



EMPLOYER

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

COMMUNIQUÉ

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4



The Sudbury Employer Roundtable on June 6, 2018, featured open and engaging discussion about the opportunities and challenges faced by employers of social workers and social service workers.

EMPLOYER ROUNDTABLES

Since 2017, the College has hosted Employer Roundtables in Thunder Bay, Windsor, Sudbury and Kitchener. These interactive events provide an opportunity for employers to learn about the College and its public protection mandate and to share their ideas about how the College can better support employers.

The College's most recent roundtable was held on November 9, 2018, at the Holiday Inn in Kitchener. Twenty-four employers across a variety of settings and sectors signed up for a wide-ranging discussion on the role of the College, its public protection mandate, routes to registration, and the benefits of hiring registered social workers and registered social service workers.

ISSUES TO EXPLORE

Employer Roundtables provide an opportunity for employers and the College to freely discuss opportunities and challenges. Some of the issues raised included:

- A need for increased awareness and understanding of the College's mandate.
- Accountability, employer liability and mandatory reporting obligations.
- Differences between colleges (regulatory) and associations (advocacy).
- How to tell whether employees are registered with the College.
- The cost and timeframes associated with the registration process.
- Understanding the reinstatement process.
- Understanding the Continuing Competence Program (CCP).
- Understanding the Social Worker and Social Service Worker Professional Development Fund.

[CONT. PAGE 2](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

Employer Roundtables **1** Title Protection: Protecting the Public from Unregulated Practitioners **2** Mandatory Reporting 101 **3** Current and Qualified: The Continuing Competence Program **4** Q&A: How Do I Determine Whether a Candidate Is Registered with the College? **5** Employer Resources **6**

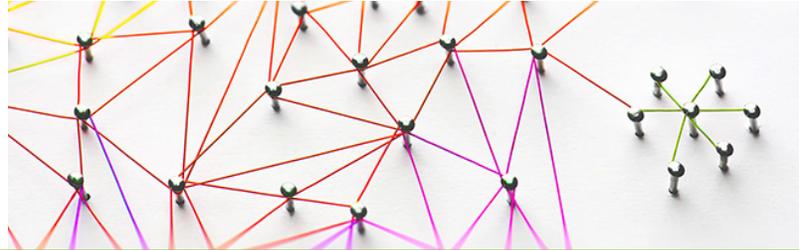
EMPLOYER ROUNDTABLES CONT.

IDEAS AND AREAS FOR SUPPORT

Employers also shared their ideas about how the College can offer ongoing support, including:

- Continuing to provide information through the *Employer Communiqué* and Roundtables.
- Continuing to provide more information about the importance of registration and regulation.
- Creating an inactive membership category for those on maternity/paternity leave.
- Providing more comprehensive information in the Online Register.

We appreciate this important feedback and will endeavour to address these questions and ideas in future issues of the *Employer Communiqué*. We thank everyone who participated in this year's Employer Roundtables and we look forward to meeting more of you in 2019!



TITLE PROTECTION: PROTECTING THE PUBLIC FROM UNREGULATED PRACTITIONERS

In August 2018, the College launched the [Unregulated Practitioners](#) webpage, located in the Public section of the College website.

This page lists court proceedings that have been initiated or are in the process of being initiated against unregulated practitioners. It is just one of a number of new and ongoing initiatives developed to enhance the College's regulatory effectiveness as it fulfills its mandate to protect the public interest.

HOW CAN THE UNREGULATED PRACTITIONERS WEBPAGE HELP YOU AS AN EMPLOYER?

We believe that a listing of unregulated practitioners helps to protect the public from unqualified, incompetent or unfit practitioners. We also believe that the listing should help you when interviewing candidates in your organization.

Registered social workers and registered social service workers are required to identify themselves as such in the course of their practice. This would also be expected of them when they are applying for employment. A quick check of the College's [Online Register](#) will confirm their registration status and mitigate risk to your organization. If you do not find your candidate's name, be sure to check the [Unregulated Practitioners](#) page to confirm if they are the subject of court proceedings.

