



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES  
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**Manual Transmission Letter (MTL)  
Family Programs Office: Statewide Child Welfare Policy Manual**

MTL # 1401-02172016

02/17/2016

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TO: Tim Burch, Director - Clark County Department of Family Services  
Betsey Crumrine, Social Services Manager V - DCFS – District Offices  
Reesha Powell, Social Services Manager – DCFS-District offices  
Amber Howell, Director - Washoe County Department of Social Services

FROM: Jill Marano, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services

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**POLICY DISTRIBUTION:**

Enclosed find the following policy for distribution to all applicable staff within your organization:

- **1401 Educational Stipends**

This policy is/was effective: 01/15/2016

- This policy is new. Please review the policy in its entirety
- This policy replaces the following policy(s): MTL # 1401-071410 Policy Name: 1401 Educational Stipends
- This policy has been revised. Please see below for the type of revision:
  - This is a significant policy revision. Please review this policy in its entirety.
  - This is a minor policy revision: (List page number & summary of change):
  - A policy form has been revised: (List form, page number and summary of change):

**NOTE:**

- Please read the policy in its entirety and note any areas that are additionally required by your agency to be in compliance with the policy enclosed.
- This is an **All STAFF MEMO** and it is the responsibility of the person listed above to disseminate the policy enclosed to appropriate staff within his/her organization and to ensure compliance.

*Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invite participation in decision-making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.*

- The most current version of this policy is posted on the DCFS Website at the following address: <http://dcfs.nv.gov/Policies/> . Please check the table of contents on this page for the link to the chapter you are interested in.

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## 1401.0 Educational Stipends

### 1401.1 Policy Approval Clearance Record

Check one only: <input type="checkbox"/> State Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Policy	This policy supersedes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1401 Educational Stipends 07/01/10</li> </ul>	Number of pages in Policy: 6 Date Policy Effective:
DMG Approval Date:	01/15/2015	Policy Lead: Jan Fragale, SSCIII
Review by Representative from the Office of the Attorney General:	n/a	Signature: n/a
DCFS Administrator Approval:	01/15/2015	Approval at DMG

### 1401.2 Statement of Purpose

**1401.2.1 Policy Statement:** Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides guidelines for Federal financial participation (FFP) to train persons preparing for employment by a Nevada public child welfare agency. It is the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services' (hereafter known as "the Division") goal to provide policy that sets minimum standards for utilization of those funds via IV-E stipend programs coordinated through participating Nevada Universities. The Universities, in coordination with the Division, will make annual decisions regarding their interest in offering the stipend program to either Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students, Master of Social Work (MSW) students, both or neither based on available funding and priorities.

**1401.2.2 Purpose:** To provide a programmatic incentive to social work students who are interested in pursuing a career in Nevada public child welfare. It is the intent of the Division, through collaboration with Nevada public child welfare agencies and participating Nevada Universities, to prepare potential child welfare professionals and enhance the skills of existing child welfare professionals through a comprehensive social work education program.

### 1401.3 Authority

Social Security Act, Title IV-E, Section 474 (3) (A)  
 45CFR235.61; .62; .63; .64; .65; .66  
 45CFR1356.60  
 NRS 284.065; .155; .343; .345; .514; .518

### 1401.4 Definitions

**1401.4.1 Decision Making Group:** A group comprised of the DCFS Administrator and Deputy Administrators, the DCFS Rural Region Manager(s), and the Directors of CCDFS and WCDSS. The group reviews, and ultimately approves, all policy drafts, then provides oversight for the direction and implementation of all approved policies, relevant procedures and practice guidelines.

**1401.4.2 Division:** Nevada Division of Child and Family Services Family Programs Office

**1401.4.3 Field Education Program Coordinator:** University employee responsible for assigning and overseeing all field practicum activities for University Social Work students. This individual coordinates the field application process of students interested in child welfare and collaborates with the University Training Coordinator. The Field Education Program Coordinator also serves as an information liaison between the Nevada public child welfare agency and the Training Coordinator in terms of any problem areas identified.

