

## Representation and Use of Title Social Worker

The Manitoba College of Social Workers is the provincial body that regulates Social Workers in Manitoba. The College receives its authority from *The Social Work Profession Act* (the *Act*, *SWPA*). As outlined in the *Act*, if an individual does not hold a valid Certificate of Practice issued by the Manitoba College of Social Workers, they are not entitled to use the title or representation of “Social Worker.”

Sections 3(1) and 3(2) of the *Act* state: “No person except a social worker who holds a current certificate of practice shall:

- Represent or hold out, expressly or by implication, that they are a practising social worker or is entitled to engage in the practice of social work as a social worker; or
- Use any sign, display, title, or advertisement implying that they are a practising social worker”.

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 of any such designation or an equivalent in any language:

- “Social Worker” or “Registered Social Worker;”
- “S.W.” or “R.S.W.”

Section 74 (1) of the *Act* states: “*A person who employs another person as a social worker must ensure that the social worker is registered under this Act during the period of employment.*”

As with other regulated professions, the granting of a degree is one prerequisite of admission to the profession, but it does not, on its own, entitle the individual to refer to themselves as a member of the profession or to otherwise adopt protected titles contrary to the governing law.

The provisions of the *SWPA* that are referenced above clearly indicate the attainment of a B.S.W. or an M.S.W. or any other educational credential, without registration, is not sufficient to permit an individual to use the protected title of “Social Worker”, or to otherwise hold out that the person is a practising Social Worker.

The *Act* prohibits practitioners from holding themselves out as a social worker either expressly or by implication. Therefore, one must consider, would a member of the public reasonably infer that an individual is a Social Worker because of:

- Education qualifications (BSW, MSW)
- Social work scope of practice
- Same services provided by licensed/registered Social Workers

If so, that individual must be registered in accordance with the *SWPA*.

Professional regulation provides the public with the reasonable expectation that individuals representing themselves as Social Workers are accountable, have the distinct professional knowledge and skills required for entry to practice and are authorized to practice as Social Workers. The primary goal of title protection and professional regulation is to protect the public interest and promote public confidence in the profession of Social Work. The public has a right to know that they are receiving services from competent professionals dedicated to professional accountability who abide by recognized standards of practice and ethical conduct.