



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON 68TH MEETING OF COUNCIL

REF: 1/25

25 October 2023

STATEMENT OF THE 68TH MEETING OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS (SACSSP)

The South African Council for Social Professions (SACSSP) held its 68th meeting on 23 and 24 August 2023 and the meeting focused on the core business of Council during the first quarter and the status of resolutions and progress made.

Registration of social service professionals

Council is pleased with the total of 1,679 persons registered through the new online registration system. However, there is a concern with the number of applications that are not yet finalised due to incomplete documentation or the unsigned declaration forms.

Council noted that there are still ongoing challenges with the online registration system and that these are being addressed case-by-case and within the wider internal IT system.

Council noted the 119 verifications on the status of registration with the SACSSP from Social Work England, CORU Regulating Health and Social Care Professionals and Social Workers Registration Board New Zealand were concluded, while one qualification obtained outside the country was assessed for the purpose of registration in terms of section 17D of Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 and 299 status of registration reports were issued.

Council welcomed a report on the registration outreach that took place at the five institutions of higher education (University of Zululand, Durban University of Technology, University of KwaZulu- Natal, University of Limpopo, University of Venda) and the Limpopo Department of Social Development.

Council noted the 104 social service professionals' names which were removed from the Register in terms of section 20(1)(a) to (h) of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978.

Professional conduct

Council noted the report on the 49 complaints of unprofessional or improper conduct investigated by the Committee of Preliminary Inquiry (CPI). The CPI finalised four complaints in terms of regulation 8 of the *Regulations regarding the conducting of enquiries into alleged unprofessional conduct*, while 22 matters were closed as the respondents were found not to be in contravention of the *Rules relating to the acts or omissions of a social worker, a social auxiliary worker or a student social worker which shall constitute unprofessional or improper conduct* and 23 matters are still under investigation.

Council welcomed the report of the *CPI Appeals Committee* that indicated that three appeals on the findings of the *Committee of Preliminary Inquiry* were considered and in all three cases the findings of the CPI were set aside by the Appeals Committee and the matters were referred back to the CPI for further investigation.

Council was informed of the outcomes of the two disciplinary hearings held. On one matter a social worker was found guilty of unprofessional /improper conduct and a penalty of a one-year suspension in terms of section 22(1)(b) of the Act was imposed and on the other matter a social worker found guilty of unprofessional /improper conduct and a penalty of a 24-month suspension in terms of section 22(1)(b) together with a five-thousand-rand (R5000.00) fine in terms of section 22(1)(d) was imposed.

Education, training and development of social service professionals

Council noted the quality assurance policy for site visits for universities and FET colleges which has been developed by Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work

Council also noted the six continuing professional development (CPD) applications received for child and youth care work of which five were approved and the 194 (CPD applications received for social work of which 170 that were approved.

Communication, public relations and outreach activities

Council noted the challenges that are raised on the SACSSP social media platforms, and the Secretariat is putting a turnaround plan to mitigate these challenges.

Council welcomed the *webinar* which took place on 31 August 2023 on the regulations of child and youth care workers; requirements for registration of child and youth care workers and auxiliary child and youth care workers and the resolutions of Council and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work pertaining to auxiliary child and youth care workers who were registered with employment letters and job descriptions.

Council further welcomed a series of *webinars* on the *Regulations* relating to fees payable by social service professionals to educate stakeholders on the prescribed fees payable by social service professionals; payment date(s); methods of payment and implications for failure to pay prescribed fees and the responsibilities of employers of social service professionals scheduled for 18 to 29 September 2023.

Congratulations

Council extended its congratulations and well wishes to Adv Derrick Block, Member of the Professional Board for Social Work with his appointment by Cabinet to the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute Board of Directors. Council also congratulated the following staff in the Secretariat: Mr Hitler Sekhita for obtaining his LLB in June 2023, Ms Lungi Mbuzo, for completing and passing the UCT Graphic Design online short course and Ms Wendy Manamela for completing and passing the UCT Copy editing online short course.

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) is an autonomous statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 ("the Act"). The SACSSP discharges its mandate, subject to the provisions of the Act together with the Regulations and Rules thereto, as the determining, guiding and directing authority body for the social service professions of social work and child and youth care work in the country. The SACSSP fulfils this role through Council constituted in terms of section 5 of the Act and the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work established in terms of section 14A of the Act and constituted in terms of the applicable Regulations, by setting the standards for education and training of social service professionals (qualifications and continuous professional development); registration of social service professionals as a requirement to practice; setting standards for and exercise effective control over the professional conduct (including ethics) of social service professionals as well as by taking policy resolutions as guidelines for the practising of the social service professions under its auspices. Thus, protecting the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. It is a legal requirement in terms of the Act for a social worker, social auxiliary worker, student social worker, student social auxiliary worker, child and youth care worker, auxiliary child and youth care worker, student child and youth care worker and student auxiliary child and youth care worker to be registered and in good standing in terms of his or her registration as condition to practise.