

Consent Reprimand

Date: February 17, 2022

The NSCSW Complaints Committee issued a reprimand with consent in accordance with section 29(2)(e) of the Social Workers Act to one of its members for conduct unbecoming. "Conduct unbecoming" means conduct outside the practice of social work that tends to bring discredit upon the social work profession.

In the context of social media, the NSCSW is statutorily mandated to protect the public interest and integrity of the social work profession by setting and enforcing standards as to public speech by Social Workers. The NSCSW, as a professional regulator, may impose requirements relating to civility, respectful communication, and other matters that impact freedom of expression. When a Social Worker's social media posts result in a sufficiently negative impact on the profession or the public interest, the NSCSW may intervene to impose disciplinary and/or remedial action.

In this case, a member of the NSCSW engaged in a social media exchange with a member of the public regarding COVID-19 vaccine mandates. Within the exchange, the member identified themselves as a Social Worker. It appeared to the Complaints Committee that the member used their status and privilege as a Social Worker to promote ideas and opinions that conflated COVID-19 vaccine mandates with events related to the Holocaust. It also appeared to the Complaints Committee that the member condoned the spread of misinformation regarding vaccine mandates. The Complaints Committee decided the member's conduct in this regard constituted conduct unbecoming and warranted a reprimand.

The member consented to the reprimand.