

# SOCIAL WORK IS *Everywhere.*

---

WHERE WILL IT TAKE YOU?



# Contents

A Field in Flux .....	3
Follow Your Ambition .....	4
Child Welfare Social Work .....	5
Clinical & Mental Health .....	7
Community Organizing Social Work ...	9
Corporate Setting .....	11
Disaster Preparedness Social Work...	13
Forensic (Criminal Justice) .....	15
Gerontology Social Work .....	17
Healthcare & Medical .....	19
Policy & Advocacy .....	21
Rural Communities .....	23
School Social Work .....	25
Sport Social Work .....	27
Substance Use Social Work .....	29
Veteran & Military Social Work .....	31
Forge Your Own Path .....	33



# A Field in Flux

## SOCIAL WORK EVOLVES TO BETTER SERVE HUMAN POPULATIONS

In many ways, the modern field of social work has borrowed its best characteristics from the talented individuals who work within it. Similar to the social workers themselves, the industry is flexible, multi-faceted, and exists in a constant state of growth and change.

As human populations evolve, the field of social work follows. As a result, today's social work degree programs attract students with a wide range of backgrounds and interests.

How can a social work degree support your goals, and how will you contribute to the continued evolution of this field? Keep reading to learn more about social work career options that may surprise you and find out how your unique strengths and passions could make you the right fit for this field.

## WHY CHOOSE UK ONLINE?

Enroll in UK's online MSW to earn a degree that matches your passion. This customizable program empowers students to follow their own path by choosing the regular or advanced standing track and pursuing one of multiple certificate options. Our thoughtfully designed, CSWE-accredited curriculum is delivered in 100% online courses that fit your busy schedule, and our [Self Care Lab](#) encourages students to prioritize their needs to avoid burnout. UK graduates are exceptionally prepared for real-world practice, resulting in licensure exam pass rates that are the highest in Kentucky and consistently exceed the national average.

# FOLLOW YOUR AMBITION



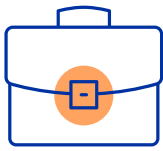
**Child  
Welfare**



**Clinical &  
Mental Health**



**Community  
Organizing**



**Corporate Setting**



**Disaster  
Preparedness**



**Forensic  
(Criminal Justice)**



**Gerontology**



**Healthcare  
& Medical**



**Policy  
& Advocacy**



**Rural  
Communities**



**School  
Social Work**



**Sport  
Social Work**



**Substance Use**

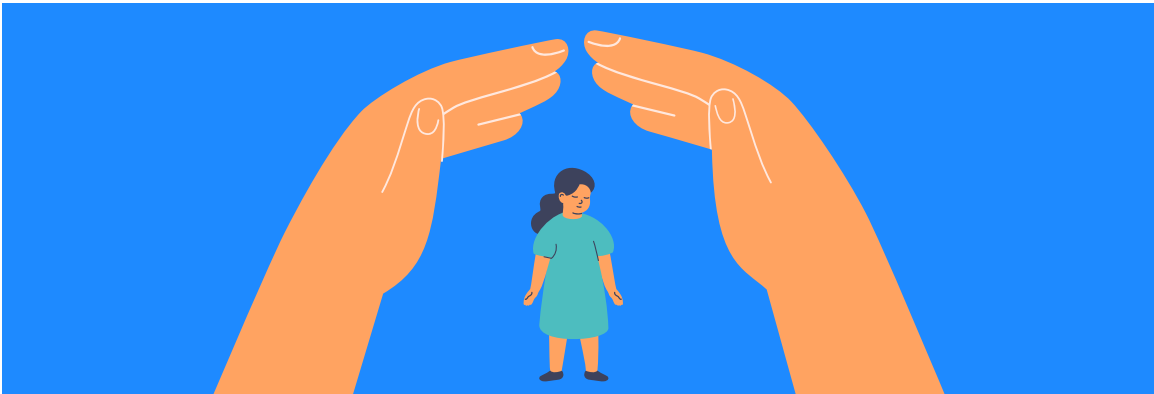


**Veteran & Military**



# Child Welfare Social Work

Child welfare social workers are passionate about **helping children and families thrive**. They intervene when children are experiencing neglect or abuse, and they work to **reunite families** when possible.



