Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

2023 Fair Registration Practices Report

Prepared for the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC)

FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER
COMMISSAIRE À L'ÉQUITÉ

Content

1. Background

Under section 20 of the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA), which is substantially similar to section 22.7(1) of Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA),

> "A regulated profession shall prepare a fair registration practices report annually or at such other times as the Fairness Commissioner may specify or at such times as may be specified in the regulations".

Section 23 of FARPACTA and Section 22.9 of Schedule 2 of the RHPA then go on to indicate that the Fairness Commissioner shall specify the form in which these reports shall be prepared, along with the required filing dates. This section also stipulates that a regulator must make these reports public.

It is pursuant to these authorities that the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) has required that each regulator complete its 2023 Fair Registration Practices Report (FRP).

Please note that this report covers the time-period from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

The FRP:

- Collects information about the organization, applicants to the profession and current membership.

- Provides information to the public about how the organization has implemented fair registration practices during the reporting period.

- Helps the OFC to successfully undertake the education and compliance activities which include monitoring, applying a risk-informed compliance framework, assessing performance, and sharing best practices.

- Determines whether the regulator is complying with recently enacted legislative and regulatory provisions designed to reduce barriers for domestic labour mobility and internationally trained applicants.

- Identifies trends across regulated professions and regulated health colleges.

Please note that the 2023 version of the FRP has changed from the previous version in terms of both form and content as the OFC's enabling statutes have evolved and as the office migrates to a more permanent portal-enabled database solution.

2. Organization information

Organization name	Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

For questions about this report, please contact:

Name	Denitha Breau
Job Title	Registrar and CEO
E-mail	dbreau@ocswssw.org

3. Registration requirements

Applicants to the regulated professions and compulsory trades must fulfil registration requirements to practice their profession or use a professional title. This section summarizes registration requirements for each profession or trade regulated by Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

Licensing requirements (brief description for each requirement listed):

Profession/ Trade Name	Social Worker
Academic requirement	All applicants applying for registration as a social worker must meet the academic requirements outlined in O. Reg. 383/00: Registration, and must demonstrate they have:
	i. Obtained a degree in social work (SW) from a social work program accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE), or a degree from a SW program, or an equivalent program offered in Canada and approved by Council as equivalent to a SW program accredited by the CASWE;

	ii. Obtained a degree from a SW program or an equivalent program offered outside Canada and approved by Council as equivalent to a SW program accredited by the CASWE or iii. A combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social worker that the Registrar determines is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a degree in SW from a social work program accredited by CASWE.
Experience requirement	Applicants who obtained their academic qualifications more than five years ago are required to satisfy the currency requirement. This requirement states that the applicant must have engaged in the practice of social work within the five years before applying to the College or otherwise satisfy to the College that they are competent to perform the role of a social worker. The College would consider that an applicant has engaged in the practice of social work within the last five years if their practice falls within the scope of practice for social work. The currency requirement does not apply to applicants who have obtained the qualifications required for registration with the College within the five years before the date of application.
Language requirement	The College's Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 383/00, sets out that one of the requirements for registration with the College in any class is that the applicant is able to demonstrate reasonable fluency to speak and write either English or French. If an applicant does not have reasonable fluency in English or French, they must take a language proficiency test(s) that is approved by the College and

	achieve the result scores below:
	English Language Proficiency:
	i. TOEFL Internet-based Test (iBT) Overall: 92, Writing: 22, Speaking: 26, Listening: 22, Reading: 22.
	ii. IELTS Academic Minimum score of no less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	iii. IELTS General Minimum score of no less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	iv. CELPIP General Minimum score of no less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	v. PTE Core Minimum score of no less than CLB 7 or as described below: Listening comprehension: 60-70 Reading comprehension: 60-68 Verbal skills: 68-75 Written skills: 69-78
	French Language Proficiency:
	i. TEF (Test d'évaluation du français) Note minimale de C1, ou selon la description ci-dessous : Compréhension écrite (lecture) C1 = 233 ou plus Compréhension orale (écoute) C1 = 280 ou plus Lexique et structure (vocabulaire et grammaire) C1 = 187 ou plus Expression écrite (écriture) C1 = 349 ou plus Expression orale (langue parlée) C1 = 349 ou plus
	ii. TCF (Test de connaissance du français) Note minimale de NCLC 7, ou selon la description ci-

	dessous : Compréhension orale (écoute) : 458 ou plus Compréhension écrite (lecture) : 453 ou plus Expression orale (langue parlée) : 10 ou plus Expression écrite (écriture) : 10 ou plus (écriture): 10 ou plus

Additional information on licensing requirements (may include links to appropriate page on regulator website):	The following registration requirements are outlined in the College's Regulation 383/00 – Registration:
	
	Citizenship/Immigration Status
	
	• Applicants must be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident or authorized to practise social work under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada).
	
	Self-Disclosure ("Good Character" Requirement)
	Applicants are required to:
	
	• Disclose any current proceeding in relation to professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity and other similar proceeding (for example, a complaint or discipline proceeding) in any jurisdiction.
	
	• Disclose any findings of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity in any jurisdiction. Disclose any findings of guilt in relation to criminal or other offences.
	
	• Make a declaration regarding health and conduct so that, based on the applicant's past and present conduct, the College has reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant:
	   o does not have any physical or mental condition or disorder that could affect their ability to practise social work in a safe manner.
	   o will practise social work with decency, integrity and honesty and in accordance with the law.

	o has sufficient knowledge, skill and judgment to practise social work.
	All requirements for registration are posted on the College's website, on the "Information for All Applicants\" webpage, available at this link:
	https://www.ocswssw.org/applicants/.

