



# *Standards for the Private Practice of Social Work in Saskatchewan*

## **1. Introduction**

These standards are intended to guide the members of SASW and social workers engaged in private practice. The purpose of the standards is to ensure accountability and thus protect the public. This is necessary because social workers in private practice are not otherwise accountable through employers or the boards of non-profit agencies. In addition, these standards give social workers and the profession protection as they provide guidelines for quality social work practice. Social workers in private practice are expected to follow the SASW's Ethical Standards of Professional Practice and the CASW Code of Ethics, which has been adopted by SASW.

## **2. Definition**

Private Practitioners are social workers who are, wholly or in part, engaged in the independent practice of social work without the benefit of supervision/direction provided by an employer or board of directors. They are solely responsible for their actions in all direct and contract work in whatever field they practice (clinical practice, social work research and social work education).

## **3. Criteria for Registration of Private Practitioners**

SASW maintains a Registry of Private Practitioners as part of the Association's mandate under the *Social Workers Act*. Membership on the Registry is voluntary. Applications for membership are reviewed by the Registrar and the Chair of the Standards of Practice Committee. The names of approved applicants are placed on the Registry by the Registrar.

In all cases, social work experience refers to a position in which the primary professional designation is social work OR for which a social work credential was required.

The following is required in making an application:

- (a) To substantiate an applicant's social work credential, a transcript issued directly to SASW from the academic institution which awarded /conferred the degree, unless this has already been provided to SASW.
- (b) Current registration in good standing as a social worker (RSW) in the Province of Saskatchewan, and has been a registered social worker for at least three consecutive years in Saskatchewan or elsewhere, immediately prior to making application.
- (c) A criminal records check current to within six (6) months of the date of application, and a report of any pending criminal charges. In addition, applicants will indicate whether they have ever been found guilty or convicted of a criminal offence in any jurisdiction.

- (d) A plan that identifies arrangements for supervision of the applicant's practice or for consultation regarding practice with a description of how the plan will be implemented.
- (e) Proof of current professional liability insurance.

### ***3.1 Additional Criteria for Registration with Master of Social Work Degree (MSW):***

- (a) Four (4) or more years of paid supervised post-MSW social work experience. Applicants must demonstrate that their experience relates to their proposed field of private practice.
- (b) Three written references by registered social workers who can provide direct knowledge of the most recent four years of the applicant's professional practice, and who are currently not employed by and are not in partnership with the applicant.

### ***3.2 Additional Criteria for Registration with Bachelor of Social Work Degree or Indian Social Work Degree (BSW/BISW)***

- (a) Eight (8) or more years of paid supervised post BSW/BISW social work experience of which 75% of the time must have been supervised social work experience. Applicants must demonstrate that their experience relates to their proposed field of private practice and that their social work experience has

been "outstanding" and "exceptional". This experience will be evaluated in the areas of demonstrated competence, knowledge and skills in the field of practice.

- (b) Three written references by registered social workers who can provide direct knowledge of the most recent four years of the applicant's professional practice, and who are currently not employed by and are not in partnership with the applicant. These references will be asked to comment on the applicant's level of competence and to evaluate the applicant's knowledge, skill and competence in their field of professional practice.

### ***3.3 Ongoing Obligations for those admitted to the SASW Private Practice Registry***

- (a) A social worker engaged in private practice who is on the Registry must identify herself/himself as a professional social worker to her/his clients, associates, referral agents, and the public by way of RSW designation. In addition, social workers in private practice must be prepared to identify to their clients and the public their academic and professional qualifications.
- (b) Applicants/members of the Registry shall maintain malpractice liability insurance. Proof of insurance must be submitted annually.
- (c) Members of the Registry shall commit to the use of ongoing professional supervision from a member of the Association and be prepared to submit proof of consultation if requested by the Registrar.

- (d) Members of the Registry shall submit an “annual update” at the time of paying RSW fees (See Section 5)
- (e) Private practitioners, who are specializing in some area where they receive training other than from a graduate school of social work, need to provide documentation substantiating their education in the area and/or their supervised experience in the area. This would include, but is not limited to specializations such as mediation, hypnotherapy, addictions, sexual therapy, consultation, social and/or organizational development, attention deficit disorder, etc.

### ***3.4 Business Ethics***

Members of the Registry shall advertise in a manner that will protect the public and will meet the Code of Ethics and Ethical Standards of Social Work Practice.

#### **(a) Advertising**

Members of the Registry may advertise their services in any media within the following guidelines:

- the information must not be misleading or false
- the information must be in a form that can be reviewed
- members of the Registry will refrain from advertising in a manner that may discredit other colleagues or the profession or mislead the public.

#### **(b) Fees**

Members of the Registry may advertise their fees providing they outline the fee structure to include all types of service, pro-rating and any exceptional circumstances.

### ***3.5 Maintenance of the Registry***

The Registry will be maintained in the office of the Association and updated annually. Copies will be available to other professionals and members of the general public who wish to locate an approved Private Practitioner.

Registered Social Workers approved for private practice will be provided with a Certificate of Private Practice which will be updated annually with a validation sticker.

The annual private practice registry fee is over and above the basic annual registration fee.

If a member’s registration in the Association is cancelled, the name of the social worker will be removed from the Private Practice Registry.

## ***4. Appeals***

An applicant who has been evaluated and formally refused may appeal to SASW Council for a review.

## **5. *Maintenance of Approved Private Practice Status***

In addition to the basic information required for renewal of membership registration, those on the Private Practice Registry are required to submit to the Registrar:

- (a) private practice status renewal form;
- (b) an updated curriculum vitae;
- (c) confirmation of current liability insurance;
- (d) a document affirming they will abide by *The Social Workers Act*, SASW Standards of Ethical Practice and the Code of Ethics
- (e) confirmation of professional consultation; documentation may be requested by the Registrar

## **6. *Reinstatement of Registered Social Worker and Private Practitioner Status***

When a registered social worker allows his/her SASW Registered Social Worker registration to lapse for more than one year, his/her status as an approved Private Practitioner lapses as well.

When applying to reinstate Registered Social Worker status, to regain inclusion in the SASW Private Practice Registry the applicant must also submit:

- (a) completed application for Private Practice Registry form;
- (b) an updated curriculum vitae;
- (c) three letters of reference from registered social workers who are members in good standing with SASW or another provincial social work jurisdiction

- (d) criminal records check current to within six months;
- (e) proof of current professional liability insurance.

The Registrar will review the above documents and make a decision regarding reinstatement of the member's SASW registration and readmission of the applicant to the SASW Private Practice Registry.

### **NOTE:**

**As of October 9, 2008 any individuals who were on the Private Practice Registry and who may not meet the new criteria, will maintain their status on the Registry.**