



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON THE 74TH MEETING OF COUNCIL

REF: 1/28

5 November 2025

STATEMENT OF THE 74TH MEETING OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS (SACSSP)

The South African Council for Social Professions (SACSSP) held its 74th meeting on 2 and 3 October 2025 and the meeting focused on the core business of Council during the first quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year and the status of resolutions and progress made.

GENERAL MATTERS

Council took a solemn moment to honor the life and legacy of **Doctor Anne Letsebe**, who sadly passed away on 16 September, 2025. Her deep connection with the Council and the Professional Board for Social Work left an indelible mark in the social work profession.

Council received a presentation from a task team responsible for the development of a compact with the Department of Social Development (DSD). The decision of this compact stems from persistent challenges that have hindered progress and negatively impacted both the Council and the Professional Boards. On the report, the task team acknowledged the challenges in engaging with the DSD especially on matters requiring ministerial attention were highlighted. Key challenges identified on the report are as follows;

- Delayed approval of the Regulations on fees payable by social service professionals: Impact on Council operations.
- Outstanding Specialty Regulations: Despite correspondence, no progress has been made.
- Funding appropriation issues: Hindering Council's ability to fulfil its mandate.
- Unclear roles: Lack of clarity between SACSSP and DSD responsibilities.

Council endorsed the following recommendations presented on this report to strengthen collaboration and resolve systemic challenges.

- Role clarification exercise: To serve as a baseline for future meetings with DSD.
- Registrar to initiate high-level meeting: With the Director General of the Department and relevant branches to address all challenges.
- Professional Boards to meet with DSD: To resolve issues affecting their functionality.
- President of the SACSSP to request ministerial meeting: To address communication barriers impacting Council operations.
- Engage the Portfolio Committee on Social Development: For unresolved challenges beyond Council-DSD engagements.
- Benchmarking on fund appropriation: Registrar to benchmark with other Professional Councils
- Formalize communication channels: Include SACSSP, DSD, Portfolio Committee, and Minister in a signed Memorandum of Understanding.

REGISTRATION OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

For the reporting period, a total of 16,795 practice cards were issued to registrants; 12,620 social workers, 2,370 social auxiliary workers, 82 child and youth care workers and 1,723 auxiliary child and youth care workers.

Council was apprised on the following matters pertaining to registration, restoration and payment of annual fees. During the reporting period a total of 1,819 persons applied to be registered and 2,229 applicants were approved (1,582 and 647 carried over from the previous quarter).

A total of 332 status reports were issued. 44 social services professionals' names were restored in terms of section 20(3) of the Social Service Professions Act, 110 of 1978 to the Registers kept in terms of section 19.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Council welcomed the report on the capacity building workshops on the Code of Ethics where 181 registrants were reached.

Council noted the report on the 44 new complaints of unprofessional or improper conduct that were reported during the period under review. The Committee of Preliminary Inquiry (CPI) investigated 105 complaints, which were carried over from the previous quarter as follows:

- six matters were finalised in terms of regulation 8.
- 22 complaints were referred for further inquiry in terms of regulation 8 of the Regulations regarding the conducting of enquiries into alleged unprofessional conduct.
- 41 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.
- 18 matters are pending supplementary documentation.
- 12 matters were *referred* as per regulation 7(5) to Professional Conduct Committee for a disciplinary inquiry
- two matters are scheduled for interviews with Respondents.
- Four complaints in terms of regulation 7(2) of the Regulations were finalised.

Three matters were tabled before the CPI Appeals Committee and finalised. The Appeal Committee upheld the decision of the CPI Committee in all matters.

Council noted the outcome of four matters of alleged unprofessional or improper conduct against social workers referred for disciplinary inquiry. Three (3) were suspended in terms of section 22(1)(b) of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 and one (1) was reprimanded in term of section 22(1)(a) of the Act.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

Council noted a total of 1,087 professionals confirmed to have earned continuing professional development (CPD) points. Out of the 1087, 999 were social workers and 88 social auxiliary workers.

A total of 163 new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) applications were received for social workers and social auxiliary workers. Of these, 177 applications were assessed, which included 67 carried over from the previous quarter. The assessment outcomes were as follows: 166 applications were approved, four were suspended, and seven were not approved due to misalignment with the scope of practice for social work and social auxiliary work. In the category of child and youth care work, three CPD applications were received, all of which were assessed and approved.

During the first quarter, developmental plans were received from the University of Mpumalanga, Nelson Mandela University, and the University of the Western Cape. The assessment of these plans was scheduled for the second quarter and will be reported in the upcoming second quarter report.

Additionally, quality assurance self-assessment reports were received from Stellenbosch University and the University of Cape Town. Panels were constituted to facilitate the evaluation of these submissions.

Congratulations

Council congratulated Dr Merle Allsopp a Member of Council on her retirement and the successful transition of leadership at the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW). Her dedication and service have clearly left a lasting impact, and it's heartening to hear that the succession plan unfolded smoothly with Mr. Donald Nghonyama the Chairperson of the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work as the new Director at the NACCW. Council wished Mr Nghonyama all the best as he steps into this important role. Council supports the University of the Western Cape's Social Work Department name change to the Department of Social Service Professions as this proposed name change reflects the department's evolving academic and professional scope, which now encompasses a broader range of social service disciplines beyond traditional social work.

Council concluded its 74th meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and active participation and urged all Members and Secretariat to remain committed to the mandate of the SACSSP.

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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.