

New Brunswick Association of Social Workers to Regulate Social Work Technicians

June 7, 2024



The New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (NBASW) is pleased to announce that it has obtained new legislation which allows the Association to regulate both the social work profession and social work technician paraprofession! The NBASW Act received royal assent on June 7, 2024.

Benefits for Both Professions

Having the NBASW regulate social work technicians (SWTs) is a key component of the five-year Social Work Recruitment and Retention Strategy (2023-2028). It will provide a pathway to the social work profession and will protect the public by providing an accountability mechanism and ensuring high standards of qualification, practice standards, and adherence to a professional Code of Ethics.

Social work technicians are specially trained to support the social work profession and will implement portions of social work case plans that fall within their scope of practice.

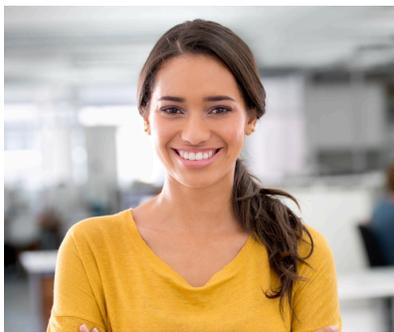
What This Change Means

With the legislation having received royal assent on June 7, 2024, the NBASW will now begin registering social work technicians. The *Social Worker and Social Work Technician Scopes of Practice* document outlines the boundaries of each profession and highlights specific tasks that social workers and social work technicians may perform within their specific scope. Anyone interested in better understanding the two professions is encouraged to review the scopes of practice.

Social work technicians can now be implemented and hired across organizations. When deciding whether a position should be filled by a social worker or a social work technician, employers must consider the tasks that will be required in the role as well as the intensity and breadth of knowledge, skill, and judgment that will be required.

- Social work technicians are suited to positions that require hands-on interventions based on established social work case plans and that are aimed at improving social functioning.
- Social workers are suited to positions that have a higher level of complexity and require an assessment of a person within their environment, interpretation, and complex decision-making and intervention.

Employers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the two scopes of practice and to reach out to the NBASW for more information, as needed.



Progress to Date

Registration for Graduates from Approved Programs: The NBASW recognizes the New Brunswick Community College's (NBCC) *Social Service Community Worker (SSCW)* program and the Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick's *Technique de service social et communautaire* (TSSC) program for social work technician registration. Graduates from these programs are now eligible to apply for social work technician registration. More details can be found on the NBASW [website](#).

12-Month Equivalency Application Period: A 12-month equivalency application period is available to those who are currently working in a position that is considered equivalent to the social work technician scope of practice. The equivalency application period is now open and applications can be submitted until June 7, 2025. More details can be found on the NBASW [website](#).

Social Work Profession

Brief History

Social work has been a regulated profession in New Brunswick since 1988 when the NBASW first obtained control of the title and practice of social work. There are currently over 2,250 social work members in the province. Currently, social workers are regulated by the NBASW Act (2024).

Scope of Practice

In New Brunswick, social workers are professionals who work with individuals, groups, and communities to improve psychosocial wellbeing. As professionals, social workers are responsible for interpreting information and making complex decisions based on their broad-based knowledge and skills.

Social workers assess, diagnose, and prevent social problems and enhance and rehabilitate the social functioning of individuals families, groups, and communities through:

- the provision of counselling services;
- the development, promotion, and delivery of human service programs;
- the development and promotion of social policies; and
- other activities consistent with the objectives of the NBASW.

Licensure Requirements

To become a social worker in New Brunswick, individuals must meet specific requirements, these include:

1. Education: The minimum educational requirement to become a social worker is a BSW or MSW from an Accredited Social Work Program in Canada or the United States. Applicants who earned their social work degree outside Canada and the United States need to have their credentials evaluated by the Canadian Association of Social Workers, before applying to the NBASW.

2. Licensure: To practice social work in New Brunswick, individuals need to be duly registered with the NBASW.

3. Protected Titles/Designations: Individuals who are duly registered with the NBASW are entitled to call themselves "social worker" or "registered social worker" or use the initials "SW" or "RSW".

4. Continuing Education: Social workers are required to complete 30 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours per year and to meet all requirements outlined in the NBASW CPE Policy, including completing one annual *NBASW Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines Training*.

Social Work Technician Paraprofession

Brief History

Although not new in Canada, social work technicians are new to the province of New Brunswick. The NBASW Act (2024) provides the NBASW with the power to control the social work technician title and scope of practice.

Scope of Practice

Social work technicians are paraprofessionals who perform hands-on interventions aimed at improving the social wellbeing of individuals, groups, and communities. As paraprofessionals, certain tasks must be done with case oversight from a social worker or other licensed professional.

Social work technicians provide paraprofessional support to the assessment, prevention of social problems, enhancement of social functioning, and rehabilitation of individuals, families, groups, and communities.

Licensure Requirements

To become a social work technician in New Brunswick, individuals must meet specific requirements, these include:

1. Education: The minimum educational requirement to apply as a social work technician is a college-level education from a recognized social work technician program. For a limited time, until June 7, 2025, people who are working in a social work technician-equivalent role can apply to become a social work technician through the 12-month equivalency application period.

2. Licensure: To practice as a social work technician in New Brunswick, individuals need to be duly registered with the NBASW.

3. Protected Titles/Designations: Individuals who are duly registered with the NBASW are entitled to call themselves “social work technician” or “registered social work technician” or use the initials “SWT” or “RSWT”.

4. Continuing Education: Social work technicians are required to complete 30 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours per year and to meet all requirements outlined in the NBASW CPE Policy, including completing one annual *NBASW Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines Training*.

