

# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

E. Maxwell Davis, PhD, MSSA  
Workforce Development Director  
School of Social Work

Martina Parashkevova, MA  
Program Manager  
School of Social Work

# Agenda

- Program Overview
- Application & Selection Process
- Training Requirements
- Additional Trainee Commitments
- Trainee Tracking and Reporting
- Questions





# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

OVERVIEW

# Program Funding and Goals

- Funded by the California Office of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) as part of a statewide behavioral health workforce development initiative
- Central goals are:
  - To better prepare MSW students to provide effective, evidence-based behavioral health care for underserved consumers in publicly funded systems, programs and settings
  - To better prepare new MSWs to proactively support the integration of behavioral health care services across public systems
  - To enhance the hiring, retention and career development of MSWs working in California's public behavioral health care systems, programs and settings

# Trainee Award Guidelines

- MSW students are accepted into the PBH MSW Training Program for one academic year at a time
- MSW students may apply to the program for one year of foundation training and one year of advanced training, in different academic years when they will participate in field training
- Acceptance into the training program for a year of foundation training does NOT guarantee acceptance for a second year of advanced training
- MSW students may participate in the training program for a maximum of two academic years (one foundation year and one advanced year)

# Trainee Eligibility Criteria

- The Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program is open to MSW students who are:
  - Enrolled in participating MSW programs as full time, part time or advanced standing students, in face to face, online or hybrid formats as determined/allowed by each MSW program (and this may vary)
  - Entering the proposed training year in good academic standing with the MSW program
  - Matched/matching with field placements in eligible training sites for the proposed training year
  - Not receiving funding support through any other HCAI or other state agency-administered training, stipend or scholarship program for the proposed training year



# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

**APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

# Trainee Selection Criteria

- The Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program seeks MSW students who demonstrate:
  - Interest in and commitment to learning about the issues, challenges and needs specific to providing behavioral health care services for underserved consumers in public service settings
  - Linguistic and cultural competencies that align with the needs of underserved consumers in California
  - Strong and sustained commitment to social work careers in California's public behavioral health care systems, programs and settings

# Application Procedures

- SJSU creates a Qualtrics-based training program application and shares that link with all MSW program partners
- MSW programs then (1) share that application link and (2) communicate all relevant campus-based application deadlines with potential applicants
- Each MSW program sets its own timeline for application release, application deadline, finalist interviews, and award notifications
- Interested students should submit completed applications by the deadlines established by and for their MSW programs

# — Trainee Selection Process

- Each MSW program receives and reviews all applications received from students in that program
- After reviewing submitted applications, each MSW program identifies finalists who are matched/matching with eligible field placements for the training year
- Panels of MSW program faculty and community members conduct panel interviews (usually on Zoom) with identified finalists
- Each MSW program selects awardees but notifies them only AFTER verifying they are matched/matching with eligible field placements for the training year
- SJSU is NOT involved in the review of applications, interviewing of finalists, or the selection of awardees in any way

# Award Notification Process

- In late August/early September, SJSU asks each MSW program to forward an email to intended trainees
- In that email, SJSU asks intended trainees to initiate contact with SJSU to confirm their intention to participate and their field training plans, and provide direct contact information
- SJSU then verifies each intended trainee's field placement again before inviting eligible trainees to register for the trainee program orientation
- AFTER each trainee has completed the program orientation, SJSU sends them the Student Service Agreement for signature
- Stipend funding dissemination begins only after SJSU has verified that the trainee and campus PI have both signed the Student Service Agreement

## PBH Stipend Awards

- Trainees who meet campus guidelines for full time enrollment are eligible for stipends of \$25,000 per academic year
  - This includes many trainees in “part time” MSW programs
  - These trainees receive two stipend disbursements of \$12,500 each
- Trainees who do NOT meet campus guidelines for full time enrollment are eligible for stipends of \$12,500 per academic year
  - These trainees receive two stipend disbursements of \$6,250 each
- Both fall and spring stipend disbursements are sent to trainees in mid semester after confirmation of course completions, course registrations and ongoing good academic standing

An aerial photograph of a city, likely San Francisco, with a prominent clock tower in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a solid blue color. The text "Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program" is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font.

# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

**TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

# Foundation Year Coursework

- Foundation year PBH trainees must complete the courses identified by their MSW program as required for foundation year PBH trainees
  - These should be foundation practice, policy and research courses that prepare students for a behavioral health option/concentration OR in a generalist practice program, the closest equivalent in which students interested in behavioral health practice typically enroll
  - Any time course options diverge, PBH trainees should complete the option that focuses most on behavioral health (versus courses more focused on CYF, child welfare, aging, macro practice, etc)
- Trainees in MSW programs that offer Behavioral Health certificates must complete the certificate requirements specified by the MSW program during the training year

# Advanced Year Coursework

- Advanced year PBH trainees must complete the courses identified by their MSW program as required for advanced year PBH trainees
  - These should be advanced year practice, policy and research courses required for a behavioral health option/concentration OR in a generalist practice program, the closest equivalent in which students focused on behavioral health practice typically enroll
  - Any time course options diverge, PBH trainees should complete the option that focuses most on behavioral health (versus courses more focused on CYF, child welfare, aging, macro practice, etc)
- Trainees in MSW programs that offer Behavioral Health certificates must complete the certificate requirements specified by the MSW program during the training year

# Field Training Requirements

- Foundation year PBH field training must involve contributing to the delivery of behavioral health care services for underserved consumers through publicly funded systems or programs
- Advanced year PBH field training must involve providing behavioral health for underserved consumers in publicly funded systems or programs
- Potential PBH field training sites include but are not limited to:
  - County behavioral health agencies, community-based behavioral health care clinics and organizations, inpatient and IOP psychiatric and SUD treatment programs, K-12 schools, school districts, SELPAs, colleges, inpatient and outpatient hospital and other health care settings AND behavioral health programs and services housed in other public systems, including public child welfare departments, regional centers, juvenile delinquency systems, court systems, and adult corrections settings

# Field Training Site Eligibility

- PBH field training sites must be BOTH (1) publicly funded to provide behavioral health care services AND (2) serve underserved areas, communities and/or populations (not either/or)
- Not just the agency or organization but the specific programs, units or services in which PBH trainees are placed MUST be supported by public (Tribal, federal, state, regional, county, city or local) funding
- Not just the agency or organization but the specific programs, units or services in which PBH trainees are placed MUST be intended to serve underserved consumers specifically, NOT just incidentally
- Accepting Medi-Cal as insurance reimbursement does NOT qualify as receiving public funding but DOES demonstrate that the site serves underserved consumers

## Field Seminars

- Some MSW programs are able to create designated specialized field seminars for PBH trainees focused exclusively/intensively on social work practice in public behavioral health care systems, settings and programs
- For MSW program that cannot offer designated PBH field seminars:
  - Foundation year PBH trainees must enroll in the field seminar best for students training in behavioral health sites, per the MSW program
  - Advanced year PBH trainees must enroll in the field seminar best for students training in behavioral health sites, per the MSW program
  - All PBH trainees must participate in monthly enhancements to the field seminar focused specifically on best practices for and key issues in providing public behavioral health care services for underserved consumers (these sessions are required and are NOT optional)

## Other Training Year Commitments

- PBH trainees must participate in all trainee meetings scheduled by SJSU during the training year, including the trainee program orientation and the new graduate orientation, as well as any individual meetings requested
- PBH trainees must complete all virtual trainings designated and scheduled by SJSU for PBH trainees during the training year (these are NOT optional)
  - This typically includes one virtual training during each semester
  - Each training is offered at multiple days and times
  - Trainings are focused on key skills for social work practice with underserved consumers in public behavioral health care settings
- PBH trainees must complete the trainee information, field training, demographic and pre-/post- training surveys as requested and on time during the training year

An aerial photograph of a city, likely San Francisco, with a blue color overlay. The image shows a mix of urban buildings, green spaces, and hills in the background. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

**POST-GRADUATION TRAINEE COMMITMENTS**

## — Post-Graduation Commitments to SJSU

- In addition to training year activities, PBH Trainees must commit to:
  - Providing updated contact information to SJSU at MSW graduation
  - Completing annual follow-up surveys as requested and on time for up to seven years after MSW graduation
  - Pursuing and documenting pursuit of LCSW licensure, including registering as an ASW, seeking a position in which supervision hours can be accrued, and working toward eligibility for the ASWB Clinical Exam
  - Completing the post-graduation service obligation within 36 months of MSW graduation

