

**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE OF THE
ONTARIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS**

Indexed as: Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers v Darrell
William Jacques, 2026 ONCSWSSW 2

Date: 20260318

BETWEEN:

THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS
AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

- and -

DARRELL WILLIAM JACQUES

PANEL: Nicole Bonnie Chair, Public Member
 Rita Silverthorn Professional Member (non-Council)
 Sue Oliver Professional Member

Appearances: Benjamin Kates and Natasha Novac, counsel for the College
 Registrant, self-represented
 Andrea Gonsalves, Independent Legal Counsel to the Panel

Heard: January 21, 2026

DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

[1] This matter came on for hearing by videoconference before a panel of the Discipline Committee (the “**Panel**”) of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the “**College**”) on January 21, 2026. The Panel announced our decision on the misconduct allegations, penalty and costs orally on the record at the hearing. These are our reasons for decision.

Publication ban

[2] The College requested an order banning publication of the identity of the client in this matter and of any information that would identify the client.

[3] The Registrant did not oppose the order sought.

[4] The Panel granted the order as requested. This case involves sensitive personal information about the client, including allegations of sexual misconduct by the Registrant. Pursuant to s. 28(7) of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, 1998, SO 1998, c 31 (the “**Act**”), a publication ban is appropriate because the desirability of avoiding public disclosure about those personal, sensitive matters in connection with the client’s identity outweighs the desirability of giving the public access to that information. There is little or no public interest in disclosing the identity of the client, whereas the client would have a strong privacy interest in not publicly revealing that she is the individual who is the subject of the intimate, sensitive matters at issue in this case.

The allegations

[5] In the Notice of Hearing dated June 16, 2022, the Registrant is alleged to be guilty of professional misconduct pursuant to the Act in that he is alleged to have engaged in conduct that contravenes the Act, Ontario Regulation 384/00 (the “**Professional Misconduct Regulation**”), Schedule “A” to By-law No. 66 of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, being the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics (the “**Code of Ethics**”), and Schedule “B” to By-law No. 66 of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, being the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Standards of Practice Handbook (the “**Handbook**”).

[6] The factual particulars of the allegations against the Registrant as set out in the Notice of Hearing are as follows:

1. At all times relevant to the allegations, you were a registered social worker with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the “College”). At all relevant times, you were employed as the Manager of the [employment] at the [employment] (the “Program”).
2. Your work at the Program included, among other things, assisting individuals who were applying for Ontario Works, including individuals applying for a Personal Needs Allowance. Your work included meeting with applicants, conducting intake interviews, and filling out (or assisting applicants to fill out) forms needed to apply for financial assistance.
3. In or about April 2019, you conducted the intake meeting for client [C1], who at the time was living at a local women’s shelter. At the intake appointment, you gathered the necessary information and then filled out the forms, or assisted [C1] to fill out the forms, for her application for a Personal Needs Allowance.
4. In or about May of 2019, you provided [C1] with cheques for the financial assistance to which she was entitled to assist with her relocation to a new home. [C1]’s file with the Program was subsequently closed on or about May 31, 2019.
5. By virtue of your role as set out in paragraphs 1-4 above, you provided social work services to [C1].
6. In or about July - August of 2019, you began a personal and/or romantic relationship with [C1]. Three or four months thereafter, your relationship with [C1] became sexual. You subsequently began living together and became engaged to be married.

[7] The College alleges in the Notice of Hearing that by reason of engaging in some or all of the conduct outlined above, the Registrant is guilty of professional misconduct as set out in ss. 26(2)(a) and (c) of the Act, as follows:

- (a) In that you violated **Section 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation** and
 - (a) **Principle II of the Handbook (commented on in Interpretations 2.1.3, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.8, and 2.2.10)** by:
 - (A) failing to maintain current knowledge of policies, legislation, programs and issues related to the community, its institutions and services in your areas of practice;
 - (B) failing to take necessary steps and/or care to ensure that clients were protected from the abuse of power after the provision of professional services and/or failing to establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries with your former client;
 - (C) entering into a dual relationship with your former client that could increase the risk of exploitation or harm to the client;
 - (D) engaging in conduct that could reasonably be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession of social work; and/or
 - (E) in situations of conflict between College standards of practice and your work environment, failing to maintain your obligation to the “Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics” and the “Standards of Practice Handbook”;
 - (b) **Principle VIII of the Handbook (commented on in Interpretations 8.1 and 8.8)** by:
 - (A) failing to be solely responsible for ensuring that sexual misconduct did not occur;
 - (B) failing to avoid sexual relations with a client to whom you had provided social work or social service work services, other than psychotherapy or counselling services, for a period of one (1) year following the termination of the professional relationship;
- (b) *[Withdrawn]*;
- (c) In that you violated **Section 2.28 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation** by contravening the *Act*, regulations or by-laws; and/or
- (d) In that you violated **Section 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation** by engaging in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

[8] At the hearing, the College sought leave to withdraw allegation (b), which the Panel granted.

Registrant's position

[9] The Registrant admitted to the allegations set out in the Notice of Hearing, except allegation (b). The Panel conducted an oral plea inquiry at the hearing. Additionally, in the Agreed Statement of Facts filed by the parties (discussed further below), the Registrant confirmed in writing his understanding of the nature of the allegations against him, that he was voluntarily admitting to the allegations, and that he understood the consequences of admitting to the misconduct.

[10] The Panel was satisfied that the Registrant's admissions were voluntary, informed and unequivocal.

The evidence

[11] The evidence was tendered by way of an Agreed Statement of Facts, which provides in relevant part as follows:

BACKGROUND

1. At all relevant times, Darrell William Jacques (the "**Registrant**") was a registered social worker registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the "**College**"). At all relevant times, he was employed as the [job title] Manager for the [employment].
2. The job description for the position of [job title] Manager does not require that the person holding that post be a social worker. However, it does require a post-secondary diploma or degree in the social services field.
3. In his role as [job title] Manager, the Registrant was responsible for (among other things):
 - (a) the management, administration and delivery of financial and developmental assistance services to eligible [employment] clients; and
 - (b) developing, planning and monitoring opportunities to assist eligible community members become self-supporting through employment or self-employment while ensuring they are able to meet basic financial needs.

A copy of the Registrant's job description is attached as **Appendix "A"** to this Agreed Statement of Facts [attachment omitted from these Reasons].

4. In his role as [job title] Manager, the Registrant did not provide counselling services to clients, but did provide advice to clients on where they could obtain assistance. His role included supporting clients in need by providing necessary assistance, including assistance with Ontario Disability Support Program ("**ODSP**"), Ontario Works, funerals, and burials, among other things.

5. Among other services it provides, [employment] delivers the Ontario Works program to individuals on reserve. It also administers a Transitional Support Fund, which provides money for first and last month's rent, household items, and moving expenses to eligible clients. Although the funding is provided by the government, the eligibility criteria and surrounding rules are set by the Community Managers of the eight First Nations who are served by [employment]. The Transitional Support Fund is not available in off-reserve Ontario Works offices.

CLIENT A'S INTERACTIONS WITH [employment]

6. Client A and her three children entered the women's shelter on [location] in or about March 2019.
7. When an individual enters the women's shelter on reserve, they are eligible for a personal needs allowance through Ontario Works. The application process for the personal needs allowance is handled through [employment] which acts as the agent of Ontario Works on reserve. As a result, it is [employment] that conducts the required Personal Needs Assessment.
8. To complete the Personal Needs Assessment, a form containing various questions about the individual's circumstances must be filled out. The process typically lasts approximately 20 minutes. Ordinarily, the assessment will be conducted by a female employee of [employment], who goes through the required questions with the individual and fills out the form for Ontario Works based on the individual's responses. Eligibility for the personal needs allowance is determined according to criteria established by the province. It is not a discretionary benefit.
9. When Client A was applying for the personal needs allowance, the individual who typically assisted with filling out the forms for the Personal Needs Assessment was not in the office. As a result, the Registrant conducted Client A's Personal Needs Assessment.
10. To complete the Personal Needs Assessment, the Registrant met with Client A on March 4, 2019. The office door was open throughout the entire meeting. The Registrant went through the questions on the Ontario Works forms with Client A and filled out the responses. A blank copy of the forms in question are attached as **Appendix "B"** to this Agreed Statement of Facts [attachment omitted from these Reasons].
11. The Registrant completed "Caseworker Notes" in the system for Client A's file on each of the three dates for which there were entries – April 8, May 23, and May 31, 2019. Those Caseworker Notes, redacted for client confidentiality, are attached as **Appendix "C"** to this Agreed Statement of Facts [attachment omitted from these Reasons]. They indicate that:
 - (a) Client A was applying for a Personal Needs Allowance. (Although the case note is dated April 8, 2019, Client A's intake and application for the Personal Needs Allowance in fact occurred on March 4, 2019.)
 - (b) Client A and her three children had left an abusive relationship and were now looking for a place to relocate.

