



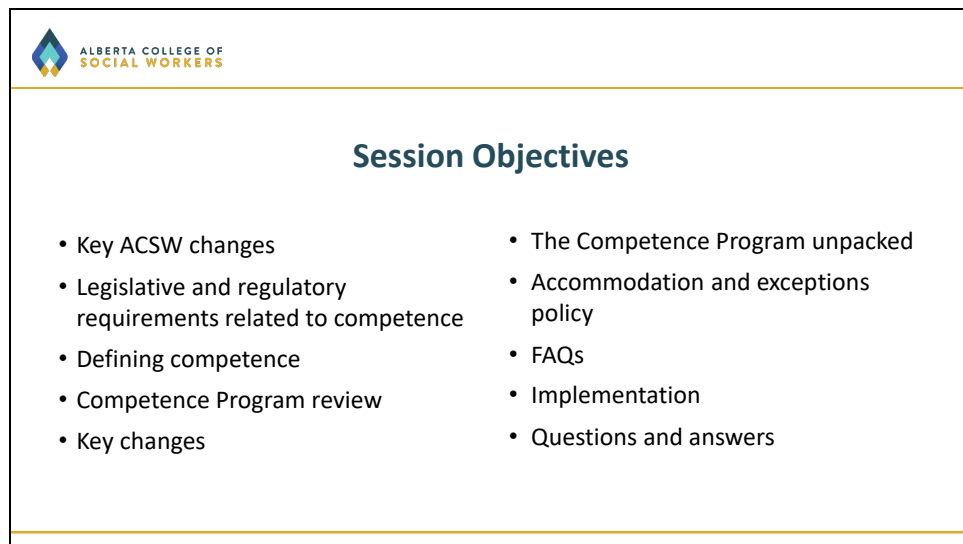
ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

Slide 1



Welcome to our presentation about changes to the ACSW competence program. This webinar is being recorded and a recording will be available on the ACSW website.

Slide 2



Here's what you can expect for us to cover today.



Slide 3

**ACSW Changes**

To help us achieve our goal of regulatory & organizational excellence, staff at the ACSW have been focusing on the following registrant-facing activities:

- Ongoing updates to website: [Home - ACSW Website](#)
- New registrant portal
- Changes to the Continuing Competence Program

I'll start this presentation with a general update about changes at the ACSW to set some context .

One of our goals has been to ensure our processes strengthen our ability to meet our regulatory mandate. We've been updating our website to improve both the registrant and the public experience. As some of you may know, we have a new registrant portal to make access to information easier.

We're also reviewing within each department to ensure we have the right policies and processes in place to protect the public.

As we complete that, information on the website is changing, so I encourage everyone to take some time to visit the website and check it occasionally for updates

The website news section and your email are the primary ways the College communicates with registrants -- and things at the College are quite dynamic at the moment.

In this presentation, however, we want to focus on the upcoming changes to the Competence Program. Those who registered in October will have already seen some differences. However, the majority of changes will take effect in January 2026.



Slide 4



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

### Why a Continuing Competence Program?

As a registered social worker, you belong to a regulated health profession legislated under the [\*Health Professions Act\*](#) (HPA).

Section 50(1) of the HPA requires “regulatory colleges to provide a program to **maintain competence** and **enhance the provision of professional activities**”.



- Health Professions Act
- Social Workers Profession Regulation
- ACSW Standards of Practice
- ACSW Competence Program Guide

To talk about competence, it's important to understand the history of the Continuing Competence Program. We have a Continuing Competence Program because it's a legislative requirement of all professions regulated under the *Health Professions Act*, or HPA.

The HPA requires regulators to have a competence program that maintains competence and enhances the provision of professional services. The requirements are further outlined in the regulation, the Standards of Practice and the Competence Program guide.



Guiding Legislation, Regulation and Standards	
Health Professions Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regulators must have a competence program</li><li>• Maintain competence &amp; enhance professional services</li></ul>
Social Workers Profession Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must have obtained a minimum of 40 credits under the Continuing Competence Program during the previous year</li></ul>
Standards of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registrants will meet annual competence requirements as outlined in the Competence Program manual</li><li>• Registrants will retain a portfolio for a minimum of 5 years</li></ul>
Competence Program Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Serves as a supplement to the Standards of Practice</li></ul>

The HPA requires regulators to have a competence program that maintains competence and enhances the provision of professional services. Competence requirements for social workers are further outlined in the Social Workers Profession Regulation, which describes the program requirements, and the Standards of Practice, which outline the minimum continuing competence requirements for registrants.

The Competence Program guide serves as a supplement to the Standards of Practice and spells out in more detail the requirements of the Competence Program and how to meet the requirements.



## What is Competence?

**Competence is generally understood as:**

“the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment  
required to provide professional services”

– *Health Professions Act, 1(1)(f)*

We’ve talked about why there’s a Competence Program. Now let’s talk what we mean by competence.

Competence is more than just your professional skills. It’s the application of these skills in a dynamic work environment.

Continuing competence is about staying current and engaging in life-long learning that enhances your professional development and your skills and knowledge and improves outcomes for the people you work with.

