Board of Accreditation (BOA)
Department of Social Work Accreditation (DOSWA)
Baccalaureate, Master's, & Practice Doctorate Program Accreditation

Candidacy Eligibility Application
(Read-Only)

IMPORTANT: This is a DRAFT application in development for use by practice doctorate programs after the practice doctorate accreditation pilot concludes. It is anticipated that programs will be able to seek accreditation in late-2025. The timeline is subject to change pending Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) review, expansion of the BOA's accreditation scope, and adoption of the final and forthcoming *Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program Accreditation*. This document is provided publicly for informational and planning purposes only and subject to change.

Directions

Purpose

- Institutions and social work programs must meet eligibility standards that demonstrate support in developing and sustaining a baccalaureate, master's, or practice doctorate social work program. CSWE reserves the right to decline consideration of any application that does not meet the eligibility criteria.

Formatting & Submission

- A completed application includes:
    - Evidence all eligibility standards are met
    - Payment of the candidacy eligibility fee
    - Finalized attestations and signatures
- Submit this application as a Microsoft Word document or searchable PDF, per policy *4.7 Document Formatting & Submission Requirements* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook.
    - The proposal must be a single document and may not include separate attachments nor appendices.
    - Scanned documents will not be accepted.
- Email completed applications to accreditation@cswe.org.
- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and must be approved prior to Benchmark 1 submission for CSWE staff approval.
- *For collaborative programs:* All institutions must meet the eligibility standards and submit separate applications/letters of intent.

Timeframe for Review & Response

Applications are reviewed and processed within 30-days of receipt. CSWE accreditation staff may request clarifying information. Upon approval, programs will receive an email confirmation. After the application is approved, the program's Benchmark 1 document can be submitted for staff review.

Table of Contents

Program Information

Date Application Submitted to CSWE:	MM/DD/YYYY
Name of Educational Institution:	
Program Mailing Address:	
Program Level for which Candidacy is sought:	☐ Baccalaureate ☐ Master's ☐ Practice Doctorate
Standards: *(check the standards the program's accreditation will be reviewed under)*	☐ 2015 EPAS ☐ 2022 EPAS ☐ 2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program Accreditation
Name of Social Work Program: *(if different than institution's name)*	
Title of Degree to be Awarded: *(to be listed on transcript)*	
Program Director Information *(name is displayed on directory)*	Name, Credentials Title E-mail Phone
Field Director Information *(name is displayed on directory for baccalaureate and master's programs only)*	Name, Credentials Title E-mail Phone

Benchmark 1 Planning

Timetable/Agenda Date[1] sought:	Month & Year

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[1] Programs are granted pre-candidacy status and assigned a timetable/agenda date upon approval of the Benchmark 1 document by CSWE staff. **Important Note:** The program can plan for a certain agenda, however assignment to an agenda is not guaranteed. A maximum of ten (10) programs are reviewed for a Candidacy decision at each Board of Accreditation (BOA) meeting. Once ten (10) pre-candidate programs are assigned to a BOA meeting agenda, the subsequent programs will automatically be assigned to the next available BOA meeting agenda (per policy *5.3 Assignment to a BOA Meeting Agenda* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook).

Date Benchmark 1 will be Submitted to CSWE Accreditation Staff for review:	MM/DD/YYYY
Date Required Faculty & Administrators for Benchmark 1 Staff Approval will be Hired[2]:	MM/DD/YYYY
Date Students will be Admitted to the Social Work Program[3]:	MM/DD/YYYY

Program Options

Identify all planned program options below. Definitions are located in policy *4.9 Program Changes* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#)[4].

