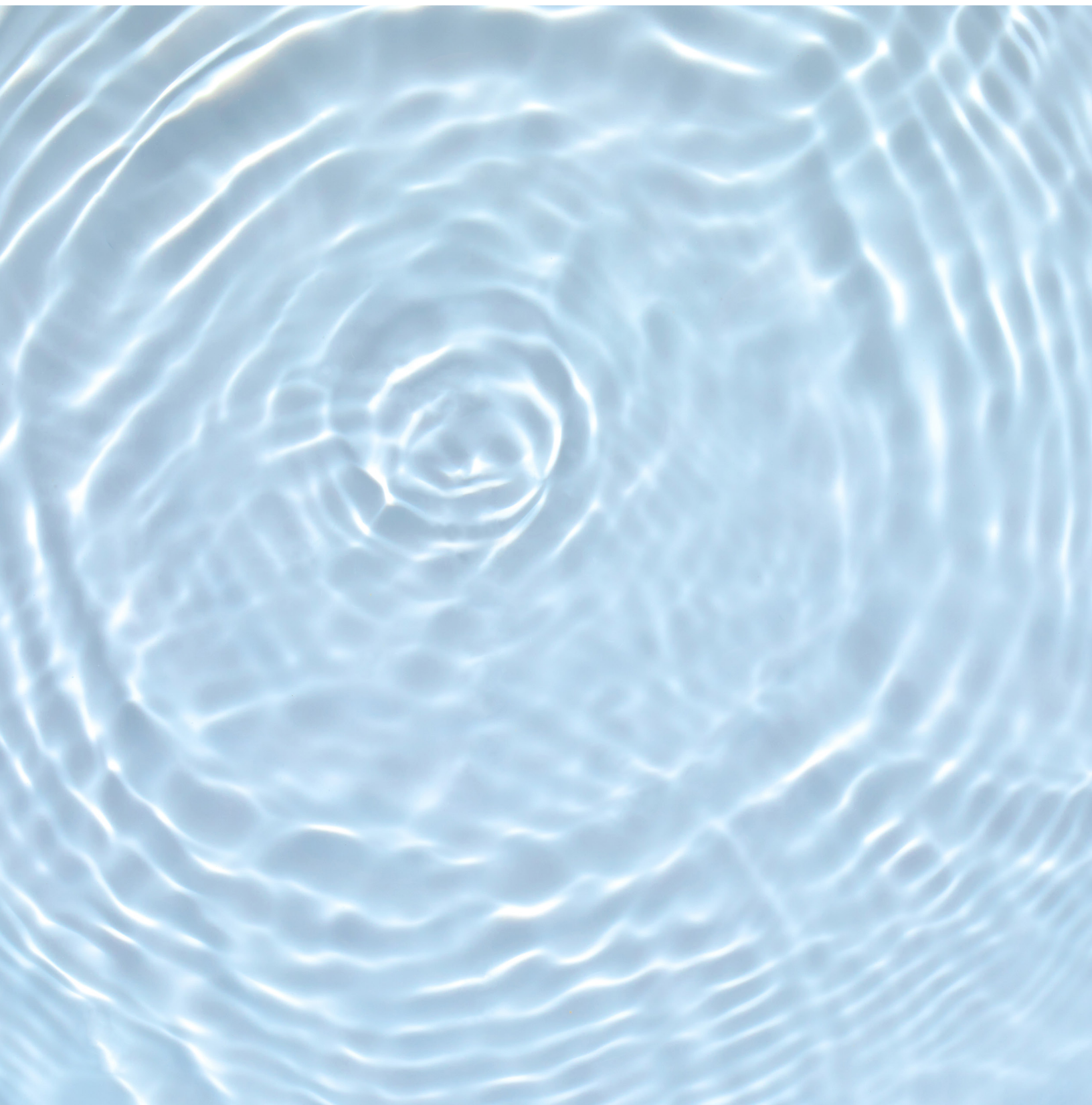


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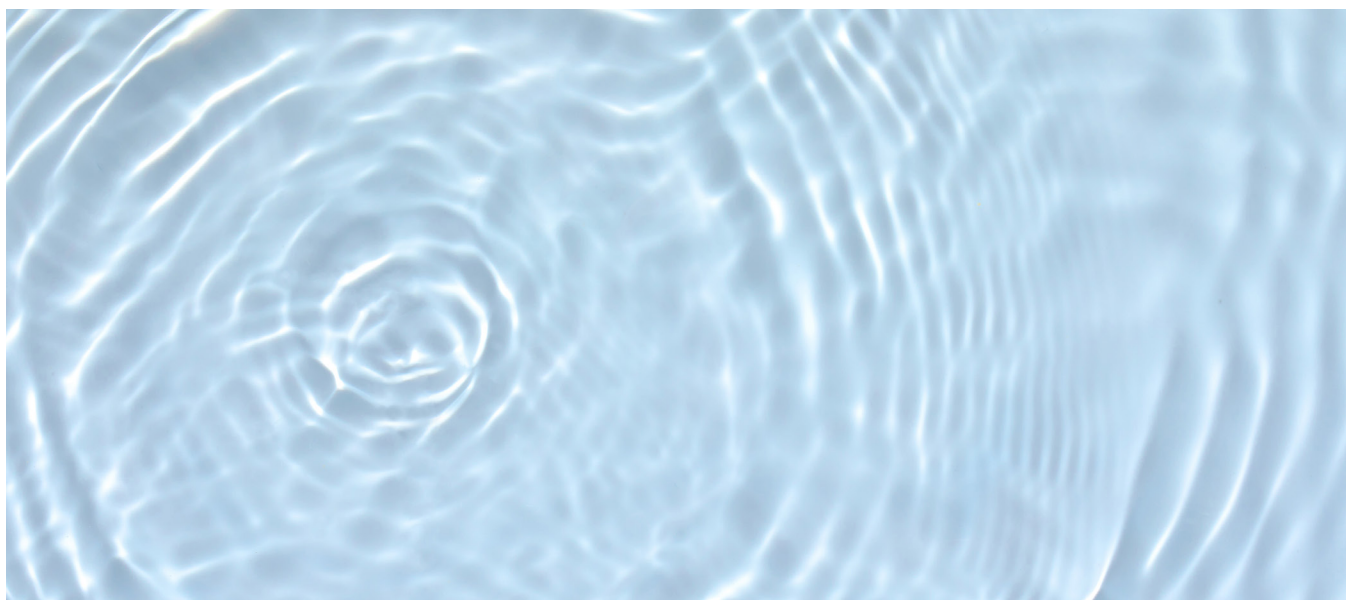
PERSPECTIVE

A PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS



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MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR AND CEO



> THE JOURNEY TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE

What is good governance? This is a question regulatory boards and staff frequently ask themselves, and one which I also reflect on in my role as Registrar and CEO of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

In the regulatory context, good governance is the framework that ensures that colleges like ours operate in an environment of continuous improvement and are well-positioned to make decisions in the public interest. In this sense, it is fundamental to the College fulfilling its public protection mandate.

