



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON 55th MEETING OF PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORK

27 October 2022

The 5th Professional Board for Social Work (PBSW) held its 55th meeting on 14 October 2022 through Microsoft Teams. The meeting focused on the core business of the Professional Board and the priorities the Professional Board set to achieve in the first 100 days. A special welcome was extended to Ms Malebo Mokone, the Council representative designated to serve on the Professional Board for Social Work in terms of section 5 (4) (a) of the Social Service Professions Act.

The Professional Board confirmed the appointment of chairpersons of the two committees of this Board, Dr Varoshini Nadesan was elected as the chairperson of the Education, Training and Development Committee at the committee's meeting held on 6 October 2022, and Adv. Derrick Block was elected as the chairperson of the Professional Conduct Committee at the committee's meeting held on 7 October 2022. The previous Professional Board identified a need for regulating private practice in social work and the 5th PBSW identified 3 members to take the process forward, together with representatives from the profession. The Professional Board raised a concern about outstanding submissions made to the Department of Social Development, including the regulations of the eight fields of specialisation, the Scope of Practice for social work, adoption accreditation guidelines and fees payable to SACSSP by practitioners. This concern will be escalated to Council with a request for an urgent meeting with representatives from National Department of Social Development.

The top 5 priorities identified by the Professional Board for the 1st 100 days were confirmed; the priorities are:

- The plea from unemployed social workers to be exempted from paying annual fees
- Assessments of 5 applications from applicants with international qualifications.
- Assessment of 80 CPD applications.
- Assessment of 30 new complaints at the Committee for Preliminary Inquiry.
- Planning for outstanding quality assurance visits to be conducted to Higher Education Institutions between March and September 2023.

The Board noted the following reports from the office of the Registrar, departments and strategic business units;

- Three vacancies for the positions of Registrations manager, Professional Conduct secretary and Professional Board for Social Work secretary. Advertisements for these positions will soon be published.
- The postponement of the Social Work Readiness program pilot project which was planned for 9 October to 5 November 2022, communication to affected candidates has been sent by the office.

- A template has been developed by the secretariat to facilitate the attainment of the 100 days priorities set by the Council and the Professional Boards.
- Registrations department reported the following for July to September 2022:
 - 1489 new online applications received of which 1038 were approved and 451 rejected.
 - 97 social workers and 16 social auxiliary workers received notices of removal from the register due to non-payment of annual fees.
 - 1977 verification from employers were processed and 161 overseas verifications completed,
 - 335 status reports were issued, 15 restorations and 3 foreign applications were processed.
 - On specialisations, 11 applicants were registered as adoption specialists and 144 as probation specialists.
- From Education, training and development, it was noted that complaints were received regarding social auxiliary training providers and that a meeting with HWSETA is being arranged.
- On the report from Professional Conduct department it was noted that 56 new complaints were received, 2 CPI complaints and 1 appeal were discussed, 1 disciplinary hearing was finalized and a total of 4 Code of Ethics workshops were facilitated.
- For Community development, an online verification form was launched for community development practitioners to register and verify their details. The Community development unit is quality assuring information received in preparation for the voters roll for the formation of a Professional Board for Community Development.
- The PBSW noted the updates from the Communication and Public Relations committee in relation with branding, the improved website and campaigns that are planned. A General Notice will be issued for unemployed social service professionals to inform them on how to apply for exemption from paying annual fees. It further noted the turnaround time on responses on the Facebook page of Council and the promotional material to be developed for Professional Conduct and the frequently asked questions for continuing professional development (CPD).
- From the IT strategic unit, the new online registration system and the advantage of the registration kiosk for those applicants who come to the office to register were noted. A brief presentation on how the call centre works and the improvement in alleviating the influx of calls to the office were further noted.

The PBSW concluded its 55th meeting by expressing appreciation for all members' contributions and the secretariat for support and a fruitful engagement.

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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.