Profession/ Trade Name	Social Service Worker
Academic requirement	All applicants applying for registration as a social service worker must meet the academic requirements outlined in O. Reg. 383/00: Registration and must demonstrate that they have: i. obtained a diploma in social service work (SSW) from a SSW program offered in Ontario at a College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT), ii. obtained a diploma from a program offered in Ontario at an OCAAT that is equivalent to a SSW program and approved by Council as equivalent to SSW program offered in OCAATs; iii. obtained a diploma from a SSW program or an equivalent program offered outside Ontario and approved by Council as equivalent to a SSW program offered in OCAAT, or iv. have a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social service worker that the Registrar determines is substantially equivalent to the qualifications required for a diploma in SSW from a social service work program offered in Ontario at an OCAAT.

Experience requirement	Applicants who obtained their academic qualifications more than five years ago are required to satisfy the currency requirement. This requirement states that the applicant must have engaged in the practice of social service work within the five years before applying to the College or otherwise satisfy to the College that they are competent to perform the role of a social service worker. The College would consider that an applicant has engaged in the practice of social service work within the last five years if their practice falls within the scope of practice for social service work. The currency requirement does not apply to applicants who have obtained the qualifications required for registration with the College within the five years before the date of application.

Language requirement	The College's Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 383/00, sets out that one of the requirements for registration with the College in any class is that the applicant is able to demonstrate reasonable fluency to speak and write either English or French.
	
	If an applicant does not have reasonable fluency in English or French, they must take a language proficiency test(s) that is approved by the College and achieve the result scores below:
	
	English Language Proficiency:
	   i. TOEFL Internet-based Test (iBT) Overall: 92, Writing: 22, Speaking: 26, Listening: 22, Reading: 22.
	  ii. IELTS Academic Minimum score of no

	less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	   iii. IELTS General Minimum score of no less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	   iv. CELPIP General Minimum score of no less than 7 in each component: reading, listening, writing, speaking.
	   v. PTE Core Minimum score of no less than CLB 7 or as described below: · Listening comprehension: 60-70 · Reading comprehension: 60-68 · Verbal skills: 68-75 · Written skills: 69-78
	
	French Language Proficiency:
	
	i. TEF (Test d'évaluation du français) Note minimale de C1, ou selon la description ci- dessous : Compréhension écrite (lecture) C1 = 233 ou plus Compréhension orale (écoute) C1 = 280 ou plus Lexique et structure (vocabulaire et grammaire) C1 = 187 ou plus Expression écrite (écriture) C1 = 349 ou plus Expression orale (langue parlée) C1 = 349 ou plus
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Additional information on licensing requirements (may include links to appropriate page on regulator website):	The following registration requirements are outlined in the College's Regulation 383/00 – Registration: Citizenship/Immigration Status Applicants must be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident or authorized to

| | practise social service work under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada).

Self-Disclosure ("Good Character" Requirement)
Applicants are required to:
- Disclose any current proceeding in relation to professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity and other similar proceeding (for example, a complaint or discipline proceeding) in any jurisdiction.
- Disclose any findings of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity in any jurisdiction.
- Disclose any findings of guilt in relation to criminal or other offences.
- Make a declaration regarding health and conduct so that, based on the applicant's past and present conduct, the College has reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant:
  - does not have any physical or mental condition or disorder that could affect their ability to practise social service work in a safe manner.
  - will practise social service work with decency, integrity and honesty and in accordance with the law.
  - has sufficient knowledge, skill and judgment to practise social service work. Fees Applicants must pay the required fees (application and registration fees) to be registered.

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All requirements for registration are posted on the |

	College's website, on the \"Information for All Applicants\" webpage, available at this link: https://www.ocswssw.org/applicants/.

4. Third party assessments

Third party organizations that assess qualifications on behalf of the regulator.

Organization name	Function
International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS)	Academic credential evaluation
Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW)	Academic credential evaluation
World Education Services (WES)	Academic credential evaluation

Fair access legislation requires regulators to take reasonable measures to ensure that any third parties undertake assessment of qualifications in a way that is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS takes the following measure(s) to ensure fair and timely assessments:

The College accepts credential assessments conducted by the following third parties:
- Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) for social work degree credentials
- World Education Services (WES) – all international credentials
- International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) – all international credentials

The College has a long-standing, over 15 year-relationship with CASW, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding. In April 2023, the College further strengthened and formalized this collaboration by entering into a Service Agreement with CASW outlining the terms for the assessment of international credentials. The College has recently finalized a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with WES and ICAS that outline the requirements to provide fair and timely assessments. In order to assess the success of the new overview of the third-party credential assessment service standards, in the late fall, the College will conduct a service satisfaction survey with those registrants who have utilized third-party credential assessment provider. This survey will gauge registrant satisfaction with the services and timeliness provided by the agencies, ensuring continuous improvement and quality assurance.

5. Accomplishments, risks and mitigations

Key accomplishments and risks pertaining to fair registration practices during the reporting period are summarized below.

A.   Accomplishments

1	Implemented a new internal Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database and self-serve Online Portal that provides a streamlined, user-friendly online experience for applicants.
2	Optimized application workflows and review processes within the new database system, resulting in reduced steps and increased efficiency.
3	Automated certain administrative tasks, freeing up staff time, reducing human error, and enabling measurable improvements and increasing application reviews.