I am pleased to report that the College has made significant progress in its journey towards more effective governance.

Last year, College Council agreed to re-examine and improve its current governance practices through governance training and a review of its governance processes. The College engaged with governance consultants Harry Cayton and Deanna Williams – both widely respected in the international regulatory community – to conduct the review and assess the College's performance against the [Standards of Good Governance](#). Following this review, College Council was provided with a "Governance Report," which was made public on the [College website](#) in May.

In response to the Governance Report, the Council's Governance Committee (at Council's direction) developed a draft action plan based on the Report's 21 recommendations. Throughout the summer, the Governance Committee carefully considered which recommendations could be implemented immediately, which should go to Council for consideration, and which may require legislative change in the longer term.

During its September Council meeting, College Council reviewed the draft action plan and made a number of decisions in relation to the recommendations from the Governance Report. I'd like to highlight one of these: that the College use the word "registrant" – rather than "member" – to make clear its role as a regulator rather than an association. As we all know, language is important; this decision will impact how we communicate with you, *our registrants*, moving forward.

The College remains dedicated to achieving regulatory effectiveness, and this includes good governance. We must continue to consider trends in regulatory governance modernization across Canada and internationally – especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and other societal challenges – and make appropriate changes based on what is happening in the regulatory sector in Ontario and across Canada. This includes, for example, considering the implications of the College Performance Measurement Framework

developed by the Ontario Ministry of Health for the regulated health profession colleges.

Everything the College does comes down to ensuring that there are safeguards in place to protect the public from unqualified, incompetent and unfit practitioners. As we continue our journey of governance transformation, we must embrace the challenges and

learn from them. I look forward to sharing more with you in the days ahead.

Lise Betteridge, MSW, RSW
Registrar and CEO
Ontario College of Social Workers
and Social Service Workers

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE 2022 MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY



➤ In July, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers sent out its 2022 Member Communications Survey to members. The purpose of the survey was to help the College evaluate its communications strategy and determine which communication tools and services were successful as well as areas in need of improvement.

Now that the survey results have been compiled – and with more than two thousand members participating – we are pleased to share the following takeaways:

PUBLIC PROTECTION

As the regulatory body for social workers and social service workers in Ontario, the College's mandate is to protect the public interest. Everything we do comes back to that public protection mandate, from setting entry-to-practice requirements to maintaining rigorous

complaints and discipline processes. It's critical that members and the public understand and are aware of our regulatory role.

According to the survey results, **75% of members** agreed that the College is effective in communicating its public protection mandate. This is a significant increase from the 2018 Member Communications Survey when 70% of members indicated that they agreed. Though we are pleased with this improvement, we believe that there is plenty of room for growth.

EMPLOYERS ARE GETTING THE MESSAGE

In 2017, the College launched its ongoing employer outreach campaign to inform employers of the importance of College registration and the value

of hiring registered social workers and social service workers. The multi-faceted campaign includes digital advertising, virtual and in-person outreach, a quarterly publication and an interactive quiz, among other initiatives.

The survey results showed that **74% of members** agreed that their employers understood and appreciate the value of their College registration, compared to 70% who said the same in the 2018 survey. **Sixty-seven per cent** also agreed that their employers require candidates for positions at their organization to be registered with the College, compared to 63% in 2018. Judging by the improvements in the survey results, the College's message is getting out to employers!

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Increasing diversity, equity and inclusion is a priority for the College, as noted in its [2020-2023 Strategic Plan](#). As part of this commitment, the College set out to enhance equity and inclusion across its organizational processes, resources and materials. The College has made some progress on this commitment, however, we wanted to understand more about how social workers and social service workers perceive our actions.

According to the results, **69% of members** agreed that the College is doing an effective job in communicating its commitment in relation to this strategic priority, although only 60% agreed that the College is making progress to enhance equity and inclusion across its organizational processes, resources and materials. Although the College doesn't have benchmarking data with which to compare these results, we know we have plenty of work ahead in this important journey.

PRACTICE RESOURCES

The College is committed to ensuring its members receive timely and relevant resources to support their ethical and professional practice. This is important not only for members but also for the individuals and communities they serve.

According to the survey results, **64% of College members** said that they access the College website and online resources when they have a challenging practice-related issue or inquiry, with the College's Practice

Guidelines, ETHICS-A Tool and Practice Notes regarded as valuable by most members.

There were some practice supports, however, which weren't as widely known to members, including the following, which may be of interest:

- The College's [video discussion](#) with Cheryl McPherson, RSW, on ethical and competent responses to anti-Indigenous racism
- The [Resource Room](#) – an online library of all College resources
- The [Employer Communiqué](#) – the College's quarterly publication for employers
- [Practice consultations](#)
- The College's social media channels for timely updates ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#))

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all members who participated in the survey. We were pleased with the solid response rate and your interest in our communications and outreach. We value your feedback!

We will continue to analyze the survey results to determine areas of improvement in our communication tools and services. For questions regarding the 2022 Member Communications Survey and the College's communication tools, please contact communications@ocswssw.org.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



➤ COMPLETE THE 2022 CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

As the end of the year approaches, the College would like to remind members of their requirement to complete the 2022 Continuing Competence Program (CCP).

The CCP is **mandatory for all members of the College** (except those holding a retired class of certificate of registration), including those who are not currently practising, are members of the inactive class, are on maternity, parental or sick leave, or who registered late in the year.

