as well as addressing the impact for the future. This is a learning process and your approaches will provide good examples for us all.