B.   Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation Measure
Staffing levels: recruitment and retention challenges hinder efforts to increase staffing levels.	The College continues to adapt and prioritize recruitment processes to highlight the College's reputation as an employer of choice. Resource levels are being optimized through strategic contracting with knowledgeable private providers. In addition, the team is being supplemented with temporary staff and capacity is being built through cross-training and ensuring the right personnel are assigned to the right positions.
Varying staffing knowledge levels: upon a comprehensive review of its application processes and	Cross-training, service standards and measurable outputs:

To address varying staffing knowledge/expertise |

procedures, the College identified varying staffing knowledge and expertise levels.	and ensure high-quality service delivery, the College developed cross- training sessions to enable staff members to perform a variety of duties and responsibilities within the Registration and Renewals Department. The College has also outlined clear and measurable team and individual goals and standards that define the expected level of performance, quality, and timeliness. The College is committed to a culture of excellence and encourages staff members to communicate, provide feedback, identify, and suggest process improvements, and implement changes. Workforce strategies: The College is actively developing robust, measurable performance indicators and metrics which involve defining individual and team goals, focusing on accountability, quality, quantity, and timeliness. These strategies aim to enhance effectiveness and efficiency.
Increased volumes of applications for registration: the College continues to experience a sustained high volume of applications for registration.	Process optimization: The College streamlined the application processes, refined, and implemented internal policies and procedures with the goal of introducing service standards and enhancing organizational efficiency. Technology enhancements: The College is leveraging technology and automation, where possible and appropriate, through the introduction of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database solution to support efficient application processing and review.

6. Changes to registration practices

During the January 1 to December 31, 2023 reporting period, Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS has introduced the following changes impacting its registration processes. Changes, anticipated impacts, and risk mitigation are summarized below.

A. Registration requirements and practices

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Registration requirements either through regulation, by-law or policy	Yes	The College revised its Registration Policy on Language Proficiency in December 2023 to ensure alignment with the amendments made to the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act (FARPACTA). The revised policy approved in December 2023 included the following language proficiency tests used for immigration purposes by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): • International English Language Testing System (IELTS) General Test • Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) General Test • Test d'évaluation de français (TEF) • Test de connaissance du français (TCF) By revising the Registration Policy on Language Proficiency, the College demonstrates its commitment to fair registration practices, aligning its regulatory requirements with FARPACTA. The discontinued language tests CanTEST and TestCan were removed in December

		2023.
New or consolidated class of certificates or licenses	No	
Assessment of qualifications, including competency-based assessments and examinations	No	
Documentation requirements for registration	No	
Timelines for registration, decisions and/or responses	Yes	The processing time for the degree/diploma applications is a minimum of 6 weeks after receiving all the required documentation. The processing time for the equivalency stream applications (non-routine applications) is currently at a minimum of eight months once all the required documentation is received.

This is the backlog identified in the recent Risk- informed Compliance Framework questionnaire, which required an extension to processing times. While acknowledging this issue, the College has been granted an exemption by the Fairness Commissioner until November 1, 2023, from the time limits for internationally trained individuals (ITIs) and domestic labour mobility applicants ("DLMAs") outlined in the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA). The College is |

		working closely with the OFC to monitor and mitigate the situation.
Registration and/or assessment fees	No	
Changes to internal review or appeal process	No	
Access by applicants to their records	Yes	Applicants may request a copy of their application materials at no additional cost. Applicants can also self-serve by accessing the Online Portal to view their application submission and documents.

B. Training, policy and applicant supports

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Training and resources for staff who deal with registration issues	Yes	Training and resources for staff who deal with registration issues Prior and after the launch of the new database, the College conducted several in-depth, hands-on trainings sessions for staff dealing with applications for registration led by the database vendor. The training sessions ensured all staff had the knowledge, resources and understanding of the end-to-end processes to work efficiently in the new system and assist applicants. A month prior to the launch, the end users dealing with applications of registration were given access to the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) environment to test the new system and provide feedback. This allowed staff to test the new system, complete "real life" tasks, and provide feedback to refine the user experience. To build internal capacity, the College also trained a group of internal subject matter experts who then trained or assisted the rest of the staff (train the trainer). Support is ongoing and it is provided by the CRM database vendor and by the internal subject matter experts. Staff have access to a centralized online repository of training materials, user guides, and meeting recordings that they can access at

		any time. Policy The College is analyzing its policy and procedures resources by undertaking a comprehensive review in 2024. This will be followed by a project plan to outline its development process for these foundational operational documents. The first phase of this process is to conduct a review of existing policies and procedures to determine their relevance and effectiveness, and to identify opportunities for revisions. The second phase of the process will focus on proactively identifying, developing, and implementing new policies and procedures. Over the next years, once the review and drafting processes are complete, the College will post the external policies on the website, ensuring transparency and accessibility for applicants, prospective applicants, academic institutions, and other stakeholders. This will include establishing regular policy reviews to ensure the documents are relevant and accurate. Additional communication tools will be developed to ensure that applicants are informed about any revisions or new policies.

Resources or training to support applicants to move through the licensing process	Yes	Applicant Support
		The College offers in-person assistance, phone support, email, or online support to applicants. The website has detailed information about the application requirements for each stream (degree/diploma or equivalency), and offers visual decision trees, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section and a robust Resource Room to assist applicants to navigate the automated portal process confidently and independently. Future communications assistance plans include offering in person appointments and in person information sessions to walk prospective applicants thorough the registration process to ensure they have the information and assistance they need to successfully complete the registration process.
		Resources to support applicants to move through the licensing process The College provides the following resources to support applicants throughout the registration process:
		Website and Online Information: The College's website features a dedicated "Applicants" tab that outlines the necessary information and requirements. The webpage "Information for All Applicants" covers general criteria for registration and FAQs addressing common questions on topics like registration eligibility, applying for registration with international degrees, among other topics.

| | | Each type of application has its own webpage where applicants can find detailed information about the application or stream that applies to their educational qualifications.