As part of the 2022 CCP, members are required to review – along with the [Standards of Practice](#) – the following practice resources:

- [Practice Guidelines for Medication Practices](#)
- [Practice Notes: To Report or Not to Report](#)

For more information on the College's Continuing Competence Program, please visit the [College website](#) or contact ccp@ocswssw.org.

COMING SOON – RENEW YOUR COLLEGE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2023

The College would like to remind all members that the renewal season for 2023 will begin in **early November**. The deadline for members to complete their membership renewal and payment for the year 2023 is **December 31, 2022**.

Members can renew their membership and pay their annual fee through the College's [online member services](#). As mentioned in the [May 2022 eBulletin](#), there will be **no increase to member fees** in 2023.

New members who were issued a certificate of registration at any time in 2022 are required to complete their 2023 annual renewal of registration and provide confirmation of participation in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) for the year 2022. For more information about the CCP, please visit the [College website](#).

For more information on the College's renewal process, please visit the [College website](#) or contact renewals@ocswssw.org.

NEW COUNCIL ROSTER FOR 2022/2023

➤ The Council is the governing body and board of directors that manages and administers College affairs. We are pleased to announce the following members of the 2022/2023 College Council:

Amanda Bettencourt – Elected Social Service Worker

Amanda Bettencourt is dually registered with the OCSWSSW, initially joining the College as a social service worker and then obtaining her bachelor of social work degree from the former Ryerson University, now known as Toronto Metropolitan University. She works full-time as a School Social Worker on Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve in Ohsweken, where she also sits on the Anti-bullying Taskforce and provides consultation services to the federal school system with a focus on Haudenosaunee ways of knowing and learning. Amanda also works part-time as a private tutor and is serving out her third term being a Council member of the OCSWSSW. Amanda has eight years of frontline experience in the social services field, including but not limited to: advocacy for persons appealing ODSP decisions; managerial support for supervised access centre; and social work within school settings – both Western and Indigenous school systems. Amanda strives to continue to contribute meaningfully to the College's mandate of public protection.

Chisanga Chekwe – Public Member

Chisanga Chekwe brings a wealth of governance, development, business and legal expertise to College Council. Chisanga has served as Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Women's Issues, Seniors' Affairs, and International Trade in Ontario; Chair and CEO of the Social Benefits Tribunal; Executive Director at Oxfam; and adjudication officer and United Nations observer support officer monitoring elections in South Africa; Supervisor of the post-war election in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He also spent six years with the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, serving as a board member and Chair of the Board. Chisanga studied law at the University of Birmingham in England, before he received a master of laws degree from the

University of London. He then read philosophy, politics and economics at the University of Oxford, resulting in BA and MA degrees.

Charlene Crews – Elected Social Service Worker

Charlene Crews is a mental health clinician with over 29 years of experience working with marginalized and homeless populations. She brings a diversity of experience and transferable skills developed through direct service and program development work across sectors of child and adult mental health and addictions, hospital and community health care, patient advocacy, corrections, forensics, homelessness and social housing. Charlene is a social housing adjudicator and a Psychiatric Patient Advocate with the Ministry of Health. Charlene holds a strong interest in health law, privacy and ethics, maintains active roles on multiple community advocacy boards and holds certificates in advanced adjudication, regulatory investigations, interpersonal mediation, family therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, and health service management. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in health administration at Toronto Metropolitan University.

John Fleming – Public Member

John has served in the management ranks of local and provincial governments as well as not-for-profits, achieving senior leadership positions in several organizations, including service as a municipal CAO, Deputy Minister in Ontario and as CEO of a national health charity. After completing his full-time career, he continued his leadership work by achieving the Chartered Director designation and opening his "Occasional" consulting practice. Since 2008, John has focused his work around governance teaching and advice, executive mentoring and coaching, and group facilitation, especially emphasizing his ability to help boards and teams work effectively to identify and achieve common goals. John is the Integrity Commissioner for the Town of Caledon and Past Chair of the Board of Governors of Sheridan College; has and continues to serve on numerous other boards and committees, and is a past Chair of the Board of

Directors of Halton Healthcare Services and of Ovarian Cancer Canada. He is also a past Director of OMERS Sponsors Corporation. He is currently the Co-Chair of the Greater Hamilton Health Network's Partnership Council. John is now Council Chair.

Judy Gardner – Elected Social Service Worker

Judy holds a bachelor of arts and also received a social service work diploma with honours in 2013. Her diverse educational background also includes administration, criminology, early childhood and women's studies. She is currently a college instructor specializing in addictions and community service work. Judy has over 10 years of frontline professional experience supporting adults with developmental disabilities and has a passion to advocate for the marginalized. Judy was elected to Council in May 2014.

Sanjay Govindaraj – Elected Social Worker

Sanjay Govindaraj graduated with an MSW from TISS (1994) and a master's in applied environmental studies from UW in 2004. Over the last 27 years, Sanjay has led projects related to poverty, food security, housing, child prostitution, Indigenous Reconciliation, accessibility and strategic planning. He is currently employed with the City of Waterloo as Director – Indigenous Initiatives, Anti-Racism, Accessibility and Equity, and also provides counselling on a part-time basis at Aligned Health in Waterloo for equity-deserving groups. Wilfrid Laurier University awarded Sanjay the title Associate Practicum Professor (part-time) for his years of supervising MSW students. Sanjay has been on numerous boards with not-for-profit organizations and is an active mentor for new immigrants/refugees. Sanjay was elected to the Council in 2018 and is currently the Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Group.

Mukesh Kowlessar – Elected Social Service Worker

Mukesh Kowlessar has served as Council President from March 2021 – September 2022; and from September 2009 – September 2013. Mukesh has served on many of the College's committees, including the Executive and Finance Committees. Following his retirement, he has continued to play an active role at the College and to pursue other interests in improving governance in the public service. Mukesh has over 30 years of leadership experience in the municipal and provincial sectors in social services. Mukesh

was formerly an adjudicator with the Landlord and Tenant Board and a Registrar at the Ontario Superior Court of Justice; he is also currently a consultant in strategic planning. Mukesh is a strong proponent in ensuring a diversity, equity and inclusion lens in the business of governance and in society in general. He holds certificates in mediation, alternative dispute resolution and executive management from Western University, and certification in crisis and critical incident stress management and a social service worker diploma from Fanshawe College.