We will talk more about how we arrived at the types of activities you have to complete to meet the competence program requirements.



### Why a Continuing Competence Program Review?

- The Continuing Competence Program was first implemented in 2003, with some changes in 2023.
- ACSW is looking inward at all its processes to ensure “right-touch regulation”.
- Right-touch regulation is designed to ensure that regulatory interventions are appropriate to the level of risk posed to the public. It encourages regulators to assess potential harm and respond with the most effective and proportionate measures.

The changes we’ll be sharing with you have come about through a competence program review.

Right-touch regulation is about finding the right balance—not too much, not too little—when it comes to rules and oversight. It means making sure our Competence Program is just enough to protect the public, support professionals, and respond to real risks, without being overly complicated or burdensome.

By reviewing and updating our program, we're making sure it's still fit for purpose: that it reflects current practice, supports professionals in staying competent, and focuses our efforts where they matter most.

It's about being smart and fair with how we regulate—so that our standards are clear, our processes are effective, and our expectations are reasonable.




### **2025 Competence Review: What We Did**

- Reviewed literature for promising and best practices
- Scanned provincial, national and international competence programs
- Interviewed other regulators (social work and non-social work)
- Identified opportunities to align program requirements with our new regulatory management system
- Aligned requirements with current regulatory requirements
- Consulted with
  - Subject matter experts
  - Registrants and other partners

The review occurred over the past 9 months and included reviewing literature, looking at other competence programs, interviewing regulators, consulting with registrants and experts, and more.



 ALBERTA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS		
The Changes		
Program Component	Description	Change for Registrants
Program Cycle	<b>The program will run from January to December each year and is no longer linked to renewal.</b>	<b>Renewal dates do not change. When competence requirements are due is changing.</b>
Mandatory Participation	All registrants must complete 40 credits annually regardless of employment status, registration status or which register you are on (practice enhancement).	Registrants working part time and those with an inactive status must participate in the Competence Program.
Credit Requirement	One credit = one hour of competence activity.	Registrants can record the actual number of hours spent in continuing education and professional engagement activities. Competence activities will not be carried over into the next competence year
Competence Activities	Registrants will be required to complete activities in two categories: continuing education and professional engagement.	There are no more category A, B and C competence requirements.

A report was presented to the ACSW Council with recommended changes and was approved on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

This table shows a summary of the major changes to the program. Let's review them.


First, the program cycle. Starting in January 2026, the program will run on a calendar year cycle from January to December. The Competence Program will no longer be tied to your renewal date.

Your renewal date will remain the same and your registration fees will be due at the same time you always pay them. What **will** change is that you start your self-assessment and setting your professional development goals in January, not when you renew your registration, and you will complete the activities and evaluate the outcomes each December.

At renewal, you will need to confirm you are aware of the program requirements and declare whether you are fulfilling them or not.






<div>ALBERTA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS</div> <div>The Changes</div>		
Program Component	Description	Change for Registrants
Program Cycle	The program will run from January to December each year and is no longer linked to renewal.	Renewal dates do not change. When competence requirements are due is changing.
Mandatory Participation	<b>All registrants must complete 40 credits annually regardless of employment status, registration status or register you are on (practice enhancement).</b>	<b>Registrants working part time and those with an inactive status must participate in the competence program.</b>
Credit Requirement	One credit = one hour of competence activity.	Registrants can record the actual number of hours spent in continuing education and professional engagement activities. Competence activities will not be carried over into the next competence year
Program Activities	Registrants will be required to complete activities in two categories continuing education and professional engagement.	There are no more category A, B and C competence requirements.

The second program component on the chart is mandatory participation. In the new program, all registrants must participate in the program regardless of their registration status or their full or part-time employment status.


We know that many social workers have an inactive status and that participation in the competence program, for them, has been optional. With the new program, we will be requiring all social workers to participate in the competence program.



