



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT OF MEETING Professional Board for Social Work

REF: 1/26

29 May 2026

STATEMENT OF THE 66TH MEETING OF THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORK

The Professional Board for Social Work (PBSW) convened its 66th meeting on 17 March 2026. The session centered on the Professional Board's core mandate and reviewed progress achieved during the third quarter (October–December 2026) of the 2026/2027 financial year. In addition, the meeting marked World Social Work Day, celebrated under the theme "A call to unite a divided society."

Chairperson's report from the Council meeting

The Professional Board noted progress emanating from the 75th Council meeting held 8–9 December 2025, as follows:

- Approved policies:
 - a) Policy on Assessment of International Qualifications
 - b) Ecometric Technology Policy.
- Council is still considering the draft amended Regulations regarding the registration of social workers and Regulations regarding the registration of student social workers and the holding of disciplinary inquiries and the draft Continuing Professional Development Policy.

Registration

The PBSW noted progress made on registration as follows;

- a total of 182 social workers, 180 social auxiliary workers, 103 student social workers and 179 student social auxiliary workers were registered with the SACSSP.
- the Restoration Panel approved applications for restoration of 48 social workers and 6 social auxiliary workers.
- a total of 104 certificates of status of good standing applications were approved.

Professional conduct

- A total of 16 new complaints of unprofessional conduct lodged against social workers were lodged between October and December 2025 and a total of 78 complaints were investigated as follows:
 - 40 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.
 - five complaints were referred for a preliminary inquiry to be dealt with in terms of regulation 8.
 - five complaints were referred for disciplinary inquiry.
 - two were outstanding with supplementary documents.
 - 20 were finalised in terms of Regulation and
 - six matters scheduled for interviews.
- *The Committee for Preliminary Inquiry Appeals Committee* heard four disputes against the findings of the Committee of Preliminary Inquiry. The Appeals Committee, after careful consideration of all records and documentary evidence upheld the findings of the CPI in all of the cases reviewed.
- The *Professional Conduct Committee* dealt with five cases of alleged unprofessional or improper conduct. The committee finalised two cases, three were part-heard (parties are still to submit closing arguments) and one case was postponed. The outcomes of the two finalised matters is as follows:

- one social worker guilty of contravening Rule 3(1), 3(2), 3(3) and 3(4) of the Rules Relating to the Acts or Omissions of a Social Worker and received twelve (12) months suspension of registration in terms of section 22(1)(b), of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978, without conditions.
- one social worker was not found guilty of contravention of Rule 3(1), 3(2), 3(3) and 3(10) of the Rules Relating to the Acts or Omissions of a Social Worker.
- One section 25 appeal was received during the reporting period and was processed to the Minister of Social Development.
- Seven Code of Ethics awareness sessions were conducted with 355 social workers and social auxiliary workers reached.

Education, training and development

The PBSW received the following update with regards to the education, training and development pertaining to social workers and social auxiliary workers:

- progress was reported on quality assurance site visits across 19 universities.
- work continues on assessment tools for specialities in social work, with recommendations to standardise competency thresholds at 60–70%.
- 31 speciality applications were assessed as follows;
 - a) 20 clinical social work applications (eight were assessed, six not approved and two pending submission of additional information)
 - b) nine forensic social work applications (two not approved and seven pending submission of additional information)
 - c) two occupational social work applications and all two are pending submission of additional information.
- delays around the release of exam results for social auxiliary work qualification by the Health and Welfare SETA was noted with concern.
- on the draft Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the South African Council for Educators (SACE); members debated whether social workers should be required to register with SACE. Concerns were raised that the legal definition of “educator” excludes social workers, and dual registration could undermine the profession. The PBSW resolved that:
 - a) social workers should remain registered only with the SACSSP.
 - b) the MoA should exclude the requirement for social workers to register with SACE and emphasize supervision of school-based social workers by supervisors registered social workers.

The PBSW also granted approval for the following documents;

- forensic social work assessment tools along with the appointment of specialty panel members.
- University of Western Cape assessment of the developmental plan with the next developmental plan due in May 2026.
- standard operating procedure for ecometrics which will be submitted to Council for final approval.

A total of 133 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) applications were processed as follows;

- 89 were approved,
- five were declined and 39 are still to be assessed.

At the conclusion of its 66th meeting, the PBSW reaffirmed the imperative of enhancing collaboration with the Department of Social Development in order to resolve outstanding matters prior to the expiration of its current term. The next meeting has been scheduled for 11 June 2026.

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

NON NOBIS – Not for ourselves

South African Council for Social 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.