Carrie McEachran – Public Member

Carrie McEachran is the Chief Executive Officer of the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce. She previously served as the Executive Director of Sarnia-Lambton Rebound and also held leadership positions at Community Living Sarnia and Pathways Health Centre for Children. McEachran carries a master's degree in leadership from Royal Roads University, a developmental services worker diploma from Loyalist College and a non-profit management certificate from Western University. Her community involvement includes being an active Rotarian for 16 years where she served a term as President of the Rotary Club of Sarnia. She currently serves as a board member for the Sarnia Lambton Economic Partnership and served previous terms on boards for North Lambton Community Health Centre, Sarnia-Lambton Physician Recruitment Taskforce, Sarnia-Lambton Social Services Network and PAVRO (Professional Association of Volunteer Leaders-Ontario). She is also an active member of the Arlanxeo Community Advisory Committee.

Christopher McIntosh – Elected Social Worker

Christopher's professional and volunteer contributions have included working in the areas of primary care, housing, and mental health for organizations across Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. These experiences are enhanced by his academic credentials including a master's degree in social work and certificates in health care leadership. Dedicated to bringing people together to solve problems collectively, Christopher is energized by helping others discover their passions and removing barriers for both clients and colleagues. Christopher's approach is founded in addressing

barriers to equity-deserving community members and relentless in addressing the social determinants of health. Overall, Christopher is committed to improving the spectrum of support and access for all clients.

Sue-Ellen Merritt – Elected Social Service Worker

Sue-Ellen Merritt graduated with honours from Niagara College's Social Service Worker Program in 1996. She has served on the Niagara College Social Service Worker Advisory Board for 15 years, and was Chair of the Board's Legislation Sub-Committee. Currently retired, Sue-Ellen was employed for 20 years by Niagara Health System, Mental Health and Addictions, where she provided direct client support and held the positions of Smoking Cessation Coordinator and Gambling Coordinator. Sue-Ellen was also a small business manager for 15 years for a privately owned natural gas company, and served as an elected official for Township West Lincoln from 2003-14. Prior to 2003, she served as Chair of the Township's Committee of Adjustment for 10 years. Sue-Ellen was an OCSWSSW Council member from 2000-2010, during which she was elected to the Executive Committee for those years and held a Vice-President position from 2001-2010.

Pamela Murphy – Public Member

Pamela Murphy is the retired Manager, Housing Service, Community and Human Services, Hastings County. Pam has worked for more than 25 years in the social services field, first as the Executive Director for Prince Edward Child Care Services, then in social housing where she worked on site as the housing administrator for a cooperative housing provider in Belleville. She joined the Hastings County Housing Services Department as the Supervisor of Non Profit Housing in 2004 and became Manager of Housing Services in 2013. During her career in housing, Pam sat on a number of provincial housing committees. She has been actively involved in her community as a member of the Board of Directors for Three Oaks, an organization whose mandate is to end violence against women. She has also served as a Board member for The Abigail's Learning Centre, an organization for children and their parents. Pam is a graduate of the Ontario Business College.

Mandi Olson – Elected Social Service Worker

Mandi Olson is a registered social service worker located in northwestern Ontario. She has been a helper

in the social work field for over 15 years and her passion includes creating grassroots and macro-level system changes that are rooted in Indigenous best practices. She is familiar with both not-for-profit and privatized wellness services and organizations. Mandi is the co-owner of a successful business, Binesiwag Center for Wellness, which focuses on providing a variety of wellness services across the lifespan, including mental health, addictions, direct support to 2SLGBTQIAP+ folx, women and girls, as well as capacity building. Outside of her professional career, Mandi enjoys being on the land and with her family. She enjoys hunting, fishing, camping and travelling.

Alexia Polillo – Public Member

Dr. Alexia Polillo received her PhD in experimental psychology from the University of Ottawa and is completing her postdoctoral fellowship at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the University of Toronto. She has extensive experience with community and health services research and helped lead small- and large-scale evaluations of community and outpatient mental health services in Waterloo, Brantford, Ottawa and Toronto. She has published over 15 peer-reviewed articles, contributed to eight technical reports used to support service providers and community mental health agencies, presented her work at national and international conferences, and received 11 institutional awards and federal and provincial scholarships.

Marinna Read – Elected Social Worker

Marinna Read is a Fort William First Nation community member and resides in Thunder Bay. She holds a bachelor's degree in criminology from the University of Manitoba and an honours bachelor of social work and master of social work degrees from Lakehead University. She has spent over 20 years practising in youth and adult mental health, Indigenous child welfare, program and community development and most recently implementing Indigenous health care in a hospital setting. She has committed her professional career to assisting those on their wellness journey in a respectful and kind way ensuring culturally safe care through an Indigenous lens. Her personal life includes plenty of family time and enjoying the great outdoors in beautiful northwestern Ontario. Marinna empowers individuals to use their inner strengths and culture to move forward and celebrate themselves while creating

change in their lives. She is excited to be joining the OCSWSSW this year and expanding her knowledge while ensuring the protection of the public in this service area.

Candice Snake – Elected Social Worker

Candice Snake's home community is Munsee-Delaware Nation. Her education started with her ancestors Rosie Deleary, her grandmother Stella Mae Burch, her mother Irene Snake, as well as her father Larry Burch. Their influence shapes the work that she does in realizing the need for critical reflection in educating service providers and helping families care for children. They ignite the fire in her to continue this vital decolonizing work to ensure Indigenous families are empowered as caregivers. Candice received her MSW from Laurier University in 2020. Her multi-disciplinary work experience over the past 26 years provided a skill set for leadership, policy development, best practice and accountability. She worked with a team to develop HEART & SPIRIT training, a program which is utilized in Ontario child wellbeing agencies to train foster parents and is currently experiencing interest nationally and internationally. She is excited for this new role and looks forward to the work.

Elayne Tanner – Elected Social Worker

Dr. Elayne Tanner is a registered social worker with over 30 years of professional experience. She continues to be a sessional graduate professor for the University of Windsor and has published on topics including anti-oppressive practice, social work ethics and hypnosis. Elayne is the sole practitioner in a thriving private practice with areas of expertise that include sexual abuse, trauma, childhood disorders, relationship counselling, parenting and divorce. As a leader in private practice, many have sought her guidance in establishing their own private practices. An active volunteer, Elayne strives to give back to her community and her profession. She has supported many volunteer boards and has been awarded Business Woman of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, and Best Counsellor in the communities of Milton and Halton Hills. On a personal level, Elayne lives with her husband, Great Dane, annoying cat and two horses on their property in North Halton.

