

# Workforce Development

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## Background

Workforce development refers to the practice of providing training, workshops, coaching, mentoring, or other learning opportunities to employees to inspire, challenge, and motivate them to perform the functions of their position to the best of their ability and within standards set by local, state, Tribal, Federal and licensing organization guidelines. Workforce development activities provide all staff with the tools they need to develop professionally, increase their knowledge, effectively work with families, and build their capacity to perform the tasks associated with their positions within the system of care.

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## Social Worker Initial Training (SWIT)

Social Worker Initial Training (SWIT) is training provided to new SWs prior to full time assignment in a Region or Program. Some of the [California Common Core](#) will be part of SWIT. SWs enter SWIT as a new hire or a promotion into the following eligible classifications:

- Social Worker I (required to attend some SWIT classes)
- Social Worker II
- Social Worker III
- Protective Services Worker
- Social Work Supervisor (if assigned to Polinsky Children's Center).

SWIT includes training specific to the County of San Diego's Child Welfare Services and California Common Core classes.

Completing SWIT is the first step in a new SW's training.

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**California Common  
Core for Child  
Welfare Workers**

California Common Core, (Core) is a standardized training program for child welfare workers throughout the State of California. The curriculum is sanctioned by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) through the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) housed at the University of California, Berkeley and is required for all new child welfare SWs throughout the state. Content was developed around the following key practice areas or blocks:

- Foundational
- Engagement
- Assessment
- Case Planning and Service Delivery
- Monitoring and Adapting
- Transitions

Core training takes place in three modalities:

Modality	Description
1. Online learning (eLearning)	Provides participants with a broad foundation of each subject area prior to classroom engagement.
2. Classroom Skill Building	Builds on foundation materials with discussions and activities that provide greater depth and scope to the subject area.
3. Field Activities	Application of knowledge from eLearning and Classroom Skill Building trainings and transfers knowledge and training into social work practice with CWS families. Streamlines learning and focuses on key knowledge, skills, and values. The Safety Enhanced Together (SET) Practice Coaches assigned to each region/program will guide SWs through the Field Activities. There are 9 required Field Activities.

The training for each topic will be completed in the above order. A SW will not be allowed to attend classroom training if the eLearning for that topic has not been completed. Field activities must follow the initial classroom training.

Each block contains two levels of curriculum; 100 level and the advanced 200 level. The 100 level classes and eLearnings will be completed as part of SWIT. The Field Activities are considered 100 level curriculum. Field Activities and 200 level curriculum will be completed after the SW is placed in a job assignment. There are no 200 level Field Activities.

In order to attend 200 level classroom trainings, **ALL** 100 level curriculum- including Field Activities must be completed.

Core curriculum is available to view [here](#).

**Training requirements for newly-hired SWs**

The first two years as a SW is a time of intensive learning. The following is what is required for the first year and second year of being a new SW:

First Year from Hire Date	Second Year from Hire Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of all 100 level Core classes (completed as part of SWIT)</li><li>• Completion of all Field Activities</li><li>• Completion of Safety Organized Practice (SOP) modules, “Mapping with Families” and “Harm Statements, Danger Statements and Safety Goals” *</li><li>• Advanced Simulation, “Interviewing for Safety” *</li></ul>	Completion of all 200 level Core classes

**NOTE:** \*This is a San Diego County requirement.

It is the SW’s responsibility to make up any classes that they were not able to complete during SWIT.

Some of the 200 level Core classes may also be completed the first year after hire, if the SW has completed all of their Field Activities.

Supervisors, SET Practice Coaches, and SPSWs will take an active and supportive role in the training and development of new SWs. Verification of training will be a significant part of the Performance Appraisal Report.

**NOTE:** For a SW to pass probation, all First Year requirements must be completed.

**Supervisor’s responsibilities**

All CWS staff will participate in ongoing training of varying intensity throughout their CWS career. It is the responsibility of each supervisor (including CWS Managers) to:

- address training in regular supervision.
- discuss and debrief trainings staff attended.
- guide staff in applying new learning to their daily practice.
- make time available for staff to complete training.
- limit workloads as appropriate during intensive training periods.
- review training and development annually and set training goals with each employee.

Supervisors are highly encouraged to attend training to become Field Advisors in order to deliver Field Activities with their new staff.

**NOTE:** Supervisors can be any classification that has supervisorial responsibilities for staff, including CWS Managers or Deputy Directors.

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## Training for supervisors

The Common Core for Supervisors consists of the following five topic areas:

- A Leading Role: Leadership Skills for Child Welfare Supervisors
- Charting a Course: Maintaining Your Bearings
- A Micro Climate of Sanity: Maximizing Worker Performance
- Coaching Institute
- A Very Special Case: Putting It All Together

The curriculum series is delivered through CWS training partner, Child Welfare Development Services (CWDS) affiliated with San Diego State University (SDSU). New supervisors are required to complete all modules (10 days) within the first year of hire or promotion.