# Post-Graduation PBH Service Obligation

- For each year of training participation, PBH graduates must complete the equivalent of 12 months of full time service within the state of California
- PBH graduates must begin searching for an eligible service position within 6 months of MSW graduation
- PBH graduates must begin service within 12 months of MSW graduation
- PBH graduates must complete required service (either 12 or 24 months depending on years of training) within 36 months of MSW graduation
- PBH service can be either paid employment or volunteer work
- PBH service can be completed on a full time or part time basis, but must involve working a minimum average of 20 hours per week each month
- Full time employment is defined by the employer and may be defined as 32, 35, 37.5 or 40 hours per week depending on the employer

## Eligible Service Sites

- Examples of eligible service employment sites include county behavioral health agencies, community-based behavioral health care clinics and organizations, inpatient and IOP psychiatric and SUD treatment programs, K-12 schools, school districts, SELPAs, colleges, inpatient and outpatient hospital and other health care settings AND behavioral health programs and services housed in other public systems, including public child welfare departments, regional centers, juvenile delinquency systems, court systems, and adult corrections settings
- Behavioral health positions in these settings may involve many different types of service provision (traditional therapy, crisis response, universal screening and referrals to treatment, etc)

## Service Site Eligibility

- PBH service employment sites must be BOTH (1) publicly funded to provide behavioral health care services AND (2) serve underserved areas, communities and/or populations (not either/or)
- Not just the agency or organization but the specific services the PBH graduate provides MUST be supported by public (Tribal, federal, state, regional, county, city or local) funding
- The specific services the PBH graduate provides MUST be intended and designed to serve underserved consumers and do so explicitly, NOT just incidentally
- Accepting Medi-Cal as insurance reimbursement does NOT qualify as receiving public funding but DOES demonstrate that the site serves underserved consumers

## Service Position Eligibility

- PBH service positions MUST be master's level positions, meaning the job description and/or position classification must indicate that a master's degree is required (or at minimum preferred) to be hired for the position in question
- PBH service positions must involve the graduate providing behavioral health care services (direct services) to underserved communities, populations and/or areas within the state of California
- PBH service positions must be funded through public (Tribal, federal, state, regional, county, city or local) funding
- PBH service positions must enable the graduate to progress toward LCSW licensure through supervision of clinical work

An aerial photograph of a city, likely San Francisco, with a prominent blue overlay. The image shows a mix of urban architecture, including a large, ornate building with a gabled roof and a clock tower in the center. The city is surrounded by hills and greenery. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

