

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

2012 Legislative Action Priorities

Major Priorities

- Give nationally certified School Social Workers the incentives offered to other school professionals
 - Create an inter-agency Safety Task Force to determine policies, procedures & technology solutions to protect the safety of public employees in the field or the office; share findings with the private sector
 - Prevent school bullying and promote ready-to-learn school attendance by adequately funding essential family and community services, as well as early intervention programs like In-Home Family Education, Right From the Start, school-based health centers and the WV Birth-to-Three program
 - Maintain strong Social Work licensing regulations to protect the public from unscrupulous practice
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Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice

- Hire additional School Social Workers to address child and family barriers to school attendance
 - Establish an independent Child Advocate to oversee and improve the state's child welfare efforts
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Health, Mental Health, Medicaid, CHIP & Health Care Reform

- Provide adequate funding for the WV Medicaid program to meet increasing health care needs
 - Position West Virginia to take full advantage of the federal Affordable Care Act (health care reform)
 - Increase substance abuse treatment & prevention services through comprehensive reforms & funding
 - Extend "Prescription Fairness Act" coverage to dependent minor children
 - Expand CHIP to cover children of legal immigrants & state employees
 - Increase the tax on tobacco products and dedicate the revenue to prevention, cessation and health care
 - Require public notice & comment prior to any Medicaid state plan amendment or waiver changes
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Public Sector Social Worker Recruitment & Retention

- Reduce high client caseloads to best-practice recommended levels
 - Expand hiring incentives for professional social workers by offering sign-on bonuses, differential salaries, loan forgiveness & tuition support
 - Establish advanced practice career pathways for master degreed Social Workers to enhance services to the public, retain experienced practitioners and to mentor/retain junior state employees
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Public Policy Initiatives

Social Work Recruitment, Retention, Safety and Other Professional issues

- Expand consumer access to quality mental health services through direct Medicaid reimbursement to Independent Clinical Social Workers and for services of supervised master social workers
 - Reestablish the hiring of professional Social Workers via a dual Civic Service register system
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Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice

- Support & fund the Statewide Service Array Project recommendations identifying essential community services
 - Appropriate state matching funds to maximize Federal Title IV-E Child Welfare training resources
 - Provide funding to pilot the existing Child Care provider quality review rating system provision
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Health, Mental Health, CHIP & Medicaid

- Veterans Care: Continue the Rural Health Education Program \$100,000 mental health services appropriation
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Economic Security, Equality, Diversity & Social Justice

- Child Custody disputes: Reaffirm and maintain the “best interest of the child” standard
 - Aggressively weatherize and otherwise improve the energy efficiency of WV’s deteriorating housing stock
 - Promote robust energy efficiency programs to protect at-risk children and adults while reducing consumption
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***NOTE:** NASW WV will closely follow bills and developments during the 2012 session of the West Virginia Legislature and work diligently to pass progressive legislation that is supportive of families and communities, expands the quality of and access to health and mental health services, promotes the concept of shared prosperity, honors justice and equality, and is respectful of our profession. We will work to defeat legislation that is regressive, punitive and/or discriminatory in nature.*

Public Policy Initiatives often involve discussions and collaboration outside of the legislative process, such as with the other branches of government, state agencies, or entities in the private and nonprofit sectors. Public Policy Initiatives that become legislative issues often find their way to the active list of legislative priorities.