

College Conversation

Report From The Registrar

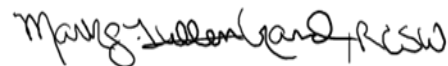
2020 was dramatically impacted by the Pandemic of COVID-19. I encourage us all to remain patient and persistent of our efforts to remain healthy and protect the health of others. I am hopeful that this upcoming year, the Pandemic will resolve, and we can return to some sense of normalcy.



In June 2020, the Board of the College of Social Workers passed a resolution to increase fees by 10%. The increase will ensure that the College remains fiscally sound and is adequately resourced to deliver efficient and registration processes, a comprehensive quality assurance program, rigorous investigation of complaints and applied discipline. Ultimately, the fee increase will enable the College to continue effectively and efficiently to fulfill its mandate of protecting the public by superintending the practice of social work in British Columbia.

As I write this report, I am listening to B.C. Minister of Health Adrian Dix speak to the Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's Independent Investigation into Indigenous-specific discrimination in B.C. Health Care. As racism continues to exist in society, we are all called to address racism.

We must work to positively impact and change society in real and meaningful ways.



Mark Hillenbrand, MSW, RCSW
Registrar – CEO
BC College of Social Workers

“We are all called to address
racism.”

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College Fee Increases

British Columbia College of Social Workers increases Application, Registration and Renewal fees.

Beginning at the onset of the 2021 renewal cycle, the British Columbia College of Social Workers (the College) will increase Application, Registration and Renewal Fees by 10 %.

At the June 20, 2020 College Board meeting, Board members noted that although the College's fees have remained unchanged for over a decade, expenses and operational costs have steadily risen. To ensure operational needs are met and that the College remains fiscally responsible and sound, Board members passed a resolution to increase fees. This is something that will continue to be a consideration each year.

The College recognizes that the increases will represent a significant change for registrants and applicants.

How will the fee increase funds be utilized?

The fee increase will ensure that the College is adequately resourced to deliver efficient application and registration processes, a comprehensive quality assurance program, rigorous investigation of complaints and applied discipline. Increased fees will also support the continuous modernization and cultural optimization of the Social Workers Act, Bylaws, Policies and Procedures. Ultimately the fee increase will enable the College to effectively and efficiently continue to fulfill its mandate of protecting the public by superintending the practice of social work in British Columbia.

For more information:

If you have questions or comments about the fee increases please send them to info@bccsw.ca or alternatively feel free to contact Mark Hillenbrand, Registrar-CEO at mark.hillenbrand@bccsw.ca.

Fee Type	2020 Fee	2021 Renewal Cycle Fee
Application	\$120.00	\$132.00
Registration-Renewal Full/Clinical Class	\$255.00	\$281.00
Registration-Renewal Provisional Class	\$200.00	\$220.00
Registration-Renewal New Graduate Class	\$200.00	\$220.00
Registration-Renewal Non-Practicing Class	\$63.00	\$69.00

Impact of COVID-19 on CPD Extended through 2021 Registration Cycle

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, there has been a change in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement for the 2021 CPD cycle. Under normal circumstances, all practicing registrants of the College are required to report a minimum of 40 hours of CPD activities each year from at least three of the six categories of CPD activities listed below (the following table and more details of different categories of activity are available at <https://www.bccsw.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CPD-Categories-of-Activities-Jan-2015.pdf>).

Category of CPD Activity	Maximum Qualifying Hours
Self-directed	15 hours
Work-based	15 hours
Professional	15 hours
Formal/Educational	15 hours
Other	15 hours
Degree/Diploma/Licensure Exam	40 hours

Pre-COVID-19 the maximum qualifying hours for five of the six categories of activity were set at 15, meaning that registrants would only receive credit for 15 hours even if they claim more than 15 hours in one of those five categories. Based on this rule, registrants have been required to record 40 hours of CPD using activities from at least three different categories (unless they have completed a degree, diploma, or licensure exam).