Beatrice Traub-Werner – Elected Social Worker

Beatrice Traub-Werner is a social worker with over 30 years of experience as a clinician, an administrator and an educator. She taught at York University's BSW Program and was the Director of Admissions at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto for 15 years. Beatrice founded TAPE Educational Services, a continuing education program for clinicians. In 2009 she became the academic director of the Bridge Training Program for Internationally Educated Psychologists and Allied Mental Health Professionals (renamed as BREM). Currently, Beatrice is the Dean of Continuing Education at Adler Graduate Professional Schools. She teaches in the Addictions Studies Program at Adler. Beatrice has worked on contract for various projects at several community colleges in Ontario. She is currently a director on the Board of the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB). She is a former director of Jewish Vocational Services, and Jewish Immigrant Aid, Eli's Place and currently serves on the Allocations Committee of the Catholic Charities and the Quality Assurance Committee of the Jewish Child and Family Services in Toronto. She served as a member of the OCSWSSW Council (2010-2017 – three terms as President) and was recently re-elected.

Durel Williams – Elected Social Worker

Durel Williams is a registered social worker with almost 15 years of experience in social work, having practised in the United States, Jamaica and Canada. Her cross-cultural experience has afforded her a keen sense of cultural sensitivity that comes with working with various populations in a variety of social contexts, including intimate partner violence, adult and youth justice, and adult and youth mental health. Durel obtained her MSW at McMaster University in 2010, where she researched how immigrant women experienced and perceived services for intimate partner violence. She is currently in private practice focusing on areas such as trauma (including racialized trauma), relationships and the self.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR MAY 5 AND 6, 2022



> MAY 5, 2022

- Governance consultants Harry Cayton and Deanna Williams, engaged by the College to conduct governance training and a governance review, presented their final report to Council.
- Council approved a motion to accept the governance report, release the report publicly and develop an action plan for Council's consideration.

MAY 6, 2022

- Mukesh Kowlessar, RSSW, President, provided his report to Council.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar and CEO, and Denitha Breau, Deputy Registrar, presented their report to Council and provided updates related to the College's Strategic Plan and operations. Their report included information on the following: the status of membership renewals for 2022; an overview of new member registrations; the College's IT related initiatives; general staffing and recruitment update; the Professional Practice Department – including the increase in inquiries about conflicts of interest and the latest Practice Notes; the College's communications initiatives – including the upcoming Annual Meeting and Education Day, the College's public awareness campaign and the eventual implementation of entry-to-practice exams; the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory*

Trades Act and what it means for the College; increasing diversity, equity and inclusion – including updates around the draft policy for the collection of race-based and other demographic data, and the College resources and materials related to DEI; the Complaints and Discipline Department and the increase in title protection matters.

- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of February 2022.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Operations as of February 2022.
- Council reviewed the 2021 Audited Financial Statements, as approved by the Executive Committee.
- Reports were received from the following statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Registration Appeals; and Fitness to Practise.
- Council reviewed and approved proposed revisions to the College's registration policies regarding social service work equivalency.
- Council received an update regarding the review of the College's Procurement Policy.

- Council received and discussed the report from the consultants who conducted Phase 1 of the review of the Standards of Practice, which was conducted with oversight from the Standards of Practice Committee.
- Council reviewed updates to the College's Risk Register.
- Council reviewed and approved the Finance Committee's recommendation that there be no increase to registration and membership fees in 2023.
- Reports were received from the following non-statutory committees: Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Governance; Corporations; and Titles and Designations.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR SEPTEMBER 8 AND 9, 2022



> SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

- The following Council members were elected by Council to the Executive Committee:
 - John Fleming, Public member – Council Chair
 - Mandi Olson, RSSW – Vice-Chair
 - Sanjay Govindaraj, RSW – Vice-Chair
 - Mukesh Kowlessar, RSSW – Executive Member
 - Pam Murphy, Public member – Executive Member
 - Durel Williams, RSW – Executive Member
- Council received orientation and training from Crowe Soberman LLP regarding financial reports and Council responsibilities.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar and CEO, and Denitha Breau, Deputy Registrar, presented their report to Council. The report provided updates under each strategic priority in the College's Strategic Plan and included information about the following: membership data, including a breakdown of registrants; registration stats over the last year as compared to previous years; an update on the College's CRM software upgrade; the Professional Practice Department's continued practice support and inquiries; the College's ongoing public awareness campaign; an update around the ASWB's social work workforce coalition, including its most recent report around exam pass rates/demographics.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2022

- Council reviewed and approved the recommendations of the Nominating Committee with respect to statutory and non-statutory committee membership and chairs.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of June 2022.

- Council reviewed the Statement of Operations as of June 2022.
- Council reviewed and approved in principle the 2023 Budget and Work Plan.
- Council reviewed and discussed the AMED (Annual Meeting and Education Day) post-event report and the format of AMED in 2023 and moving forward.
- Council discussed and passed a motion to re-approve the following applications as equivalent to a Social Service Work Program offered in Ontario at a college of applied arts and technology (CAAT):
 - Confederation College – Onajigawin Indigenous Services
 - Centennial College – Addiction and Mental Health Worker
- Council passed a motion to request further information from George Brown College regarding the Community Worker Program parameters in order to address Council's concerns about the number of placement hours and qualifications for supervision; George Brown College will be invited to provide this information should they wish to resubmit their application for approval.
- Council approved in principle the Equity and Inclusion Data Policy (previously called the Member Census Data Policy).
- Council reviewed the College's Risk Register.
- Council approved a motion amending Bylaw No. 1 which adds the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to the College's list of non-statutory committees.
- Council discussed and carefully considered and approved a number of decisions around the implementation of recommendations from the governance review.
- Reports were received from the following statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Registration; and Fitness to Practise.
- Reports were received from the following non-statutory committees: Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Governance; Corporations; and Titles and Designations.