Applicants can contact the College by phone or by email:
The College has designated staff to respond to live calls and email inquiries on a daily basis. Applicants can contact the College in person (by appointment only), by phone or email to reach a group of designated support staff. |
| Anti-racism and inclusion-based policies and practices | Yes | In 2023, the College's Staff Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, comprised of management and frontline staff, organized a comprehensive training program called *Body Swaps Let's Talk About Race*. This immersive, multi-module soft skills learning program enabled participants to have challenging conversations about privilege, bias, microaggressions, and gender inclusion. After completing the modules, staff engaged in debrief sessions to further enhance their learning and understanding. Some of the |

		modules (Understanding Conflict, Giving Feedback and Resolving Conflict) were completed in January 2024. In addition to the *Body Swaps* training, registration staff listened to a podcast on unconscious bias available through the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR). From a governance perspective, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was created in 2022, building on the work of the DEI Task Group. The DEI Committee's mandate is to:
		• Make recommendations to Council on the potential for, and/or existence of, systemic and structural racism, discrimination and/or bias within the College's statutory, regulatory and governance policies and processes.
		• Develop strategies, including revisions to bylaws, standards, guidelines, and policies to address any identified issues.
		• Implement an approach to meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action within the regulatory sector.
		• Enhance educational resources to support College registrants in practising ethically and professionally, with a focus on considerations related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

C. System Partners

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Steps to increase accountability of third-party service provider(s)	Yes	One way the College is monitoring or increasing the accountability of its third-party service providers is the development of formal service agreements or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with partners like CASW, WES, and ICAS. These agreements outline the framework of our collaboration. One of the requirements of the agreements is for the parties to meet periodically to review the current agreements. The regular check-in meetings allow the College to monitor the third-party's adherence to agreed-upon service levels, outcomes, and measurable outputs, and to discuss and address outstanding issues.

Accreditation of educational programs	Yes	In September 2023, the College's Council approved two program applications, one offered at an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT) and the other offered at a college in Quebec, as equivalent to a Social Service Work Program offered in Ontario at a OCAAT:
		• Northern College (in Ontario) – Addiction and Mental Health Worker Program
		• Collège Universel (outside Ontario) - Techniques de travail social (Social Service Worker) Program
		Graduates of these programs are able to apply to the College through the approved diploma stream, which will meet the education requirement set out in the Registration Regulation respecting the issuance of a certificate of registration for social service work.
		In December 2023, Council approved a new Registration Policy on Social Work Programs Offered in Canada that are Accredited by the National Indigenous Accreditation Board (NIAB) that allows graduates of indigenous social work degree programs accredited by NIAB to seek registration with the College under the accredited degree stream, meeting the education requirement set out in the Registration Regulation for the issuance of a certificate of registration for social work.
		This new policy marks a step forward towards

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Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
		inclusivity by removing barriers for individuals holding an Indigenous social work credential, but also a step toward building on labour mobility efforts which will continue to be important as governments strive to address workforce demands, mobility and licensure/registration portability across Canada.
Mutual recognition agreements	No	

D. Responsiveness to changes in the regulatory environment

Registration process	Changes Made (Yes / No)	Description
Emergency registration plans	Yes	The College is putting finishing touches on its draft Emergency Registration Plan, to be submitted to the OFC by early July. This plan will ensure that the College is ready to respond and can ensure continuity of registration processes and regulatory functions should an unforeseen emergency arise.

Technological or digital improvements	Yes	In 2023, the College upgraded its internal database and Online Portal. The initiative had a two-fold objective:

In 2023, the College upgraded its internal database and Online Portal. The initiative had a two-fold objective:

Improve organizational efficiency by:

- o Automating administrative tasks and workflows to reduce manual efforts and reallocate resources efficiently.
- o Implementing a self-serve portal that is intuitive and user-friendly, improving the online experience for applicants.

Strengthen the College's overall cybersecurity strategy by:

- o Designing the portal with security principles in mind, prioritizing data protection.
- o Implementing multi-factor authentication.
- o Providing cybersecurity awareness training to all staff.

In addition to these upgrades, the College also adopted the MyCreds™ platform in 2023 for the purpose of receiving and validating secure electronic transcripts.

Through the partnership with the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC), the College can securely receive electronic transcripts through the MyCreds™ platform, ensuring accuracy and streamlining the document submission process. Through these technology improvements, the College is embracing digital transformation and is modernizing its application processes.

Steps to address labour shortages in the profession or trade	Yes	The College has maintained proactive communication and outreach efforts with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to discuss the continued growth and evolving landscape of the social work and social service work professions in Ontario. One of these initiatives include the ongoing dialogue with MCCSS representatives on the College's development and implementation of the Equity and Inclusion Data Initiative.
		This initiative aims to establish an initial benchmark for the diversity and representation within the College's registrant base, therefore providing insights into the workforce composition of these professions. As the largest mental health providers in the province, the College's registrant workforce has also garnered interest with the Ministry of Health. Meetings have been held with the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and
		Minister of Long-Term Care, facilitating ongoing dialogue with the College regarding its registrant database. By maintaining open lines of communication with key provincial ministries about its initiatives and the evolving landscape of the professions, the College demonstrates its commitment to collaboration, transparency, and information-sharing with the provincial government.
Other	No	

7. Membership and application data

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner collects membership and application data from regulators through annual Fair Registration Practices Reports, which are also made available to the public. Information is collected for the purpose of discerning statistical changes and trends related to a regulator's membership, application volumes, licensure/certification results, and appeals year over year.