- 1401.4.4 Field Instructor:** The field instructor is the primary Agency mentor responsible for on-site supervision of Social Work students in the Nevada public child welfare agency field practicum. This individual is responsible for supporting the achievement of key competencies when students are in the field practicum.
- 1401.4.5 Forgivable loan:** This is the term that the University uses for stipends indicating that the loan is only considered forgiven (paid in full) when/if the applicant fulfills the employment obligation to the Nevada public child welfare agency.
- 1401.4.6 Nevada Public Child Welfare Agency:** Means that in a county whose population is less than 100,000, the agency is a local office of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS-Rural); or in a county whose population is 100,000 or more, the agency is county administered and includes Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) and Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS). May also be referred to as "Agency."
- 1401.4.7 Persons preparing for employment:** Individuals who are not yet employed by a Nevada public child welfare agency but who have received financial assistance from the University, as outlined in its contract with the Division, for furthering their education and have made a legally binding commitment with a Nevada public child welfare agency for future employment under the conditions of this policy.
- 1401.4.8 Selection Sub-Committee:** A sub-committee of the Training Management Team which is appointed by TMT members to participate in the stipend award process.
- 1401.4.9 Stipend:** The basic living allowance paid to a stipend recipient intended to assist with payment of tuition.
- 1401.4.10 Training:** For purposes of this policy, training is defined as the successful completion of the Social Work Degree Program (or graduation) and attainment of License Social Worker (LSW) status granted by the Nevada Board of Examiners for Social Workers.
- 1401.4.11 University:** Participating Nevada educational institution with a BSW and/or MSW program that has entered into an agreement with the Division to coordinate a IV-E stipend program.
- 1401.4.12 Waiver:** A decision made by the Division to alter the terms of the original contractual obligation.

## 1401.5 Procedures

### 1401.5.1 Stipend Sub-Committee

- A. The Sub-Committee will be made up of one member from each participating University partner and one member from each Nevada public child welfare agency and will be chaired by the University Training Coordinator. Each member has one vote.
- B. Members shall serve one-year renewable terms.
- C. The Sub-Committee will meet as required by program needs.
- D. The Sub-Committee will identify vacancy needs statewide, including determination of "hard to recruit" areas, establish geographic recruitment priorities and other recruitment needs (i.e. bilingual and/or multi-cultural) applicable to the awarding of stipends.
- E. The Sub-Committee will allocate stipend awards for each budget cycle based upon identified needs and budgetary restrictions
- F. The Sub-Committee and/or University Training Coordinator will report to the TMT monthly on Stipend program activities.

### 1401.5.2 Stipend Award Amount

- A. For recruitment and planning purposes, award amounts for the contract budget cycle will be determined based on the cost of tuition at the University for a full time student

- B. Award amounts may be adjusted to maximize program impact with approval from the DCFS Training Manager.

#### **1401.5.3 University Responsibilities**

- A. The University will submit an **Annual Stipend Program Report** to DCFS by July 5<sup>th</sup>. The report shall include at a minimum, the following:
  - 1. Review of current program
  - 2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the current recruitment strategy;
  - 3. Summary of the impact of stipend awards on the Nevada public child welfare agency vacancies;
  - 4. Summary of stipend recipients progress in field practicum
  - 5. Summary of the child welfare employment status of stipend recipients for at least three years post-graduation.
- B. The University will report to the TMT at scheduled TMT meetings.
- C. The University will follow generally accepted accounting procedures unless otherwise negotiated with DCFS Management.

#### **1401.5.4 Application Process**

##### **A. Applicants Preparing for Employment:**

- 1. For applicants who are preparing for employment with a Nevada public child welfare agency, the following items shall be submitted as part of the application packet
  - Application including identification of child welfare agency/office post-training employment site;
  - A Personal Statement by the applicant describing educational aspirations and career goals as related to employment with a Nevada public child welfare agency;
  - Work history and resume;
  - Professional letters of reference ;
  - Section 1 of INS Form I-9
  - Evidence (or proof that evidence is pending) that based on criminal background checks and CANS check there is no record that would preclude hire in a Nevada public child welfare agency or proof that such evidence is in progress;

##### **B. Applicants Currently Employed in a Nevada Public Child Welfare Agency:**

- 1. For those applicants who are currently employed by a Nevada public child welfare agency at the time of application, the following additional items shall be submitted for consideration:
  - Evidence that supports that the employee has successfully completed the required probationary period;
  - A letter of recommendation from the current supervisor.

- C. Students who complete an application packet must return it to the University Training Coordinator by the identified deadline to be considered.

#### **1401.5.5 Selection Criteria:**

- A. All Applicants for the educational stipend program must, at a minimum:
  - 1. Be enrolled and in good standing in a participating University Social Work program;
  - 2. Be working toward or be accepted into a Nevada public child welfare field practicum;
  - 3. Be eligible for hire by a Nevada public child welfare agency.

#### **1401.5.6 Selection of Stipend Recipients**

- A. The University Training Coordinator will compile the completed application packets as well as each student's current GPA for review by the Stipend Sub-Committee and/or their designees.
- B. The Sub-Committee and/or their designees will consider all candidates and make selections based on applicant qualifications, qualities, budgetary restrictions and established priorities.
  - 1. The Sub-Committee and/or their designees may interview applicants at their discretion.
  - 2. The University Training Coordinator will notify all applicants, the TMT and the Field Education Program Coordinator of the final award determinations.

