



Ontario College of
Social Workers and
Social Service Workers

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

On March 6, 2025 allegations of the Registrant's professional misconduct were referred to the Discipline Committee for hearing, on a date yet to be fixed. Please see the Notice of Hearing below:

**ONTARIO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS
AND SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS**

IN THE MATTER OF Sections 26 and 28 of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, 1998, S.O. 1998, Chapter 31;

AND IN THE MATTER OF a hearing directed to be held by the Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, 1998;

AND IN THE MATTER OF allegations respecting the professional conduct of Ryan Young, a Social Worker and registrant with the said College;

NOTICE OF HEARING

TAKE NOTICE that a hearing will take place on a date to be fixed by the Registrar at the hour of 9:30 o'clock in the forenoon (or as soon after that time as a panel can be convened for the purpose of conducting the hearing) electronically, in writing or in person at the Board Room of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, 250 Bloor Street East, Suite 1000, Toronto, Ontario before the Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (to be confirmed). The hearing will be held pursuant to the provisions of sections 26 and 28 of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* (the "**Act**") and pursuant to the Regulations made thereunder, for the purpose of hearing and determining allegations of professional misconduct against you, Ryan Young, which allegations were referred to the Discipline Committee pursuant to section 24(5)(a) of the Act.

AND TAKE NOTICE that you are alleged to be guilty of professional misconduct within the meaning of section 26(2) of the Act in that you are alleged to have engaged in conduct that contravenes the Act, Ontario Regulation 384/00 (the "**Professional Misconduct Regulation**"), Schedule "A" to By-law No. 66 of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, being the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics (the "**Code of Ethics**"), and Schedule "B" to By-law No. 66 of the Ontario College of Social

Workers and Social Service Workers, being the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Standards of Practice Handbook (the "**Handbook**")¹.

I. The following are particulars of the said allegations:

1. You are a registered social service worker with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the "College"), having obtained a certificate of registration on October 26, 2022.
2. During the relevant period, you were employed by [employment] as a [job title]. In that role, you provided mental health and addiction counseling services to outpatients.
3. Client A became a client in the [program] after having completed a residential treatment program for alcohol addiction. You provided Client A mental health and counselling services in individual and group setting commencing in or around October 2021.
4. You were aware that Client A was a vulnerable client and suffered from mental health issues, including depression, anxiety and addiction. Client A was a single mother who had experienced significant trauma. In the years prior to her involvement with you, Client A had lost her home, her job, survived sexual assault and had been suicidal. This was known to you.
5. You continued to provide group and individual counselling to Client A until 2023. In July 2023, after Client A reached out to you, you responded by continuing a therapeutic relationship as well as initiating a personal relationship. At this time, you were no longer working at [employment]. You continued to provide Client A supportive counselling outside [employment].
6. On or around July 22, 2023, you reached out to Client A by text initiating dialogue of a personal nature.
7. Thereafter, you failed to meet the standards of the profession, failed to maintain appropriate boundaries, and/or engaged in an inappropriate personal and sexual relationship with Client A, including but not limited to:

¹ By-law 24, as amended by By-law Nos. 32 and 48 and revoked effective July 1, 2008 by By-law 66, continues to apply to conduct which occurred prior to July 1, 2008.

- a. developing romantic and/or sexual feelings for Client A and taking no steps to draw boundaries;
 - b. communicating with Client A on your personal phone;
 - c. exchanging in personal texts and/or emails with Client A;
 - d. engaging in a sexual activity with Client A, including sexual intercourse.
8. You engaged in a romantic and sexual relationship with Client A which included:
- a. spending days and weekends together, renting Airbnbs as Client A was living in a women's shelter with her child at the time;
 - b. vacationing together in Algonquin Park;
 - c. arranging to live together and securing a residential lease to share an apartment together.
9. You led Client A to believe you were going to leave your wife and move in with her and her [child]. You were aware throughout that this relationship was prohibited.
10. In or around January 2024, you abruptly ended your sexual and personal relationship with Client A, leaving Client A in a state of distress. You did not move into the leased premises. Client A was pregnant with your child at the time.

II. It is alleged that by reason of engaging in some or all of the conduct outlined above, you are guilty of professional misconduct as set out in section 26(2)(a) and (c) of the Act:

- a. In that you violated sections 2.2 and 2.10 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle I of the Handbook 3rd ed. (commented on in Interpretations 1.7 and/or 1.8) by:
 - i. failing to be aware of and reflecting upon your values, attitudes, assumptions and biases and how these impact your professional relationships with clients;
 - ii. failing to distinguish your needs and interests from those of your clients to ensure that the clients' needs and interests remained paramount.

and Principle I of the Handbook 2nd ed. (as commented on in Interpretations 1.5. and 1.6) by:

- i. failing to distinguish your needs and interests from those of your clients to ensure that, within professional relationships, clients' needs and interests remain paramount;
 - ii. failing to distinguish your needs and interests from those of your clients to ensure that the clients' needs and interests remain paramount.
- b. In that you violated sections 2.2 and 2.5 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle VIII of the Handbook 3rd ed. (as commented on in Interpretations 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5 and/or 8.9) by:
- i. failing to ensure that sexual misconduct does not occur;
 - ii. engaging in sexual intercourse and/or other forms of physical sexual relations with a client;
 - iii. engaging in touching of a sexual nature with a client;
 - iv. engaging in behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature towards the client;
 - v. engaging in sexual intercourse, physical sexual relations and/or touching of a sexual nature with the client to whom you provided counseling services;
 - vi. failing to seek consultation/supervision and developing an appropriate plan when you developed sexual, romantic or otherwise unprofessional feelings toward a client that could put the client at risk;

and Principle VIII of the Handbook 2nd ed. (as commented on in Interpretations 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.7) by:

- i. failing to ensure that sexual misconduct did not occur;
 - ii. engaging in sexual intercourse, physical sexual relations, touching of a sexual nature and behaviour or remarks of sexual nature towards a client.
 - iii. developing sexual feelings towards your client that could, in your judgment, put the client at risk, and failing to seek consultation/supervision or develop an appropriate plan; and
 - iv. engaging in sexual relations, including with your client to whom you provided counselling services, following the termination of the professional relationship.
- c. In that you violated sections 2.2, 2.6 and 2.10 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle II of the Handbook 3rd ed. (commented on in Interpretations 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.4, 2.2.6 and/or 2.2.12) by:

- i. failing to recognize that you were in a position of power and responsibility to the client and responsible for ensuring that the client was protected from the abuse of such power during and after the provision of professional services;
- ii. failing to establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries for the protection of the client;
- iii. engaging in sexual relations with a client;
- iv. using information obtained during a professional relationship, and using your professional position of authority, to coerce, improperly influence, harass, abuse or exploit a client; and/or
- v. engaging in conduct that could reasonably be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession of social service work

and Principle II of the Handbook 2nd ed. (as commented on in Interpretations 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2. and 2.2.3, and 2.2.8) by:

- i. Failing to ensure clients are protected from an abuse of power, including sexual misconduct, during and after the provision of professional services and/or failing to establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in a professional relationship;
- ii. engaging in a professional relationship that constitutes a conflict of interest and/or in a situation in which you ought reasonably to have known that the client or former client would be at risk; failing to evaluate professional relationships and other situations involving clients or former clients for potential conflicts of interest; failing to avoid conflicts of interest and/or dual relationship with clients that could impair your professional judgment or increase risk of exploitation or harm to clients;
- iii. engaging in sexual relations with a client;
- iv. using information obtained in the course of a professional relationship, and using the professional position of authority, to coerce, improperly influence, harass, abuse or exploit a client, or former client;
- v. engaging in conduct that could reasonably be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession of social service work.

d. In that you violated Sections 2.2 and 2.10 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle III of the Handbook 3rd ed. (commented on in Interpretation 3.13) by:

- i. failing to assume full responsibility for demonstrating that your client has not been exploited, coerced or manipulated intentionally or unintentionally where a personal relationship occurs with the former client and establishing a personal relationship with a former client that creates a conflict of interest;

and Principle III of the Handbook 2nd ed. (commented on in Interpretation 3.7) by:

- i. failing to assume full responsibility for demonstrating that your client has not been exploited, coerced or manipulated intentionally or unintentionally.
- e. In that you violated section 2.28 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation;
- f. In that you violated section 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation by engaging in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

AND TAKE NOTICE that the Discipline Committee may make an order under Section 26(4), (5), (6), (7), (8) and (9) of the Act, or any of them, in respect of any or all of the above allegations.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that the parties (including the College and you) shall be given the opportunity to examine before the hearing any documents that will be given in evidence at the hearing.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that if the hearing is proposed to take place in writing, either of the parties (including the College and you) may, in accordance with the procedures set out in the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act*, RSO 1990, c S.22 (the “SPPA”) and the Discipline Committee’s Rules of Procedure, seek to require that the hearing be held electronically or orally by satisfying the Discipline Committee that there is good reason for not holding a written hearing.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that if the hearing is proposed to take place electronically, either of the parties (including the College and you) may, in accordance with the procedures set out in the SPPA and the Discipline Committee’s Rules of Procedure, seek to require that the hearing be held orally by satisfying the Discipline Committee that holding an electronic hearing is likely to cause the party significant prejudice.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that at the said hearing, you are entitled to be present and to be represented by counsel.

IF YOU DO NOT ATTEND AT THE HEARING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS NOTICE OF HEARING, THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE MAY PROCEED WITH THE HEARING, AND MAY DEAL WITH THE ABOVE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST YOU, IN YOUR ABSENCE AND WITHOUT ANY FURTHER NOTICE TO YOU.

Dated at Toronto, the 7th day of March 2025.

By: _____
Registrar and CEO
Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers