

Specialization Level: Management and Policy (MAP)

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy know the NASW Code of Ethics and understand how the Code applies to their specific professional endeavors and behaviors. They understand the role of an organizational and policy leader as a voice of organizational and community values. They are fully aware of practices that may constitute a conflict of interest and how to avoid them. They are proficient in managing their affective reactions and setting and maintaining boundaries in their relationships with clients, supervisees, supervisors, volunteers, and contractors. They treat employees and property with respect, and model ethical behaviors and mentor others in adhering to ethical principles. Social work practitioners focused on management and policy recognize how their personal values may enhance or hinder their ability to work effectively within organizational and policy contexts. They additionally understand the ethical implications of current and emerging technologies within those contexts.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Use critical thinking to apply the NASW Code of Ethics to analyze ethical issues related to management and policy;
- Identify, through processes of self-examination and supervision, personal values that enhance or hinder one's ability to work effectively within organizational and policy contexts; and
- Use a range of technologies ethically within a larger management and policy context, including assuring confidentiality of client data and appropriate use of informed consent in interventions.

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy are committed to assuring that the work of the organizations and communities in which they practice, and the policies which they advocate and implement, respect and advance the rights of all those served, all those employed therein, and all those impacted by that work. They are aware of important laws and other policies that affect such rights in their work. They are knowledgeable about racism, social inequalities, human rights violations, and other forms of oppression in the communities they serve and their root causes. Accordingly, they develop and implement interventions at multiple system and institutional levels to assure such rights are fully and democratically accepted and integrated into the organizations and communities within which they work. They have the skills to understand how laws and other policies may oppress the rights of others and thus not advance social, racial, economic, or environmental justice, and how laws and other policies may be amended to protect and further human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Social workers engaged in management and policy practice reflect on their reactions to these social, racial, economic, or environmental injustices and discuss them with their colleagues and others in a professional manner.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Contribute to the development and implementation of policies, programs, and practices within the organizations and communities in which they work that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice;
- Identify important laws and other policies that are relevant to human rights, and racial, social, and environmental justice in the organizations and communities in which they practice;
- Contribute to the efforts of the management and leadership of the organizations and communities in which they work to infuse this competency into the implementation of the mission, vision, values, and programs of the organization; and
- Practice democratic leadership by engaging with communities rather than taking action upon them.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy understand how white supremacy, racism, and other forms of stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and oppression intersect to impact groups. Thus, practitioners of social work in management and policy recognize the importance of working to assure openness to and support of efforts to promote anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the organizations and communities in which they serve, and in the policies and programs they advocate and implement. Diversity includes, but is not limited to age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Practitioners of management and policy value the diversity that builds organizational and community strength and equal opportunity. They understand white supremacy and the structure of power and oppression, and how organizational policies and practices can help to ameliorate varying forms of inequality. They have insight into their own biases about certain groups and communities and can reflect on how those biases may affect their ability to carry out their work.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Uphold the concepts of intersectionality, cultural humility, affirmative action, equal opportunity employment, and harassment- and discrimination-free workplaces within the organizational and community settings in which they practice;
- Identify organizational policies and practices that explicitly or implicitly reflect institutional biases based on age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status as well as other forms of discrimination, and suggest effective ways to eliminate such policies and practices; and
- Exercise leadership that embraces the values of anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organizational culture.

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy recognize the value of adapting evidence-informed programs and services for the organizations and communities in which they practice. They also understand the value of using scientific evidence to inform the policies that they advocate and implement. They seek to achieve the best possible outcomes for those they serve, and recognize that the most effective manner to achieve this end is to employ those services and programs that have demonstrated positive results as documented by research and evaluation conducted consistent with sound scientific methods. Social workers practicing in management and policy positions use research conducted by their staff, or appropriate and qualified third parties, to contribute to the body of knowledge on evidence-informed interventions. They have the skills and knowledge to identify qualified staff and third parties to conduct evaluations on the programs and services provided by their organizations. Social workers engaged in management and policy practice can reflect on the processes used to collect and analyze data from evaluations and can present these findings in a non-judgmental manner to board members and other constituents.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Locate, identify and, if appropriate, adapt evidence-informed programs, practices, and policies to the organizational, community, and policy settings in which they serve;
- Support research and evaluation conducted on current programs, services, or policies operated by organizations and communities in a manner that adheres to best practices of informed consent of subjects and the protection of human subjects, and does not otherwise interfere with the quality and accessibility of other programs or services; and
- Apply current research and evaluation literature to inform practices and policies in a manner consistent with the mission, vision, and values of the organization.