- (c) Client A received her Personal Needs Allowance shortly thereafter. She also received first and last month's rent for her new home and money for moving expenses and for certain household items through the Transitional Support Fund that was administered by [employment]. These cheques were provided to her by the Registrant on behalf of [employment]. (Although the case note is dated May 23, 2019, these events in fact took place on March 11, 2019.)
 - (d) Client A's file was closed on May 31, 2019.
12. The Registrant met with Client A both at the initial meeting to conduct the Personal Needs Assessment on March 4, 2019, and again on March 11, 2019, when he provided her with the financial assistance to which she was entitled through Ontario Works.

THE NATURE OF THE SERVICES THE MEMBER PROVIDED TO CLIENT A

13. The Registrant acknowledges that the social work scope of practice is defined in the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook*, Second Edition effective September 7, 2018 (the "**Handbook**"), and that the Standards of Practice apply to any actions that fall within that scope of practice. The definition of the scope of practice as found in the second edition of the Handbook, the version in force at the material time, is attached to this Agreed Statement of Facts as **Appendix "D"** [attachment omitted from these Reasons].
14. Among other things, the social work scope of practice includes:
- SW3 The provision of social support to individuals and/or groups including relationship building, life skills instruction, employment support, tangible support including food and financial assistance, and information and referral services.
15. The Handbook also contains an Explanatory Note providing further detail about the contexts in which social work services may be provided. A copy of that Explanatory Note is attached to this Agreed Statement of Facts as **Appendix "E"**. The Explanatory Note states (among other things) that:
- (a) social work services may involve clinical or non-clinical interventions;
 - (b) social work services may involve direct or indirect practice;
 - (c) clinical practice, for social workers, refers to the professional application of social work theory and methods to the treatment and prevention of psychosocial dysfunction, disability or impairment, including but not limited to emotional and mental disorders;
 - (d) direct practice refers to professional activities on behalf of clients in which goals are reached through personal contact and immediate influence with those seeking services;
 - (e) indirect practice refers to professional activities that do not involve immediate or personal contact with the client being served;

- (f) an example of a direct clinical practice is the provision of counseling services;
 - (g) an example of a direct non-clinical practice is providing social supports to clients in a social-recreational group;
 - (h) an example of indirect clinical practice is the provision of information and referrals; and
 - (i) an example of indirect non-clinical practice is the administration of a human service program.
16. The Registrant acknowledges that the administration of the Ontario Works program on reserve, including assisting clients in filling out the necessary paperwork to apply for financial assistance and distributing financial assistance to clients, falls within the social work scope of practice as defined in the Handbook. In particular, the Registrant acknowledges that the administration of the Ontario Works program on reserve constitutes non-clinical direct practice within the social work scope of practice as defined in the Handbook.
 17. The Registrant acknowledges that in both direct and indirect practice, and in both clinical and non-clinical roles, there is an inherent power differential between a social worker and their client.
 18. The Registrant acknowledges that knowing Client A lived in a women's shelter might give a social worker an advantageous position over the client by knowing the nature of the social service contact.
 19. The Registrant acknowledges that although his job description does not require him to be a member of the College, he was a member of the College during the time of meeting with Client A and delivered direct, non-clinical social work services to Client A before they started dating.
 20. If he were to testify, the Registrant would state that at the time of the events in question, neither he, nor his employer at [employment], nor the Mississauga First Nation believed that the assistance he provided Client A constituted social work services. He would state that, among other things, this is because no counselling was being provided, the services provided were brief, and he was permitted to make external inquiries to verify the accuracy of the information Client A provided. However, the Registrant acknowledges that those services fall within the social work scope of practice as defined in the Handbook, and that the College's Standards of Practice therefore applied.