However, for the 2021 CPD cycle, the College has decided to set the maximum qualifying hours at 40 for **all categories of activity**. This change in the rule will allow registrants to be credited for up to 40 hours in any of the six categories, meaning they will be able to meet the yearly 40-hour requirement using activities from as little as one category.

This decision to provide registrants with more flexibility in choosing types of CPD activities is due to the challenge in completing activities in categories involving face-to-face interactions such as Work-based, Professional and Formal/Educational. The College understands that many trainings, seminars and conferences have been cancelled due to COVID-19 physical distancing and anticipates that registrants have taken/will be taking on more activities in the Self-directed category such as independent learning or attending webinars. Therefore, this change in the maximum qualifying hours will alleviate the burden for registrants having difficulty accumulating CPD hours in categories other than the Self-directed category.

This change only applies to categories of activity, the requirement remains that a minimum of three hours of CPD activity be related to ethical conduct.

Please note that this change in the rule applies to the 2020 and 2021 CPD cycles only. The College will continue to monitor the development of the COVID-19 situation and the fast-changing professional environment to assess whether this change needs to be maintained for the future CPD cycles.

For further information contact the College at info@bccsw.ca.

2021 Board of Director Election Results

Each year, registrants of the College have the opportunity to elect their peers to the Board of directors.

We are pleased to announce the 2021 results of the election of members to the Board of the BC College of Social Workers.

The 2021 Board members elect are:

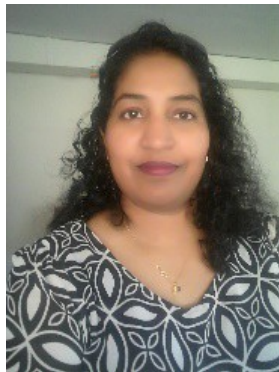
Sonia Andhi Bilkhu, RSW



Christina Rodrigues, RSW



Ann Mary Joseph, RSW



Amy Rosborough, RSW



The Board of the College would like to take this opportunity to express their sincere gratitude to all candidates who allowed their names to stand for election. Every one of the candidates brought a high degree of commitment to the College's primary role, which is to act in the public interest.

Denise Armstrong, RSW
David Chong, RSW
Monika Dewan, RSW
Collins Jammal, RSW
Da Rae Lee, RSW
Mike Newman, RSW
Matthew Scott, RSW



Social Worker Title Protection And College Jurisdiction

Madelaine Kirk, Junior Counsel – Investigator, JD

Occasionally the College will receive an inquiry, often from a concerned registrant, about a role that seemingly falls within the scope of social work being performed by someone who is not registered. Often the answer they receive is, “that whether any given position within an organisation requires the employee to be registered, as a pre-requisite to the role, is entirely at the discretion of the employer and is outside the jurisdiction of the College.”

This post is intended to further clarify that answer and explain the limits of the jurisdiction of the College and how protected titles play a role in the process.

In BC social work is a self-regulated profession, meaning the government has delegated the authority to regulate the profession to its members. This is a common form of professional regulation, the rationale for which is that members of a profession are best placed to understand what qualifications are necessary and what good practice looks like. The Social Workers Act SBC 2008, c.31, (the “SWA”) delegates the authority to govern the profession of social work to the BC College of Social Workers. The SWA sets out the mandates, jurisdiction and powers of the College.

Broadly speaking, there are two mechanisms used as the basis for any professional regulation, protected titles and restricted activities. In a title protection scheme, only people who meet certain criteria can use the designated title. In a restricted activities scheme, only people who meet certain criteria can perform the restricted activities. Some professional regulation utilizes only title protection, and some uses both; for example, under the Veterinarians Act SBC 2010, c.15, no person other than a registrant may call themselves a veterinarian or perform “veterinary medicine”.

The SWA sets out a scheme of title protection. Under section 18 a person may not use the protected titles (social worker, registered social worker and registered clinical social worker) unless they are registered with the College, or subject to an exemption. The exemptions are set out in Social Workers Regulation BC Reg 323/2008.