**HELPING ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD  
GROWS UP IN A SAFE, NURTURING,  
AND LOVING ENVIRONMENT.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

While social workers can begin their careers in child welfare with a bachelor's degree, those who pursue a **specialized MSW** with a **child welfare certificate** can gain deeper skills to offer even more impactful support. An MSW can also help you advance to **leadership and management positions**. Child welfare social work may be a good fit for those interested in:

- Helping families find the services and resources they need
- Supporting processes such as adoption, foster placement, and family reunification
- Working to ensure children grow up in safe, nurturing homes

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Child Welfare Practice Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Child welfare social workers lead meaningful careers that make a lasting difference for the families they serve. If you're passionate about **intervening on behalf of vulnerable children**, learn more about the career paths below.

### CHILD WELFARE SPECIALIST

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$53,940<sup>1</sup>**

Child welfare specialists ensure the safety of children by enacting necessary interventions and connecting families with resources and services. Their responsibilities may include removing children from unsafe homes, providing trauma counseling, and developing treatment plans for behavioral disorders.

### AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR

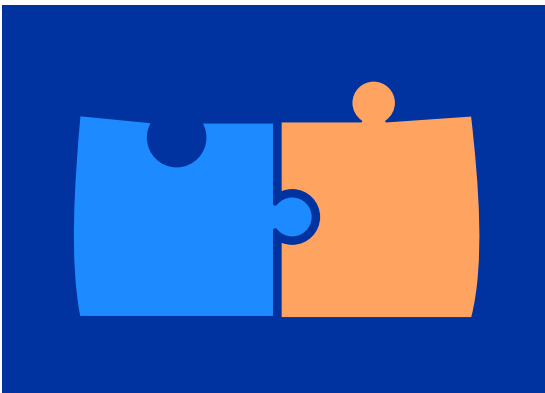
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$77,030<sup>2</sup>**

Agency administrators oversee the operations of social service organizations. Depending on the type of organization they manage, professionals in this role may lead a team that facilitates adoptions, foster home placements, family advocacy, or other social services.



# Clinical & Mental Health

Clinical and mental health social workers provide **individual and group care** to people seeking treatment. Social workers in this area of the field are interested in understanding the **human mind** and seek to improve **mental health outcomes** for their clients.



**ASSESSING & TREATING  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CONDITIONS AND  
BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Clinical and mental health social workers are required to complete **specialized training** and meet **state licensing requirements\*** before they can provide services. This area of social work could be a good fit for those interested in:

- Fostering healthy human development
- Supporting individuals through difficulties
- Mentoring people at various stages of life
- Understanding the human mind

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Clinical Social Work Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Clinical and mental health social workers are helping **fill the gap** in healthcare and making sure people experiencing various health crises get the support they need. If you're passionate about supporting efforts to improve **mental health services**, learn more about the career paths below.

### LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$68,034<sup>3</sup>**

Licensed clinical social workers (LCSWs) are mental health professionals who support clients in building new habits to lead healthier lives. In individual and group therapy sessions, they work with clients on strategies to overcome emotional struggles and cope with obstacles to their mental and emotional well-being.

### TREATMENT COORDINATOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$52,691<sup>4</sup>**

Treatment coordinators assist patients in accessing the care they need. These professionals may work in hospitals, mental health clinics, private offices, or other clinical settings. They work with patients to determine what type of treatment will best meet their needs and explore options to finance their care.





# Community Organizing Social Work

Community organizers are passionate about **inspiring change**. They work from the ground up to create services and improve systems that **help individuals and communities**.



**INSPIRING CHANGE  
FROM THE  
GROUND UP.**



# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

You'll be qualified to pursue a career in community organizing with an undergraduate degree in social work, but a **master's degree** could help you move into **management positions**. Community organizing could be right for you if you're interested in:

- Advocating for vulnerable populations
- Finding solutions to problems that affect communities
- Protecting the interests of others
- Working closely with community members and leaders

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Individuals working in community organization have the potential to **improve quality of life** for **entire populations**. If you think this area of social work could be right for you, learn more about the career paths below.

### SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE MANAGERS

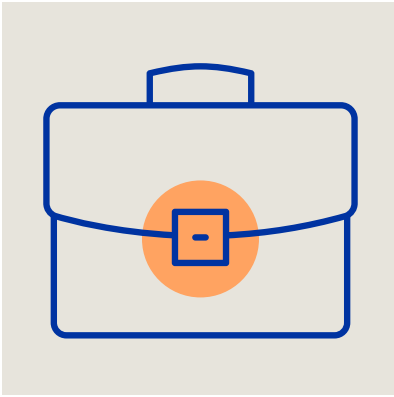
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$77,030<sup>2</sup>**

Social and community service managers work to create, maintain, and improve programs that serve the public's wellbeing. Professionals in this role may work with many types of programs or organizations, and their responsibilities often include evaluating programs, recruiting and training staff members, and implementing program improvements.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$206,680<sup>5</sup>**

Executive directors lead nonprofit organizations and are sometimes called chief executive officers (CEOs). These leaders are responsible for making high-level, strategic decisions and working closely with other high-ranking managers to fulfill the nonprofit's mission.



