



Ontario College of  
Social Workers and  
Social Service Workers

Ordre des travailleurs  
sociaux et des techniciens  
en travail social de l'Ontario

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Dear Employer:

The College has had an opportunity to review many employer forms. It appears that, when employers have answered the question “Does/Did the applicant’s practice involve any of the following duties and responsibilities?” there may be different interpretations of the term “diagnosis” being used. These different interpretations have had an impact on the manner in which the forms have been completed. The following is the manner in which the College intends the term “diagnosis” to be interpreted in connection with the role of a social worker:

*A social work diagnosis defines that series of judgments made by a social worker based on social work knowledge and skills in regard to individuals, couples, families and groups. These judgments:*

- a) serve as the basis of actions to be taken or not taken in a case for which the social worker has assumed professional responsibility and*
- b) are based on the Social Work Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.*

*Such judgments and the procedures and actions leading from them are matters for which the social worker expects to be accountable.*

Please note that one of the distinctions in the regulation made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* (O. Regulation 383/00) between the role of a social worker and role of a social service worker is that the role of a social worker involves diagnosis whereas the role of a social service worker does not. Accordingly, the College believes that it is important for employers to be aware of the College’s interpretation of the term “diagnosis”.

Please feel free to contact Mindy Coplevitch, Director of Registration or Tracy Raso, Registration Coordinator at the College should you wish to discuss this matter further.