It is illegal for an individual to hold out expressly or by implication that they are a social worker or social service worker in Ontario without being registered with the College. If you are aware of any individual who is illegally using a protected title and/or holding themselves out as a social worker or social service worker, please report this to the College at titleprotection@ocswssw.org.

We know you strive to provide quality care to the clients your organization serves. Title protection is as important to you as an employer as it is to our members. By reporting individuals who use the protected titles illegally, you help to protect the public from unqualified, incompetent or unfit practitioners. Visit the [Unregulated Practitioners](#) webpage for more information.

**IT IS ILLEGAL FOR AN
INDIVIDUAL TO HOLD
OUT EXPRESSLY OR BY
IMPLICATION THAT THEY
ARE A SOCIAL WORKER
OR SOCIAL SERVICE
WORKER IN ONTARIO
WITHOUT BEING
REGISTERED WITH
THE COLLEGE.**

MANDATORY REPORTING 101

As mandated under the [*Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*](#), the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers is required to have a process for mandatory reports.

The Act lists [specific circumstances](#) in which an employer of a College member must make a report to the College. These include but are not limited to terminating the employment of a College member for reasons of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity.

HOW SOON MUST AN EMPLOYER FILE A MANDATORY REPORT WITH THE COLLEGE?

The report must be made within 30 days of the date on which you terminated the member's employment or within 30 days of the date on which the member resigned. As mandated under the [*Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*](#) (PHIPA), in the case where a health information custodian terminates, suspends or disciplines a College member in relation to a breach of privacy, the report is required to be filed within 30 days of the event.

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT?

- Your name.
- The name of the College member who is the subject of the report.
- A statement about the reason for the report (e.g., due to the termination or resignation of the member).
- If the report concerns the termination or resignation of a member, a detailed explanation or description of the professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity for which you terminated or intended to terminate the member.
- If the report concerns the suspension or discipline of a member for reasons relating to a breach of privacy, a detailed explanation of the nature of the privacy breach and details regarding the suspension or discipline imposed.
- If the report concerns the member's conviction for an offence involving sexual conduct, a detailed explanation or description of the offence, including the dates on which the sexual conduct occurred or on which the member was charged, and the date on which the member was convicted.
- If the report concerns a member's sexual abuse of a client, a detailed explanation or description of the sexual abuse.
- The name of the client who was sexually abused ONLY IF the client or the client's representative (if the client is incapable) has consented in writing. If the client (or client's representative if the client is incapable) has not consented in writing, the client's name MUST NOT be included in the report.

You may also wish to enclose relevant documents with your report.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T MAKE A REPORT?

The Act makes failure to report an offence. On conviction, there is liability for a fine of up to \$25,000. Members of the College who fail to report may also face allegations of professional misconduct.

The mandatory reporting process is an important regulatory tool used by the College to protect the public from unqualified, unfit and incompetent practitioners. Employers of social workers and social service workers are responsible to be aware of, and if need be complete, the mandatory reporting process.

For more information about when and how to file a mandatory report, please visit the [College website](#).

**THE MANDATORY
REPORTING PROCESS
IS AN IMPORTANT
REGULATORY
TOOL USED BY THE
COLLEGE TO PROTECT
THE PUBLIC FROM
UNQUALIFIED, UNFIT
AND INCOMPETENT
PRACTITIONERS.**

CURRENT AND QUALIFIED: THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

Learning Never Ends



Organizations that hire College members employ professionals who are accountable for their actions and dedicated to enhancing their practice in an ongoing way.

The College's [Continuing Competence Program \(CCP\)](#) ensures that members remain current in their practice. The CCP requires members to engage in self-assessment and goal-setting on an annual basis to ensure that they continue to learn and develop as professionals throughout their careers.

WHAT IS THE CCP?

The CCP is a quality assurance program that encourages members to enhance their practice in an ongoing way. In accordance with the [Registration Regulation](#) made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, the CCP is mandatory for all College members with the exception of those who hold a retired class of certificate of registration.