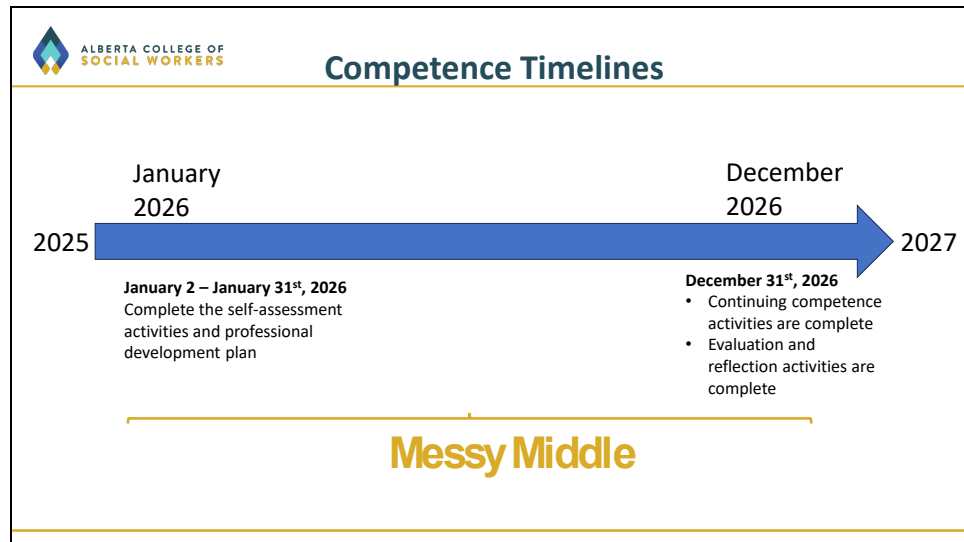
<div>ALBERTA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS</div> <div>The Changes</div>		
Program Component	Description	Change for Registrants
Program Cycle	The program will run from January to December each year and is no longer linked to renewal.	Renewal dates do not change. When competence requirements are due is changing.
Mandatory Participation	All registrants must complete 40 credits annually regardless of employment status, registration status or register you are on (practice enhancement).	Registrants working part time and those with an inactive status must participate in the competence program.
Credit Requirement	<b>One credit = one hour of competence activity.</b>	<b>Registrants can record the actual number of hours spent in continuing education and professional engagement activities. Competence activities will not be carried over into the next competence year</b>
Program Activities	Registrants will be required to complete activities in two categories continuing education and professional engagement.	There are no more category A, B and C competence requirements.

The third component of the program is the credit requirement. The number of credits remains at 40. One credit is equal to one hour, so social workers will need to complete 40 continuing competence hours between January 2026 and December 2026. In the new program, we are eliminating carryover credits.



<div>ALBERTA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS</div> <div>The Changes</div>		
Program Component	Description	Change for Registrants
Program Cycle	The program will run from January to December each year and is no longer linked to renewal.	Renewal dates do not change. When competence requirements are due is changing.
Mandatory Participation	All registrants must complete 40 credits annually regardless of employment status, registration status or register you are on (practice enhancement).	Registrants working part time and those with an inactive status must participate in the competence program.
Credit Requirement	One credit = one hour of competence activity.	Registrants can record the actual number of hours spent in continuing education and professional engagement activities. Competence activities will not be carried over into the next competence year
Program Activities	<b>Registrants will be required to complete activities in two categories continuing education and professional engagement.</b>	<b>There are no more category A, B and C competence requirements.</b>

The last component is the competence activities. In the new program, social workers will be required to complete activities in two categories: continuing education and professional engagement. Categories A, B and C have been eliminated. We will talk about these two new categories in more detail later in the presentation.



All of us have been used to the current competence requirements and used to competence being linked to renewal. Our new program will start in January for all 10,000 registered social workers. We know that 2026 will be the messy middle, or transition year, as we move towards everyone being fully on the new program and adhering to the new requirements in 2027.

Change can be difficult and sometimes not as clear and straightforward as we might like. At the ACSW, we're committed to working through transition in a reasonable and measured way. If we do not have an answer to your question, we will work to find one.



Slide 14

A screenshot of the 'Competence and Renewal' portal. The page has a header with the college's logo and name. The main title is 'Competence and Renewal'. On the left, under 'Previous Program', there are two bullet points: 'In the past, to renew your registration, you had to upload your competence credits into the registrant portal' and 'Credits needed to reconcile against the Category A, B, & C requirements to renew your registration'. The main content area is titled 'CONTINUING COMPETENCE DECLARATION'. It contains a paragraph stating that registered social workers are required to participate in an annual continuing competence program. Below this are four numbered points: 1. I am aware of the requirement to participate in the ACSW continuing competence program. 2. I understand that I am required to complete 40 credits annually. 3. I understand I am required to maintain a portfolio of evidence of my participation in the continuing competence program for 5 years. 4. I understand that the ACSW can request evidence of my participation in the continuing competence program at any time. A 'Declaration Statement' section follows, with a text box for the signature and a date field. There are radio buttons for 'Fulfilling' and 'Not fulfilling'. At the bottom, there is a warning message and three buttons: 'Submit', 'Save for later', and 'Withdraw'.

Just one more word about competence and renewal to clear up some confusion and questions.

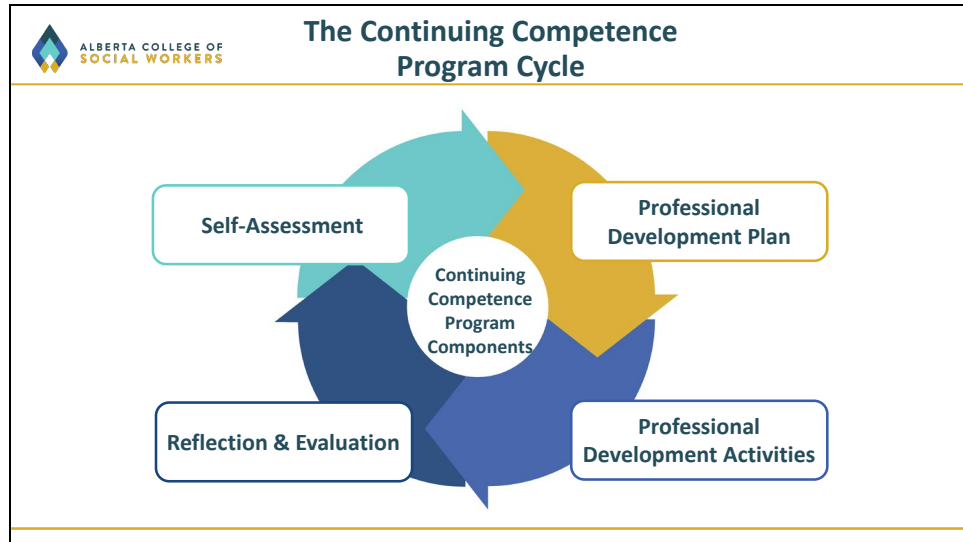
In the past to renew your registration, you had to upload your competence credits into the registrant portal. Credits needed to reconcile against the Category A, B, & C requirements to proceed to renew your registration.