A. Race-based data collected

	Race-based data collected? (Yes or No)
Members	Yes
Applicants	No

Additional description:

As mentioned in section A.6. Membership Profiles, the College introduced the Equity and Inclusion Questions on the 2024 online renewal form. This initiative invites registrants to share demographic information on a voluntary basis. The Equity and Inclusion Questions are taken from existing validated data sources (where such data sources exist), for example the Canadian Census and the Anti-Racism Data Standards – as set out in the Anti-Racism Act. Although some of these data sources are not wholly inclusive, using existing questions will allow for the data collected by the College to be measured and compared to a degree with the broader Ontario public.

The College has not yet analyzed or publicly shared the collected data. This is an action plan for future data analysis and reporting. The results will be brought forward to Council before being shared publicly.

B. Other identity-based or demographic data collected

	Other identity-based or demographic data collected? (Yes or No)
Members	Yes
Applicants	Yes

Additional description:

The College collects the following information:
- Gender
- Region of practice/Electoral District for election purposes
- Preferred language of communication with the College (English/French)
- Date of Birth
- Citizenship/Immigration Status

C. Languages of service provision

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS makes application materials and information available to applicants in the following languages.

Language	Yes / No
English	Yes
French	Yes
Other (please specify)	

D. Membership Profile

Profession Name	Total Number of Members
Social Worker	25043

Class of License	Total Number of Members	Total Number of Internationally Educated Members
Full / General/ Independent Practice Inactive Retired	24106 609 328	632 24 4

Gender	Number of Members
Female Male X (includes trans, non-binary, and two-spirit people) Other / not collected	21670 3211 155 7

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Number of Members
Ontario Other provinces and territories United States Other International Other/not collected	19128 1343 1182 660 2730

Country of Initial Training	Number of Members
Albania	11
Argentina	2
Australia	21
Bangladesh	7
Belgium	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Brazil	4
Burundi	1
Cameroon	1
Canada	20408
Chile	3
China	5
Colombia	6
Denmark	2
Dominican Republic	1
Egypt	5
El Salvador	1
United Kingdom	65
Ethiopia	1
Germany	7
Greece	1
Guyana	4
Hong Kong	241
Hungary	1
India	553
Iran	6
Israel	19
Jamaica	21
Kazakhstan	1
Lebanon	6
Lithuania	1
Malta	1
Mauritius	1

Mexico	1
Nepal	1
Netherlands	3
New Zealand	1
Nigeria	5
Norway	1
Pakistan	8
Palestine State	1
Peru	3
Philippines	14
Poland	3
Portugal	2
Macedonia	2
Romania	9
Russia	2
Slovakia	1
South Africa	19
South Korea	3
Spain	1
Sweden	2
Turkiye	2
Uganda	2
Ukraine	1
United Arab Emirates	1
United States of America	1206
Zimbabwe	2
Other Countries	2336

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	24460
French	583

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Other	25043

E. Data Notes

A.0. The total number of registrants above (25,043) is comprised of 24,563 social workers and 480 dual registrants (individuals registered in both categories, social work and social service work).

A.4. The jurisdiction of initial training for the 2,336 records mentioned in A4 (Other/Not Collected) is unavailable due to limitations in legacy database systems.

A.6. The College introduced the Equity and Inclusion Questions on the 2024 online renewal form. This initiative invites registrants to share demographic information on a voluntary basis. The Equity and Inclusion Questions are taken from existing validated data sources (where such data sources exist), for example the Canadian Census and the Anti-Racism Data Standards – as set out in the Anti-Racism Act. Although some of these data sources are not wholly inclusive, using existing questions will allow for the data collected by the College to be measured and compared to a degree with the broader Ontario public. The College has not yet analyzed or publicly shared the collected data. This is an action plan for future data analysis and reporting. The results will be brought forward to Council before being shared publicly.

Profession Name	Total Number of Members
Social Service Worker	3997

Class of License	Total Number of Members	Total Number of Internationally Educated Members
Full / General/ Independent Practice Inactive Retired	3850 123 24	2 0 0

Gender	Number of Members
Female Male X (includes trans, non-binary, and two-spirit people) Other / not collected	3417 544 34 2

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Number of Members
Ontario Other provinces and territories	3016 8
United States Other International Other/not collected	1 2 970

Country of Initial Training	Number of Members
Brazil	1
Canada	3024
Mexico	1
United States of America	1
Other Countries	970

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	3937
French	60

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Other	3997

E. Data Notes

A.6. The College introduced the Equity and Inclusion Questions on the 2024 online renewal form. This initiative invites registrants to share demographic information on a voluntary basis. The Equity and Inclusion Questions are taken from existing validated data sources (where such data sources exist), for example the Canadian Census and the Anti-Racism Data Standards – as set out in the Anti-Racism Act. Although some of these data sources are not wholly inclusive, using existing questions will allow for the data collected by the College to be measured and compared to a degree with the broader Ontario public. The College has not yet analyzed or publicly shared the collected data. This is an action plan for future data analysis and reporting. The results will be brought forward to Council before being shared publicly.

A.7. The jurisdiction of initial training for the 970 records mentioned in A4 (Other/Not Collected) is unavailable due to limitations in legacy database systems.

F. Applicant Profile

Profession Name	Total Number of Applicants
Social Worker	**3091**

Gender	Number of Applicants
Female	2620
Male	407
X (includes trans, non-binary, and two-spirit people)	53
Other / not collected	11

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Applications received in 2023	Applications with decisions pending
Ontario	1968	223
Other provinces and territories	182	10
United States	98	6
Other International	188	17
Other/not collected	655	138

Country of Initial Training	Number of Applicants
Australia	5
Bangladesh	1
Barbados	1
Canada	1982
China	1

Egypt	1
Ghana	1
Hong Kong	109
Hungary	1
India	110
Israel	2
Jamaica	1
Kenya	1
New Zealand	1
Nigeria	2
Philippines	3
Macedonia	1
South Africa	2
Spain	1
Turkiye	1
Uganda	2
United Kingdom	9
United States of America	100
Zimbabwe	1
Other Countries	752

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	2975
French	116

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Not collected	3091

G. Data Notes

B.2.

1. Out of the 394 SW in progress applications at the end of the reporting year mentioned in B2, 69 applications were fully reviewed and approved by the College, awaiting only applicant's payment of the registration fee.

2. The jurisdiction of initial training for the 655 records mentioned in B2 (Other/Not Collected) is unavailable due to limitations in legacy database systems.

B.5. The College does not collect applicant data on racial identity at this time.

H. Application Decisions

The table below summarizes the outcome of registration decisions finalized in 2023. Some applications may have been received in the previous year.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Successful	Unsuccessful	Withdrawn
Ontario	1710	4	31
Other provinces and territories	171	0	1
United States	92	0	0
Other International	170	0	1
Other/not collected	151	9	238

I. New Registrants

For the 2023 reporting year, the breakdown of new registrants by class of registration is provided below:

Class of registration	Total new registrants by class	Number of internationally educated registrants
Full / General/ Independent Practice	2294	170

J. Data Notes

For the 151 records categorized in B7 as "Other/Not Collected", the jurisdiction of the initial training cannot be determined due to limitations in legacy database systems.

K. Reviews and Appeals

Applicants for registration may appeal a registration decision. An **internal review or appeal** involves formal reconsideration of a registration decision further to an application and submissions by the applicant.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of internal reviews and appeals processed	Number of decisions changed following internal review or appeal
Ontario	1	0

An **external review or appeal** involves review of a registration decision by an external appeal tribunal or court, such as the Health Professions Review and Appeal Board or Divisional Court.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of applicants who sought external review or appeal	Number of decisions changed following external review or appeal
Ontario	0	0

Issues raised in reviews and appeals can point to challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top issues or reasons that applicants raised during these appeal proceedings.

Issue or reason raised	Number of appeals
1. Applicant provided new information/supporting documents	1
2. Applicant believed that they met the criteria through their existing academic programs or experience	0

Internationally trained applicants face additional challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top reasons for not registering internationally trained individuals.

Reason for not registering	Number of internationally trained applicants

L. Data Notes

None of the requests for review received in 2023 were from internationally trained individuals.

Profession Name	Total Number of Applicants
Social Service Worker	**1418**

Gender	Number of Applicants
Female	1187
Male	209
X (includes trans, non-binary, and two-spirit people)	16
Other / not collected	6

Jurisdiction of Initial Training	Applications received in 2023	Applications with decisions pending
Ontario	1017	214
Other provinces and territories	5	3
Other International	6	2
Other/not collected	390	91

Country of Initial Training	Number of Applicants
Canada	1013
Bangladesh	1
United Kingdom	1
Hong Kong	2
India	4
United States of America	1
Other Countries	396

Official language of preference	Number of Members
English	1369
French	49

Racial identity (optional)	Number of Members
Not collected	1418

G. Data Notes

B.2.

1. Out of the 310 SSW in progress applications at the end of the reporting year mentioned in B2, 81 applications were fully reviewed and approved by the College, awaiting only applicant's payment of the registration fee.

2. The jurisdiction of initial training for the 390 records mentioned in B2 (Other/Not Collected) is unavailable due to limitations in legacy database systems.

B.5. The College does not collect applicant data on racial identity at this time.

H. Application Decisions

The table below summarizes the outcome of registration decisions finalized in 2023. Some applications may have been received in the previous year.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Successful	Unsuccessful	Withdrawn
Ontario	771	2	30
Other provinces and territories	2	0	0
Other International	0	1	3
Other/not collected	30	0	0

I. New Registrants

For the 2023 reporting year, the breakdown of new registrants by class of registration is provided below:

Class of registration	Total new registrants by class	Number of internationally educated registrants
Full / General/ Independent Practice	803	0

J. Data Notes

The jurisdiction of initial training for the 30 records mentioned in B7 (Other/Not Collected) is unavailable due to limitations in legacy database systems.

K. Reviews and Appeals

Applicants for registration may appeal a registration decision. An **internal review or appeal** involves formal reconsideration of a registration decision further to an application and submissions by the applicant.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of internal reviews and appeals processed	Number of decisions changed following internal review or appeal
Ontario	7	1

An **external review or appeal** involves review of a registration decision by an external appeal tribunal or court, such as the Health Professions Review and Appeal Board or Divisional Court.

Jurisdiction of initial training	Number of applicants who sought external review or appeal	Number of decisions changed following external review or appeal
Ontario	0	0

Issues raised in reviews and appeals can point to challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top issues or reasons that applicants raised during these appeal proceedings.

