

Continuing Competence Accommodation and Exception Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the process by which registrants of ACSW may request accommodations, deferrals, exceptions, or waivers related to continuing competence requirements. The goal is to ensure equity, uphold professional standards, and maintain public trust.

Scope

This policy applies to all ACSW registrants, including those on the general or provisional, or those with inactive registration status, who request accommodations or exceptions due to:

- Documented disabilities
- Protected grounds under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*
- Temporary or extraordinary circumstances (e.g., illness, bereavement, displacement, significant life event or unexpected personal circumstances)

Guiding Principles

- **Equity and Inclusion:** ACSW is committed to removing barriers to participation while maintaining professional standards.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Decisions will be documented, communicated clearly, and subject to review.
- **Public Protection:** Any accommodation or exception must preserve the integrity of the profession and safeguard the public.
- **Evidence-Informed:** Requests must be supported by appropriate documentation and assessed using consistent criteria.

Types of Accommodations and Exceptions

Type	Description	Duration
Accommodation	Modification to meet individual needs (e.g., disability, religious observance)	Ongoing or time-limited
Deferral	Temporary delay in meeting a requirement (e.g., CCP submission)	Max 12 months
Exception	Approved deviation from a requirement under specific conditions	Time-limited or ongoing
Waiver	Full release from a requirement in rare circumstances	Ongoing, rare and exceptional

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered, the registrant must:

- Submit a written request with supporting documentation
- Demonstrate that the accommodation or exception is necessary and reasonable
- Collaborate with the college to
- Agree to any conditions or monitoring required to ensure continued competence

Practicing outside the scope of social work practice will not be considered an acceptable reason for an exception to the continuing competence requirements.

Application Process

1. Submission:

- **Submit a written request** to the College at competence@acsw.ab.ca, accompanied by relevant supporting documentation, including the Accommodation and Exception Request form.
- **Demonstrate that the request is necessary and reasonable**, based on documented barriers, protected grounds under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, or extraordinary circumstances.
- **Collaborate with the College** to identify appropriate modifications, timelines, or alternative approaches that uphold professional standards and public protection.
- **Agree to any conditions or monitoring** that may be required to ensure continued competence, ethical practice, and regulatory compliance.

2. Review:

- The request will be reviewed by the Director of Professional Practice or designated staff.
- Reviews may include consultation with legal, practice advisors or the continuing competence committee.

Decision Matrix

Criteria	Accommodation	Deferral	Exception	Waiver
Barrier is documented	Required	Required	Required	Required
Impact on public safety	No impact	No impact	No impact	No impact

Duration of impact	Ongoing or temporary	Temporary	Temporary or ongoing	Permanent
Feasibility of compliance	Not feasible without support	Feasible with delay	Not feasible under current conditions	Not feasible at all
Review Cycle	annual	annual	annual	Not applicable

3. Decision:

- Registrant receives written notification of the decision within 10 business days of receipt.
- If approved, terms and duration will be specified.
- If denied, rationale will be provided and appeal options outlined.

4. Review of a Decision:

- A registrant may request a review of the decision by the Executive Director and Registrar by email at competence@acsw.ab.ca
- A written decision will be provided within 30 business days. If approved the decision will outline any change to the requirements for the registrant and any associated timelines. Decisions may include accommodation(s), deferral, exception and/or waiver of requirements.

5. Appeal:

- Registrants may appeal decisions through the ACSW Appeals Committee within 30 calendar days of notification of the review of the decision.
- Appeals after this timeline will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Confidentiality

All requests and related documentation will be handled in accordance with ACSW's privacy policies and applicable legislation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Approved accommodations or exceptions are subject to review as identified in the decision matrix to ensure ongoing compliance and effectiveness.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by changes in legislation or regulatory standards.

Definitions

- **ACCOMMODATION:** A modification or support provided to a regulated member to enable equitable participation in regulatory requirements, including the Continuing Competence Program (CCP). Accommodations are designed to address barriers related to disability, protected human rights grounds, or other documented needs, without compromising public safety or professional standards.
Example: A registrant requests assistive technology or additional time to complete an on-line assessment, they are required to do as part of continuing competence.
- **DEFERRAL:** A temporary postponement of a regulatory requirement or deadline, granted upon request due to documented personal, medical, or professional circumstances. Deferrals are time-limited and subject to review, and do not exempt the member from eventual compliance.
Example: a registrant may request a deferral of their continuing competence requirements due to evacuation or an unexpected health event.
- **EXCEPTION:** A formally approved deviation from a standard regulatory requirement, granted under specific conditions where compliance is not feasible or reasonable. Exceptions may be conditional and are assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure continued competence and public protection.
Example: A registrant requests an exception from completing the wellness worksheet and in lieu provides another tool used at their place of employment.
- **WAIVER:** A complete release from a specific regulatory obligation, typically granted in rare or exceptional circumstances. Waivers are considered only when the requirement is deemed unnecessary, unduly burdensome, or incompatible with the member's practice context, and must be justified through documented evidence.
Example: a registrant who has end stage cancer diagnosis and is volunteering to facilitate a group for other people experiencing the same illness and diagnosis, requests a waiver of continuing competence requirements.