
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Certification program consists of successful completion of both Child Welfare 1 (Introduction to DCS) and Child Welfare 2 (Core Foundations of the Child Welfare Professional). In addition, internship/field placement must be completed within the Department of Children Services (DCS).

Content Access

Content for Child Welfare 1 and 2 is in the University/DCS Certification Program basecamp. Content consists of the State of Tennessee Department of Children Services “Introduction to DCS” and “Core Foundations of Child Welfare Practice”. Content includes facilitator guides, power points and handouts. Material can be adjusted to fit length of semester/quarter. Activities can be adjusted to meet the needs of your adult learners. Additional guidance or training on the content delivery can be requested.

Eligibility Requirements

To apply for admission to the Certification Program, students must:

- Be a U.S citizen or, if a qualified alien, provide documentation of their eligibility for work in the U.S. for the duration of their study and their possible employment with DCS.
- Possess a valid driver's license, automobile insurance, and reliable transportation.
- Undergo a background check and fingerprinting.
- Be admitted into an accredited Social Work Program at a participating university. Process steps for students:

Program Guidelines

- To remain in good standing, program participants must:
- Remain in good standing at their university.
- Maintain an overall GPA of 2.6 in social work courses.
- Successfully complete and receive a minimum grade of 'B-' for the Child Welfare I & II courses offered by their university.
- Successfully complete the university field placement requirement, which must include a field placement of a minimum of 370 hours in a Tennessee DCS Regional Office.
- Submit all requested information and documentation to DCS (e.g., transcripts, forms, updates).

Application Deadlines

- April 30- Summer acceptance
- June 15- Fall acceptance
- November 15- Spring acceptance

Process Steps for Student

Step 1: Complete the Application for the DCS Child Welfare Certification Program.

Step 2: Complete the following forms needed to perform a criminal background check.

- CS-0319-Application for Service as a Volunteer
- Fingerprint Application

Please complete all required documents and submit them to the regional DCS Volunteer Coordinator or the student's university Field Coordinator. Successful completion of all application materials is required to be considered for entry into the Certification Program.

Step 3: Certification Program students will complete the DCS Internship and be assessed throughout the experience for their readiness to begin as a Case Manager 1 with the department. Students' internships must be 370 hours to be eligible to receive the Tennessee Department of Children's Services Child Welfare Case Management Certification. Certification Program students may apply with the department 120 days prior to graduation.

Step 4: Volunteer coordinator will submit verification that internship, Child Welfare 1 and 2 were successfully completed including uploaded transcripts (provided by the applicant)

Step 5: Certification Program Certificates will be sent to via email to be used in the employment process when applying for employment at The Department of Children Services.

Certified Students enjoy preference form hiring panels for positions within the Department of CHILDREN Services during the interview process. Those who gain employment as a Case Manager 1 (CM1) will receive Case Manager 2 (CM2) salary compensation. In addition, certificated students participate in a shortened pre-service training experience.

Contact information.

Email: ei-dcs.preservice@tn.gov

Webpage: <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/hr/certification-program.html>