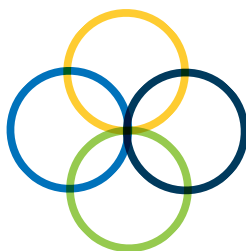
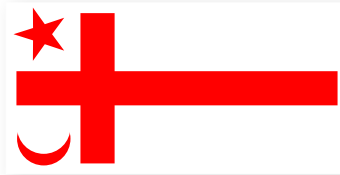


# Framework For Safe(R) Social Work Practice



**A Path Forward for Ethical Social Work:  
Systems, Safety, and Justice**



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The NSCSW is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, whose inherent rights were recognized in the Peace and Friendship Treaties that were signed from 1725 to 1779. This series of treaties did not surrender Indigenous land, resources or sovereignty to the British Empire, but instead established rules for an ongoing relationship between nations. The treaties were later reaffirmed by Canada in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, and remain active to this day. The NSCSW joins our members and our communities in the labour of reconciliation, and we are grateful to live and work together as treaty people in Mi'kma'ki.



## REPARATIONS

The College firmly recognizes that reparations are both a moral and material obligation to atone for the deep-rooted history of anti-Black racism within Nova Scotia and the broader Canadian context, which has led to human rights violations and crimes committed to people of African descent. We are unequivocally committed to engaging with our members in proactive efforts toward reparations for the historical enslavement of peoples of African descent and addressing the systemic disenfranchisement faced by African Nova Scotian communities.

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## PROACTIVE REGULATION:

### Make Care Safe(r)



Plan ahead to spot potential issues before they happen

### Put Public Safety First



Improve professional practices and identify system problems that affect care.

### Monitor Concerns



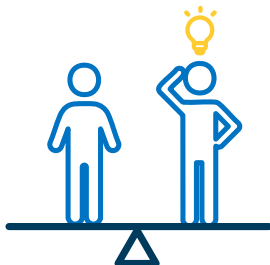
Identify trends in social work practice concerns.

## NSCSW FRAMEWORK GOALS:

1. Enhance safe(r) services for both service users and social workers
2. Enhance overall care delivery and impact

## APPROACHES:

### Develop Solutions



Develop solutions that are proportionate, transparent, and accountable.

### Navigating System Change



Focus on professional responsibility and necessary system changes

### Connecting People & Policy



Work closely with professionals and the public to make sure rules and systems work well together and build trust.

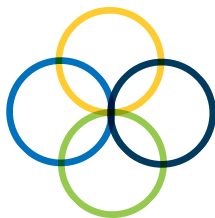
# FRAMEWORK FOR SAFE(R) SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

## CORE VALUES:

Human Rights



Intersectionality



Social Justice



## MULTI-LEVEL FOCUS:

### MICRO:

Upholding individual professional conduct

### MEZZO:

Improving community practices

### MACRO:

Tackling systemic issues



## DIRECT PRACTICE STRATEGIES

NSCSW is accountable for ensuring that Nova Scotians can rely on safe, skilled, ethical social work services. We identify areas for improvement by listening to feedback and being alert for emerging trends.

OUTCOMES:	STRATEGIES:
<p><b>1. Dignity in Dialogue</b></p>  <p>Communication reflects dignity and worth through written, verbal, and nonverbal methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train social workers to adopt the new Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.</li> <li>• Develop a toolkit for clear and respectful communication skills.</li> <li>• Training on building therapeutic alliances and rapport.</li> <li>• Assess communication skills of candidates during candidacy.</li> <li>• Anti-discrimination training on unconscious bias and cultural attentiveness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Living Our Values</b></p>  <p>Upholding core social work values in both professional and personal conduct.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop clear policy guidelines for professional behaviour on social media, and use of artificial intelligence.</li> <li>• Encourage peer support and supervision.</li> <li>• Expand professional networks through in-person events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Professional Relationships</b></p>  <p>Maintaining professional boundaries within client relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop guidelines for therapeutic alliances and boundaries.</li> <li>• Strengthen supervision practices for dealing with potential conflicts.</li> <li>• Promote the use of an ethical decision-making tool</li> </ul>

## DIRECT PRACTICE STRATEGIES

### OUTCOMES:

### STRATEGIES:

#### 4. Quality Documentation



Use of respectful and non-judgmental language in documentation.

- Workshops on documentation practices and safety.
- Case management workshops.
- Collaboration with employers on documentation policies.

#### 5. Seeking Necessary Supervision



Social workers engage in regular supervision and guidance on practice.

- Establish supervision guidelines, policies, and procedures.
- Provide consultations on and peer support on supervision practices.
- Present supervision guidelines to employers and supervisors.

#### 6. Maintaining Privacy & Confidentiality

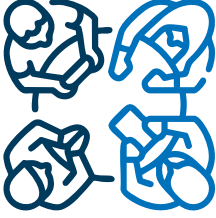




Respect confidentiality in all forms of communication.