The SWA does not include a restricted activities scheme. This means there are no specific activities that require a person to be registered with the College. A person may fulfill a role that looks very similar to that of a social worker, or one that would fall within the scope of social work as defined in the SWA without being required to register. As long as they are not using a protected title, the content of their role does not attract the oversight of the College.

The College can only exercise the powers granted under the SWA and has no jurisdiction to operate outside of those bounds. This means that where a person is not using the title social worker, the College has no jurisdiction over their activities. This is a limitation of the legislation under which the College operates. It is not indicative of a lack of concern on the part of the College about which roles should be regulated. The College’s core mandate is public protection and from that perspective, the College prefers that roles falling within the scope of social work, use the title social worker and require registration. Registrants are welcome to advocate for such within their organisations.

Professional Practice Considerations When Supervising An RCSW Applicant

Alana Prashad, RSW

The following professional practice question is a composite of similar inquiries to The College from August to December 2020. The College gratefully acknowledges Martine Paquet, Registrar and Lisa Hanke, BSW student, from the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers who brought this topic to life in a recent discussion about advanced social work practice on December 11, 2020.

What qualifications does the College require of registrants to supervise an RCSW applicant or an RCC applicant?

Registered Clinical Social Work applicants must meet requirements set out in the College [Bylaws](#). In Bylaw 42, “clinical social work” means the application of social work knowledge and theories (same as full registration) and the independent use of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (currently DSM-5) for the purpose of providing psychosocial intervention. For this reason, Bylaw 42(2)(c) requires a minimum of 3000 hours of supervised clinical social work experience after having obtained a master’s or doctorate in social work. The 3000 hours refers to the number of hours of social work worked while under supervision. It does not refer to 3000 hours of supervision. The Bylaws are also currently silent on requiring the applicant to provide any log of the hours of supervision with their supervisor.

The “**Model Social Work Practice Act**” offered by the [Association of Social Work Boards](#) provides key guidance for supervision of clinical applicants. This information can be used to craft the outline of a supervision plan. The completed plan then provides a legacy document for the applicant should they choose to apply for clinical social work registration in other jurisdictions at a later date.

Below are salient areas of guidance from the Association of Social Work Boards Model Social Work Practice Act

“Section 306 – Independent Practice”.

- *The quality of a supervision plan* includes factors such as “whether the supervisor is in the same agency as the supervisee, the geographic distance between the supervisor and supervisee, additional job responsibilities and workload of the supervisor [including other supervisees], current personal circumstances of the supervisor, and other concerns that may affect the overall quality of the supervisor/supervisee relationship. The overall goal for Supervision is professional growth and development”
- *Supervision plan sections* include (i) The purpose of Supervision (ii) Process to be used in Supervision, i.e., timing, skills, electronic or in person (iii) Learning objectives (iv) Professional growth (v) Intervention processes (vi) Plans for documentation (vii) Ethics and values (viii) Evaluation
- *Supervision content areas* include (i) Clinical skills. (ii) Practice management skills. (iii) Skills required for continuing competence. (iv) Development of professional identity. (v) Ethical practice. (vi) Cultural competency.
- *Clinical supervisory accountability areas* include (i) Client care. (ii) Knowledge of relevant agency policy and procedure. (iii) Legal and regulatory requirements. (iv) Ethical standards of the profession. (v) Professional responsibility for social work services provided by the supervisee.

(vi) Documented assessment of the supervisee’s competence to practice independently.

Continued: Professional Practice Considerations When Supervising An RCSW Applicant

Registered Clinical Counsellor applicants must meet requirements of the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors. As such, which professionals can supervise RCC applicants is determined by BCACC. In other words, the College does not have purview over the qualifications for supervisors of RCC applicants.

As the College moves towards modernization, bylaws relating to clinical supervision will be updated. And while the College currently does not require registrants to have specific qualifications or to be on an approved clinical supervisors list, this does not preclude registrants from implementing processes that promotes a high-quality experience for both supervisor and supervisee.

Please share wisdom gained or successful elements of your clinical supervision process and we may include it in the next College Conversation.

