

Professional development standards

Changes for active members

learn more at nscsw.org/pd

Old standard

Annual professional development: 40 hrs
All annual PD was on topics chosen at the discretion of the member.

At least 20 hrs had to be formal (e.g. structured learning, teaching, research, scholarship).

Up to 20 hrs could be informal activities. Some subcategories of informal PD had separate maximums applied (e.g. up to 5 hours could be for personal activities such as self-care).

Original mandatory topic

Social work ethics: 5 hours/5 years

This was not included in the annual total of 40 hours. The five year cycle was tracked separately for each member.

New professional development standards for NCSW members were approved in 2021 and took effect January 2022.

New standard

Annual professional development: 40 hrs

Discretionary topics: 34 hrs

Still must include at least 20 hrs formal PD on discretionary topics chosen by the member. Subcategories of formal PD have been more clearly defined.

Up to 14 hrs informal PD on discretionary topics. Subcategories have been redefined and have new limits ([see website for details](#)).

New mandatory topics: 6 hrs

These are now required every year and included in the annual total.

Training only



Social work ethics: 1 hour/year



Anti-racist & anti-discriminatory practice: 1 hour/year

Training and/or activities



Truth & Reconciliation: 1 hour/year



Social justice: 1 hour/year



Prevention of vicarious trauma & secondary distress: 2 hours/year