# Corporate Setting

In a corporate setting, professionals with training in social work help to improve work **conditions for employees**. They typically work in an office environment and are guided by a desire to help others lead **healthier work lives**.



**APPLYING SOCIAL WORK PRINCIPLES  
TO ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP  
ROLES IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.**



# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Companies often seek out professionals with social work degrees to fill **employee-facing positions**.

Corporate settings could be a good fit for those passionate about:

- *Advocating for diversity and inclusion*
- *Promoting healthy conflict resolution*
- *Ensuring corporate accountability*
- *Protecting employee rights*
- *Implementing learning and development activities*

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#) or [DSW in Administrative Leadership](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

The corporate world may seem like an **unconventional environment** for social workers, but professionals who follow this path can make a **major impact** on workplace wellness. If you're interested in applying social work principles to a corporate setting, learn more about the career paths below.

### TRAINING MANAGER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$125,040<sup>6</sup>**

Training managers play an essential role in building the potential of a company's staff. Social work skills come in handy for these professionals, as they must be able to identify and address the needs of staff members and work directly with employees to ensure they have the resources necessary to succeed in their jobs.

### HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$136,350<sup>7</sup>**

Similar to training managers, human resources managers work directly with a company's staff members to ensure they have the resources needed to succeed. However, responsibilities for this particular role also include choosing employee benefits, overseeing the hiring process, and managing workplace conflict.



# Disaster Preparedness Social Work

Social workers who specialize in disaster preparedness collaborate with community leaders to **create processes and systems** that **protect members of the community** in the event of a disaster.



**PLANNING FOR DISASTERS  
AND CONNECTING LOCALS  
WITH AID GROUPS.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Disaster preparedness is an area of social work that requires a great deal of **planning, organization, and attention to detail**. This type of social work may be right for you if you're interested in:

- Collaborating with community leaders to protect others
- Helping individuals and families access emergency services
- Organizing disaster response services in the case of an emergency
- Planning for natural and human-made disaster scenarios

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Social workers may assist in various aspects of disaster preparedness. From **planning** for natural disasters to **assisting community members** following a **major emergency**, their responsibilities are critical to disaster response. If you're interested in working in disaster preparedness, learn more about the career paths below.

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$68,576<sup>8</sup>**

Emergency management specialists work to predict the impact of disasters, plan for the best course of action, and coordinate the on-ground response. Their duties include collaborating with first responders, creating and adjusting emergency response plans, and helping community members find the services they need.

### EMERGENCY TEAM LEADER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$83,960<sup>9</sup>**

Team leaders supervise a team of emergency responders or specialists to ensure proper implementation of preparedness plans in cases of natural disaster and other emergencies. These professionals oversee training activities, coordinate response teams, create status reports, and update preparedness plans as needed. They also maintain communications with government officials and public service leaders.

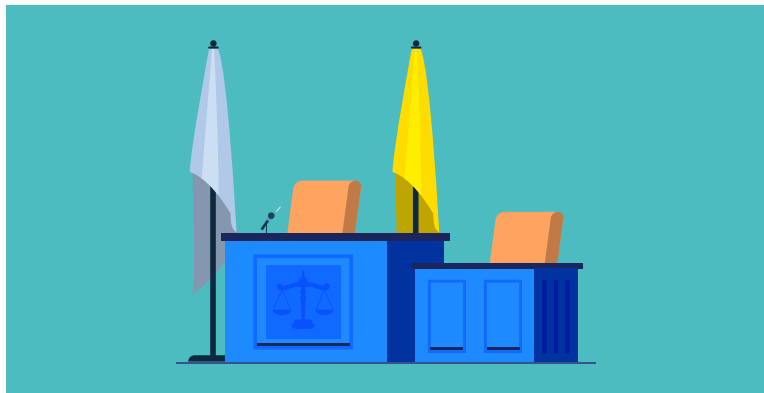


# Forensic (Criminal Justice) Social Work

Social workers in forensics and criminal justice are interested in **ensuring fairness** and working toward **just outcomes** for those impacted by crime.



