



# CaISWEC

California Social Work Education Center

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ABOUT THE TITLE IV-E PATHWAY PROGRAM

### **Q: What is the Pathway Program?**

**A:** The Pathway Program supports California county and Tribal child welfare employees, with an emphasis on rural and educationally underserved communities, in their pursuit of bachelor's and master's degrees in social work with a focus on child welfare. The Pathway Program also offers support to California public universities in their development of courses and degrees that can be offered to BASW/MSW distance education students.

CaISWEC is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. Based at Berkeley Social Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley, CaISWEC was created in 1990 by a partnership of social work educators and practitioners dedicated to developing a professional social service workforce to effectively serve California's diverse population.

### **Q: Who is eligible to be a Pathway Program student?**

**A:** California Tribal or county social services employees in targeted rural counties can participate in the Pathway Program. Pathway students must receive a letter of support from their employer.

### **Q: What are the benefits to students participating in the Pathway Program?**

**A:** Students accepted in the Pathway Program are eligible to participate in the Title IV-E Stipend program, which offers financial support through reimbursement of tuition and fees, books and supplies, and other educational expenses. Because Pathway courses are offered using distance education technologies, they can be completed partially or entirely online, allowing students to balance their degree programs with other work/life obligations.

### **Q: What are the obligations of students who complete the Pathway Program?**

**A:** Students who participate in the Pathway Program and receive Title IV-E funding must work in an approved position at a county or Tribal child welfare program after graduation. For BASW students, this is a one-year obligation; for MSW students, this is a two-year obligation. CaISWEC and individual schools offer information about approved available positions to students.

### **Q: Which schools offer the Pathway Program?**

**A:** The Pathway Program is currently offered at three California universities: Humboldt State University; CSU, Chico; and CSU, San Bernardino. All three schools offer BASW and MSW degrees using distance education technologies. More information about each school's program is available on their websites:

- Humboldt State: <http://www2.humboldt.edu/socialwork/partnerships/calswec-projects/pathway-program>
- CSU, Chico: <http://www.csuchico.edu/swrk/ive/pathwaytitleiv-e/index.shtml>
- CSU, San Bernardino: <http://socialwork.csusb.edu/majorsprograms/pdep/index.htm>

University of California, Berkeley  
School of Social Welfare  
2850 Telegraph Ave., Suite 215 | Berkeley, CA 94720-7420  
510-642-9272 (P) | 510-642-8573 (F)  
<http://calswec.berkeley.edu>

**Q: Can Pathway students be located anywhere in California?**

**A:** Although degrees in the Pathway Program are offered using distance education technologies, the primary purpose of the program is for campuses to offer distance education opportunities to students within their own region. These regions are generally defined by county:

Humboldt State	CSU, Chico	CSU, San Bernardino
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Del Norte</li><li>• Humboldt</li><li>• Mendocino</li><li>• Siskiyou</li><li>• Tehama</li><li>• Trinity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Butte</li><li>• Colusa</li><li>• Glenn</li><li>• Lake</li><li>• Lassen</li><li>• Modoc</li><li>• Plumas</li><li>• Shasta</li><li>• Siskiyou</li><li>• Sutter</li><li>• Tehama</li><li>• Trinity</li><li>• Yuba</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inyo</li><li>• Mono</li><li>• Riverside</li><li>• San Bernardino</li></ul>

If you live outside of these counties, or are unsure which campus might be the most geographically appropriate for you, you can contact the Pathway Program representatives at the campuses you are interested in attending for more information. This list of counties is intended as a general guideline only; all admissions decisions are at the discretion of each individual campus.

**Q: Can the Pathway Program be completed entirely online?**

**A:** Although the majority of Pathway coursework is completed online, each campus sets their own structure and policy for face-to-face meetings. Generally, students will be expected to travel to campus at least a few days per calendar year; this provides students with opportunities to meet their peers, and to practice their skills in face-to-face settings.

**Q: Can I complete the Pathway Program courses at my own pace?**

**A:** The instructor determines the exact structure of individual courses within the Pathway Program. Generally, Pathway Program courses include both synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced) content; students in courses with synchronous content, such as lectures and discussions, may need to be online at scheduled times each week. Pathway courses follow the traditional academic year.

**Q: Who teaches Pathway Program courses?**

**A:** Pathway Program courses are developed and taught by the same faculty who teach traditional face-to-face courses at each campus.

**Q: Who grants Pathway degrees? Are Pathway degrees accredited?**

**A:** Students who complete the Pathway Program receive identical bachelor’s or master’s degree as those students who complete traditional face-to-face programs and as are issued by their home campus. These degrees are fully accredited by the same organizations (the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Council on Social Work Education) that oversee traditional face-to-face education.

**Q: What are the field education requirements for Pathway students?**

**A:** All BASW and MSW programs, including online degrees, require a minimum number of supervised hours of field placement (400 hours for BASW students and 900 for MSW students). Students participating in the

Pathway Program must complete these field placement hours in a traditional, face-to-face setting. After admission to a Pathway degree program, the student's host campus will provide them with assistance in securing a field placement opportunity in the campus' local area. The Pathway Title IV-E stipend requires that this internship be focused on child welfare.

**Q: What are the minimum technology requirements to be a Pathway student?**

**A:** Generally, students need a computer and Internet connection to complete Pathway courses. Students will also be expected to have the ability to play back video and audio content online. Each campus may have additional technology requirements. Financial support to purchase a computer may be available using the Title IV-E stipend received by Pathway students.

**Q: How can I apply for the Pathway Program?**

**A:** Child welfare workers in the designated counties or in Tribal regions that serve these counties must first apply for admission and be accepted to the campus that serves their area. At some campuses, students must specifically indicate at the time of their application that they wish to enter the distance education program; at others, students will apply through the regular admissions process. Check with your local campus representative for specific information about your particular program or region. After admission to a campus offering the Pathway Program, students can then apply to receive a Title IV-E stipend as a Pathway student.

**Q: Can students enroll in distance education programs without being Pathway students?**

**A:** Yes, the distance education programs supported by the Pathway Program are available to any students interested in pursuing a social work degree. Each campus sets their own admissions policies for these programs.

**Q: What is CalSWEC, and what is its role in the Pathway Program?**

**A:** The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu>) administers the Title IV-E Stipend Program for CSU and UC campuses in the state of California. This program promotes professionalization of social work practice by offering financial stipends to BASW and MSW students who make a commitment to a career in public or Tribal child welfare. CalSWEC provides financial and programmatic support to Pathway campuses, but each campus is responsible for the development and administration of their own degree programs.

**Q: How can students get more information about the Pathway Program?**

**A:** If you are a California county social service employee who is interested in participating in the Pathway Program, you can contact the Pathway Program representative at the site where you are interested in enrolling:

- Humboldt State: Michelle Rainer, [michelle.rainer@humboldt.edu](mailto:michelle.rainer@humboldt.edu)
- CSU, Chico: Meka Klungtvvet-Morano, [mklungtvvet-morano@csuchico.edu](mailto:mklungtvvet-morano@csuchico.edu)
- CSU, San Bernardino: Teresa Morris, [tmorris@csusb.edu](mailto:tmorris@csusb.edu)

Pathway students must complete the regular application process for admission to their selected university.