



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON 67TH MEETING OF COUNCIL

REF: 1/24

3 August 2023

STATEMENT OF THE 67TH MEETING OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS (SACSSP)

The South African Council for Social Professions (SACSSP) held its 67th meeting on 19 and 20 April 2023 virtually. The meeting focused on the core business of Council and the priorities within the first 100 days since the inauguration of the 5th Council.

Council reflected on the first 100 days initiative after it assumed its term of office which created an opportunity for the Council and Professional Boards to focus on matters handed over by the 4th Council, 4th Professional Board for Social Work and 3rd Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. The meeting noted the significant progress made towards addressing a number of matters as outlined in the “first 100 days” roadmap.

Council approved the 5-years strategic plan *for the period 2023/2024 to 2027/2028* and the *Annual Performance Plan 2023/2024*. These documents will be published in due course on the SACSSP's website.

Council was apprised on the following matters pertaining to *registration, restoration and payment of annual fees*:

- Council noted that a total of 82 applications for exemption from paying annual fees in terms of regulation 3(b) of the *Regulations relating to the fees payable by social workers, child and youth care workers, social auxiliary workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers, student social workers and student child and youth care workers* (2022), were received in November 2022, from unemployed social service professionals of which 72 applicants met the criteria and were exempted for the current financial year. The remaining ten applicants were not approved as they did not meet the requirements as per the Regulations. All applicants were informed on the outcome of their applications.
- Council approved the SACSSP's *Guideline on the restoration of the name of a person to the Register in terms of section 20(3) of the Act* that establishes a uniform procedure to be followed for the handling and processing of applications by persons who request to be restored to the Register.
- During the period 1 January to 31 March 2023 (4th quarter of the financial year) a total 2,561 persons applied to be registered through the new online registration system, of which 1,595 applicants were approved, while 966 applicants were rejected due to a number of reasons, mainly being incomplete applications
- A total of 46 social services professionals' names were restored in terms of section 20(3) of the Act to the Registers kept in terms of section 19 following their applications to be restored during the period 1 January to 31 March 2023.
- The Secretariat processed a total of 1,120 verifications of registration with the SACSSP from employers, international bodies, including issuing of status reports within the 3rd quarter (1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022).
- A total of 308 registrants were removed from the Register (deregistered) in terms of section 20(1)(d).
- Council was informed on some technical challenges regarding the new online registration system and that these are continuously addressed as the new system is being implemented.
- Integration of declaration feature and the digital certificate templates has been completed on the online system following approval of the digital certificates for all categories.

- All social service professionals who applied on the new online system are requested to log in on <http://www.sacssponline.co.za/> and complete the declaration form in order to receive their registration certificates and practice cards.

On Professional conduct, Council noted the work undertaken during the 4th quarter (1 January to 31 March 2023) as following:

- The Professional Conduct Division received 39 new complaints.,
- The *Committee of Preliminary Inquiry (CPI)* investigated 46 complaints in terms of Regulation 5 of the Regulations regarding the conducting of inquiries into alleged unprofessional conduct.
- The *CPI Appeals Committee* dealt with two appeals of which the decisions of the CPI were upheld.
- The *Professional Conduct Committee* finalised three (3) disciplinary inquiries as follows:
 - One social worker was found guilty and penalties of suspension of his registration for two years in terms of section 22(1)(b) and a fine of R5,000 fine in terms of section 22(1)(d) were imposed.
 - One social worker was found guilty and a penalty of cancellation of his registration in terms of section 22(1)(c) was imposed.
 - A social worker was found guilty and a penalty of a R5000 fine was imposed in terms of section 22(1)(d) of the Act on charge 1; while on charge 2 a penalty of her registration was suspended for a period of 12 months in terms of section 22(1)(b) of the Act, which was suspended for 12 months in terms of section 22(1A).
 -

Council noted the following regarding *education, training and development* from the reports presented during the meeting:

- In terms of the Professional Board for Social Work, quality assurance site visit letters were sent to the three institutions whose site visits for 2023/2024 financial year were outstanding (University of Limpopo, Walter Sisulu University and University of Zululand).
- The Professional Board for Social Work assessed two applications in terms of section 17D where the applicants obtained their qualifications outside of the Republic of South Africa as to ascertain whether it meets the minimum requirements for a prescribed qualification to be registered with the SACSSP. One application went for moderation and was found not competent and one applicant met the requirements to be registered with the SACSSP as a social worker. There is one appeal against the decision of the PBSW which is pending for an outcome.
- The Professional Board for Social Work assessed 105 continuing professional development (CPD) applications of which 87 were approved, 14 not approved and four were suspended. Four appeals against the CPD Panel decisions were re-assessed of which two were approved and the non-approval outcome of the CPD Panel was set aside, one appeal was not granted, while one was suspended due to insufficient documents.
- Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work assessed one CPD application from October to December 2022.
- Council designated *Dr Zurina Abdulla* in terms of section 10(2) of the Act as Chairperson of the Education Training and Development Committee of Council after resignation by Prof Kgashane Malesa as chairperson of this Committee.

Members took note during the meeting of a number ***communication, public relations and outreach*** activities, including

- The combined annual report (2016/2019) and 2021/2022 annual report that has been finalised and will be published soon. It will be available online on all SACSSP communication platforms.
- Council designated *Ms Nicolette van der Walt*, who is replacing Ms Hloniphile Ndhlovu whom has resigned as Council Member, to serve on the Communication and Public Relations Committee.
- Council noted the challenges of bulk email communication as the office could not send communication directly to registrants from January 2023 however at the time of the council meeting the matter was already resolved.
- Council approved the increase with 5% of all advertising with Council on all communication platforms at the 66th meeting, new advertising rates are available on Council's website www.sacssp.co.za.

The President of the SACSSP, Dr Paul Mbedzi, concluded the 67th meeting by urging Members and staff in the Secretariat to attend to resolutions of Council diligently and ensure that it is executed timely; and the Committees of Council, two Professional Boards and Secretariat to initiate and/or adjust their planning in accordance with the

SACSSP's *Strategic Plan for 2023/2024* as to ensure that implementation starts without delay. The President further expressed appreciation towards Members for the work done and the Secretariat for their support and reminded all that the work of the SACSSP, in line with the SACSSP's Strategic Plan, is to protect the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large.

ISSUED BY: SACSSP Communications

ENQUIRIES:

Lungelwa Mbuzo (Ms) (*Communications and Public Relations Practitioner*)

Office: +27 12 356 8300 | Direct: +27 12 356 8302 Email: communications@sacssp.co.za

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.