THE MEMBER AND CLIENT A ENTER INTO A RELATIONSHIP

21. In July 2019, the Registrant encountered Client A by chance while doing a household job (installing a ceiling fan) as a favour for another community member. Client A then asked the Registrant for help with similar jobs, which he agreed to do. It was in this context that the Registrant and Client A reconnected. After meeting a few times, the Registrant started to develop feelings for her, and spoke to his supervisor, the Director of [employment], about whether he was permitted to enter into a relationship with Client A.

22. The Registrant's supervisor is not a registered social worker. She told the Registrant that it was her view that Client A was not his client, but rather was a client of the shelter. She also expressed the view that the Registrant was not providing social work services because he had not provided counselling and was simply assisting Client A in filling out forms to obtain the personal needs allowance. As a result, she told the Registrant that she did not see an issue with him dating Client A.
23. The Registrant did not seek advice from the College about whether a relationship with Client A was permissible in the circumstances.
24. Based on the go-ahead from his boss, the Registrant and Client A began dating in August 2019, and their relationship became sexual in nature (including sexual intercourse) a few months later in 2019.
25. There is no suggestion that the relationship was the product of coercion or exploitation.
26. The Registrant and Client A are currently living together and are engaged to be married.

APPLICABLE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

27. The Handbook sets out the standards that apply to registrants' relationships with clients and former clients, as detailed in Principles II and VIII. Those standards require, among other things, that registrants:
 - (a) Maintain current knowledge of policies, legislation, programs, and issues related to the community, its institutions and services in their areas of practice (Interpretation 2.1.3);
 - (b) Establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries and take steps to ensure that clients are protected from the abuse of power after the provision of professional services (Interpretation 2.2);
 - (c) Avoid dual relationships with former clients that could increase the risk of exploitation or harm to the client (Interpretation 2.2.1);
 - (d) Avoid conduct that could reasonably be seen as reflecting negatively on the profession of social work (Interpretation 2.2.8);
 - (e) In situations of conflict between College standards of practice and the registrant's work environment, maintain their obligation to the "Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics" and the "Standards of Practice Handbook" (Interpretation 2.2.10);
 - (f) Maintain sole responsibility for ensuring sexual misconduct does not occur (Interpretation 8.1); and
 - (g) Avoid sexual relationships with clients to whom the registrant has provided social work services (other than psychotherapy or counselling services) for a period of one year after the termination of the professional relationship (Interpretation 8.8).

28. The Registrant acknowledges that the conduct set out in paragraphs 6 through 26, above, did not abide by these standards.
29. Because the Registrant provided social work services (as defined in the Handbook) that did not involve counselling or psychotherapy, he was not permitted to have a sexual relationship with Client A for a one-year period after the termination of their professional relationship. The Registrant acknowledges that he began a romantic and sexual relationship with Client A less than one year after the professional relationship was terminated.
30. The Registrant acknowledges that although his employer indicated that a relationship with Client A was permissible, he was also required to ensure that such a relationship was permitted under the Standards of Practice. He acknowledges that he did not do so, and that his relationship with Client A was a breach of the College's Standards of Practice.

Decision of the Panel

[12] The College bears the onus of proving the allegations against the Registrant on the balance of probabilities, using clear, cogent and convincing evidence. Having carefully considered that onus and standard of proof, the admissions of the Registrant, the evidence in the Agreed Statement of Facts, and the submissions of the parties, the Panel found that the Registrant committed the acts of professional misconduct in allegations (a), (c) and (d) of the Notice of Hearing.

[13] The Panel announced its decision orally on the record at the hearing.

Reasons for decision

[14] The College made four allegations of professional misconduct against the Registrant. Three of those allegations involved a failure to meet the standards of the social service work profession as set out in the Handbook, which constitutes professional misconduct under s. 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation. The College also alleged acts of misconduct under ss. 2.10, 2.5, 2.28 and s. 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation.

