

National Association of Social Workers, Florida Chapter 2017 Legislative & Policy Advocacy Agenda

The **National Association of Social Workers, Florida Chapter (NASW-FL)** is part of the world's largest organization of professional social workers, and represents approximately 5,000 professional social workers in Florida.

Legislative Priorities

- Enhance services and funding for mental health and behavioral health services
- Enhance services for Veterans, military members, and their families
- Enhance services for aging persons and their caregivers
- Enhance health care coverage
- Enhance services in child welfare

Legislative Agenda

I. MENTAL HEALTH & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

- * Promote legislation that would utilize treatment, rather than prison or homelessness, for those with mental health or behavioral health problems.
- * Ensure involuntary commitment procedures that best protect the clients and the public.
- * Support the expansion of and improvements of mental health and behavioral health services available to Veterans and their families.
- * Allow licensed clinical social workers to provide and be reimbursed for Medicaid mental health services independently.
- * Increase mental health and behavioral health services for aging persons.

II. SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE

- * Support fair and marketable reimbursement rates for social workers providing mental health and behavioral health services through public and private insurance carriers.
- * Ensure that caseloads for child welfare investigators and dependency case managers are set at a level to provide optimal care.
- * Support the legislature in their efforts to recruit, train, and retain qualified child welfare staff, including promoting full utilization of Title IV-E funds.
- * Encourage the legislature to recognize the importance of the social work profession, workforce challenges, and trends in employment.
- * Explore the need for licensure and/or certification for bachelor's level social workers and non-clinical master's level social work.
- * Support programs which address safety concerns for social workers.

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III. HEALTH, AGING, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

- * Support accessible and affordable health care for all families, including Medicaid recipients, and the utilization of all federal funds to expand care.
- * Promote criminal justice laws and sentencing guidelines that are reasonable, equitable, free of bias, flexible to the situation, and protect the public.
- * Support programs that reduce homelessness or assist those experiencing homelessness, and that enhance affordable housing options.
- * Expand services and funding to aging persons, those with disabilities, and their caregivers.
- * Promote legislation which allows services and employment for all people regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disabilities.

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