**APPLYING SOCIAL WORK KNOWLEDGE  
TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM AND PROVIDING  
SUPPORT TO THOSE IMPACTED BY CRIME.**



# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

In addition to a degree in social work, knowledge or **experience in criminal justice is valuable** for individuals who are interested in this path. Social workers in the criminal justice field are often:

- Committed to justice and fairness
- Highly compassionate toward others
- Interested in ensuring humane treatment for both victims and perpetrators of crime
- Knowledgeable about legal issues and the criminal justice system

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Trauma-Responsive Practice Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

In the field of criminal justice, social workers strive to **ensure fair treatment** for all people who encounter the justice system. They are often passionate about advocating for their **clients' rights**. If you're interested in working in criminal justice as a social worker, learn more about the career paths below.

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCACY

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$54,600<sup>1</sup>**

In the Department of Public Advocacy, social workers identify individuals facing incarceration who are experiencing substance use disorder or other mental health conditions and could benefit from alternative options to jail or prison time.<sup>10</sup> Also called alternative sentencing workers (ASWs), these professionals develop and present Alternative Sentencing Plans (ASPs) to courts and prosecutors as options for sentencing individuals who are likely to make positive behavior changes as a result of treatment and rehabilitation.

### COURT LIAISON

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$63,770<sup>1</sup>**

Court liaisons advocate for individuals, families, or organizations involved in the justice system. They attend court hearings and maintain communication between their clients and other essential parties, including judges, attorneys, and other liaisons. Social workers employed as court liaisons often specialize in juvenile, family, civil, or criminal court.





# Gerontology Social Work

Social workers who focus on the area of gerontology are interested in building a society that better serves an **aging population**. Gerontology social workers may be involved with **nursing homes, end-of-life care**, and other issues faced by senior citizens.



**PROMOTING  
INDEPENDENCE AND  
DIGNITY FOR OLDER  
ADULTS.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Elderly adults experience specific challenges that must be met with **respect and compassion**. Gerontology social work may be right for you if you are interested in:

- Helping elderly citizens access the care and services they need to live fuller lives
- Improving end-of-life care
- Supporting families in making choices that best serve their elderly loved ones' interests

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Social workers who focus in gerontology are passionate about **improving quality of life** for an aging population. If you're interested in gerontology social work, consider the career paths below.

### GERIATRIC SOCIAL WORKER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$65,787<sup>11</sup>**

Geriatric social workers support elder adults in sustaining a high quality of life. They may help their clients navigate healthcare systems, find caregivers, develop new coping skills, and adjust to changing capabilities. Geriatric social workers play an essential role in helping elderly clients maintain their independence and well-being.

### HOSPICE SOCIAL WORKER

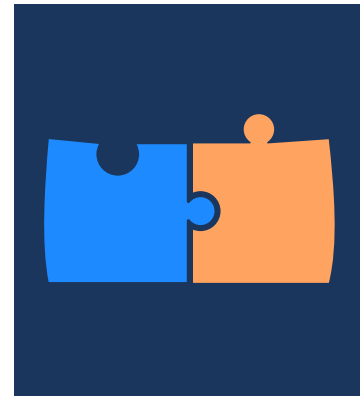
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$62,940<sup>12</sup>**

Social workers who are employed in hospice facilities are responsible for helping clients navigate the emotional and logistical aspects of end-of-life care. This can include ensuring the client and necessary family members understand important medical information, keeping the client company, remaining vigilant for signs of elder abuse, and supporting the client through major decision-making processes.



# Healthcare & Medical

Healthcare and medical social workers support individuals, families, and groups in **accessing healthcare** and **copng with illness**. These professionals are often employed by hospitals, health clinics, and similar healthcare settings.



**HELPING PATIENTS AND FAMILIES UNDERSTAND ILLNESSES AND HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Social workers interested in the healthcare field would benefit from earning a master's degree, and some employers may prefer to hire candidates who are **licensed clinical social workers\***. This area of social work may be right for you if you are interested in:

- Addressing barriers to access in healthcare
- Functioning as an advocate for clients in a medical setting
- Helping families and caregivers find the information they need to support those in their care
- Supporting clients in developing a deeper understanding of their health conditions

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Clinical Social Work Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Social workers employed in healthcare are committed to helping clients **navigate the healthcare system**. If you're interested in healthcare and medical social work, consider the career paths below.

### HOSPITAL SOCIAL WORKER

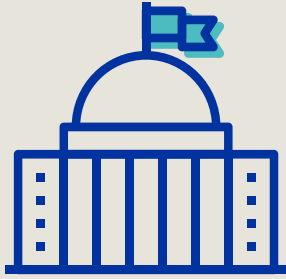
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$62,940<sup>12</sup>**

Hospital social workers provide non-medical support for patients who may need help understanding their diagnosis, moving between care centers, identifying community resources, challenging insurance denials, and more. Hospital social workers play an essential role in advocating for patients in a hospital setting and ensuring that patients fully understand their illness and treatment options.

