



Mendocino County
Department of Social Services
Healthy People, Healthy Communities
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mendocino County Needs Social Workers

Ukiah, CA – Social work, a profession supporting people experiencing what may be the most difficult time in their life, is a career that brings together a variety of backgrounds, experiences and passion. Here in Mendocino County, social workers can be found in child welfare, adult services, schools, hospitals, health centers, and within many helping organizations.

With 16 currently vacant social work positions within Mendocino County Social Services Department, the need for new social workers is crucial. "There's a lot of people in our community that would make great social workers," shares Shirley Fulks, Family & Children's Services Social Worker.

Fulks applauds Mendocino County for being progressive in their staffing structure, offering Social Worker Assistant (SWA) positions that provide a first-step into the field of social work without the Bachelor's or Master's degree many county agencies require. "We can hire people who have a passion for this work and perhaps the experience that makes them an extraordinary social worker, then support them through continuing their education if they find this is their calling."

The University of California Berkeley California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) Title IVE Program provides educational and monetary support to those pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in social work who intend to pursue or continue a career in the field of public child welfare. Numerous local social workers have participated in this program including Fulks and long-time Social Worker Supervisor, Kort Pettersen. "My growth in this organization (Mendocino County Family & Children's Services) has been nothing short of amazing from humble beginnings as a social work assistant to my current position as a social worker supervisor. I've had the opportunity to support families directly and now support the staff that are doing that vital work," says Pettersen.

Pettersen goes on to share that Mendocino College's Human Services Certificate program which provides a two-year certificate that includes numerous child development classes, are helpful not only for social work, but any child care related profession.

With a combined fifty-one years of service to Mendocino County Family & Children's Services, Fulks and Pettersen have worked in every position from prevention to continuation services for families who have been involved in dependency matters.

"It's really exciting to see a family that has prior experience with the Department, succeed in making permanent and beneficial changes in their lives. When they get it I love it. It's really nice to be a part of that," Fulks explains.

Pettersen, having graduated with his Master's degree last year, plans to build off his continued learning to increase cultural awareness within social work and collaboration throughout Mendocino County. He encourages those interested in the field of social work. "Involve yourself in the community and the field you are interested in. I love the work that I do and believe it improves the lives of the families we work with."

If you would like information on a career in social work with Mendocino County, please visit the Mendocino County website at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/mendocinoca>.

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