

# Professional development standards

## *Changes for associate members*

*learn more at [nscsw.org/pd](https://nscsw.org/pd)*

### Old standard

Annual professional development: 20 hrs  
All annual PD was on topics chosen at the discretion of the member.

This could be a mix of formal and informal activities. An associate member could choose to only pursue informal activities such as reading and volunteer service. However, some subcategories of informal PD did have separate maximums applied (e.g. up to 5 hours 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 20 hours.

A five year cycle was tracked separately for each member. However, associate members at the end of their cycle were given an extension until they resumed active status.

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

### New standard

Annual professional development: 20 hrs

**Discretionary topics: 14 hrs**

All 14 hrs on topics chosen by the member may be formal, informal, or a mix of the two. However, some of the subcategories of informal PD 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 for associate members.

#### 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