Based on an adult education model, the CCP requires members on an annual basis to:

- Review the Standards of Practice.
- Complete a self-assessment based on those principles.
- Set goals and carry out learning activities based on their self-assessment.

CCP learning activities are defined broadly and may include attending courses or workshops, reading journal articles, conducting research and much more.

FUNDING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Employers can support their employees in meeting their CCP obligations by sharing information about the [Social Workers and Social Service Workers Professional Development Fund](#). Created by the Ontario Government, the Fund can be used toward learning activities needed to meet the requirements of the CCP.

FIELD EDUCATION

Did you know that College members can use [field education](#) toward the completion of their CCP? College members are free to choose what activities they will work on to achieve their learning goals, which may include providing field education to social work/ social service work students as part of their practice.

The CCP supports members as they strive for ethical and professional practice; it is one of the many ways the College fulfills its public protection mandate. For more information about the CCP, please visit our [website](#) or contact ccp@ocswssw.org. Employers can also view the College's [introductory video](#) on the CCP.

**THE CCP IS A QUALITY
ASSURANCE PROGRAM
THAT ENCOURAGES
MEMBERS TO ENHANCE
THEIR PRACTICE IN AN
ONGOING WAY.**

Q&A

HOW DO I DETERMINE WHETHER A CANDIDATE IS REGISTERED WITH THE COLLEGE?

The College encourages employers, as part of the hiring process, to check a candidate's registration status on our [Online Register](#). This is the best way to determine whether the candidate is registered with the College.

As mandated by the [Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998](#), the College maintains a register that can be accessed on the College's website. The [Online Register](#) lists all registered social workers (RSWs) and registered social service workers (RSSWs) in Ontario and includes information about a member's registration status, discipline history (if any) and current employer contact information.

The Online Register includes the following information about social workers and social service workers in Ontario:

- Name
- Registration number
- Previous name(s) (if known to the College)
- Name of business or employer
- Business address
- Business phone number
- Class of certificate of registration
- Terms, conditions and limitations
- Notations (e.g., suspension, cancellation or revocation of a member's certificate of registration)
- Other information in accordance with the College's bylaws

THE ONLINE REGISTER IS ANOTHER WAY THAT THE COLLEGE FULFILLS ITS MANDATE OF PUBLIC PROTECTION

To learn more about the College, its mandate and how it protects the public, we encourage employers to check out the [College Knowledge Quiz](#). Designed to test an employer's knowledge, this quiz highlights the many benefits of hiring RSWs and RSSWs.

HAVE A QUESTION OR TOPIC YOU'D LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE COLLEGE'S *EMPLOYER COMMUNIQUÉ*? CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT AT COMMUNICATIONS@OCSWSSW.ORG.

EMPLOYER RESOURCES



Employers play an important role in helping the College fulfill its mandate of public protection. Educational tools and resources are available to employers on the College website at ocswssw.org. Click the links below to learn more.

CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Employers may refer to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008* to understand their employees' professional obligations and to inform agency policies and practices.

PHIPA TOOLKIT

The *Privacy Toolkit for Social Workers and Social Service Workers* was developed to assist members in understanding the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA) and their responsibilities under this Act.

THE ONLINE REGISTER

Verify a member's registration status using the College's accessible, easy-to-use Online Register.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The College develops Practice Guidelines to assist members and employers in interpreting and applying the College's Standards of Practice in specific areas.

MANDATORY REPORTS

Under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, employers of social workers and social service workers have mandatory reporting obligations.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM (CCP)

Support your employees in completing their annual CCP.

PRACTICE NOTES

Covering a range of topics, Practice Notes are designed as an educational tool to assist members and employers in gaining a better understanding of how the Standards of Practice may apply to recurring issues in everyday practice.

HIRING REGISTERED SOCIAL WORKERS AND REGISTERED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

Visit this webpage to find out the value of hiring registered social workers and registered socialservice workers.

PERSPECTIVE NEWSLETTER

The official member publication of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

For a full list of College resources and publications, click [here](#).