Alana Prashad RSW, Director of Professional Practice welcomes your question and comments. alana.prashad@bccsw.ca

Association of Social Work Boards

Reprint: Association News Issue 3 May/June 2020

[Two Canadian provinces reflect on pandemic challenges and solutions - ASWB](#)

“Regulation is not known for being particularly nimble or flexible, and yet I think we have all been forced to take a hard look at our policies, processes and assumptions and to act very quickly – and that’s a silver lining in this. – Lise Betteridge (ON).

While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a shared experience across the planet, it has also resulted in particular challenges and specific solutions. The ways in which the social work regulatory colleges in British Columbia and Ontario have handled the pandemic’s challenges illustrate both the commonalities and the particularities of continuing to serve the public in troubled times.

British Columbia

Mark Hillenbrand, Registrar and CEO of the British Columbia College of Social Workers, says his office closed in mid-March. “We haven’t been in the office since then.” Nevertheless, the College, which serves approximately 5,000 social work registrants, has continued to provide all services with minimal disruption.

Provisional and temporary registrations

No new legal provisions were needed to handle circumstances created by the pandemic, Hillenbrand said. British Columbia has a pair of licensure categories—a provisional registration and a temporary registration—that have been put to good use in addressing issues caused by the pandemic.

“We already have temporary registration, available to social workers at no cost,” Hillenbrand said. Temporary registration allows a registered social worker from outside the province to practice in British Columbia for 90 days, a period that can be extended to six months. Social workers providing services to university students especially benefited

from this mobility provision. “We’ve had university students from all over Canada come home,” Hillenbrand said, “and we were able to set their practitioners up with temporary registration so care could continue uninterrupted.”

British Columbia also has a provisional class of registration that gives registrants with a job offer a year to pass their social work licensing exam. “That class of registration addressed the ASWB test center closures,” Hillenbrand said. It also supported the stability of the social work workforce, especially in hospitals. “We focused on getting students who had been doing practicums in hospitals provisionally registered so they could stay in their positions,” Hillenbrand said. By keeping in close contact through biweekly meetings with social work leaders in hospitals, the college was able to ensure it was not creating workforce barriers.

Communicating with peers

Regular communication with registrars and association directors across Canada has also proven helpful, Hillenbrand said. “CASW [Canadian Association of Social Workers] opened a biweekly meeting of registrars and association directors so we can talk with and educate each other.” They have addressed how to ease the mobility of the workforce, sharing information about temporary registration for social workers registered in other provinces, for example.

Ontario

Lise Betteridge, who serves as registrar and CEO of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, also values staying in close contact with other jurisdictions throughout the crisis. “I’m very grateful for my social work regulatory colleagues and for our regular update meetings,” Betteridge said. “I think being aware of what is going on in different provinces continues to be very important for all of us as we move forward.”

Updating members

The value of staying in contact also applies to communication with registrants and other stakeholders in Ontario. Since the start of the

Continued: Association of Social Work Boards

Reprint: Association News Issue 3 May/June 2020

emergency, the College has sent out regular updates to the 23,000 social workers and social service workers it regulates. Recent updates have included links to government resources and information needed as Ontario begins to reopen. Betteridge said that recent updates have also shared information about “practice considerations and emphasized that members must use their professional judgment and refer to guidance from government and public health authorities in order to decide whether it was safe for them to return to providing in-person services.”

And though social workers are not considered to be regulated health care professionals under Ontario’s system, the college followed the health care regulators’ lead and shared very specific safety guidance—some directed toward those in private practice who may not receive information from an employer. Betteridge added, “Members were also strongly advised to continue to provide services by electronic means wherever possible.”

Electronic practice provision helps Ontarians

Some of the solutions available to the British Columbia College were not possible in Ontario. “Our legislation doesn’t provide for emergency or temporary registration,” Betteridge said. But a provision allowing electronic practice that was approved by the council (board) in summer 2019 allows practice by “those social workers in good standing in other Canadian provinces who wish to practise electronically in Ontario exclusively by electronic means,” Betteridge said.