### CASE MANAGEMENT SUPERVISOR

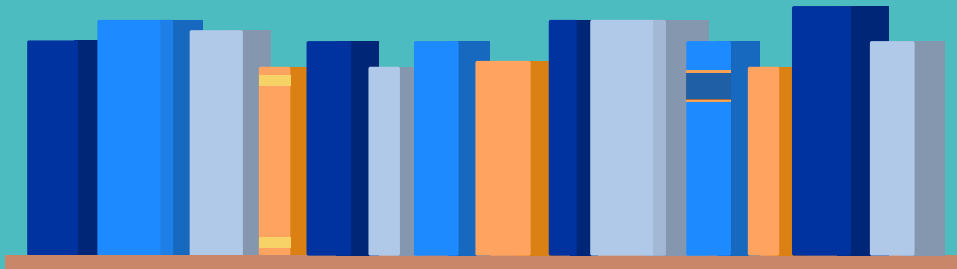
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$61,960<sup>13</sup>**

Case management supervisors oversee the work of case managers to ensure all clients under their care receive appropriate services. In a healthcare setting, these professionals may also collaborate with clinical managers and other medical professionals. Case management supervisors are typically responsible for hiring, training, evaluating, and providing guidance to the case managers on their team.



# Policy & Advocacy

Social workers in policy and advocacy enact **broad change** in their communities. They work to address the root causes of social issues through policies that **address disparities** and **advance equity** for all people.



**SHAPING LAWS TO ADDRESS  
THE ROOT CAUSES OF  
SOCIETAL ISSUES.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Policy and advocacy work is closely involved with the **legal and political** fields, so individuals seeking roles in this area would benefit from **experience or education** in one or both of these industries. This could be a good fit for those with social work training who are interested in:

- Advocating for the rights of vulnerable individuals and communities
- Collaborating with lawyers, community leaders, and politicians to enact wider change
- Working to improve laws and government policies

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Social workers employed in policy and advocacy careers are passionate about **helping their communities** by making **lasting change** through legal and political means. If you're interested in this area of social work, learn more about the career paths below.

### POLICY ANALYST

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$65,542<sup>14</sup>**

Policy analysts work with a government organization or nonprofit to advance a social cause through legal and political routes. Policy analysts are often responsible for analyzing bills and proposed regulations from the perspective of a specific cause, and collaborating with lawmakers and community members to improve the impact of laws and regulations.

### LOBBYIST

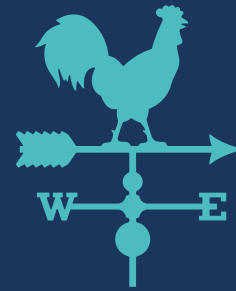
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$89,521<sup>15</sup>**

Lobbyists work on behalf of an organization to further a cause with lawmakers and other politicians. Their responsibilities can include collaborating with policy experts to understand the implications of specific pieces of legislation, networking with elected officials and politicians, and persuading elected officials to support their cause.



# Rural Communities

Rural community social workers help **give big voices to small towns**. They recognize the **unique needs** of rural communities and rise to meet the challenges faced by the population they serve.



**APPLYING SOCIAL WORK  
PRACTICE TO THE UNIQUE  
CHALLENGES OF THE  
RURAL ENVIRONMENT.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Individuals who are interested in working in rural communities may benefit from specialized training, such as a **rural social work certificate or emphasis**. This can help prepare social workers for the unique needs and challenges faced by rural communities, which include:

- Difficulty finding doctors
- Higher risk of overdose death
- Higher rates of poverty
- Lower access to mental health support

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

In rural communities, social workers have the opportunity to provide a wide **variety of services** to people living in small, often close-knit communities. If you're interested in pursuing this area of social work, learn more about the career paths below.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$44,956<sup>16</sup>**

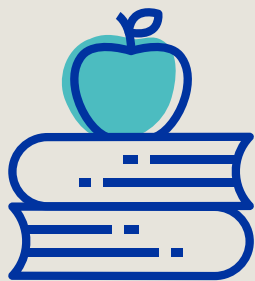
Community support workers provide services to individuals in day programs and group homes. Their responsibilities may include building relationships with clients, helping clients build social and emotional skills, and managing client healthcare and medical appointments.

### SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$77,030<sup>2</sup>**

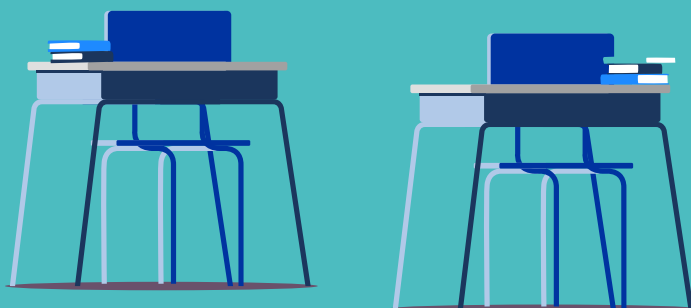
Program supervisors work to create, maintain, and improve social service programs that serve their community's wellbeing. In rural communities, trained social workers in this role will develop strong community ties as they collaborate with many other programs and organizations, including small businesses, schools, local government, civil organizations, and more. Their responsibilities often include evaluating programs, recruiting and training staff members, and implementing program improvements.





# School Social Work

School social workers are passionate about **helping children grow and learn**. They support children in navigating the complexities of childhood and adolescence.



**PROMOTING SAFE  
AND NURTURING  
ENVIRONMENTS FOR  
CHILDREN.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Professionals interested in school social work are best served by an MSW program that offers a school social work specialization or certificate. School social work may be right for you if you're interested in:

- Connecting with children, family members, and school personnel
- Helping families find the resources they need to thrive
- Intervening on behalf of vulnerable children
- Supporting healthy child development

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with School Social Work Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

As a school social worker, you'll be poised to **make a meaningful difference** in the lives of **children**. If this area of social work interests you, learn more about the career paths below.

### SCHOOL CRISIS COUNSELOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$66,210<sup>17</sup>**

School crisis counselors support students, staff, and families experiencing crises such as homelessness, death of a loved one, abuse or neglect, and more. Interpersonal communication and a strong understanding of child psychology are essential in this role.

### DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

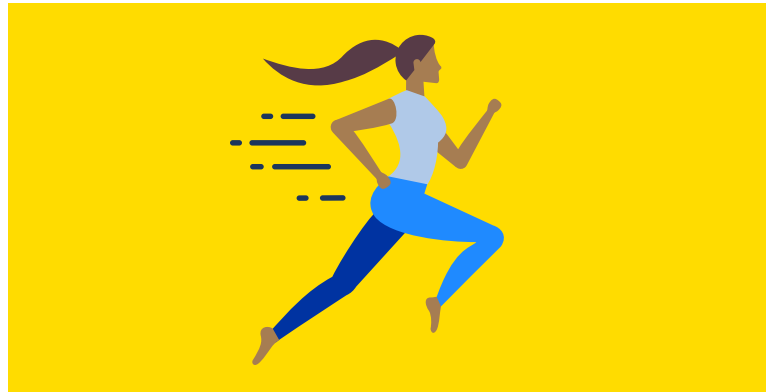
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$71,482<sup>18</sup>**

The director of student support services connects students and families with the resources they need to thrive. Professionals in this role collaborate with educators and administrators to identify students experiencing personal difficulties and intervene on their behalf. They may provide counseling, connect students with community resources, implement strategic programming, and more.



# Sport Social Work

Sport social workers intervene to support the overall **health and well-being of athletes**. They implement measures to help clients improve **mental health**, gain a stronger sense of **community**, advocate for their needs, and more.



**APPLYING SOCIAL WORK SKILLS  
AT THE INTERSECTION OF SPORT  
AND RECREATION.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Sport social workers may benefit from prior experience with the sport and recreation industry and can gain the skills they need to **support athletes across the lifespan** by earning a Master of Social Work degree. Sport social work may be right for you if you're interested in:

- Advocating for the needs of athletes and their families
- Helping clients identify the life skills they've gained through sport and recreation
- Supporting clients in building habits for healthier lives
- Utilizing sport and recreation to support mental, emotional, and physical well-being

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Individualized Plan of Study](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

As a sport social worker, you'll be poised to **support athletes** in leading full, healthy lives. If this area of social work interests you, learn more about the career paths below.

### SPORT PROGRAM DIRECTOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$73,460<sup>19</sup>**

Sport program directors oversee the operations related to athletic activities for their organization. They may specialize in one sport or manage an entire recreation department. Sport program directors strive to create opportunities for individuals to grow as athletes in a safe, supportive environment.