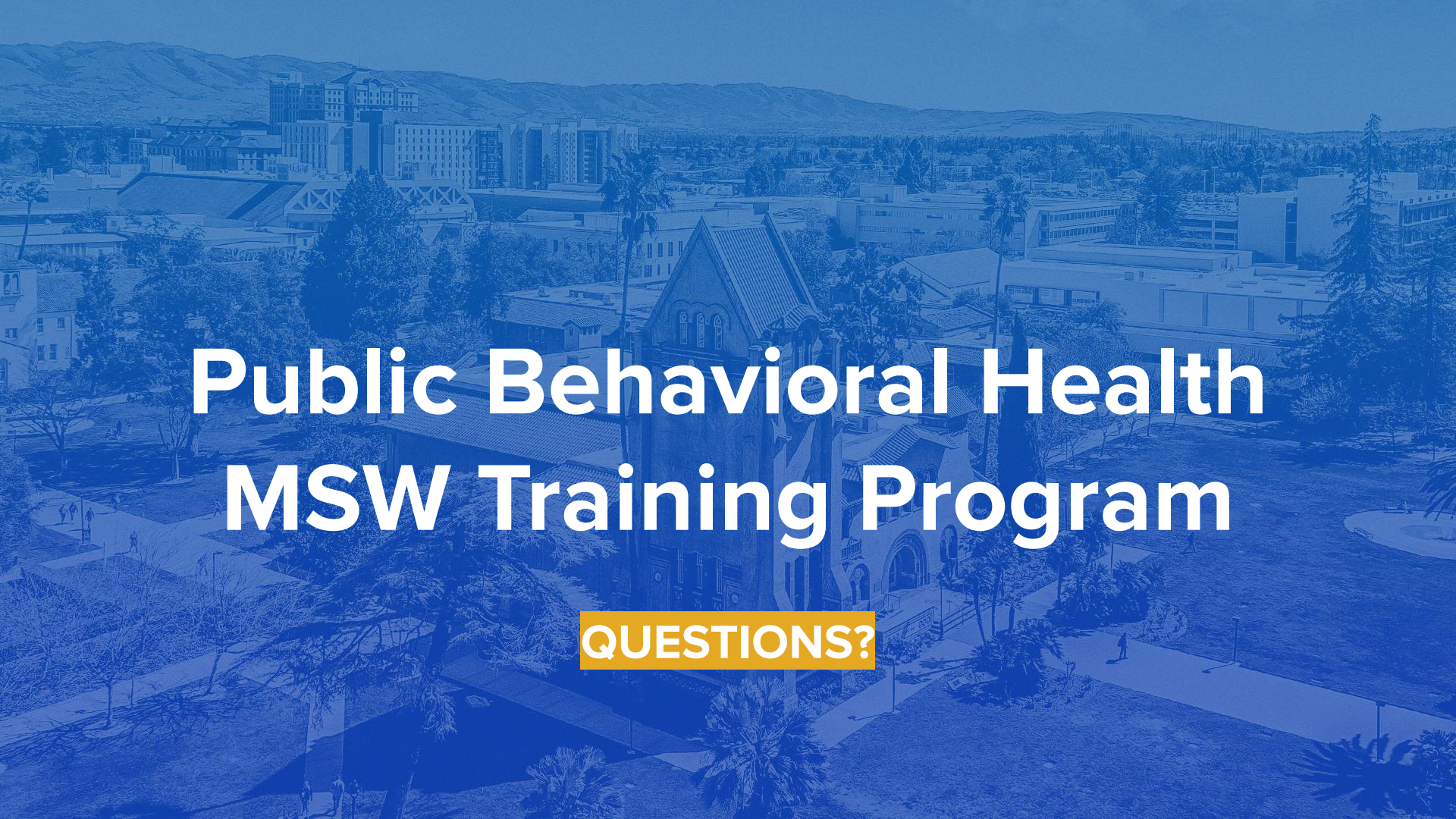
**TRAINEE TRACKING & REPORTING**

# Post-Graduation Repayment Obligation

- Former PBH trainees who fail to complete (1) the MSW degree, (2) the training program OR (3) the service obligation within 36 months of MSW graduation must repay the stipend funding they received
- Former PBH trainees and PBH graduates who fulfill NONE of the service obligation must repay all stipend funding in full
- PBH graduates who fulfill SOME but NOT ALL of the service obligation must repay a prorated amount based on the number of months of eligible service completed
- Stipend funding repayment plans typically involve monthly payments spread out over 12 to 24 months and may include interest and fees as well as stipend funding
- The key to staying out of repayment is staying in communication with SJSU
- HCAI does not actually want graduates to end up in repayment and SJSU works hard to help graduates avoid this outcome

# Trainee Tracking and Reporting

- PBH graduates should reach out to SJSU, not to their former MSW programs, with questions and issues related to post-graduation obligations
- SJSU manages all tracking of and reporting on PBH trainees during training and PBH graduates after training program completion
- SJSU verifies, documents and reports to the program funder on all PBH graduates' completion of the service obligation, pursuit of LCSW licensure, and cash repayment of stipend funding
- SJSU reaches out to graduates at various intervals to verify ongoing and timely progress toward completion of post-graduation requirements



# Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program

QUESTIONS?

# Questions?

- Students should reach out to the Public Behavioral Health MSW Training Program Project Coordinator and/or field faculty at their MSW programs with questions about:
  - The eligibility of specific field placements for the PBH trainees
  - Timelines for applications, interviews, trainee selection and awards
- Students can reach out to PBH MSW Training Program staff Martina Parashkevova (at [martina.parashkevova@sjsu.edu](mailto:martina.parashkevova@sjsu.edu)) or E Maxwell Davis at ([emaxwell.davis@sjsu.edu](mailto:emaxwell.davis@sjsu.edu)) with specific questions about:
  - Technical issues with the program application
  - Unusual or very specific issues related to student eligibility, etc, not fully addressed in these slides

# SJSU

SAN JOSÉ STATE  
UNIVERSITY



[www.sjsu.edu](http://www.sjsu.edu)