The Education for Public Child Welfare Program is a partnership between the University of Maryland School of Social Work and the Maryland Department of Human Services to prepare Master of Social Work (MSW) students for public child welfare practice. Federal “Title IV-E” child welfare funds support this effort to provide professional social work education to students preparing to practice in public child welfare programs such as Child Protective Services, Family Preservation, Foster Care, and Adoption. Child Welfare Student Units with faculty field instructors have been established in Local Departments of Social Services for a specialized child welfare field placement. Both current and prospective public child welfare employees are able to apply. Selection to the program is competitive, based on an application essay, academic record, and participation in group selection activity. Additional information is available by contacting the Title IV-E Educational Director, Chris Wirt, at cwirt@ssw.umaryland.edu.

To be selected for the Program students must meet, at a minimum, the following conditions:

- Have a basic understanding of and express a specific interest in social work practice in public child welfare;
- Be enrolled in the MSW foundation or advanced level field practicum course;
- Have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- At the advanced MSW level, be a clinical concentrator if participating in the program for the first time;
- At the advanced MSW level, specialize in Families & Children and enroll in the following child welfare courses:
  - SWCL 727 (Clinical Practice with Families & Children in Child Welfare);
  - SOWK 715 (Children and Social Services Policy); and
  - SOWK 777 (Research in Child Welfare; also cross-listed as SWOA 777)
- Legal status that includes ability to accept employment indefinitely in the U.S.;
- Plan to remain in Maryland after graduation from the School of Social Work; and
- Agree to seek and accept employment with the Maryland Department of Human Services after graduation. Students incur an employment obligation of twelve months for each academic year (fall/spring semesters) of participation. Students who do not fulfill the employment obligation must repay their Title IV-E stipend. Participants sign a contract agreeing to the employment and payback conditions.

For Academic Year 2022-2023 student stipends are $5,000 per semester for a total of $10,000 per year for practicum and advanced level MSW students. The student pays his/her tuition and fees from the stipend.

Students who are interested in applying for the Title IV-E Program must indicate this interest on their Field Placement Application. Applicants will be contacted and required to complete an essay describing their interest in Public Child Welfare practice and professional goals. Applicants are selected based on their essay, an interview with program faculty, academic record, and writing sample.