# of Program Options	Location or Delivery Method	Program Option Type *(check one per row)*	Percentage of the Curriculum Delivered Online *(check one per row)*
1	City, State, Country or Online	In-person / Face-to-Face / Traditional: ☐ Main / Primary Campus ☐ Branch / Satellite Campus Distance Education: ☐ Online ☐ Broadcast Site ☐ Correspondence	☐ 0-50% ☐ 51-100%

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[2] Per the 2022 EPAS: Baccalaureate and master's social work programs must have a program director [AS B/M4.3.4(a-c)], field director [AS B/M4.3.5(a-c)], and two (2) full-time faculty members formally hired with at least 51% or more of their appointment to the social work program seeking candidacy (AS B/M4.2.1) for staff to approve the Benchmark 1 document and to enter pre-candidacy. The program director and field director can fulfill two (2) faculty member roles. Per the 2025 Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program Accreditation: Practice doctorate social work programs must have a program director and two (2) full-time faculty members formally hired with at least 51% or more of their appointment to the social work program seeking candidacy for staff to approve the Benchmark 1 document and to enter pre-candidacy. The program director can fulfill one (1) faculty member role. Required faculty and administrators must have a start date no later than 30-days before the candidacy visit date (i.e., when the Benchmark 1 document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist).

[3] Only students admitted to the social work program during or after the academic year in which the program is granted candidacy will be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited program, once the program achieves initial accreditation as granted by the Board of Accreditation (BOA). Students admitted prior to the academic year in which the program was granted candidacy will not be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited social work education program, regardless of the program's accredited status when they graduate per policy 5.2 *Retroactive Accredited Status* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

[4] All program options must be addressed in the Benchmark 1 documents for staff approval, per policy 5.1 *Understanding Candidacy Benchmarks & Initial Accreditation* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

# of Program Options	Location or Delivery Method	Program Option Type *(check one per row)*	Percentage of the Curriculum Delivered Online *(check one per row)*
2	City, State, Country or Online	In-person / Face-to-Face / Traditional: ☐ Main/Primary Campus ☐ Branch / Satellite Campus Distance Education: ☐ Online ☐ Broadcast Site ☐ Correspondence	☐ 0-50% ☐ 51-100%
3	City, State, Country or Online	In-person / Face-to-Face / Traditional: ☐ Main / Primary Campus ☐ Branch / Satellite Campus Distance Education: ☐ Online ☐ Broadcast Site ☐ Correspondence	☐ 0-50% ☐ 51-100%
#	Add or delete rows as needed		

Eligibility Standards

Eligibility Standard 1:

The president/chancellor of the institution authorizes the CSWE Board of Accreditation's review of the social work program, including conducting candidacy visits.

1a.   The president/chancellor of the institution authorizes the CSWE Board of Accreditation's review of the social work program, including conducting candidacy visits.
       ☐ Yes
       ☐ No

1b.   Complete the *Authorization of Program Review Form*, signed by the president/chancellor of the institution.

Authorization of Program Review Form

Check the following boxes:

☐ As the president/chancellor of this institution, I hereby request and authorize a review of the social work degree program to be conducted by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Board of Accreditation.

☐ The president/chancellor understands they must meet with the visitor during their visit and will receive copies of official Board of Accreditation decision letters.

President/Chancellor Signature:	Insert e-signature or image of signature
President/Chancellor Name, Credentials:	
Title:	
Date Signed:	MM/DD/YYYY
Phone #:	(###) ###-####
Email Address:	

Eligibility Standard 2:

The program is within an educational institution recognized by a regional accrediting body approved by the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)](#).

2a.   The program is within an educational institution recognized by a regional accrediting body.
☐ Yes, Regional Accreditor Name
☐ No

2b.   The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognizes the regional accrediting body.
☐ Yes
☐ No

2c.   The social work program has been approved by the institution's regional accrediting body to offer the social work program and award degrees for the program seeking candidacy.

☐ Yes, date approved: MM/DD/YYYY
☐ No
☐ Regional accreditor does not require approval to offer the social work program and award degrees for the program seeking candidacy.