Staff on the supervisor eligibility list may participate in Supervisor Core classes if approved by their manager and if space permits.

Supervisor core curriculum is available to view [here](#).

Supervisors are also required to complete the following Simulations within the first year of hire or promotion:

- Interviewing for Safety Advanced Simulation
- Quality Supervision for Child Welfare Leaders: Advanced Simulation
- Supervising for Safety Advanced Simulation

**NOTE:** Supervisors that have completed probation are still responsible for completing Simulations by the due date shown in their training transcript as part of their ongoing training.

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## Training for managers

The Manager Core consists of the following six topic areas:

- Foundations for Managers in Child Welfare
- Effective Relationships as a Manager
- Strategies for Effective Organizational Communication
- Growing and Sustaining Effective Internal and External Teams
- Essentials for Resource Management
- Strategic Thinking and Planning Tools for the Manager

The curriculum series is delivered through CWS training partner, CWDS affiliated with SDSU. New Managers are required to complete all six modules within the first year of hire or promotion.

Staff on the Manager eligibility list may participate in Manager Core classes if approved by their Deputy Director and if space permits.

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## Training for managers (cont.)

Managers are also required to complete the following Simulations within the first year of hire or promotion:

- Quality Supervision for Child Welfare Leaders: Advanced Simulation
- Supervising for Safety Advanced Simulation

**NOTE:** Managers that have completed probation are still responsible for completing Simulations by the due date shown in their training transcript as part of their ongoing training.

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## Ongoing training

Per CDSS requirements, SWs and supervisors are required to attend a minimum of 20 hours of training per year. Managers are required to attend a minimum of 10 hours of training per year.

Staff will monitor their LMS training transcript to ensure they complete all assigned trainings including Simulations by the due date listed.

Ongoing training opportunities are available through the [HHSA The Knowledge Center](#), CWDS, CWS, and outside (community) trainings, including conferences and seminars.

Approval for outside trainings must be obtained from staff's immediate supervisor.

In order to assist CWS staff (and all County staff) in their professional development, employees satisfactorily completing work-related courses at accredited colleges and universities may apply for Tuition Reimbursement . This program is also offered to assist employees attending conferences, training classes, workshops, and/or seminars which are sponsored by educational providers. All applications for tuition assistance must be made at least 15 days prior to the beginning of the training.

**NOTE:** Staff are responsible for submitting all training verification for entry into individual training transcripts in the [LMS](#) for any outside trainings. Verifications may be provided to a regional or centralized LMS administrator for entry into LMS.

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## Coaching

Coaching is available to all levels of staff to increase their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Coaching can take place on an individual, unit, group, program, or regional level. It can occur in the office, field, or outside location.

SET Practice coaches aid in the development of knowledge and skills of SWs. Although staff sometimes bring cases to coaching sessions, they often coach with CWS cases and clients, SET Practice coaches do not make case decisions and coaching never takes the place of supervision. All case work decisions are made by SWs in conjunction with their supervisors and managers as appropriate.

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## Coaching (cont.)

The content of coaching sessions is confidential with the exception of areas of potential liability for CWS, such as unprofessional relationships, dangerous practices, danger to self or others, etc. Should any of these concerns arise, coaches will inform the SW's supervisor, as well as the coaching unit supervisor. Otherwise, coaching session content will only be shared with others, including a supervisor, if the SW requests it. Content may also be shared with permission from the SW.

**NOTE:** When the coach is acting as a [Core Field Advisor](#), there is no confidentiality due to the reporting and feedback requirements.

If a coach accompanies a SW into the field with CWS families, the SW will document in the CWS/CMS contact that a coach was present. All documentation of what occurred between the SW, coach, and client during the field based coaching session is the responsibility of the SW. Regular coaching sessions will not be documented anywhere in CWS/CMS when there are no clients involved.

Coaching will not be used as a punitive or disciplinary measure. While leadership may encourage staff to seek coaching, the scope, goals, and content of the session remains learner led and confidential.

Coaching sessions will be entered into [LMS transcripts](#) and will count towards the annual hourly training requirements.

This table describes how to access coaching.

Classification	Contact the...
SW	Region's/program's SET Practice coach.
Supervisor/Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Region's/program's SET Practice coach, or</li><li>Coaching Unit supervisor, or</li><li>Child Welfare Development Services (CWDS) contract coach.</li></ul>
Deputy Director	Child Welfare Development Services (CWDS) contract coach.

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## SET Practice Coaches as Field Advisors

Initial Core training includes Field Activities that follow the eLearning and classroom skill building trainings. Field Activities are designed to enhance SW's transfer of learning from the classroom into skills practice directly with CWS families.

Safety Enhanced Together (SET) Practice coaches and supervisors fill the role of Field Advisors under the Core training model. As Field Advisors, they are responsible for supporting the delivery of Field Activities with new SWs including tracking SW's completion of the Field Activities.