PRACTICE NOTES



➤ TERMINATION: MANAGING CLIENTS AND MOVING FORWARD

PRACTICE NOTES

TERMINATION: MANAGING CLIENTS AND MOVING FORWARD



BY CHRISTINA VAN SICKLE, MSW, RSW, DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Practice Notes is an educational tool designed to help Ontario social workers, social service workers, employers and members of the public gain a better understanding of recurring issues dealt with by the Professional Practice Department and the Complaints Committee that may affect everyday practice. The notes offer general guidance only and College members with specific practice inquiries should consult the College, since the relevant standards and appropriate course of action will vary depending on the situation.

The termination process can be very challenging to navigate. As a result, the Professional Practice Department frequently receives inquiries on this topic from members asking about their ethical obligations. Some inquiries demonstrate members' uncertainty as to when it is appropriate to end the professional relationship with their client – either because members are unaware of their ethical and professional responsibilities to a client, or because they believe that there are limited circumstances in which termination is appropriate.

There is a common misconception among members that only a client can terminate or withdraw from services

once the professional relationship has begun. Members may misunderstand the concept of “client abandonment” – a term that is commonly used in health care environments, but which is not included in any definition of professional misconduct for social workers or social service workers.¹ While the Professional Misconduct Regulation does not include the term “client abandonment,” it does contain the following provision, which defines professional misconduct to include:

8. Discontinuing professional services that are needed unless,
 - i. the client requests the discontinuation,
 - ii. the client withdraws from the service,
 - iii. reasonable efforts are made to arrange alternative or replacement services,
 - iv. the client is given a reasonable opportunity to arrange alternative or replacement services,
 - or
 - v. continuing to provide the services would place the member at serious risk of harm, and, in the circumstances described in subparagraph i, ii, iii or iv, the member makes reasonable efforts to hold a termination session with the client.

¹ Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998. O. Reg 384/00 Professional Misconduct.

Members should look to the Professional Misconduct Regulation and the Standards of Practice for direction as to the circumstances in which they are permitted or required to terminate services.

Upon deciding to work with a new client, College members must assess whether the services they provide (and whether they themselves) are a suitable match for the client. They may decide, for a variety of reasons, that the client would be more appropriately served by another professional. In these cases, the member should make an onward referral and/or provide the client with suggestions for alternative resources.

In other instances, members may only determine that they are not an appropriate fit for a client after the professional relationship has been established. They may reach this conclusion because they realize that they do not have the requisite competence, that their professional services are not benefitting the client, and/or that the professional relationship has been ruptured, has dissolved or is untenable. In these cases, members must apply their professional judgment to determine whether it is appropriate to terminate client services.

The following scenarios are intended to assist members in the decision-making process when they are considering whether to terminate their professional relationship with a client:

SCENARIO 1: TERMINATION WHEN THE GOALS OF SERVICE ARE NOT BEING MET

A member contacted the Professional Practice Department for a consultation because they had been unable to assist a client with whom they had been working for some time in meeting their stated goals. The member had come to this conclusion despite having sought supervision and applied various strategies and interventions. The member believed that the client may be better served by another professional who could bring a different perspective and apply new skills in relation to the client's situation.

Professional Practice staff directed the member to the Standards of Practice, which state that "College members may provide services and/or products so long as the provision of these services and/or products are relevant and conform to College standards. College members do not provide a service and/or product that the member knows or ought reasonably to know is not likely to benefit the client."² The member noted that they had not previously considered that they should not be offering a service if they knew that it was not likely to benefit their client, and indicated that they did not feel their services had been helpful to the client for some time.

The member was referred to Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.9, which states that:

College members terminate professional services to clients when such services are no longer required or requested. It is professional misconduct to discontinue professional services that are needed unless:

- i) the client requests the discontinuation,
- ii) the client withdraws from the service,
- iii) reasonable efforts are made to arrange alternative or replacement services,
- iv) the client is given a reasonable opportunity to arrange alternative or replacement services, or
- v) continuing to provide the services would place the member at serious risk of harm, and in the circumstances described in subparagraph i, ii, iii, or iv, the member makes reasonable efforts to hold a termination session with the client.³

The member indicated that they had already considered alternative or replacement services that they could recommend to the client. As a result of their discussion with Professional Practice staff, the member decided to inform the client that they would be terminating service in a month's time, following which the client would be transferred to another provider. The member stated that they would begin this conversation at their next

² Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW), *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.8.

³ OCSWSSW, *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.9. See also O. Reg 384/00 Professional Misconduct, s. 2.8

session with the client, which would give the client time to adjust to the transition while also providing them with an opportunity to connect with other recommended service providers prior to the termination. The member also decided to hold a termination session at the end of this period, following which they would, if the client agreed, provide the client's new service provider with a summary of their work together.

SCENARIO 2: TERMINATION OF COURT-ORDERED SERVICE

A member of the College who was named on a court order requiring a couple to attend co-parenting counselling with them contacted the Professional Practice Department for a consultation. The goals of service included supporting the couple in developing better communication strategies and setting parenting norms and expectations. One parent chose to withdraw from services, effectively ending the professional relationship. The member was concerned that termination of service by that client may not be permitted and was unsure if they would be held liable by the courts because the co-parenting sessions had not been completed.

As in Scenario 1, Professional Practice staff referred the member to the Standards of Practice. In this instance, the Standards of Practice appeared to support termination because the client had withdrawn from service.⁴ The member expressed concern about possible ramifications resulting from one client's withdrawal from service because that client had been court-ordered to see the member; Professional Practice staff suggested that the member obtain a legal consultation through their professional liability insurance and then follow up with the Professional Practice Department to discuss next steps.

The member indicated in a follow up call to the Professional Practice Department that they had followed up on their earlier discussion, obtained legal advice and were going to terminate the professional relationship because the client had withdrawn from services. It should be noted that each situation involving

court orders is different, and dependent on a number of variables, including how the order is worded and the extent to which the member was involved in the issuance of the court order. Members should always seek their own legal advice and be mindful that the course of most caution is to seek direction from the court. It should also be noted that it would have also been permissible, according to the Standards of Practice, for the member to terminate the court-ordered counselling if the member thought that the services were not likely to benefit the client; as before, this decision should be made after obtaining legal advice.⁵

In the follow-up consultation with Professional Practice staff, the member inquired further about how to terminate ethically and appropriately – namely, what would constitute “reasonable efforts” in the context of members’ responsibility to “arrange alternative or replacement services” and “hold a termination session with the client.”⁶ The member was encouraged to consider the following reflective questions:

- Did the member give careful thought to which alternative or replacement services would best suit the individual needs of the client?
- Did the member provide the client with the contact details of several professionals and/or organizations in order to access alternative or replacement services?
- Did the member provide appropriate support and/or guidance to the client in contacting other professionals and/or services?
- Did the member make multiple attempts to contact the client, using different means of communication (e.g. phone and email) in order to arrange a termination session?
- Did the member consider whether it was necessary to seek legal advice (in relation to court-ordered counselling, for example)?