[15] In allegation (a), the College asserts that the Registrant failed to meet the standards of profession, which is an act of professional misconduct under s. 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation. The College identifies two sets of standards that it alleges the Registrant failed to meet: standards relating to Competence and Integrity under Principle II of the Handbook, and standards relating to Sexual Misconduct under Principle VIII of the Handbook.

[16] With respect to Principle II of the Handbook, Interpretations 2.1.3, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.8, and 2.2.10 are engaged in this case. The Panel's reasons for finding that the College has met its burden of proving that the Registrant engaged in professional misconduct by failing to meet those standards are as follows:

- (a) The College alleges that the Registrant failed to maintain current knowledge of policies, legislation, programs and issues related to the community, its institutions and services in his areas of practice, as required by Interpretation 2.1.3. The Registrant acknowledged the sensitivity of the matter and made an effort to obtain

guidance from his workplace supervisor. However, the information he received was inaccurate. The Registrant lacked sufficient knowledge of the relevant professional standards and failed to seek clarification or direction from the College. According to the Agreed Statement of Facts, the Registrant did not believe that the assistance he provided to the client constituted social work services. However, it was his responsibility to remain informed of and compliant with all relevant professional standards and regulatory obligations.

- (b) The College also alleges that the Registrant failed to take necessary steps and/or care to ensure that his client was protected from the abuse of power after the provision of professional services and/or failing to establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries with his former client, as required by Interpretation 2.2. The Registrant entered into a personal relationship with Client A just four months after providing professional services. The Registrant acknowledges failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries when he agreed to perform various tasks at the client's residence. At the time, the Registrant also had access to the client's personal information obtained through the intake process.
- (c) The College alleges that the Registrant entered into a dual relationship with his former client that could increase the risk of exploitation or harm to the client, which is contrary to the standards in Interpretation 2.2.1 of the Handbook. The Registrant entered into a personal relationship with the former client, which evolved into an intimate relationship, constituting a dual relationship just four months after the termination of the professional relationship. The standards of the professional required that at least a year pass.
- (d) The College alleges that the Registrant engaged in conduct that could reasonably be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession of social work, in contravention of Interpretation 2.2.8 of the Handbook. The Registrant engaged in a sexual relationship with a former client, thereby creating a dual relationship and breaching the obligation to maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries. This conduct represents a misuse of the inherent power imbalance arising from the prior professional relationship and is conduct that is likely to bring the profession into disrepute.
- (e) Finally, under Principle II, the College alleges that the Registrant failed to comply with the standards set out in Interpretation 2.2.10 by not upholding his obligations under the Code of Ethics and the Handbook when faced with a conflict between the College's standards of practice and the expectations of his work environment. Although the Registrant sought guidance from his workplace, the Standards of Practice supersede employer direction.

[17] The second set of standards at issue in this case under allegation (a) are found in Principle VIII of the Handbook, commented on in Interpretations 8.1 and 8.8. The Panel found that the College proved the Registrant failed to meet those standards. In particular:

- (a) Interpretation 8.1 requires that College members be solely responsible for ensuring that misconduct does not occur. The Registrant entered into a sexual relationship with a former client during the mandatory 12-month post-termination prohibition period, contrary to the professional boundary requirements imposed by the Standards of Practice.
- (b) Interpretation 8.8 prohibits sexual relations between College members and clients to whom members have provided social work services other than psychotherapy or counselling services for a period of one year following termination of the professional relationship. There is no dispute that the intimate relationship began approximately four months after the termination of the professional relationship and that the individual was a former client of the Registrant at the time the relationship commenced.

[18] In allegation (c), the College maintains that the Registrant engaged in professional misconduct under s. 2.28 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation by contravening the Act, the regulations or the College's bylaws. The Panel's findings that the College proved misconduct under allegation (a) also leads to a finding that the College has proved allegation (c), since the Registrant contravened s. 2.2 of the Regulation and the standards as set out in the Handbook, which is a bylaw of the College.

[19] With respect to allegation (d), the College must prove that the Registrant engaged in conduct or performed an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional, which constitutes professional misconduct under s. 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation.

