

Credential for Strengths-Based Family Workers (SFW)



Praise for the Empowerment Skills for Family Workers curriculum from SFW participants:

“It helped me remember why I went into this work in the first place.”

“I have a renewed attitude toward the families I work with. This course showed me what it’s like to be on the other side of the desk.”

“Now I’m looking for strengths. Last year, I never thought about how important that step is when working with families.”

“I’m more patient and communicate better with families. I look at situations differently now.”

“This class should be a prerequisite for every family worker.”

How do I apply?

The SFW registration application and scholarship application are available at:
www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/fdc.aspx.

You may also request more information or an application from: 412-350-6611 or email:
SFW@alleghenycounty.us.

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of a protected class including: race; color; religion; national origin; ancestry or place of birth; sex; gender identity or expression; sexual orientation; disability; marital status; familial status; age (40 and older); use of guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical disability.

DHS is

responsible for providing and administering publicly funded human services to Allegheny County residents.

DHS Principles

All services will be:

- High quality, comprehensive and accessible.
- Individualized and designed to be respectful of the unique cultural characteristics of each individual and/or community.
- Integrated and offered through a team approach that recognizes the capacity of individuals and families to identify their own strengths, needs and goals; create relationships and natural supports; and take steps necessary to accomplish these goals.

The SFW is a joint project of DHS and Temple University, Harrisburg.

Funding Acknowledgments

For state and federal funding acknowledgments, please visit the DHS website at
www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/funding.aspx

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Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Credential for Strengths-Based Family Workers (SFW)

Strengths-based family-support training for frontline family workers...

Transforming the way agencies work with individuals and families.



What is the Credential for Strengths-Based Family Workers?

The Credential for Strengths-Based Family Workers is an enhanced training and credentialing program that ensures family development workers have the basic knowledge, skills and values to facilitate a family's ability to obtain and maintain self-sufficiency. It is offered in Allegheny County through DHS with the credential issued by Temple University, Harrisburg. The credential is recognized in 13 states.

SFW is ideal for people working with families and individuals in programs related to:

- Family support
- Child welfare
- Education
- Employment and training
- Drug & alcohol prevention and treatment
- Early childhood
- Afterschool and summer activities
- And other direct services

What does a worker need to do to receive the SFW credential?

- Complete 90 hours of interactive classroom instruction and portfolio coaching using the Empowerment Skills for Family Workers Handbook as a reference. All of the work is based on Temple University's "Help Giving Cycle" model.
- Prepare a skills portfolio with the support of a Learning Coach; and
- Pass a state credentialing examination.

SFW Core Competencies:

- Demonstrates professionalism and commitment to ethical practice
- Recognizes strength in diversity and difference: demonstrating sensitivity in practice
- Understands and utilizes the power of clear, non-judgmental communication
- Demonstrates self-care and lifelong learning
- Applies strengths-based principles to practice with families
- Applies strengths-based principles to agency and community system



In addition, workers will be eligible to earn up to seven college credits which can be used at a number of colleges and universities in Allegheny County, as well as CEUs and training credits.

When will the course be offered?

- SFW is offered twice each year in Allegheny County.
- The program schedule is posted here: www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/fdc.aspx.

What is the cost of the SFW?

- \$325 for program fee, book and credential fee. All other costs are underwritten by DHS.
- A limited number of partial scholarships are available. Interested parties should submit a completed SFW application for scholarship.

SFW Outcomes

In research conducted on the outcomes of the SFW training,

Workers said:

- They use family development skills in their professional and personal lives
- They enhanced their skills in helping families develop their own goals of self-reliance
- They increased the ability of families to meet their goals

Supervisors reported:

- Increased effectiveness in helping workers relate to families
- Improved communication among workers and families