Issue or reason raised	Number of appeals
1. Applicant provided new information/supporting documents	4
2. Applicant believed that they met the criteria through their existing academic programs or experience	3

Internationally trained applicants face additional challenges in the registration process. The table below summarizes top reasons for not registering internationally trained individuals.

Reason for not registering	Number of internationally trained applicants

L. Data Notes

None of the requests for review received in 2023 were from internationally trained individuals.

8. Changes Related to New Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

By Ontario law, regulated occupations must provide registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and far. Non-health occupations are governed by the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA)*, while health professions are governed by *the Regulated Health Professions Act, 2011 (RHPA)*.

In 2021, both statutes were amended to incorporate substantive provisions to:

    A. Eliminate the use of Canadian experience requirements except under prescribed circumstances.

    B. Streamline language proficiency testing requirements.

    C. Provide for the continuity of registration processes during emergency situations.

    D. Set registration time limits. (FARPACTA only)

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS has made the following changes to comply with these new legal obligations:

A. Canadian Experience

Change required: No changes required

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS has taken the following measures to comply with legislative requirements on eliminating Canadian experience requirements unless an exemption is granted or an alternative is identified that meets criteria prescribed in regulations (non-health regulators) or the exceptions in legislation are met (regulated health colleges).

The College did not/does have a Canadian experience requirement in place. Applicants applying for registration through the equivalency stream (combination of academic credentials and experience performing the role of a social worker or social service worker) may submit evidence of Canadian and/or international experience performing the role.

B. Language Proficiency Testing

Change required: Yes

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS has taken the following measures to comply with recent legislative changes requiring that regulators accept language proficiency testing results derived from any of the tests accepted for immigration purposes to satisfy their language proficiency requirements:

The College revised its Registration Policy on Language Proficiency in December 2023 to ensure alignment with the amendments made to the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act (FARPACTA). The revised policy includes the following language proficiency tests used for immigration purposes by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC):
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) General Test
- Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) General Test
- Test d'évaluation de français (TEF)
- Test de connaissance du français (TCF)

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS offers applicants the following options to demonstrate language proficiency.

- IELTS (General)
- CELPIP (General)
- TEF Canada
- TCF Canada

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- Other language proficiency tests

C. Emergency Registration

Change required: Yes

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS has taken the following measures to comply with requirements to establish an emergency class (health colleges) or develop an emergency registration plan (non-health regulators).

> The College is putting finishing touches on its draft Emergency Registration Plan, to be submitted to the OFC by early July. This plan will ensure that the College is ready to respond and can ensure continuity of registration processes and regulatory functions should an unforeseen emergency arise.

D. Registration timelines (FARPACTA Regulators only)

Profession: Social Worker

i.   Domestic Labour Mobility Applicants

9.1 (4) of FARPACTA prescribes that regulators must make a registration decision within 30 business days from the time that they receive a complete application "and everything required by the regulated profession in respect of the application."

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS requires the following documentation before beginning to count the 30-day registration time-period. This would be the starting point of the registration process for the purpose the data summarized below.

- Completed application form
- Letter of standing / good character
- Payment of fee

For domestic labour mobility applications received between January 1, 2023 and November 30, 2023, registration timelines and outcomes are summarized below:

Registration decisions	30 days or less	More than 30 days
Full registration granted	120	48
Alternative registration granted	0	0
No registration granted	0	0

ii.   Internationally Trained Individuals

Sections 5 and 6 of Ontario Regulation 261/22 made under FARPACTA establish two-time standards for ITIs:

- **A six-month time limit** for a regulator to make a registration decision following

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receipt of everything that it requires in respect of an application for registration. (This time limit must be met in 90% of all cases.)

- **A 12-month standard** for the regulator to report on its ability to register ITIs, who are eligible for registration without condition, from the earlier of the date that:
  - (a) the regulated profession receives everything it requires in respect of the individual's application for registration, or
  - (b) any third-party that assesses the individual's qualification on behalf of the regulated profession, receives everything it requires for this purpose.

Section 6 of the regulation further stipulates that the regulator's annual Fair Registration Practices Report shall include data on a regulator's compliance with the six-month standard, and its ability to meet the 12-month standard and, where the regulator has been unable to meet this one-year standard, the steps that the regulator is taking to meet this target.

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS requires the following documentation before beginning to count the six-month registration time-period for internationally educated individuals.

- Completed application form
- Credential assessment report
- Payment of fee
- Other (please specify) - The College requires the following information from the Internationally Trained Applicants: completed application form, credential assessment report, payment of application fee, course descriptions, and evidence of work experience performing the role of a social worker.

Measures undertaken to date to comply with new registration time limits for internationally trained individuals are as follows:

The College has been granted an exemption by the Fairness Commissioner until November 1, 2023, from the time limits for internationally trained individuals (ITIs) and domestic labour mobility applicants ("DLMAs") outlined in the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA). Out of the 48 DLMAs mentioned above registered in more than 30 days, 42 applicants were registered prior to the time limit of November 1, 2023.

The College follows the steps below to ensure compliance with the two-time limits for internationally trained individuals:

Assigns priority levels:
All applications for registration from Internationally Trained Applicants (ITIs) received by College are assigned a priority level at the intake stage. All applications are reviewed within 10 business days and an acknowledgement of receipt email is sent to applicants within this timeline. The acknowledgement also outlines any missing documents or information.

Creates views to track applications:
While the College awaits the submission of outstanding documents or information, applications are placed in a queue. Once the required documents or information are received, the applications are re-screened for completeness. Applications deemed complete are moved to the next stage in the process, which is the issuance of the registration decision. Incomplete applications remain in the queue, "on hold" until the required documents are received or until a sunsetting deadline has passed.