This process stopped in October 2025.

This image on the slide shows what you *now* need to do regarding competence to complete your renewal.

You will be asked to sign a declaration that says you understand the competence requirements and then declare whether you are or aren't completing them.


Signing the declaration allows you to renew your registration.



We've just shared an overview of some of the program changes – let's dive in a little bit more, starting with the program cycle and how it works.

The program cycle includes a self-assessment, professional development plan, completion of identified activities and a reflection and evaluation. In essence, the cycle hasn't changed, but what you do and how you do it has.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

### Continuing Competence Program Components & Requirements

#### Self-Assessment

Provides an opportunity for registrants to pause, reflect and evaluate your knowledge, skill and understanding of practice to inform ongoing competence activities.

**Every January, you will:**

- Complete an annual competence update in the registrant portal.
- Download and complete a reflection worksheet. This is not kept in the registrant portal but must be kept in your portfolio.
- Complete a wellness reflection and maintain it in your competence portfolio.

Starting in January 2026, all social workers will start the competence program cycle by completing a competence self- assessment.

The practice of self-assessment is foundational to both reflective practice and professional competence in social work.

Self-assessment provides an opportunity for registrants to pause, reflect, and evaluate your knowledge, skill and understanding of practice to help inform ongoing practice development. Self-assessment ideally includes your own introspection as well as feedback from supervisors, colleagues and clients.

By the end of January each year, social workers are expected to complete the self-assessment activities.

The self-assessment is comprised of three separate activities:

- The annual competence update,
- The reflection worksheet, and
- The wellness worksheet.


The annual competence update is completed directly in the registrant portal.



The reflective practice worksheet and the wellness assessment worksheet are downloaded and saved in your portfolio. They are not uploaded to the registrant portal unless you are audited.

The self-assessment component of the competence program is opened to registrants at the beginning of January and closed on January 31st.

Slide 17

**Annual Competence Update**

PART I: ANNUAL COMPETENCE UPDATE		
Please describe your practice setting. (What population are you working with, what services do you provide, what interventions do you perform?)		
How many years have you been practicing social work?		
Are you in private practice	Yes	No
Are you receiving feedback on your practice from those you are serving?	Yes	No
Are you performing the restricted activity of psychosocial intervention?	Yes	No
Are you providing practice supervision?	Yes	No
Are you on the provisional register?	Yes	No
Please describe your successes and achievements in your social work practice since your last renewal. (What is going well in your practice?)		
What challenges are you experiencing in your practice (technical, interpersonal, systemic challenges etc.)?		
How are you engaging in supervision where you are required to because of provisional registration status, applying for practice enhancement or practicing in a new area of practice?		
How are you engaging with other social workers about practice related and professional practice topics, e.g. consultation, community of practice, discussion group, peer circle etc.)?		
What are your social work career goals or aspirations over the next 5 years? (How might your continuing competence activities support these goals?)		

The annual update is completed in the registrant portal.


Let's look at the 3 activities that make up the self-assessment component.

The first is the annual competence update. It requires you to think about and describe your practice setting and consider both the achievements and challenges in your practice to inform the development of your professional development plan.

This screenshot does not include all of the questions in the annual competence update, but provides a sense of the types of questions it includes.







ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

## Reflective Practice Worksheet

**PART II: REFLECTIVE PRACTICE WORKSHEET**

The following are an interconnected system of factors and resources that influence professional practice. Consider these factors and provide a response to each of the following questions. Click on the links to access the [Standards of Practice](#) and [Code of Ethics](#).

**PERSONAL FACTORS**

*Personal factors refer to the internal conditions and habits that affect your ability to show up as a competent, ethical and emotionally grounded professional. These factors are about you, your health, mindset, resilience and capacity to manage stress because they directly influence how you engage with clients, colleagues and complex situations.*

- To practice safely, effectively, and ethically, it is important to maintain a certain level of self-care and personal well-being. Describe the following:
  - How do you maintain physical, psychological, cognitive, and emotional fitness to practice?
  - What do you do to enhance your self-care and well-being?

