

November 5, 2019

## Use of Title and Designation – Social Worker, RSW Important Information for Members and their Employers

The Manitoba College of Social Workers (the College) understands that several Registered Social Workers employed with the Department of Families were recently directed by their employer to avoid using their professional designation, Social Worker and/or RSW, and to otherwise avoid representing that they are registered with the College. Please be advised that Social Workers who are registered with the College are legally entitled and professionally obligated to use the title and designation of “Social Worker, RSW” in their correspondence and/or communication to ensure that the public is aware that they are regulated professionals. In accordance with *The Social Work Profession Act*, this legal entitlement applies to all Registered Social Workers regardless of their place of employment or position title.

Restrictions on the use of title, “Social Worker”, and designation, “RSW”, apply to *unregistered social work practitioners* who, by law, are not authorized to use the title Social Worker or represent themselves as Social Workers in Manitoba.

The College views any attempt by an employer to discourage registration of employees who perform social work, including restricting Registered Social Workers from using their legal professional designation, as a disservice to the profession of social work and to the public who rely on professional regulation as a measure of assurance of professional standards and accountability. The College is currently communicating with employers and government representatives regarding this matter.

The College commends those who have made a commitment to professional regulation and public accountability through registration with the College and fully supports members in their ongoing use of their respected professional designation of Social Worker and RSW. Should members or their employers require clarification, support or assistance regarding this matter, please feel free to contact the College at 204-888-9477 or [info@mcsw.ca](mailto:info@mcsw.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barb Temmerman".

Barbara (Barb) Temmerman, MSW, RSW  
Executive Director/Registrar

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki Verge Burgess".

Vicki Verge Burgess, MSW, RSW  
President

### **Social Work Profession Act**

3(1) No person except a social worker who holds a current certificate of practice shall

- (a) Represent or hold out, expressly or by implication, that he or she is a practicing social worker or is entitled to engage in the practice of social work as a social worker; or
- (b) Use any sign, display, title or advertisement implying that he or she is a practicing social worker

3(2) No person except a social worker who holds a current certificate of practice shall use any of the following designations or abbreviated designations, a variation if any such designation or an equivalent in another language:

- (a) "social worker" or "registered social worker"
- (b) "S.W." or "R.S.W."

### **Social Work Profession Regulation**

21(1) A Member must include in his or her professional signature the abbreviation of the person's highest post-secondary academic credential, in order to ensure clarity regarding academic qualifications and position title.

15(1) In addition to the standards described in subsections (2) to (4), the standards of practice for members are those established and published by the college. Each member must comply with the standards of practice.

### **Manitoba College of Social Workers Amended and Restated By-Laws**

Members holding a valid certificate of practice are entitled to:

- (vi) practice as a registered social worker and to use the initials R.S.W. (or RSW) after their names.

### **Manitoba College of Social Workers Standards of Practice**

Standard 5.3 The Social Worker must sign the record for each entry with full name, highest degree and professional designation (i.e. RSW)