Field Advisors provide balanced feedback to the SW and their supervisor about Field Activity completion and the SW's progress on each activity.

**SET Practice Coaches  
as Field Advisors  
(cont.)**

SWs are responsible for the completion of all 9 state-mandated Field Activities, and supervisors will support new staff in ensuring timely completion of required Field Activities.

Core training, including Field Activities, is to be completed according to a defined schedule provided to SWs in [SWIT](#) and begins with the completion of SWIT. The training schedule allows for Field Activities to be completed soon after SWIT to increase the transfer of learning from eLearning and classroom skill building to SW practice with CWS families. The Field Activities for each block must be completed prior to a SW taking the 200 level curriculum for any block. All Field Activities must be completed for Core completion.

Unlike other SW/[SET Practice Coach](#) activities, when the SET Practice Coach is acting in the role of Field Advisor, they are required to provide the regional supervisor with feedback on the new SW's skill development after completion of each field activity. This feedback is provided based on what worked well, suggested upgrades, and what are the next steps. Due to this feedback process, there is no confidentiality during completion of field activities as there is in a coaching session.

If a worry is identified on the feedback given to the supervisor, it is the supervisor's responsibility to follow up with the worker.

**NOTE:** Field Activities are part of a SW's training and are meant to be used as a learning experience, not to evaluate a SW's performance.

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**Learning  
Management System  
(LMS) and Waitlists**

The County of San Diego uses an electronic Learning Management System (LMS) for training. The LMS is a web-based program that supports the training and development of employees. Required CWS or HHSA training opportunities, including simulations, eLearning or classroom trainings may be assigned to employees through LMS. Employees may also search available training classes and register for in-person and online classes through the LMS.

When registering for a class in Learning Management System (LMS), occasionally classes are at capacity and staff are added to a waitlist. If placed on a waitlist and an opening is made available, staff will receive an email notification allowing them to attend. Staff who do not receive this notification or did not register formally for a class may not be able to attend if the class is already at capacity.

If staff register for a class through LMS and then are unable to attend, they must cancel their registration in LMS. This will allow for the spot to be filled by a staff on the waitlist, or the class to be cancelled and rescheduled for a time when more staff can attend.

Each employee has a training transcript within the LMS. The LMS transcript is the official record of training completed by employees. Trainings that were assigned or selected and completed through the LMS will appear on the LMS transcript. Other training can be entered on the LMS transcript by designated CWS staff. Staff should ensure a sign in sheet is collected and provided to the regional or centralized LMS administrator for entry.

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**Training and employee performance**

Training is a tool to build and enhance employee performance.

The supervisor is required to do the following for their staff:

- Record all training completed by the employee in the Employee Performance Report
- Identify training needs in the Employee Performance Report

When there is a specific training need, the supervisor and the staff member will discuss and jointly plan a way to meet that need. Failure to complete required training will be a cause to not pass probation or to take corrective action.

**NOTE:** Supervisors have additional [responsibilities](#) supporting staff training, as noted above.

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**The Knowledge Center**

The Knowledge Center (TKC) provides ongoing training for HHSA employees, including CWS staff. TKC offers a diverse array of training programs, in a variety of platforms, to meet the operational needs of HHSA and the needs of staff. Some of the training categories include: Professional and Leadership Development Programs, Continuing Education Courses, Health & Safety, Wellness, Lean Six Sigma, and many more. Staff may sign up for training offered by TKC through LMS, and they will appear on their LMS transcript. Trainings taken through TKC will count toward hourly training requirements.

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**Child Welfare Development Services (CWDS)**

CWDS is a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence at San Diego State University School of Social Work. In addition to delivering Core training, CWDS offers ongoing learning opportunities including advanced training and special training opportunities. CWDS is a training partner with CWS and may deliver required training to CWS staff. When a CWDS training is offered through the partnership with CWS, completion will appear on the SW's LMS transcript.

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**Training for Rehired Staff (San Diego or Other California County)**

SWs who have previously worked in a California county may come to the position with significant knowledge and experience. To ensure all SWs have met current training requirements, prior training will be evaluated by the CWS Training Unit and an appropriate training plan will be developed. Some staff may be required to complete SWIT again, depending on the training needs of that particular employee.

Supervisors or Managers may complete Supervisor Core or Manager Core at different points in time, either prior to or during their initial year in that position. Some Supervisors or Managers may be required to complete their respective core, depending on the training needs of that staff.

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**Alignment with SET**

CWS supports staff at all levels and encourages them to learn and grow in an environment where principles of a learning organization are practiced and valued, and where resources are provided to support professional growth. This is demonstrated in SET [Value 6](#) which includes the guiding principle of ongoing learning and professional development that includes respectful mentoring and coaching relationships. It also includes the agency practice of understanding that learning and development happen throughout your career.

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