Follow up with applicants:
To ensure timely completion of applications and minimize delays, follow-up reminders are sent out to applicants whose applications are incomplete or missing documents.

Please note that new legal time limits came into effect as of July 1, 2023. Because of longer time periods for internationally educated applicants, regulators will only be required to report publicly on achieving these requirements in the 2024 Fair Registration Practices Report.

Profession: Social Service Worker

i.   Domestic Labour Mobility Applicants

9.1 (4) of FARPACTA prescribes that regulators must make a registration decision within 30 business days from the time that they receive a complete application "and everything required by the regulated profession in respect of the application."

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS requires the following documentation before beginning to count the 30-day registration time-period. This would be the starting point of the registration process for the purpose the data summarized below.

- Other (please specify)   Not applicable for the social service work profession

For domestic labour mobility applications received between January 1, 2023 and November 30, 2023, registration timelines and outcomes are summarized below:

Registration decisions	30 days or less	More than 30 days
Full registration granted	0	0
Alternative registration granted	0	0
No registration granted	0	0

ii. Internationally Trained Individuals

Sections 5 and 6 of Ontario Regulation 261/22 made under FARPACTA establish two-time standards for ITIs:

- **A six-month time limit** for a regulator to make a registration decision following receipt of everything that it requires in respect of an application for registration. (This time limit must be met in 90% of all cases.)

- **A 12-month standard** for the regulator to report on its ability to register ITIs, who are eligible for registration without condition, from the earlier of the date that:
  - (a) the regulated profession receives everything it requires in respect of the individual's application for registration, or
  - (b) any third-party that assesses the individual's qualification on behalf of the regulated profession, receives everything it requires for this purpose.

Section 6 of the regulation further stipulates that the regulator's annual Fair Registration Practices Report shall include data on a regulator's compliance with the six-month standard, and its ability to meet the 12-month standard and, where the regulator has been unable to meet this one-year standard, the steps that the regulator is taking to meet this target.

Ontario College of SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS requires the following documentation before beginning to count the six-month registration time-period for internationally educated individuals.

- Completed application form
- Credential assessment report
- Payment of fee
- Other (please specify) - The College requires the following information from the Internationally Trained Applicants: completed application form, credential assessment report, payment of application fee, course descriptions, and evidence of work experience performing the role of a social service worker.

Measures undertaken to date to comply with new registration time limits for internationally trained individuals are as follows:

The College has been granted an exemption by the Fairness Commissioner until November 1, 2023, from the time limits for internationally trained individuals (ITIs) outlined in s. 5. (1) of the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006 (FARPACTA).

The College follows the steps below to ensure compliance with the two-time limits for internationally trained individuals.

Assigns priority levels:
All applications for registration from Internationally Trained Applicants (ITIs) received by College are assigned a priority level at the intake stage. All applications are reviewed within 10 business days and an acknowledgement of receipt email is sent to applicants within this timeline. The acknowledgement also outlines any missing documents or information.

Creates views to track applications:
While the College awaits the submission of outstanding documents or information, applications are placed in a queue. Once the required documents or information are received, the applications are re-screened for completeness. Applications deemed complete are moved to the next stage in the process, which is the issuance of the registration decision. Incomplete applications remain in the queue, "on hold" until the required documents are received or until a sunsetting deadline has passed.

Follow up with applicants:
To ensure timely completion of applications and minimize delays, follow-up reminders are sent out to applicants whose applications are incomplete or missing documents.

Please note that new legal time limits came into effect as of July 1, 2023. Because of longer time periods for internationally educated applicants, regulators will only be required to report publicly on achieving these requirements in the 2024 Fair Registration Practices Report.

Glossary of terms

Applicant: An individual who has applied for membership in a regulated profession or compulsory trade, with the associated rights to practice their profession / trade or use a professional title.

Domestic labour mobility: Applications subject to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which stipulates that a certificate issued by one province or territory should be recognized by all others unless there is an exception due to public health, safety and security reasons.

Internationally educated / trained: An individual whose initial professional education was not from a Canadian educational institution, or who is applying for trade certification based on experience gained outside Canada. This category includes individuals with education / training in the US and other countries. It also includes individuals who completed their initial professional education outside Canada and later addressed gaps with courses or a bridging program based in Canada.

Jurisdiction of initial training: For professions, the jurisdiction in which an applicant obtained their initial professional education used in full or partial fulfilment of registration requirements. For trades, the jurisdiction of initial trade experience listed on a Trades Equivalency Assessment (TEA) application.

Member: An individual who has satisfied the conditions for registration in their profession / trade and has been granted the right to practice and/or the right to use a professional designation or title. Members may hold a full license to engage in independent practice, or they may hold an alternate class of registration.

Racial identity: Voluntary self-report data of racial identity as a social description. Follows categories identified in the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate Data <https://www.ontario.ca/document/data-standards-identification-and-monitoring-systemic-racism> .

Registration requirements: the entry-to-practice requirements that that an applicant must meet to be granted full membership in a regulated profession or trade, with the associated right to practice or right to use a professional title.

- **Academic requirement**: The formal education, or equivalent, that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade.
- **Experience requirement:** The experiential training or work experience that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade.
- **Language requirement**: The level of language proficiency that is required for licensing or certification in a particular regulated profession or trade, and the language proficiency tests accepted in fulfillment of this requirement.

Third party service provider: An external organization that assesses applicant qualifications on behalf of the regulator.