- Provide guidelines for confidentiality in remote work settings.
- Develop ethics training on confidentiality laws.
- Offer ethics consultations to social workers, employers and the public.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

NSCSW helps make sure social workers follow ethical standards to protect the people they serve. We create guidelines for good social work practices and work to improve them. This is especially important for supporting vulnerable members of the community and ensuring their safety. We also encourage social workers to connect with their communities, which helps build trust and makes it easier to report concerns. Simply put, we play a key part in making social work safer and more trustworthy for everyone.

OUTCOMES:	STRATEGIES:
<p><b>1. Community &amp; Employer Collaboration</b></p>  <p>Enhance employers' understanding of ethical social work Strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an employer engagement strategy.</li> <li>• Create a transparent Ethical Consultation Process.</li> <li>• Implement feedback mechanisms from employers to actively participation in the regulatory process.</li> <li>• Conduct public awareness campaigns about new Code of Ethics</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Boost Community Participation</b></p>  <p>Strengthen community empowerment and involvement in the regulatory process to improve cohesion and trust, reducing under-reporting of issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop outreach programs with the Nova Scotia Regulated Health Profession Network.</li> <li>• Improve complaint reporting mechanisms for accessibility.</li> <li>• Collaborate with community leaders to build trust and understanding related to social work.</li> <li>• Ensure representation of marginalized communities within the council of the College.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Fostering Resilience</b></p>  <p>Address moral distress among social workers by supporting resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote resilience-building activities through community care.</li> <li>• Provide ongoing training to boost confidence and professional identity.</li> <li>• Advocate for supportive work environments.</li> <li>• Expand communities of practice to foster connections.</li> </ul>



## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### OUTCOMES:

### STRATEGIES:

#### 4. Enhancing Professional Identity



Strengthen professional identity.

- Use Connection blog to reinforce core social work values and share best practices.
- Revise Candidacy Mentorship Program to strengthen professional identity
- Strengthen awards programs to recognize exemplary social workers.

#### 5. Bridging Trust



Strengthen trust between social workers and the public, especially with communities that have been historically marginalized.

- Ensure transparency and accountability in NSCSW actions.
- Establish a service user feedback system to identify improvement areas.

#### 6. Enhancing Supervision Skills






Build the capacity of supervisors and mentors to meet the growing demand for social work supervision.

- Train more senior social workers as supervisors and mentors.
- Partner with universities and colleges for supervision support.
- Advocate for policies recognizing supervisors' roles.

## ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC ISSUES

NSCSW works to create and support policies that improve social conditions and promote fairness. In order to protect the public, we push for changes to policies that help make social work safer, more ethical, and fairer for everyone.

OUTCOMES:	STRATEGIES:
<p><b>1. Tackling Racism Towards Justice</b></p>  <p>Work towards fairness and equality, with a focus on fighting against anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement mandatory anti-bias training for social workers.</li> <li>• Advocate for policy changes using an intersectional lens to impact justice.</li> <li>• Collaborate with organizations to advocate for policy that reduces economic inequality</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Holistic Health Approach</b></p>  <p>Support a health approach that looks at social, economic, and environmental factors together.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop regulations for health care social work and advocate for the inclusion of the bio-psycho-social model in all health policies.</li> <li>• Develop resources and support for social workers to implement this approach effectively</li> <li>• Develop resources to educate service users about the broader determinants of health, empowering them to engage in political processes that influence healthcare delivery.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Empowering Leadership</b></p>  <p>Shift from a management style to a leadership approach that focuses on supporting people and communities by understanding and responding to their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for social services that are culturally attentive.</li> <li>• Develop retention policies to prevent burnout and maintain service quality.</li> <li>• Advocate for policies that empower professional judgment.</li> </ul>

## ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC ISSUES

### OUTCOMES:

### STRATEGIES:

#### 4. Enhancing Domestic Violence Support



Strengthen policies and practices to address the impacts of domestic violence, prioritizing the safety and well-being of those affected.

- Equip social workers addressing domestic violence with clearly defined skills and practices.
- Develop guidelines for supporting survivors of domestic violence.
- Enhance protections and support systems for those impacted by domestic violence.

#### 5. Support 2SLGBTQIA+ Protections



Strengthen protections and advocacy for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, ensuring safe environments to tackle misinformation and violence.

- Advocate for school resources to reflect current legislation on gender identity and expression.
- Ensure first-voice representation in decision-making processes affecting 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.
- Build community capacity to advocate for policy changes and counter misinformation about 2SLGBTQIA+ issues.

#### 6. Child and Family Well-Being



Reduce the impacts of poverty on children and families.

- Advocate for stronger social safety nets to support families.
- Promote the creation of an ecosystem for child and family well-being to improve access to essential services.
- Enhance training for Child and Family Well-Being Social Workers.



## ABOUT NSCSW

The Nova Scotia College of Social Workers (NSCSW) exists to serve and protect Nova Scotians by effectively regulating the profession of social work. We work in solidarity with Nova Scotians to advocate for policies that improve social conditions, challenge injustice, and value diversity. Learn more about the College at [nscsw.org/about](https://nscsw.org/about).

## FIND US ONLINE

Facebook, YouTube & LinkedIn: @NSCSW

[nscsw.org](https://nscsw.org)