

Content Development Guidelines for Social Work Continuing Education

Course topics must build on the foundations of social work education and must clearly fall within the scope of practice for social workers and be directly applicable to social work theory and practice, relating to one or more of the following social work educational areas:

- Theories and concepts of human behavior in the social environment
 - Social work practice, knowledge, and skills
 - Social work research, programs, or practice evaluations
 - Development, evaluation, and implementation of social policy
 - Social work generalist practice
 - Social work clinical practice
 - Diversity and social justice
 - Social work ethics
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- Course content should be based on peer-reviewed research, cover evidence-based theory and practice, and apply specifically to the needs and the scope of practice of licensed social workers.
 - CE providers must ensure that their continuing education courses promote cultural awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion as defined in the NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice.

Multidisciplinary courses:

CE providers must not offer a course for social work CE that is created for another profession/discipline and includes learning objectives and content that is inappropriate for social workers or geared specifically to another profession or professions, paraprofessionals, or a general audience. For example, courses that are within the scope of licensure and practice for medical professionals, courses to train paraprofessionals, staff orientation or development.

Avoiding Commercial Bias

- Course providers and/or instructors must not promote, offer, or sell specific products or services in the context of a learning activity.
- Course materials must not promote a specific product or service.

Instructional Materials

Instructional materials (e.g., training manuals, handouts, outlines, background materials, audiovisual aids, bibliography, etc.) must enhance participants' understanding, be appropriate to their learning level, and be professional.

- Materials initially developed for audiences other than social workers must be carefully reviewed and modified as necessary in consultation with the CE provider's social work consultant or, if applicable, the social work planner.

- Course providers and/or instructors and material must not promote commercial bias or interest.
- CE providers must ensure and attest that program materials do not infringe upon or otherwise violate intellectual property or privacy rights, including copyright, trademark, and license rights. Providers must either own the materials used or be permitted by law to use them, consulting with legal counsel if needed. NASW may require a provider to show proof of usage rights in the form of written permission. It is ultimately the responsibility of the CE provider, however, and not NASW, to ensure compliance with all applicable laws for all continuing education courses offered for NASW credit.

Unacceptable CE Content Areas

- Billing/Coding
- Coaching
- Commercial content
- Company specific policy procedures
- Consultation and Peer Support-Staff/Peer/Intern/Case/Client consultation/technical support
- CPR
- Computer software training/EHR Trainings and User Groups/ Technology enhancement
- Divorce mediation
- Exam Prep
- Financial Planning
- Funeral Planning
- General Leadership or Management
- Generating income
- Infection control
- Interpreter training
- Marketing or growing a practice/business
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Office Management
- Personal growth/Enrichment/Self Help
- Sex therapy
- Staff orientation/staff development
- Supervisory Sessions (including but not limited to supervision towards licensure)
- Topics outside the scope of social work practice (prescribing, medication administration, nutrition, massage, aroma therapy, funeral planning, financial advice. legal advice- for example: powers of attorney, guardianship, etc.)
- Touch therapy
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Promotion of sexual orientation change efforts as a therapeutic method (sometimes called "conversion therapy).

- Political and religious content restriction: The program cannot state or imply in any manner that individuals who act inconsistently with or who do not accept a particular political or religious belief or principle are dysfunctional or otherwise inappropriate or that the belief is unacceptable or incorrect.

Course content related to other functions sometimes filled by social workers, such as general leadership or business practices, are not acceptable for social work CE credit. Training that applies to leaders in any field, even when helpful to social workers is not acceptable for social work CE credit. Course topics that are procedural or oriented toward business practices, self-help or staff development are not acceptable towards CE credit.

*The above list is not comprehensive, additional course content areas may be determined to be unacceptable to offer CE credit.