



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON 53rd MEETING OF PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORK

21 April 2022

The Professional Board for Social Work (PBSW) held its 53rd meeting on 31 March 2022 through Microsoft Teams. Following the previous meeting held on the 20 October 2021, the PBSW focused on progress made relating to resolutions of the 52nd meeting and attended to other business matters in preparation for the handover report as their term of office is coming to an end on 18 June 2022.

On the Organisational quarterly report, the PBSW noted the business continuity at Council, out of the 60 staff members, which include graduate interns; 20 staff members are still unvaccinated and efforts to encourage them to get vaccinated are underway. The office is currently busy with the following key projects;

- mobilising the sector to improve the state of readiness to participate in the elections,
- IT system development,
- working on community development professionalisation
- migration of data to the new IT system; this will alleviate a lot of queries as people will be able to download their certificates and proof of registration receipts online.
- preparing for the strategic session to evaluate progress for the past 6 years for Council and its structures against the business plan

PBSW noted that general complaints, like telephones not being answered, and emails not responded to, still occur; the Registration division's project of focusing on current email inquiries and processing applications for a smooth transition to the new system is addressing the matter; this will also alleviate the influx of calls at the switchboard. The office is planning to conduct blended outreach sessions to introduce the new system once it is launched.

On the chairperson's report from Council, the Professional Board noted the following documents, which were approved by Council;

- Education, Training & Development Quality Assurance Policy
- Standard Operating Procedure for persons whose qualifications were obtained outside the Republic of South Africa and does not meet the minimum requirements of Section 17 (D) of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978
- Speciality on Probation; draft regulations were submitted to the National Department of Social Development for gazetting
- Social Work readiness programme;

The Social Work Readiness Programme is at its final stages with HWSETA pledging to sponsor the stipends for a 12 months' contract for 100 – 120 interns and their supervisors for the duration of the pilot phase of this programme.

- Training for Code of Ethics and other Council - led services; a task teams has been established which includes a representative of the PBCYCW, to develop a project plan for the training and present such to Council for approval. Only once approved can the training manual be developed.

The Professional Board deliberated extensively on the issue of guidelines for social workers in private practice and came to a resolution of amending the current regulations to include private practice and to develop norms and standards to the amended regulations. The task will be left for the next PBSW. It was also reported that the two pilot virtual Quality Assurance site visits to the two selected higher education institutions have been successfully been completed. Each panel will now complete its report where after PBSW will approve it through round robin. It will then be sent to Council for noting and final report will be sent to the higher education institutions through the office of the Registrar during May 2022. The virtual site visits provided an opportunity to test the newly approved Quality Assurance policy and some minor improvements will be proposed based on the application of the policy.

From the Professional Conduct report, it was noted that during the third quarter (October to December 2021), 23 new complaints were received, 54 complaints from previous quarters were investigated, 9 pre-trials conducted and 4 disciplinary hearings finalised. From January to March 2022, 27 new complaints were received, 61 complaints were investigated by the Committee for Preliminary Inquiry (CPI) and 9 disciplinary hearings conducted. Currently there are 157 cases to be investigated and 41 cases for disciplinary hearings. Code of ethics workshops were organised for the Western Cape Department of Social Development from 15 to 16 March 2022.

The Chairperson, Ms Follentine, expressed appreciation for the work done by PBSW members in the past five years as the Professional Board is left with one meeting to finalise its handover report before its end of term in June 2022.

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its two professional boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practising social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, student social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers, student child and youth care workers, and student auxiliary child and youth care workers.