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy fully understand the process through which social welfare policy is developed, the underlying values and ideologies that guide policy choices, and the impacts that social welfare policies may have on individuals, families, organizations, and communities. They recognize their roles and responsibilities in participating in policy development, implementation, and analysis. They engage in policy practice at the mezzo and macro levels to promote human rights, and racial, social, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize how policies may enhance or limit disproportionality in life outcomes or status such as morbidity, mortality, poverty, incarceration, and others. Social workers engaged in management and policy practice consistently reflect on the unintended consequences of policies and can develop strategies to address these consequences.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Identify and analyze policies, laws, rules, and governmental regulations that affect human services in their domain of practice and how these affect the organization, financing, and delivery of such services;
- Identify and/or advocate in collaboration with others in support of policies that positively impact the communities they serve;
- Analyze policies for the identification and elimination of elements that result in either intended or unintended consequences leading to biases based on age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status or other discrimination inconsistent with social work values;
- Engage in and support policy practice at the mezzo and macro levels to promote equality, social, economic, racial, and environmental justice and an inclusive human rights framework; and
- Assess the process of policy implementation at the community and organizational levels and analyze the degree of fidelity of implementation to the original intent of the policy.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy practice often work in leadership roles in organizations that deliver social welfare, healthcare, education, and human services or promote policy innovations in these areas. They understand the nature, process, and value of community engagement in order to tailor the services provided to meet the needs and aspirations of the various communities served; to make those services culturally competent and accessible for community members; to promote democratic processes; and to foster a sense of partnership between the organizations and the communities served. They can identify the structure, composition and general membership characteristics of the client, geographic, political, and professional communities in which they operate and engage with these communities. Social workers engaged in management and policy practice reflect on the reasons why they could and could not engage effectively with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and document the lessons learned to ensure successful provisions of services in their future endeavors.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Observe, support, and/or participate with organizational leadership in efforts to establish a dialogue with members of the relevant communities and constituencies being served with the ongoing intention of promoting democratic process and community empowerment;
- Promote an organizational culture that values and rewards community engagement and service by its staff; and
- Identify and promote organizational practices that affirm the meaningful inclusion of community members across organizational levels, including those of governance, management, staff, and volunteers.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy practice have developed the capacity to organize, manage, and support efforts relative to assessing the needs of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. They have the skills to develop and implement organizational, program, and policy evaluations and to create program and strategic plans to meet the current and future needs of the populations served by organizations, the organizations themselves, and the communities that are impacted, given the rapid and ongoing changes in organizational environmental forces.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Observe and/or contribute to organizations' efforts to assess their relationships to their environments, including the emerging internal and external forces affecting the organizations (i.e., through conducting community needs assessments, resource inventories, environmental scans, etc.);
- Engage in self-reflection to identify and counter one's own prejudices and stereotypes in the assessment process;
- Critically examine existing assessment processes to identify and change operations that perpetuate injustices;
- Contribute and add value to the development and implementation of program, organization, and community-wide planning processes designed to position the organization for efficacy in realizing program and organizational missions and goals; and
- Incorporate ongoing organizational and program evaluation and assessment in the analysis and management of program and planning processes.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy practice design and manage the delivery of services and interventions targeted to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This may involve recruiting and retaining an adequate workforce; securing and managing the necessary funds and resources to support the interventions; partnering and collaborating with outside organizations; applying appropriate applications of information technology to support clients, staff and management; assuring services are inclusive and culturally competent; and exercising the initiative and leadership to build or strengthen an organizational culture that recognizes and rewards professionalism along with policies and programs that further social justice.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Observe, identify, lead, and/or support core management functions such as strategic management, human resource management, budget and finance, and information technology in an organizational context;
- Identify and /or apply the concepts, practices, and styles of organizational and community leadership and can assess their own strengths and limitations in these regards;
- Critically examine existing interventions to identify and change those that perpetuate injustices;
- Observe, communicate, and work with organizational and/or community governance and advisory structures;
- Contribute positively as a member of a team conducting marketing and fundraising activities, including grant writing, creating a culture of philanthropy within an organization or community, and serving as stewards of donated resources; and
- Identify how leadership may be used to anchor the mission, vision, and values within an organization; and motivate board members, volunteers, and employees to fulfill their roles in accordance with organizational missions and goals.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy practice must understand the value, importance, and methods of evaluation of interventions with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. They apply critical thinking to design, craft and employ various methods and interpret results to enhance the quality and efficacy of the organization's programs and services. They are also knowledgeable about the existence of evidence-informed services and advocate for the use of these when appropriate. Social workers engaged in management and policy practice have the skills to evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities or identify qualified third parties to do such evaluation. They can reflect on the processes used to collect and analyze evaluation data and can present these findings in a non-judgmental manner to board members and other constituents.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Can identify, critically assess, and employ various methods of program evaluation;
- Apply critical thinking with a social justice lens to the interpretation of evaluation data in a manner that contributes to and enhances the quality and efficacy of services; and
- Translate and present evaluation data to various stakeholders/audiences.

Competency 10: Develop Liberatory Consciousness

Social work practitioners engaged in management and policy practice recognize their roles as liberation workers who are “committed to changing systems and institutions characterized by oppression to create greater equity and social justice” (Love, p. 470, 1980). They also understand and identify how white supremacy, racism, and other forms of stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and oppression intersect to impact groups, organizations, and communities within which they work and live. They recognize their own power as well as systems of power and oppression in the organizations and communities in which they work. Through advocacy, they challenge unjust systems of power and oppression. Such social workers understand and actively engage with the four elements of developing a liberatory consciousness (awareness, analysis, action, and accountability/allyship) to challenge stigma, discrimination, and oppression and promote social justice with groups, organizations, communities, and society regardless of (but not limited to) age, caste, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, generational status, immigration status, legal status, marital status, political ideology, race, nationality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status.

Practitioners of Social Work in Management and Policy:

- Practice awareness through continually examining and acknowledging their own power and privilege and that of the organizations with which they work;
- Analyze how all systems of oppression impact groups, organizations, and communities within which they work and live;
- Act with intention to intervene when they encounter institutional racism and other forms of stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and oppression in groups, organizations, communities, structures, and/or institutions; and
- Hold themselves accountable and practice allyship by consistently being aware of and evaluating how their actions and practices affect others and whether their actions are challenging oppression individually as well as in collaboration with people from marginalized communities.