### STUDENT ATHLETE SERVICES COORDINATOR

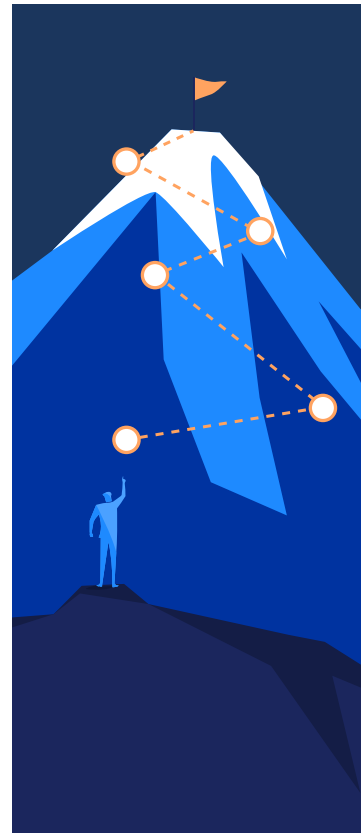
**ANNUAL SALARY: \$61,710<sup>20</sup>**

Student athlete services coordinators create programming designed to match the specific needs, interests, and goals of their institution's student population. Professionals in this role may collaborate with administrators, community members, and families to provide enriching opportunities for student athletes.



# Substance Use Social Work

Substance use social workers possess a thorough understanding of the **complexity involved in substance use disorder**. Individuals who work in this area care deeply about **helping people through hardship**.



**SUPPORTING THOSE STRUGGLING  
WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER.**

# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

To become a substance use social worker, you'll need specialized training such as a **substance use disorder certificate**. People who work in substance use social work are often interested in:

- Helping clients build healthy coping skills
- Providing mental health counseling services
- Supporting others through difficult times
- Understanding the human mind and brain development

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Substance Use Disorder Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Substance use social workers are passionate about providing **invaluable services** to people struggling with **substance use disorder**. If you're interested in pursuing roles in this type of social work, learn more about the career paths below.

### ADDICTION COUNSELOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$53,710<sup>21</sup>**

Addiction counselors provide mental health services to individuals who are living with substance use disorder (SUD). They help their clients overcome the challenges of SUD and live healthier lives. Many employers require these professionals to be licensed clinical social workers\* in their state.

### REHABILITATION SPECIALIST

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$44,040<sup>22</sup>**

Rehabilitation specialists work with individuals and groups experiencing difficulties due to a range of conditions, including substance use disorder. Professionals in this role help clients build independence, practice healthy habits, develop life skills and employability, and learn to cope with emotional distress.

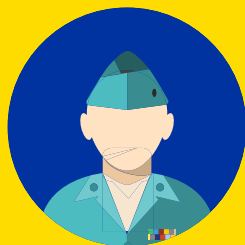


# Veteran & Military Social Work

Veteran and military social workers possess a deep sense of **respect for the service provided** by members of the military. They seek to repay this service by understanding and providing for the **unique needs** of this population.



**PROVIDING SUPPORT  
TO THOSE WHO HAVE  
SERVED OUR COUNTRY.**



# INTERESTED IN THIS PATH?

Working with veterans and military members requires an understanding of the **specific challenges faced** by this population. **Additional training** can be helpful, and certification is required for those working specifically in mental health. This type of social work could be right for you if you're interested in:

- Connecting military members and their families with mental health and medical services
- Helping veterans utilize their military-sponsored benefits
- Providing therapy services to active military members
- Supporting military members in accessing public services

*Learn more about the University of Kentucky's [online MSW with Military Behavioral Health Certificate](#).*

## CAREER SPOTLIGHTS

Veteran and military social workers perform the **important and rewarding** task of supporting those who have **served our country**. If you're interested in pursuing this area of social work, learn more about the career paths below.

### MILITARY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$67,040<sup>23</sup>**

Military behavioral health counselors work directly with active members of the military, veterans, and their families to identify and treat PTSD, anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions. They provide counseling services and help clients build skills to cope with the specific challenges faced by a military population.

### VETERANS HEALTH ASSOCIATION (VHA) SOCIAL WORKER

**ANNUAL SALARY: \$68,850<sup>23</sup>**

This area of social work focuses on serving veterans and their families within VHA facilities. Many veterans require mental health, housing, financial, and social support; social workers in this field connect their clients to these resources.



# Forge Your Own Path



Social work offers a multitude of career options outside of the traditional social services setting. Whether you're preparing to start your career or already an established professional planning your next move, choosing the right educational opportunities is an essential first step in forging your path in the wide world of social work.