2d.   Website hyperlink to institution's accreditation profile or directory listing on the regional accrediting body's website: Insert website hyperlink here

Eligibility Standard 3:

The institution must be legally organized and authorized to operate as a post-secondary educational institution under the laws of the relevant state, district, or territory. The program has been approved by the appropriate higher education authorities.

3a.   The institution is legally organized and authorized to operate as a post-secondary educational institution under the laws of the relevant state, district, or territory.
☐ Yes
☐ No

3b.   The social work program has been approved by the appropriate state, district, or territory-level higher education authorities to offer the social work program and award degrees for the program seeking candidacy.

☐ Yes, date approved: MM/DD/YYYY

☐ No

☐ The appropriate state, district, or territory-level higher education authorities do not require approval to offer the social work program and award degrees for the program seeking candidacy.

Eligibility Standard 4:

The institution complies with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

4a.   The institution is compliant with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
☐ Yes
☐ No

4b.   Insert the institution's written ADA compliance plan, website hyperlink to the information, or other proof[5] of the institution's compliance with the ADA:

Insert website hyperlink or embed proof here

Eligibility Standard 5:

The institution has appointed a program director (per the 2015 EPAS, 2022 EPAS, or *Accreditation Standards for Practice Doctorate Social Work Program Accreditation*) who has the ability to provide leadership through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and / or other academic and professional activities in social work. At the baccalaureate level, the social work program director has a master's social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program. At the master's level, the social work program director has a master's social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program, and it is preferred that the social work program director have a doctoral degree, preferably in social work. At the practice doctorate level, the social work program director has a doctoral degree in social work, a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program, and at least two years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work.

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[5] ADA compliance information may be found in several places, depending on the structure of the institution, including institutional centers, offices, or departments of disabilities services; human resources; the office of the affirmative action; affirmative action compliance officer; and office of the president, provost, academic vice president, or university counsel. Program's may submit website hyperlinks to ADA-related policy documents, ADA-related information posted on the university's website, information in a catalog, handbook, manual, syllabi, or documented procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations.

Baccalaureate, master's, and practice doctorate programs must identify separate program directors.[6]

5a.   Provide the name of the social work program director.

Insert text here

5b.   Indicate the degree(s) the program director holds.

Insert text here

5c.   The program attests that the program director holds master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited[7] program.
☐ Yes
☐ No

5d.   **Practice Doctorate Programs Only:** The program affirms that the program director has at least two years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work.
☐ Yes
☐ No

5e.   **Practice Doctorate Programs Only:** The program affirms that the program director holds a doctoral degree in social work.
☐ Yes
☐ No

5f.   Insert the social work program director's curriculum vitae (CV) here:

Embed CV here

Eligibility Standard 6:
The institution identifies and describes the social work program in its catalog, similar publication, or on its website. Program mission and course offerings are specified.

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[6] At the same institution, the baccalaureate and master's program directors may be the same person until 30-days before the candidacy 1 visit. Therefore, the program director indicated on this application may temporarily be the same for both program levels. However, for staff to approve the Benchmark 1 document and enter Pre-candidacy, programs must have documented that a separate program director is formally hired, with a start date no later than 30-days before the visit date (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist). For Benchmark 1, programs must have a program director actively working within the program 30-days before the visit date (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist) even if students are not enrolled or the program is not fully operational.

[7] This includes degrees recognized through CSWE's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service or covered under a memorandum of understanding with international social work accreditors.

No information required. This standard is not approved until the Initial Accreditation Eligibility Application is reviewed.

Eligibility Standard 7:

The educational institution provides its organizational chart to document the position of the social work program in the governance structure of the institution and to demonstrate its position relative to other professional education programs offered by the institution.

No information required. This standard is not approved until the Initial Accreditation Eligibility Application is reviewed.

Eligibility Standard 8:

The institutional transcript for students who complete the accredited social work program confirms that the social work program was completed, and a baccalaureate, master's, or practice doctorate degree was awarded.