**SOCIAL FACTORS**

*Social factors refer to the interpersonal and relational elements that influence how one practices, communicates and collaborates within a professional setting. They can either empower or constrain your ability to practice. They are often invisible but deeply influential.*

- Consider how you developed an awareness of and managed a situation with a client, or others (e.g., staff members, colleagues, student) in which you experienced one of the following: being triggered, effects of power dynamics, effects of unconscious bias, and/or conflict of societal and/or personal values and beliefs. What was learning for you in this situation?

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

*Environmental factors refer to the physical, geographic, and community-based conditions that influence how social work is practiced and how individuals access services. These factors shape both the needs of clients and the capacity of practitioners to respond effectively.*

- Reflecting on the broader community, geographic context, and physical surroundings.
  - What aspects of your community or physical environment benefit and impede your practice?
  - How does your local context shape your practice?

**STRUCTURAL FACTORS, SOCIETAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

*Structural factors, societal policies and practices refer to the systemic conditions and institutional frameworks that influence people's access to resources, opportunities, and support. These factors are often beyond the control of individuals, yet they profoundly shape both client experiences and practitioner decision-making.*


- Social workers promote fairness and equal distribution of resources and act to reduce barriers and expand choice for all persons. Examine the organizational, environmental and structural factors including organizational structures, leadership and policies, laws, funding, public opinion, and political dynamics that influence and impact your practice.
  - Describe how the current structural factors, societal policies and practices impact your practice.

- The reflective practice worksheet is available to download in the registrant portal.
- It is not saved in the registrant portal.
- You must retain a copy in your portfolio.

The second activity is the reflective practice worksheet. Completing this worksheet is a way to deepen your professional insight and shape meaningful professional development goals. You are required to download and complete the worksheet and retain it in your portfolio as evidence of completion.

Social work practice occurs in a context that includes our own personal, social, environmental and structural factors. Each of these factors can enhance, impede or influence your practice. Asking you to reflect on your own context is intended to help you determine potential continuing competence activities.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

## Wellness Worksheet

### THE SIX DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

**Dimension #1: EMOTIONAL**  
Emotional wellness includes the degree to which one feels positive and enthusiastic about oneself and life. In this dimension, it is important to be aware of and accept one's feelings & take an optimistic approach to life.

**Dimension #2: OCCUPATIONAL**  
Occupational wellness refers to satisfaction in one's work. In this dimension, it is important to seek out a career which is consistent with one's personal values, interests, and beliefs. Individuals are encouraged to develop functional, transferable skills through structured involvement opportunities, and to remain active and involved.

**Dimension #3: PHYSICAL**  
Physical wellness puts focus on movement, fitness, sleep, relaxation, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including the consumption of foods and beverages that enhance rather than impair good health.

**Dimension #4: SOCIAL**  
Social wellness includes making contributions to the common welfare of one's community and thinking of others. In this dimension, it is important to live in harmony with others and the environment.

**Dimension #5: INTELLECTUAL**  
Intellectual wellness is defined as life-long learning. In this dimension, it is important to stretch one's thinking and challenge one's mind in both intellectual and creative pursuits, in addition to identifying potential problems and choosing appropriate courses of action based on available information.

**Dimension #6: SPIRITUAL**  
Spiritual wellness recognizes one's search for meaning and purpose in human existence. In this dimension, it is important to be true to oneself, live each day in a way that is consistent with one's values and beliefs, go beyond faith and religion to ponder the meaning of life, and be tolerant of the beliefs of others.

- The wellness worksheet is available to download in the registrant portal.
- It is not saved in the registrant portal.
- You must retain a copy in your portfolio.


[About NWI - National Wellness Institute](#)

The third part of the self-assessment requirement is completing the wellness assessment worksheet. Providing safe, competent, and ethical care to clients is a professional responsibility. Social workers must take steps to maintain personal and professional wellness to help avoid conditions that could result in impaired judgement and interfere with your ability to practice ethically. Monitoring your own health and participating in activities that help to achieve and maintain wellness are part of the Continuing Competence Program.

Social workers experiencing situations affecting their wellness have a professional obligation to address the issue to continue to practice social work. In some circumstances, social workers may not be able to deal with the situation and may require support.

You can access the wellness self-assessment through the registrant portal. The assessment must be downloaded, completed and saved in your portfolio. You are encouraged to continually address any wellness risks, but there are no required activities associated with the wellness domain.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

---

## Continuing Competence Program Requirements

### Professional Development Plan

The professional development plan is a roadmap that outlines the goals registrants set for themselves, and the activities and timelines identified for completion of the goals.

**Every January**, registrants will:

- Complete an annual professional development plan in the registrant portal
- Create a minimum of one goal per category for:
  - continuing education
  - professional engagement

The annual professional development plan is the second component of the Continuing Competence Program cycle. The professional development plan provides a roadmap that outlines the goals you set for yourself, and the activities and timelines identified for completion of the goals.