For a customizable, high-quality program that's accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), look into the University of Kentucky's [online MSW](#). Featuring multiple certificate options, it has an area of focus for any career path you choose:

- **Child Welfare Practice**  
Build the foundational skills and knowledge necessary to support and intervene on behalf of neglected and abused children and their families.
- **Clinical Social Work**  
Move from the broader foundation of generalist social work practice to an advanced level of clinical knowledge.
- **Military Behavioral Health**  
Enhance your ability to provide effective and culturally sensitive behavioral healthcare services to veteran and military populations.
- **School Social Work**  
Gain the skills you need to assess and intervene on behalf of children and adolescents in a school setting.
- **Substance Use Disorder**  
Learn evidence-based treatment and prevention approaches and gain clinical and scientific knowledge about the nature of substance misuse.
- **Trauma-Responsive Practice**  
Learn how to work with individuals on their healing journey and reduce the risk of re-traumatization.
- **Individualized Plan of Study**  
Tailor your education to support your professional goals by choosing qualified elective courses with the guidance of your MSW advisor.



\* A professional licensure or certification may be required to practice, advance, or specialize in social work. This program meets the educational requirements in Kentucky to pursue a certified social worker (CSW) license and licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) license, pending successful completion of all additional practice experience, examination, and other state requirements. However, educational requirements for licensure vary by state. [View more information about social work licensure.](#)

# Sources

1. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Social Workers." August 29, 2024. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm>.
2. O\*NET OnLine. "Social and Community Service Managers." February 25, 2025. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/11-9151.00>.
3. Payscale. "Average Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Salary." Retrieved April 17, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Licensed\\_Clinical\\_Social\\_Worker\\_\(LCSW\)/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Licensed_Clinical_Social_Worker_(LCSW)/Salary).
4. Payscale. "Average Treatment Coordinator Hourly Pay." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Treatment\\_Coordinator/Hourly\\_Rate](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Treatment_Coordinator/Hourly_Rate).
5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Top Executives." August 29, 2024. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/top-executives.htm>.
6. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Training and Development Managers." August 29, 2024. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/training-and-development-managers.htm>.
7. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Human Resources Managers." August 29, 2024. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/human-resources-managers.htm>.
8. Payscale. "Average Emergency Management Specialist Salary." Retrieved Mar. 19, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Emergency\\_Management\\_Specialist/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Emergency_Management_Specialist/Salary).
9. O\*NET OnLine. "Emergency Management Directors." February 25, 2025. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/11-9161.00>.
10. Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy. "Alternative Sentencing Worker Program." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://dpa.ky.gov/kentucky-department-of-public-advocacy/about-dpa/asw/>.
11. Payscale. "Average Geriatric Social Worker Hourly Pay." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Geriatric\\_Social\\_Worker/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Geriatric_Social_Worker/Salary).
12. O\*NET OnLine. "Healthcare Social Workers." February 25, 2025. Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/21-1022.00>.
13. Payscale. "Average Case Management Supervisor Salary." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Case\\_Management\\_Supervisor/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Case_Management_Supervisor/Salary).
14. Payscale. "Average Policy Analyst Salary." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Policy\\_Analyst/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Policy_Analyst/Salary).
15. Payscale. "Average Lobbyist Salary." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Lobbyist/Salary>.
16. Payscale. "Average Community Support Worker Hourly Pay." Retrieved March 25, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Community\\_Support\\_Worker/Hourly\\_Rate](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Community_Support_Worker/Hourly_Rate).
17. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "May 2023 National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: NAICS 611100 – Elementary and Secondary Schools." Retrieved March 25, 2025, from [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4\\_611100.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_611100.htm).
18. Payscale. "Average Director, Student Services Salary." Retrieved March 25, 2025, from [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Director%2C\\_Student\\_Services/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Director%2C_Student_Services/Salary).
19. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Entertainment and Recreation Managers." August 29, 2024. Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/entertainment-and-recreation-managers.htm>.
20. O\*NET OnLine. "Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors." February 25, 2025. Retrieved March 25, 2025, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/21-1012.00>.
21. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors." Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/substance-abuse-behavioral-disorder-and-mental-health-counselors.htm>.
22. O\*NET OnLine. "Rehabilitation Specialists." February 25, 2025. Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/21-1015.00>.
23. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "May 2022 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates by ownership: Federal, state, and local government, including government-owned schools and hospitals and the U.S. Postal Service." April 3, 2024. Retrieved March 20, 2025, from <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/999001.htm>.