No information required. This standard is not approved until the Initial Accreditation Eligibility Application is reviewed.

Eligibility Standard 9:

If a full-time plan of study is offered, the institution must ensure that the master's social work program can be completed[8] in two (2) calendar years of full-time study. If a part-time plan of study is offered, the institution must ensure that the master's social work program can be completed in a maximum of four (4) calendar years.

*Only master's social work programs respond to this standard.

9a. The institution ensures that the full-time master's program can be completed in two (2) calendar years.
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ N/A, a full-time plan of study is not offered

9b. No information required. This standard is not approved until the Initial Accreditation Eligibility Application is reviewed.

9c. The institution ensures that the part-time master's program can be completed in a maximum of four (4) calendar years.

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[8] Individual students may pursue customized plans of study beyond the 2-years of full-time study or 4-years of part-time study. However, the program must ensure the structured curricular pathways or plans of study align with this standard.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ N/A, a part-time plan of study is not offered

9d.   No information required. This standard is not approved until the Initial Accreditation Eligibility Application is reviewed.

Eligibility Standard 10:

If a full-time plan of study is offered, the institution must ensure that the practice doctorate social work program can be completed[9] in four (4) calendar years of full-time study. If a part-time plan of study is offered, the institution must ensure that the practice doctorate social work program can be completed in a maximum of six (6) calendar years.

*Only practice doctorate social work programs respond to this standard.

10a.   The institution ensures that the full-time practice doctorate program can be completed in four (4) calendar years.
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ N/A, a full-time plan of study is not offered (skip 10b)

10b.   Insert the website hyperlink and page number (if applicable) to the social work program's full-time plan of study documenting that the practice doctorate social work program can be completed in four (4) calendar years of full-time study.

Insert website hyperlink here

Identify page number location of information (if applicable)

10c.   The institution ensures that the part-time practice doctorate program can be completed in a maximum of six (6) calendar years.
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ N/A, a part-time plan of study is not offered (skip 10d)

10d.   Insert the website hyperlink and page number (if applicable) to the social work program's part-time plan of study documenting that the practice doctorate social work program can be completed in six (6) calendar years of full-time study.

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[9] Individual students may pursue customized plans of study beyond the 4-years of full-time study or 6-years of part-time study. However, the program must ensure the structured curricular pathways or plans of study align with this standard.

Eligibility Standard 11:

The institution documents sufficient and firm institutional supports to create, build, and maintain the social work education program.

11a. The institution attests to having sufficient and firm institutional supports to create, build, and maintain the social work education program.
☐ Yes
☐ No

11b. Insert the program's current budget and projections using the required budget form :

Program Level:
(check one only)
☐ Baccalaureate
☐ Master's
☐ Practice Doctorate

Program Budget

Program Budget Expenses	Previous Year: 20YY-20YY	Current Year: 20YY-20YY	Next Year: 20YY-20YY
Full-time Faculty Salaries	$	$	$
Administrator Salaries	$	$	$
Part-time Faculty Salaries	$	$	$
Staff Salaries	$	$	$
Fringe Benefits *(for all faculty, administrators, & staff)*	$	$	$
Student Financial Aid	$	$	$
Technological Resources	$	$	$
Supplies & Ancillary Services	$	$	$
Travel *(for all faculty, administrators, staff, & students)*	$	$	$
Other, please specify	$	$	$

Total:	$	$	$

Letter of Intent

The *Letter of Intent* is a narrative that demonstrates the program and institution's intent to start and maintain a social work program. Please respond to the prompts below.

1. Discuss the institution's mission statement and the relationship of the social work program to that mission.

Insert the institution's mission statement.

Explain how the social work program supports, integrates with, embodies, and / or further enhances the institution's mission. Use verbiage from the institution's mission to show clear linkages.

How does starting a new social work program align with the institution's mission?

