

November 18, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-136**

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL), is to provide guidance and information about the July 2021 implementation of the statewide standardized Common Core 3.5 (CC 3.5) for child welfare social workers. The CC 3.5 is a streamlined version of Common Core 3.0 (CC 3.0), which was implemented in February 2017.



KIM JOHNSON  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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GAVIN NEWSOM  
GOVERNOR

November 18, 2021

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-136

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY STAFF DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS  
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS  
ALL ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES  
ALL COUNTY ADOPTION AGENCIES  
ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES  
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS  
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: REVISION OF THE STATEWIDE COMMON CORE CURRICULUM

REFERENCE: [CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES \(CDSS\)](#)  
[MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES \(MPP\) STAFF](#)  
[DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING, DIVISION 14. ALL COUNTY](#)  
[LETTER 17-17. ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-66-03.](#)  
[ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-44-15. ALL COUNTY](#)  
[LETTER 21-94](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide guidance and information for the newest iteration of Common Core, hereafter referred to as Common Core 3.5 (CC 3.5).

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2017, the Common Core 3.0 (CC 3.0) was implemented as the single, standardized curriculum that is required statewide to ensure all new child welfare social workers receive the foundational training necessary for competence in the field. This standardization and statewide implementation were a direct result of the 2003 federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the resulting Program Improvement Plan (PIP), which required the development and implementation of a statewide, standardized core curriculum for social workers and supervisors. [ACL 17-17](#) details the large-scale undertaking and shift in practice toward a workforce development mindset grounded in the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM).

After initial implementation, statewide feedback gathered through observation and evaluation from the state, county, and Regional Training Academy (RTA) partners resulted in the need for the revision, reduction, and streamlining of the curricula. Throughout the first two years of CC 3.0 implementation, it was found that new workers were struggling to complete the curricula within a year. The revision process was intended to remedy these concerns by streamlining and reducing the duplicative modalities, updating courses with ICPM best practices, and focusing on the foundational knowledge and skills needed to perform direct child welfare practice. With this streamlining, the CDSS recommends new workers complete CC 3.5 within the first year of county employment.

### **COMMON CORE 3.5 & SEQUENCING**

The CC 3.5 consists of 10 eLearning courses, 18 classes (19 ½ days), and five field activities. This is a reduction of six classroom days, 13 eLearnings and four Field Activities. The CC 3.5 maintains the current Common Core structure and continues to be organized around key practice areas defined in the ICPM. The only change to the block sequence in the newest iteration is that the Engagement and Assessment blocks are now combined. There will no longer be the 100 and 200 leveling structure, as classes have been integrated due to duplicative concepts and content. Field Activities now need to be completed by the end of the core series and are no longer associated with each block. This allows flexibility for new workers and Field Advisors based on caseload and time availability. There are prerequisites associated with each activity to ensure knowledge has been acquired before activity completion. The three modalities of eLearning, Classroom, and Field Activities continue in CC3.5 with prerequisites for classroom and field. There is a Statewide Standardized Passport (attached) to assist new workers and their supervisors in navigating completion of CC 3.5. The directives found in [ACL 17-17](#) apply to CC 3.5.

Maintaining the sequence in which a trainee experiences CC 3.5 is imperative, as it is reflective of best practices social workers use to engage with families. Beginning a new social worker in the middle of a CC 3.5 cycle may be confusing and hinder their ability to apply concepts in the field, as the curriculum is designed to build upon itself. There are required prerequisites for identified courses outlined within the attached passport. If a new social worker is unable to complete the pre-requisite eLearning or class prior to their scheduled class, they will need to reschedule their class. It is necessary the counties ensure new social workers have protected time to complete their prerequisites prior to class in order to keep trainees on track for timely completion.

The CC 3.5 is standardized content and will be delivered as written to ensure that the proper and consistent training reaches all of California's new social workers. The new Learning Management System, the California Child Welfare Training (CACWT) System,

will aid in sequence navigation, enhance streamlining, and assist with tracking as all county child welfare agencies have access to trainee records. All training provided through CDSS contracts with the RTAs will be delivered through CACWT starting July 1, 2021.

### **TIMEFRAMES**

The CC 3.5 implementation started July 1, 2021. Any new child welfare worker that started CC 3.0 before July 2021, will need to finish within that sequence. The RTAs will continue to provide CC 3.0 classes until June 2022, to allow CC 3.0 cohorts to reach completion. Any missed classes must be made up within that year. Workers that are unable to complete CC 3.0 by July 2022 will work with their RTAs to take a comparable CC 3.5 class for completion. The revision process includes a make-up matrix, which will be made available by May 2022 to assist in these instances.

Any worker that starts Common Core after July 2021, will be taking the revised CC 3.5 curricula via the CACWT system.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

All CC 3.0 materials will remain on the CalSWEC website and all CC 3.5 materials will be maintained in the CACWT System. [ACL 21-94](#) outlines access to and provides information about the CACWT System.