**1401.5.7 Award Process:**

- A. Each student awarded a stipend will enter into a written agreement of award which must be signed by the University Training Coordinator, the stipend recipient, and a DCFS representative.

**1401.5.8 Employment Obligation**

- A. Stipend recipients are committed to one year of employment for each academic year they received a stipend in the Nevada public child welfare agency/site identified in the written agreement of award.
- B. The stipend recipient is expected to apply for and accept employment, if offered, with the Nevada public child welfare agency identified in the written agreement of award immediately upon completion of training.
- C. The determination to extend a stipend graduate an offer of employment is entirely at the discretion of the hiring Agency.
- D. Federal regulations require that employment must be offered within 2 months of completion of training. If a stipend recipient has complied with all the terms of the written agreement but has not been offered a position by the identified child welfare agency/site within 2 months of completion of training, the stipend recipient can submit a written summary of their efforts to secure employment to the University Training Coordinator. If it is determined that the recipient complied with the terms outlined in the written agreement as determined by this policy, the stipend (loan) is forgiven and the employment obligation will be waived. Loan forgiveness can only be granted by the DCFS Administrator or designee in writing.

**1401.5.9 Repayment:**

- A. If the stipend recipient fails to meet their employment obligation and is not granted a waiver, deferral, or special accommodation by DCFS in writing, the stipend must be repaid as follows:
  - 1. Repayment will be coordinated through and paid to the University. Unless a written agreement is made with DCFS, the total amount of the stipend award, interest, attorney fees, and late fees based upon the University rate for student loans will be sought.
  - 2. The total amount must be paid within 3 years of the date of graduation.
  - 3. Under certain specific conditions, the DCFS Administrator, or designee, has the discretion to waive the repayment after an employee refuses an offer of employment for significant personal reasons.
- B. The University will develop a system for ensuring that debts are pursued and that recipients' whereabouts are monitored during the repayment process.
- C. University will report collected funds on an annual basis and will reimburse funds collected to DCFS (or the funds will be deducted from the current reimbursement request) on the same billing basis as their current contract.

**1401.5.10 Request to Waive or Defer Repayment**

- A. The DCFS Administrator or designee has the responsibility to grant or deny any request for waiver, deferral, or special accommodation of stipend repayments. In the event that a stipend recipient is unable to complete their employment commitment, the recipient must submit a written request for waiver, deferral, or special accommodation that documents any extraordinary circumstances supporting the request. Requests will be processed in the following manner:
  1. The request will be submitted to the University Training Coordinator for review and then forwarded to the DCFS Administrator or designee.
  2. The DCFS Administrator or designee will notify the University Training Coordinator of the determination. The University Training Coordinator will provide the stipend recipient requesting a waiver with a letter of approval or denial.

**1401.6 Public Child Welfare Agency Action**

- 1401.6.1** The Nevada public child welfare agencies will coordinate with the University to provide field practicum opportunities.
- 1401.6.2** The Nevada public child welfare agencies will offer the individual preparing for employment a position within 2 months upon completion of training unless precluded by merit system requirements, legislative budget cuts, position freezes, or other circumstances beyond the agency’s control; and if unable to offer employment, the stipend recipient may apply for a waiver to be released from his or her commitment.

**1401.7 State Responsibilities**

**1401.7.1 Participants in Policy Development**

- A. **FPO Staff** – J. Fragale Social Services Chief III, D. Duncan, Training Specialist  
**Child Welfare Agency Representatives:** J. Bascom - WCDSS, M. Hickey - DCFS Rural Region  
**External Stakeholders:** J. Massie– UNR, M. Gyger - UNLV

**1401.7.2 Technical Assistance**

- A. **Requesting Technical Assistance:** Region IX Office of the Administration of Children and Families.

Resources: N/A

**1404.7.3 Clearance Process**

Table 1401.1: Policy Clearance History

Policy Name & MTL Number	Workgroup Name & Review Dates	DAG Recommendation Date	PART Final Recommendation Date	DMG Final Approval Date	DCFS Admin. Approval Date	Effective Date
1404-071410	TMT – 06/08/09; 04/12/10	n/a	n/a	06/18/10	06/18/10	07/01/10
200 Educational Stipends - 102505	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	10/25/05	10/25/05	10/25/05

**1401.7.4 Policy Impacts**

- A. Title IV-E Plan
- B. Title IV-E Cost Allocation Plan

## **1401.8 Policy Cross Reference**

N/A