[20] The Registrant's conduct was a serious disregard for his professional obligations. Although the Registrant took certain steps with his employer before pursuing a personal relationship with his former client, he did not take all the steps he should have and acted based on inaccurate information provided by his supervisor. His professional responsibilities obligated him to investigate further, including seeking guidance from the College. The Registrant's conduct falls well short of what the public rightly expects of those registered with the College. The Panel found that his conduct would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

Penalty submissions

[21] The parties were in agreement on the issue of penalty. They presented to the Panel a Joint Submission on Penalty and Costs ("**Joint Submission**") asking this Panel make an order as follows.

1. The Registrant shall be reprimanded by the Discipline Committee, and the fact and nature of the reprimand shall be recorded on the College's Register.
2. The findings and the order of the Discipline Committee shall be published, in detail or in summary with the name of the Registrant, online and/or in print, including, but not limited to, in the official publication of the College, on the College's website, and on

the College's public register. Such publication shall include the Undertaking and Acknowledgment of the Registrant, to be signed by the Registrant as part of the resolution of this matter, which shall be published in the manner described above and posted on the public portion of the Register maintained by the College. The Register shall reflect that the Registrant entered into this Undertaking and Acknowledgment as part of a resolution of Discipline Committee proceedings.

3. The Registrant shall pay costs to the College in the amount of \$1,000, to be paid over a two-year period beginning thirty (30) days after the date of the order, in twenty four (24) monthly installments in accordance with the payment schedule attached at **Appendix "A"**.

[22] The parties also filed at the hearing an Undertaking, Agreement and Acknowledgement signed by the Registrant (the "**Undertaking**"). The Undertaking includes, among other terms, the following:

... I, DARRELL WILLIAM JACQUES, undertake that:

1. Having previously resigned my certificate of registration, which certificate was cancelled effective November 3, 2022, I hereby resign from the College, and permanently surrender my Certificate of Registration.
2. I shall refrain from engaging in the practice of social work or social service work, as defined in the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and/or use the restricted titles set out in sections 46 and 47 of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, S.O. 1998, c. 31 (the "**Act**"), and/or hold myself out to the public as a member of the College and/or as qualified to practice as a social worker or social service worker.
3. I shall permanently refrain from re-applying to the College to be registered and/or in any way seek the reinstatement of my certificate of registration.
4. I acknowledge that the Registrar will record on the public register the fact of my Undertaking and Acknowledgment to permanently resign from the College and to refrain from re-applying to the College and/or to seek reinstatement of my certificate, and/or engage in the practice and/or use any of the restricted titles set out in sections 46 and 47 of the *Act*.
5. I acknowledge that the College is authorized to provide information regarding this Undertaking and Acknowledgement in response to any inquiries it receives from any authority that regulates the practice of social work in any other jurisdiction.

[23] In support of the Joint Submission, the College argued that the parties' proposal is appropriate and reasonable, and satisfied the College's duty to protect the public. The reprimand serves the objectives of specific and general deterrence, and allows the Panel to express its concerns and disapproval of the Registrant's conduct. Publication of the Panel's finding and order together with the Registrant's name ensures public protection and serves as a specific and general deterrent. Publication is necessary to protect the public interest and to maintain public confidence in the integrity of the College's discipline process.

[24] The College submitted that the Joint Submission addresses the aggravating and mitigating factors of the case. The primary aggravating factor is the vulnerability of the client, which was known to the Registrant. On the other hand, the Registrant has no discipline history, and his admission to the misconduct is an important mitigating factor. The Registrant also made some effort to clarify with his supervisor whether he could pursue a relationship with the client after providing her with services (though he did not seek clarification from the College and ultimately received incorrect information from his supervisor).

[25] The College noted that the fact the Registrant signed an Undertaking to permanently resign and never to re-apply to the College is relevant to the Panel's consideration of penalty. The Registrant has voluntarily and permanently surrendered his certificate of registration and undertaken not to re-apply for registration or to engage in the practice of social work in the future. This is a more robust and absolute consequence than the Panel could order. Under ss. 26(4) and (7), the Panel could only fix a period of time during which the Registrant may not re-apply after ordering revocation of his certificate, and not permanently prevent him from practising in the future.