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ OCSWSSW, *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.8.

⁶ OCSWSSW, *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.9.

- Did the member document appropriate details in relation to the reflective questions above?

As a result of their second consultation with the Professional Practice Department, the member decided to compile a list of other service providers who may be able to offer co-parenting counselling services to the couple and to send an email to both parents to try to arrange a joint termination session. The member stated that if they did not receive a response, they would attempt to call each parent separately to offer individual termination sessions. If that approach was unsuccessful, they indicated that they would send a final email to both parents explaining that service had been terminated and providing a list of recommended replacement service providers.

SCENARIO 3: TERMINATION RESULTING FROM INFRINGEMENT OF PERSONAL VALUES

A member had been working with a client for several sessions when the client made racist comments and expressed racist ideologies. The member conscientiously probed, questioned and attempted to challenge the client's thinking, but the client remained firm in their beliefs. After the session, the member sought supervision and peer support to determine how, and if, they could continue to work with the client. At the next session, the member attempted unsuccessfully to address the client's racist ideas and was left feeling exasperated, incensed and unsure about how to continue to work with the client after the session. The member's supervisor suggested that they consult with the College in order to decide what to do.

During their conversation with Professional Practice staff, the member explained that they felt that their personal values and beliefs had been infringed upon to the extent that they could no longer be objective in their work with the client. The member stated that because of this, they believed they could not provide a service that would benefit the client.⁷ The member was referred

to the Standards of Practice which direct members to take appropriate steps to terminate services by:

- making reasonable efforts to arrange alternative or replacement services;
- giving the client a reasonable opportunity to arrange alternative or replacement services; and
- making a reasonable effort to hold a termination session with the client.⁸

While the member said that they were comfortable with arranging alternative services for the client, they were concerned about holding a termination session in person (like previous sessions) because they felt unsafe due to their recent conversations. Professional Practice staff asked whether they may be able to hold a termination session online or over the phone and the member decided that they would feel safe terminating in one of these ways.

One week later, the member reached out to the Professional Practice Department again and recounted that they had called the client to explain that they would need to transition services to another professional and to arrange a termination session via an online platform. The member noted that the client became very hostile at this point, directing aggressive and abusive language toward the member. The member stated that they ended the phone call, but the client had continued to call and leave threatening and angry voicemails for several days. The member stated that as a result of these developments, they no longer felt safe with the client and did not feel that they could follow through with a termination session. Professional Practice staff encouraged the member to refer to Interpretation 3.9 in Principle III: Responsibility to Clients in the Standards of Practice, which states that College members may discontinue services if “continuing to provide the

⁷ OCSWSSW, *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.8.

⁸ OCSWSSW, *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, Interpretation 3.9.

services would place the member at serious risk of harm.”⁹

After discussing this further, the member decided to email the client to explain why they were ending the professional relationship and to provide recommendations for alternative or replacement services. Professional Practice staff suggested that the member may wish to speak with their supervisor or obtain a legal consultation through their workplace or professional liability insurance in order to decide on appropriate wording for this email. The member agreed to document the process thoroughly in the event that they were required to provide evidence of their decision-making process and the actions they had taken.

At the end of the consultation, the member expressed concern that the client may make future attempts to contact or threaten them in the future. Professional Practice staff suggested that the member may wish to contact an IT specialist to determine if the client could

be blocked from calling or emailing them and/or to obtain a legal consultation to determine if there was any legal recourse available to them.

CONCLUSION

Members must carefully consider their professional and ethical obligations when terminating their professional relationships with their clients. There are times when termination of a professional relationship is both necessary and permitted by the Standards of Practice. Members should review the Standards of Practice, consult appropriately and document their decision-making process to ensure that they are engaging in a thoughtful and careful process which supports ethical decisions.

⁹ Ibid.

DISCIPLINE DECISION SUMMARIES



> The College publishes summaries of decisions of the Discipline Committee and/or provides links to full-text, neutralized versions of its decisions. Information that is subject to a publication ban or that could reveal the identity of witnesses or clients, including the name of the facility, have been removed as necessary, or have been anonymized. As of January 2019, decisions are also available via the [Canadian Legal Information Institute](#) (CanLII).

By publishing decisions, the College endeavours to:

- Illustrate for social workers, social service workers and members of the public what does or does not constitute professional misconduct.
- Provide social workers and social service workers with direction about the College's Standards of Practice and professional behaviour, to be applied in future, should they find themselves in similar circumstances.
- Implement the Discipline Committee's decision.
- Provide social workers, social service workers and members of the public with an understanding of the College's discipline process.

February 18, 2022

KARISSA-JUNE BOULAY, #826459

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Karissa-June Boulay is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, 2.10, 2.21, 2.28, and 2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles I, II, III, IV and VIII of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), and Interpretations 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.8, 3.7, 4.1.2, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8 of the College's Standards of Practice.

[Karissa-June Boulay, #826459 \(Discipline Decision Summary and Reasons\)](#)

April 13, 2022

DORIT OSHER, #520599

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Dorit Osher is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.20, 2.28, 2.29 and 2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles II, IV and V of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), as commented on in Interpretations 2.2.8, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.5, 5.1, and 5.3.

[Dorit Osher, #520599 \(Discipline Decision Summary and Reasons\)](#)

April 21, 2022

SHARLEEN CAINER, #804081

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Sharleen Cainer is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21 and

2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles II and IV of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), as commented on in Interpretations 2.2.8, 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3.

[Sharleen Cainer, #804081 \(Discipline Decision Summary and Reasons\)](#)

I'VE BEEN COMPLAINED AGAINST – WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

FAQ

> The College's mandate is to protect the public from unqualified, incompetent and unfit practitioners. One of the ways the College fulfills this mandate is to consider and investigate complaints made by the public regarding the alleged conduct of College members. And though it may feel daunting or upsetting to find out that someone has made a complaint against you, the College ensures that due processes are in place, upholding fairness and maintaining transparency for all parties involved.