Building upon your practice context, self-assessment, and reflective practice worksheet, you will establish goals to strengthen, maintain and/or grow social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

### Professional Development Plan

Competence Type	Goal	Activity	Expected Outcome	Evidence for my portfolio
Continuing Education				
Professional Engagement				

**Every January**, registrants will:

- Complete an annual professional development plan in the registrant portal
- Create a minimum of one goal per category for:
  - continuing education
  - professional engagement

You must create at least one goal that addresses ongoing professional development in each of the following two areas:


continuing education and professional engagement. For each goal, you will identify activities that will help you achieve that goal, and you'll consider how this will impact your practice and the outcomes for the clients you serve.

Professional development plans are dynamic like your practice. They may change or evolve during the year. You can keep them updated as you update your goals or activities. **Remember, goals need to be relevant to your practice.**

The professional development plan -- unlike the self-assessment -- is open all year as goals may change throughout the year.

You will now be able to count the actual number of hours spent in continuing competence activities in a calendar year, rather than a maximum per course. If a course or activity spans two calendar years, you will split the hours across the appropriate competence year.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

### Continuing Education

Educational activities related to the population, services, or interventions you are providing or the practice you are intending to provide in the coming year that result in meaningful growth in knowledge and practice of social work.

**There are no more category A, B or C activities.**

### Sample Activities

- Course, workshop, webinar
- Certificate completion
- Attending a conference
- Reading research papers
- Conducting new research
- Program development
- Policy/practice support development
- Process improvement project
- New course/workshop/education development
- Indigenous ceremonies
- Cultural experiences

The first category of professional development is continuing education. Continuing education activities focus on gaining new knowledge or skills related to the population, services, or interventions you're providing, or the practice you're intending to provide. They result in meaningful growth in knowledge and practice of social work.

- Continuing education can include taking classes or workshops, attending professional conferences, earning a certificate, or experiential learning to expand your knowledge relevant to your practice context.
- Continuing education does not need to be accredited, nor is there a list of approved education or training events that will meet the continuing education requirement.
- Continuing education activities can be employer-provided or accessed independently. Activities must be related to your area of practice, and you must be able to discuss the impact of the activity to your professional practice.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

## Professional Engagement

Active involvement with a professional community of social work peers that facilitates learning, collaboration and relationship building

### Sample Activities

- Supervision of students
- Mentorship
- Participating in a community of practice
- Practice-related discussion group
- Peer circle participation
- Teaching or providing education
- Case review
- ACSW volunteerism (e.g., advisory group or committee participation)
- Professional association active participation (e.g., SWAA, social justice activities, etc.)

The second category of professional development is professional engagement. Professional engagement allows you to grow in your practice by applying your expertise and learning through interactions with other professionals, in both formal and informal ways.

Professional engagement is about sharing your skills and knowledge for mutual benefit and impact.

- Professional engagement activities may align with your direct scope of practice but are not required to.
- Professional engagement activities are recognized for their contribution to professional growth, sector development, and community impact.
- While relevance to your current area of practice can enhance learning outcomes, engagement outside of your direct scope are equally valid and encouraged, provided they support ethical reflection, competence development, or broader understanding of the profession (such as student supervision, social justice, social action, regulatory or association activities.)



### Summary of Requirements

The **minimum** number of hours spent in each category are as follows.  
Each hour is equal to one credit:

AREA OF FOCUS	MINIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS
Continuing Education	15
Professional Engagement	15
Total must equal 40	40


**Competence activities are done annually. There is no more carryover of competence activities.**

Let's take a minute to summarize the competence requirements.

In January, you will complete your self-assessment activities and develop a professional development plan. The professional development plan is completed in the registrant portal and must contain at least one goal related to continuing education and one goal related to professional engagement. You will identify activities that will help you achieve that goal and the expected outcomes for you professionally, for your practice, and for the client population you serve.

You must complete a minimum of 15 hours in each of the two categories. The remaining 10 hours can be in either of the two categories or split between the two as long as the total hours equal 40.





ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

---

## Continuing Competence Program Requirements

### Reflection & Evaluation

Provides an opportunity for you to pause, reflect and evaluate **your** learning over the year, and the impact on your practice and client outcomes

**Every December**, you will:

- Complete an evaluation of the learnings
- Complete the reflection portion of the professional development plan
- Save artifacts to your portfolio

The last part of the competence program cycle is reflection and evaluation.

Reflection is a process which helps you gain insight into your practice by:

- intentionally thinking about your practice at a deeper level,
- questioning your approach,
- engaging with your feelings, beliefs and attitudes, and
- gaining greater self-awareness.

Gathering feedback from others familiar with your practice can supplement the reflection. The insights developed and lessons learned can lead to improvements or developments in your practice and inform future professional development plans.





Competence Type	Goal	Activity	Expected Outcome	Evidence for my portfolio
Continuing Education				
Professional Engagement				
<b>How have you applied the learning in your practice?</b> What impact did this activity have on your practice? (knowledge, skills, attitudes, judgment and/or practice)				
<b>How have you grown professionally?</b>				
Looking back which Standard of Practice or ethical principle was addressed by participating in this activity?				
Evidence of your participation (What have you added to your competence portfolio?)				

**By the end of December, you will:**

- Complete the reflection questions

- A concise statement outlining what new knowledge, skill, or value related to your practice you acquired while participating in a specific learning activity, and,
- Identifying which professional standard or ethical principle the learning outcome aligned with.