Indeed, Betteridge said one of the most surprising aspects of the response of the social work community to the emergency was social workers’ swift transition to electronic practice. “With the emergency closure regulation in place, those of our members who weren’t considered ‘essential’ were not permitted to provide services in person,” Betteridge said. “It is

striking how quickly the situation unfolded and how quickly members made this shift in their practice. Some might say we are in ‘the new normal’ now—though I can’t say this time has felt either normal or as static as that term implies.”

Paperwork challenges

While many of the College’s regulatory operations—council and committee meetings, practice support, member services, and enforcement processes—were easily adapted to remote work, one major function of the college faced challenges because the registration process uses paper. “We were able to make some accommodations to register high-priority applicants and new graduates, but we are now facing a backlog of applications (including equivalency applications) that we must address,” Betteridge said.

Lessons for the future

Reflecting on the lessons learned so far in the emergency situation, Betteridge said, “Regulation is not known for being particularly nimble or flexible, and yet I think we have all been forced to take a hard look at our policies, processes, and assumptions and to act very quickly—and that’s a silver lining in this.” Betteridge and Hillenbrand agree that the future will include a new emphasis on emergency preparedness and a willingness to adjust and improve. As Betteridge notes: “I don’t think we will ever go back to the way things were.”

Farewell From Jenny Morgan, Ed.D, MSW, RSW

I had the chance to join the Board as an elected member in 2016. During that time I was a member of the Towards Developing Respectful Relationships group. In collaboration with the consulting firm Nashwito Creek, the College began its journey with provincial engagement with Indigenous communities and began to become more aware of the important work of Reconciliation.

I participated as a College Board member from 2016-2017 + 2019-2020, while serving throughout on the later formed Indigenous committee. This past year I was the chair of the Indigenous Committee. As Indigenous Committee Chair, I oversaw the committee guiding the College in fulfilling commitments made when engaging provincially, as outlined in the Nashwito Creek report recommendations. The recommendations include such changes as mandatory ongoing training for Board and staff on Indigenous Cultural Safety, ensuring Indigenous representation of Board members and staff, having a Board Elder, just to name a few.

On November 30, 2020, a report led by Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond was released titled *In Plain-Sight, Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*. The 24 recommendations include changes needed at the College as one of the Province's professional regulators. It is my hope that the leadership of the College strengthens its relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities and registrants as they implement the necessary changes at the BC College of Social Workers.

It is with mixed feeling that I am stepping away from the College activities at the end of this year. My hope and vision is the College begins more profound structural changes that include Indigenous leadership within the organization, mandatory seats on the board allocated to Indigenous Peoples for both public and elected seats, and the existing committee evolving into a governance council to support accountability of action for the College in carrying out the Nashwito Creek report recommendations and the Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond report of this year.

It is assuring that these are the conversations happening at the Indigenous Committee level, and for those who continue to lead in this work I extend great appreciation. I thank all the Indigenous peoples I have had a chance to work alongside in this journey both on the Board and the Committee members. I'd also like to say a special thank you to Mark Hillenbrand, the CEO and Registrar of the College. It is with his openness, humility, and kindness, and holding space for Indigenous peoples, the Committee work has flourished. Thank you, Mark, for being a great ally in this important work of the College.



Dr. Jenny Morgan, Ed.D, MSW, RSW
Gitxsan, Lax Gibuu, House of Wii Muk'willixw

Acknowledgements

Grateful farewells

The College would like to extend its thanks and best wishes to departing Board member Connie Kawessi, RCSW.

Connie throughout her two-year term 2018-2020 brought much knowledge and experience to the Board and College as a whole.

Connie also extended her knowledge to the Committee's she chaired and served on which included:

Registration Committee (Chair) – 2019, 2020

Quality Assurance Committee - 2019

Policy Committee - 2019

THANK YOU Connie for your hard work and commitment to cultivating and maintaining excellence in the Social Work profession. You will be missed.



Thank You!

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From all of us at the BC College of Social Workers

Happy Holidays and a Very Happy New Year!