Here are answers to commonly asked questions that members have about the complaints process:

ARE ALL COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATED?

The College must investigate every complaint, with limited exceptions. Some examples of where the College may decide not to investigate a complaint include complaints that are about practice concerns that happened before the professional was a member of the College or where the complaint does not relate to the practice of social work or social service work – for example, a complaint about a member who also happens to be a landlord.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF SOMEONE HAS MADE A COMPLAINT AGAINST ME?

You will receive a written notification from the College if someone files a complaint against you.

DO I NEED A LAWYER?

The College strongly recommends you retain the services of a lawyer. If you are a member of the Ontario Association of Social Workers or the Ontario Social Service Worker Association, you may want to contact them for assistance in obtaining a lawyer.

AM I GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO THE COMPLAINT?

Yes. It is strongly recommended that you provide your account of the allegations in the complaint to the College. This way, the [Complaints Committee](#) will have all relevant information needed when making their decision.

ONCE I RESPOND TO THE COMPLAINT, WILL I BE REQUIRED TO SHARE CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT INFORMATION?

In order to respond to the complaint, you may need to share confidential client information. As set out in Principle V, section 5.3.2 of the Standards of Practice, you are allowed to share confidential client information with the College to defend yourself against a complaint. In doing so, College members should not divulge more information than is reasonably required.

WILL THE COMPLAINT BE MADE PUBLIC?

No. Complaints made against College members are not made public or noted on the Online Register. If the Complaints Committee refers your complaint to the Discipline Committee, a notation regarding the allegations that were referred will be posted on the College website and Online Register.

IS THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes. Except for allegations referred to the Discipline Committee as noted above, the details and information gathered in the course of a complaint investigation are confidential to the complaints process.

HOW LONG DOES THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS TAKE?

The College makes best efforts to complete investigations in a timely manner. Generally, the process can take from six months to a year to get before the Complaints Committee for review. However, there are a number of factors that may impact the time it takes for the College to complete an investigation – for example, a delay in receiving documents from third parties or the volume of complaints received at any given time by the College. To learn more about what can further delay the investigation process, please visit the [College website](#).

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF A COMPLAINT?

Once the investigation is complete, it is reviewed by the Complaints Committee, who will decide on an appropriate course of action. This may include:

- Taking no action with respect to the complaint.
- Providing advice to the member with the goal of remediating their practice going forward.
- Requiring the member to appear before a panel of the Complaints Committee to be cautioned.
- Referring the matter to the Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee for a hearing.

For more information about the College's complaints process, visit the following webpages:

- [Complaints Process- What Members Need to Know](#)
- [Complaints and Discipline](#)
- [Complaints](#)
- [Complaints Committee](#)
- [Complaints Guide](#)
- [Fitness to Practise](#)

College members with any complaint-related questions can contact the Complaints and Discipline Department at investigations@ocswssw.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

➤ CHANGE OF INFORMATION NOTIFICATION

If you change employers or move, please advise the College in writing within 30 days. The College is required to have the current business address of its members available to the public. Notification of change of address can be done by sending the new employer address to the College by email to info@ocswssw.org, by fax to 416-972-1512 or by mail to the College office address. In addition to providing your new address, please provide your old address and College registration number.

If you change your name or use a different name other than the one you registered with when providing social work or social service work services, you must advise the College of both your former name(s) and your new name(s) in writing and include a copy of the change of name certificate or marriage certificate or other official government document for our records. The information may be sent by email to info@ocswssw.org, by fax to 416-972-1512 or by mail to the College office address.

If you wish to update your education, you must ask your academic institution to forward an official transcript with the institution seal and/or stamp directly to the OCSWSSW by regular mail or by email to info@ocswssw.org.

PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE COLLEGE

If you are interested in volunteering for one of the College's committees or task groups, please email oor@ocswssw.org to receive an application form. The College welcomes all applications; however, the number of available positions for non-Council members is limited by the statutory committee requirements in the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* as well as the bylaws and policies of the College.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings can now be viewed in real time via YouTube livestream. To view a Council meeting on YouTube, please email oor@ocswssw.org. Visit the College's website for the dates and times of upcoming Council meetings.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers protects the interest of the public by regulating the practice of social workers and social service workers and promoting ethical and professional practice.

VISION STATEMENT

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers strives for organizational excellence in its mandate in order to: serve the public interest; regulate its members; and be accountable and accessible to the community.

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

HOW TO REACH US

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Fax: 416-972-1512
Email: info@ocswssw.org
ocswssw.org

FOLLOW US

Facebook: [@OCswssw](https://www.facebook.com/OCswssw)
Twitter: [@OCswssw](https://twitter.com/OCswssw)
YouTube: [OCswssw / l'OTSTTSO](https://www.youtube.com/OCswssw/)
LinkedIn: [Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Ontario-College-of-Social-Workers-and-Social-Service-Workers)
Instagram: [@ocswssw_otstts](https://www.instagram.com/ocswssw_otstts/)

Editor: John Gilson

If you require this publication in an alternate format, contact the College at 1-877-828-9380 or communications@ocswssw.org

WHO TO CONTACT AT THE COLLEGE

MEMBERSHIP/ ADMINISTRATION

For general membership inquiries, please email: info@ocswssw.org

For renewal inquiries, please email: renewals@ocswssw.org

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

If you wish to contact the Office of the Registrar, or are seeking information related to the College Council, please email oor@ocswssw.org.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

For professional practice inquiries, please email: practice@ocswssw.org

For inquiries related to the Continuing Competence Program (CCP), please email: ccp@ocswssw.org

COMMUNICATIONS

For inquiries regarding the College's website, newsletter, Annual Report and other publications, please email: communications@ocswssw.org

REGISTRATION

For general registration inquiries, please email: registration@ocswssw.org

If you are a graduate of a program not in social work or social service work and have a registration inquiry, please email: equivalency@ocswssw.org

COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

For information on complaints, discipline and mandatory reporting, please email: investigations@ocswssw.org

If you are aware of any individual who is illegally using a protected title and/or holding themselves out as a social worker or a social service worker, you may report this information to the College at titleprotection@ocswssw.org