2. Analyze the relationship of the proposed social work program to the institution's strategic or long-term plan.

Summarize the institution's strategic plan or long-range plan.

Optional: Insert a website hyperlink to the institution's full strategic plan or long-term plan.

Explain how the social work program supports, integrates with, embodies, and/or further enhances the institution's strategic plan or long-term plan. Use verbiage from the strategic plan or long-term plan to show clear linkages.

How does starting a new social work program align with the institution's strategic plan or long-term plan?

3. The program explains and/or lists the institutional supports provided to create, build, and maintain the social work education program.

Explain or list the institutional supports provided for starting and maintaining a social work program.

4. Preliminary ideas about the social work program's mission statement.

Explain or list preliminary ideas for the program's mission statement. Review the standards for inspiration.

5. Summary of the social work program's initial development activities[10].

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[10] This may include research conducted (needs assessment, environmental scan, etc.), securing approvals internally and externally, hiring, curriculum design, selection of program options (delivery methods and locations),

Identify the steps that have occurred from ideation (brainstorming starting the program) to application for the new social work program.

How has the program developed to date?

Who has been involved?

What approvals were secured?

What recruitment and hiring has occured?

What elements of the program have been designed?

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advertising, recruitment, admissions, developing policy and procedure manuals, developing syllabi, convening an accreditation writing team, etc.

Payment of Candidacy Eligibility Fee

The institution documents payment of the *Candidacy Eligibility Fee*. **Applications will not be approved until this payment is verified by the CSWE Finance Department.**

☐ The program has mailed a check to:

       Council on Social Work Education
       Attention: Accounting Office
       333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 400
       Alexandria, VA 22314

       Check number: Insert text here
       Routing information: Insert text here
       Date mailed: Insert text here

☐ The program has paid electronically via credit card, ACH (Automated Clearinghouse), or bank transfer. To do so, please contact Accounting Manager in the CSWE Finance Department.

       Reference Number: Insert text here
       Date Paid: Insert text here

☐ The program sent an email requesting an invoice for this fee from the CSWE Accreditation Fees Department (feesaccred@cswe.org) on MM/DD/YYYY with the following information included within the email request:

1. Fee Type: Candidacy Eligibility Fee
2. Institution Name:
3. Program Level (Baccalaureate, Master's, Practice Doctorate):
4. Program's Primary Contact[11] Name and Credentials:
5. Program's Primary Contact Email Address:
6. Program's Mailing Address:

Requesting an invoice does not supersede the requirement of payment to proceed. Applications will not be processed until these payments are verified by CSWE accounting.

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[11] Each program applicant selects one (1) primary contact. The primary contact manages all accreditation-related communications between the program and CSWE per policy *4.1 Primary Contact and Accreditation Communications* in the Accreditation Policy Handbook.

Attestations

By submitting this application, the program attests to the following:

☐ We understand that the approval of this Candidacy Eligibility Application by CSWE staff does not supersede any approvals needed by the program's regional accreditor or other appropriate state, district, or territory-level higher education authorities to offer the social work program and award degrees for the program seeking candidacy.

☐ We understand that the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#) includes the policies and procedures governing the accreditation review.

☐ We understand that CSWE's Department of Social Work Accreditation and the Board of Accreditation have made many resources available on the [CSWE website](#) to guide us through each step of the process.

☐ We attest that the program will utilize the Interpretation Guide (as designed for the corresponding set of standards) developed by CSWE's Department of Social Work Accreditation and the Board of Accreditation to understand accreditation standards and compliance statements, to guide program design, to develop benchmark documents, and to obtain the greatest success throughout the process.

☐ We attest that the program will review policy *4.7 Formatting & Submission Requirements* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#) in its entirety and comply accordingly with all volumes for each benchmark.

☐ We make a commitment to Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) efforts in the program's explicit and implicit curriculum.

☐ We understand that accreditation reviews are program-driven, and reminders/prompts will <u>not</u> be sent to the program. Downloadable [timetables](#) are available to guide programs through each step of the process.