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the [Training Support Unit general email box](#).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By***

ANGIE SCHWARTZ, Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

**ATTACHMENT – COMMON CORE 3.5 STATEWIDE STANDARDIZED PASSPORT**



Modality	Common Core 3.5 Version
Classroom	18 classes (19 ½ days)
eLearnings	10 eLearnings
Field Activities	5 Field Activities

**FOUNDATION BLOCK**

Training Component	Course Title	Duration
<b>Classroom</b>	Orientation to California Child Welfare Practice	1 day
<b>Classroom</b>	Introduction to Child Development	1 day
<b>Classroom</b>	Trauma-Informed Practice	1 day
<b>Classroom</b>	Fairness and Equity	½ day
<b>Classroom</b>	Child and Family Teaming	1 day
<b>eLearning</b>	Federal and State Laws	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Legal Procedures and Responsibilities	1 day
<b>eLearning</b>	Introduction to ICWA	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	ICWA and Working with Native American Families & Tribes (required prerequisite: Intro to ICWA eLearning)	1 day
<b>eLearning</b>	Key Issues in Child Welfare: Behavioral Health, Substance Use Disorders, and Intimate Partner Violence	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Key Issues in Child Welfare: Social Worker as Practitioner (required prerequisite: Key Issues in Child Welfare: Behavioral Health, Substance Use Disorders, and Intimate Partner Violence eLearning)	2 days
<b>Classroom</b>	Introduction to CWS/CMS	½ day

### ENGAGEMENT & ASSESSMENT BLOCK

Training Component	Course Title	Duration
<b>Classroom</b>	Cultural Humility in Child Welfare Interviews	1 day
<b>Classroom</b>	Critical Thinking & Assessment	½ day
<b>Classroom</b>	Engagement and Interviewing ( <b>recommended prerequisite from Foundation Block: Trauma-Informed Practice &amp; Child and Family Teaming</b> )	1 day
<b>Classroom</b>	Interviewing Children ( <b>required prerequisite: Cultural Humility in Child Welfare Interviews and Engagement &amp; Interviewing</b> )	1 day
<b>eLearning</b>	Child Maltreatment Identification (CMI)	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Child Maltreatment ID Skills Lab ( <b>required prerequisite: CMI eLearning and Introduction to Child Development</b> )	2 day
<b>eLearning</b>	Overview of Assessment Procedures	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Structured Tools and Assessment Skills Lab ( <b>required prerequisite: Overview of Assessment Procedures eLearning</b> )	2 days

### CASE PLANNING AND SERVICE DELIVERY BLOCK

Training Component	Course Title	Duration
<b>eLearning</b>	Purposeful Visitation and Family Time	Self-paced
<b>eLearning</b>	Case Planning Basics	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Teaming with Families to Develop Behavioral Case Plans ( <b>required prerequisite: Case Planning Basics eLearning</b> )	1 day

### MONITORING AND ADAPTING BLOCK

Training Component	Course Title	Duration
<b>eLearning</b>	Placement	Self-paced
<b>Classroom</b>	Managing the Plan: Supporting Safety, Permanency and Well-being ( <b>required prerequisite: Placement eLearning</b> )	1 day

<b>TRANSITION BLOCK</b>
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Training Component	Course Title	Duration
<i>eLearning</i>	Case Closure & After Care Plans	Self-paced
<i>eLearning</i>	Transition Planning with Youth and Young Adults	Self-paced
<i>Classroom</i>	Transition Practice (required prerequisite: Case Closure & After Care Plans and Transition Planning with Youth and Young Adults eLearning)	1 day

**FIELD ACTIVITIES to be completed by the end of Core**

<b>Training Component</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>Field Activity</b>	Fairness and Equity ( <b>required prerequisite: from Foundation block: Fairness and Equity</b> )	Self-paced
<b>Field Activity</b>	ICWA and Working with Native American Tribes ( <b>required prerequisites from Foundation block: Intro to ICWA eLearning and ICWA &amp; Working with Native American Families and Tribes Classroom</b> )	Self-paced
<b>Field Activity</b>	Time and Stress Management ( <b>no required prerequisite</b> )	Self-paced
<b>Field Activity</b>	Interviewing and Social Worker Safety ( <b>required pre-requisites from Engagement &amp; Assessment Block: Cultural Humility in Child Welfare Interviews, Engagement and Interviewing, and Interviewing Children</b> )	Self-paced
<b>Field Activity</b>	<p>Teaming with Families: New workers will be required to complete <b>one</b> of the four following teaming options, based on their assigned role and/or caseload:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exploring Safety and Risk (<b>required pre-requisites from Engagement &amp; Assessment Block: Overview of Assessment Procedures and Child Maltreatment Identification eLearning modules and Child Maltreatment ID and Structured Tools and Assessment Skills Labs</b>) OR</li> <li>2. Initial Case Plan (<b>required prerequisites from Case Planning Block: Case Planning Basics eLearning and Teaming with Families to Develop Behavioral Case Plans</b>) OR</li> <li>3. Case Plan Update (<b>required prerequisites from Case Planning Block: Case Planning Basics eLearning and Teaming with Families to Develop Behavioral Case Plans</b>) OR</li> <li>4. Transition Planning (<b>required prerequisites from Case Planning Block: Case Planning Basics eLearning and Teaming with Families to Develop Behavioral Case Plans</b>)</li> </ol>	Self-paced