These requirements are intended to motivate careful thought about the link between a specific learning activity and practice.

The reflection and evaluation component of the program must be completed by the end of December every year.



## Accommodation and Exceptions Policy

- The ACSW Council has approved a continuing competence accommodation and exceptions policy
- This policy outlines the process by which you may request accommodations, deferrals, exceptions, or waivers related to continuing competence requirements.

### Types of Accommodation 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

We recognize that social workers experience conditions or circumstances that require flexibility and accommodation. We developed a policy and process to ensure transparency and consistency for all social workers.


To be considered, you 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.

This policy and form is posted on the ACSW website.



 ALBERTA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS <b>Accommodation and Exceptions Policy</b>		
Type	Description	Example
Accommodation	A modification or support provided to a regulated member to enable equitable participation in regulatory requirements, including the Continuing Competence Program. Accommodations are designed to address barriers related to disability, protected human rights grounds, or other documented needs, without compromising public safety or professional standards.	<i>A registrant requests assistive technology or additional time to complete an on-line assessment they are required to do as part of continuing competence.</i>
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.	<i>A registrant may request a deferral of their continuing competence requirements due to evacuation or an unexpected health event.</i>
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.	<i>A registrant requests an exception from completing the wellness worksheet and in lieu provides another tool used at their place of employment.</i>
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.	<i>A registrant with end-stage cancer is volunteering to facilitate a group for other people with the same illness and diagnosis, and requests a waiver of continuing competence requirements.</i>

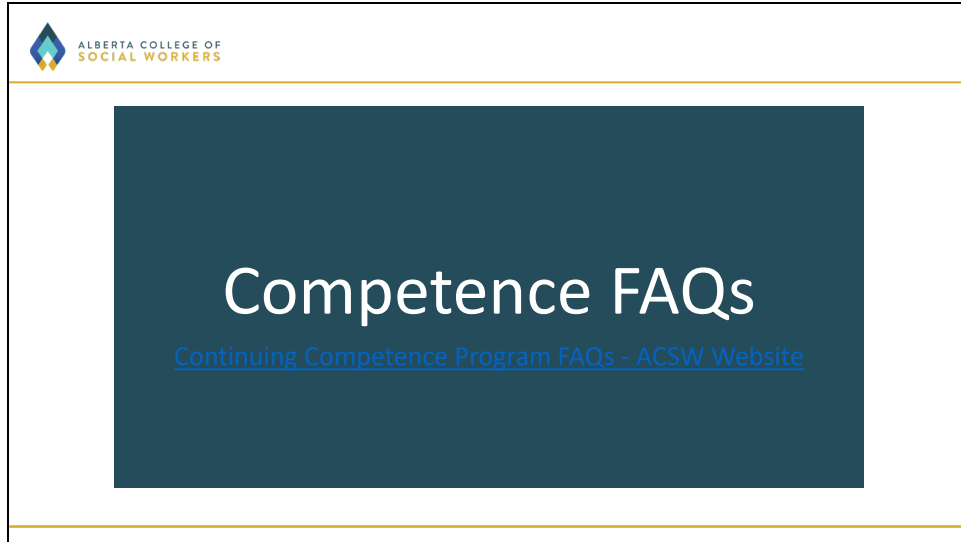
This slide provides a little more information about the types of accommodations and exceptions in the policy.

If we think back to your registration renewal and the declaration you have to complete, those who select that they are **not** fulfilling the program requirements should have an approved accommodation or exception on their file. Those who do not will be contacted by the practice department.



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

Slide 29

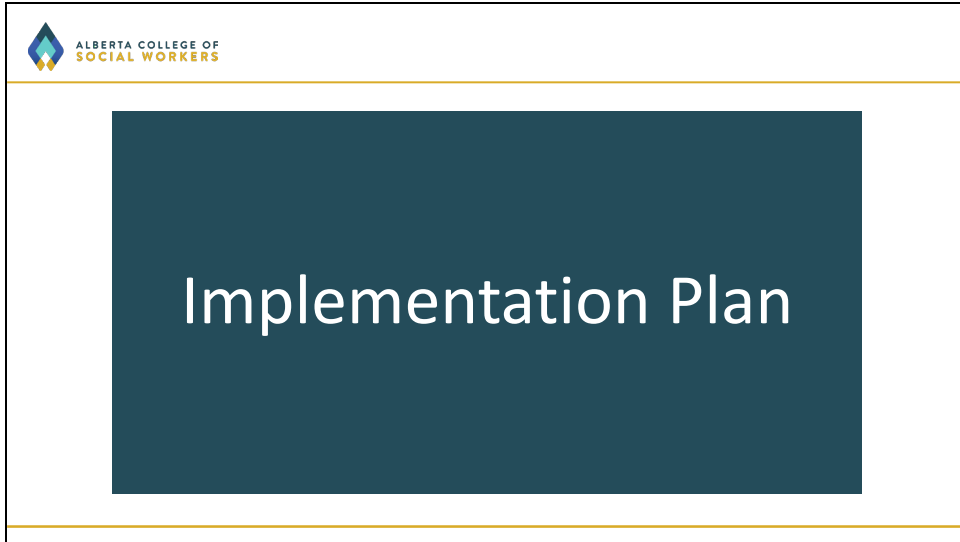


That brings us to the end of our walk-through of the program cycle and its components. I expect that there are lots of questions. We've developed a list of FAQs which are posted on the ACSW website. We'll continue to update as needed.