☐ We understand that the Board of Accreditation limits each agenda to ten (10) new programs. Therefore, when ten (10) Benchmark 1 documents are approved by CSWE Staff for an agenda/timetable, subsequent approvals will be assigned to the next available timetable/agenda date.

☐ We understand that only students admitted to the social work program during or after the academic year in which the program is granted candidacy will be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited program, once the program achieves initial accreditation as granted by the Board of Accreditation (BOA). Students admitted prior to the academic year in which the program was granted candidacy will not be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited social work education program, regardless of the program's accredited status when

they graduate per policy *5.2 Retroactive Accreditation Status* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook.](#)

☐ We attest that the institution has a written anti-discrimination policy and complaint or grievance process for employees and students.

☐ We attest that the institution has a written anti-harassment policy and complaint or grievance process for employees and students.

☐ We understand that CSWE accreditation staff will assign visitor for each candidacy visit and a visitor assignment confirmation e-mail will be sent to the program.

☐ We agree to contact the BOA visitor within 2-weeks of each candidacy visit assignment email notification, to begin planning the visit, including selecting a date, travel plans, and initial schedule setting and inquire about any accommodations the visitor may need during travel or the visit (e.g., mobility, communication).
- Policies and procedures regarding the site visit are located in policy *5.9 Candidacy Visits 1,2,&3* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

☐ We understand that the program is responsible for purchasing flight and hotel accommodations for the visitor and reimbursing for all relevant ground transportation expenses and meals on travel days and visit day(s). We understand that visitors are not expected to provide the program with an IRS Form W-9, personal service agreements, or similar contracts requested by the program/institution, as they are not vendors or service providers.
- Policies and procedures regarding the site visit are located in policy *5.9 Candidacy Visits 1,2, &3* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

☐ We attest that we will keep the institution's president/chancellor, social work program administrators, faculty, staff, and students appraised of the review timetable, and request all stakeholders hold the selected date for each forthcoming candidacy visit.

☐ We understand that CSWE accreditation staff cannot determine compliance and the Board of Accreditation is the sole and final arbiter of compliance.

☐ We understand that all accreditation-related communications must be facilitated by the program's selected primary contact per policy *4.1 Primary Contact & Accreditation Communications* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook.](#)

☐ We understand that the program is responsible for providing updated contact information to ensure timely and accurate correspondence.
- Policies and procedures for updating the program's record, including key personnel, are located in policy *4.9 Program Changes* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

☐ We understand that accreditation status applies to the entire social work program, inclusive of all program options.

- Program options are defined in policy *4.9 Program Changes* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).
- Compliance issues for one program option, affects the accreditation status of the entire social work program, inclusive of all program options.
- All program options must be identified at Benchmark 1.

☐ We understand that the program is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the data and information submitted in materials for candidacy, reaffirmation, or other accreditation-related review processes.
- Presenting false or materially inaccurate information, either through intent or through failure to exercise care and diligence in verifying the information, is considered a breach of policy *1.3 Integrity Policy* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).

☐ We understand that the program is solely responsible for implementing, demonstrating, and maintaining compliance with the standards during the pre-candidacy and candidacy process as well as in-between review cycles as an accredited program.

Application Authorization

To be completed by the social work program's primary contact[12]:

Check the following box:

☐ We understand that the primary contact must meet with the visitor during the candidacy visit and will receive copies of official Board of Accreditation decision letters.

Primary Contact Signature:	Insert e-signature or image of signature
Primary Contact Name, Credentials:	
Title:	
Date Signed:	MM/DD/YYYY
Phone #:	(###) ###-####
Email Address:	

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[12] Each program applicant selects one (1) primary contact. The primary contact manages all accreditation-related communications between the program and CSWE per policy *4.1 Primary Contact and Accreditation Communications* in the [Accreditation Policy Handbook](#).