[26] With respect to costs, the College explained that the parties' joint proposal for the amount of \$1,000 to be paid by the Registrant in equal instalments over the course of twenty four (24) months reflects the Registrant's specific financial circumstances and ability to pay, and the evidence of financial hardship provided by him to the College.

Penalty decision

[27] Having considered the findings of professional misconduct, the evidence, the submissions of the parties and the Registrant's Undertaking, the Panel accepted the Joint Submission and made an order in accordance with the terms set out in paragraph 21, above, and Appendix "A".

[28] The Panel's order was announced orally on the record at the hearing.

Reasons for penalty decision

[29] The Panel recognized that the penalty should maintain high professional standards, preserve public confidence in the ability of the College to regulate its Registrants, and, above all, protect the public. This is achieved through a penalty that considers the principles of general deterrence, specific deterrence and, where appropriate, rehabilitation and remediation of the Registrant's practice. The Panel also considered the principle that the Panel should accept a joint submission on penalty unless it is contrary to the public interest and would bring the administration of justice into disrepute.

[30] The Panel accepts the joint submission on penalty. In doing so, the Panel applied the principle that joint submissions should be upheld unless the proposed disposition would bring the administration of justice into disrepute or would otherwise be contrary to the public interest. The proposed penalty appropriately advances the core regulatory objectives of public protection, general and specific deterrence. The reprimand serves the objectives of specific and general deterrence. Publication of the Panel's finding and order together with the Registrant's name ensures public protection and serves as a specific and general deterrent. The Registrant's permanent resignation from the College is a significant consequence of the misconduct, and indeed

a more severe outcome than the Panel could have ordered. Taking into account the Undertaking, the penalty proposed by the parties is adequate to serve the goals of penalty.

[31] The Panel also considered the mitigating factors present in this case, including the Registrant's cooperation, insight, and acknowledgment of his misconduct, as well as the absence of evidence demonstrating an ongoing risk to the public. The aggravating factors—including the serious breach of professional boundaries and the impact such conduct may have on public confidence in the profession—were also weighed. In light of these considerations, the Panel is satisfied that the jointly proposed penalty is proportionate and falls within an acceptable range.

[32] With respect to costs, the Panel finds the jointly proposed amount of \$1,000 to be reasonable. The costs represent a fair and proportionate contribution toward the College's expenses incurred in investigating and prosecuting this matter, and the amount is consistent with costs awarded in comparable cases. In light of the parties' agreement and that the Registrant apparently provided the College with evidence of his financial hardship, the Panel is satisfied that the \$1,000 costs order is reasonable and appropriately reflects the principle that members bear partial responsibility for the regulatory costs associated with their misconduct.

[33] At the end of the hearing, after confirming that the Registrant waived his right of appeal, the Panel delivered an oral reprimand to the Registrant in accordance with paragraph 1 of the Panel's order.

I, Nicole Bonnie, sign this decision as chairperson of the Panel and on behalf of the Panel members listed below.

Date: March 18, 2026

Signed:

Nicole Bonnie, Chair
Rita Silverthorn
Sue Oliver

Appendix “A”

Instalment	Amount (\$)	Due Date after Date of Order¹
1.	41.66	Month 1
2.	41.66	Month 2
3.	41.66	Month 3
4.	41.66	Month 4
5.	41.66	Month 5
6.	41.66	Month 6
7.	41.66	Month 7
8.	41.66	Month 8
9.	41.66	Month 9
10.	41.66	Month 10
11.	41.66	Month 11
12.	41.66	Month 12
13.	41.66	Month 13
14.	41.66	Month 14
15.	41.66	Month 15
16.	41.66	Month 16
17.	41.66	Month 17
18.	41.66	Month 18
19.	41.66	Month 19
20.	41.66	Month 20
21.	41.66	Month 21
22.	41.66	Month 22
23.	41.66	Month 23
24.	41.82	Month 24

¹ Per paragraph 3 of the Joint Submission on Penalty and Costs, the first instalment (*i.e.*, Month 1) shall be due 30 days after the date of the Discipline Committee’s order, with all subsequent instalments due no later than 30 days after the previous month’s due date.