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

Slide 30



So when does all this start and what are we doing to support the transition?




Implementation Schedule		
<b>October 2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registration renewal changed to require a declaration rather than uploading of competence activities</li></ul>	<b>January 2026</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All registrants regardless of renewal date will be required to complete a self-assessment and professional development plan for the 2026 competence year</li></ul>	<b>December 2026</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All registrants will complete a reflection and evaluation of their competence activities</li></ul>

As mentioned earlier in the presentation, competence and registration renewal were separated with the October 2025 renewal.

In January 2026, all social workers regardless of renewal date will be required to complete a self-assessment and professional development plan for the 2026 competence year.

In December 2026, all social workers must complete a reflection and evaluation of their competence activities.





What other resources will be available to social workers to help with the new Competence Program changes?

- A step-by-step video on how to complete the competence requirements in the registrant portal will be available on the website
- The Continuing Competence Program guide will be updated and available on the website by late December.
- We will be hosting virtual drop-in sessions starting in January for those with questions or experiencing difficulties completing the competence documents in the registrant portal
- For anyone looking for additional tools, additional resources will be available on the ACSW website, such as
  - Providing and receiving feedback
  - Creating learning goals
  - Reflective practice

The program starts on January 1st.

Between now and then, we are testing the new system, and introducing the program to social workers through these webinars. We are updating the competence program guide and creating resources.

There will be videos walking you through how to complete the requirements and additional resources for those who want them on

- completing a self-assessment,
- getting feedback from peers and others,
- creating learning goals,
- reflective practice and more.


Starting in mid-November, there will be drop-in sessions to answer questions and provide support if you are having trouble logging on, updating your profile, changing your registration or renewing your registration.

The drop-in sessions will shift in January to provide support to social workers who have questions or are experiencing difficulties completing the self-assessment and professional development plan.




Just a caution, there will be a lot of traffic with all social workers completing this activity. Please review the resources or join a drop-in session. If you call or email, there will likely be a delay in responding.

Slide 33



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS




Is there anything I can do  
between now and  
January to prepare for the  
changes?

- **Starting in November**, social workers with a January renewal will be able to start their renewal process
- Review the [login video](#) on the ACSW website - [acsw.ab.ca/login-video](https://acsw.ab.ca/login-video) - and create your new account
- **How you previously logged onto the portal will no longer work**
- Do not click a button if you are not sure what it is for or what it will do. If you aren't sure, then please attend one of our lunch 'n learns in mid-November

You'll find instructions on the website about what you can do between now and January to prepare for these changes.







ALBERTA COLLEGE OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

### A Side Note About Audits

What Registrants Think About Audits	Feedback Some Registrants Who Have Experienced an Audit Have Provided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scary</li><li>• ACSW will take my license away</li><li>• I am in trouble</li><li>• Administrative requirement</li><li>• Not meaningful or relevant to my practice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invited me to slow down and see the threads that connect all areas of my work</li><li>• I've realized competence is not just about acquiring knowledge, it's about integrating it so it may transform into wisdom</li><li>• Appreciated the time someone took to read and provide me with feedback</li><li>• While administrative on the surface, has been a meaningful mirror</li><li>• Although I felt intimidated by the audit process, I feel like I learned a lot in my interactions with the ACSW.</li><li>• The constructive feedback has helped me grow professionally and made me recognize the importance of the competence program.</li></ul>

A quick note about audits: Audits are the tool we currently use for quality assurance. These activities are routine and expected in a regulated profession. They're not triggered by suspicion or concern, but are part of a broader commitment to quality and public trust.

We recognize that it can be anxiety-provoking and stressful to receive a notice that you've been selected for an audit. We're looking at ways to communicate this that are less stressful.

Audits are intended to provide an opportunity for the College to look at social workers' practice and provide feedback. They're intended to support registrants and provide an opportunity for professional reflection, peer connection, access to resources, and validation of good practice.

- Many social workers find that practice visits give them a chance to pause, reflect, and receive affirmation of the great work they're doing, as you can see from the direct feedback from social workers who recently participated in the audit process.
- While there are consequences for not fulfilling competence requirements, the remediation is intended to be supportive, not punitive unless the circumstances are egregious.



## Questions After the Webinar

Review the Resources on the ACSW website. We will continue to add resources from now until January.



[acsw.ab.ca](http://acsw.ab.ca)

If you cannot find the answer to your question on the ACSW website:

- Join a virtual coffee time with the College. This is a drop-in to ask questions about completing your self-assessment and professional development plan.
- Email [practice.consultation@acsw.ab.ca](mailto:practice.consultation@acsw.ab.ca)