



PEI Social Work Registration Board

Private Practice Policy

Authority: [PEI Social Work Act](#)
[PEI Social Work Act Certificate Regulations](#)
[PEI Social Work Act Disciplinary Regulations](#)

Purpose: This purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and minimum requirements for social workers wishing to be endorsed in private practice to ensure high standards of ethical conduct, competence, and client care.

1. Definition: The PEI Social Work Registration Board (PEISWRB) defines private practice as the practice of social work by a registered social worker who is self-employed, a member of a partnership/group practice, or independent contractor. Private practice services are provided for a fee that is agreed to by a client or third party (i.e. Insurance company, EAP provider, or other affiliated organization) or as set out in a contract. Social workers in private practice are solely responsible for the liability of their work and the quality of social work services being provided. They are responsible to ensure compliance with the PEI *Social Work Act* and Regulations, the Code of Ethics, and the standards of practice.
2. Endorsement: All social workers engaging in private practice in PEI, either on a full-time or part-time basis, must be endorsed by the PEISWRB. All endorsements are subject to conditions.
3. Board's Responsibility: The PEISWRB has the legal responsibility to assess applications to determine if the applicant satisfies the requirements to be endorsed for private practice. The Board's primary responsibility is to protect the public.
4. Ethical Responsibility: All social workers engaged in private practice in PEI must adhere to the Code of Ethics adopted by the PEISWRB.

5. Compliance and Accountability: Social workers must comply with all relevant laws, regulations, and professional standards governing their practice including but not limited to the PEI *Social Work Act* and Regulations.
6. Submission Timeline: Applications will be assessed as quickly as possible once all required information is submitted to the Board. Social workers wishing to be endorsed to deliver private practice social work services in PEI should submit their completed application to the PEISWRB at least 12 weeks prior to the intended start date.

Social Workers must receive endorsement by the PEISWRB prior to beginning any private practice work.

7. Application: Applications for endorsement to engage in private practice must include:
 - a. Area of Social Work Practice: Applicants must outline their area of practice in their application form, providing a detailed overview of their intended area of practice. This may include type of service provided; inclusion or exclusion criteria; or area of employment.
 - b. References: Applicants must provide a minimum of two reference letters. Referees must be able to speak to the applicant's social work practice and competencies in the proposed area(s) of practice.
 - c. Education, Training, and Experience: Applicants must demonstrate through a list of relevant education, training, and experience that they are competent in the area of proposed practice.
 - d. Liability Insurance: Applicants are required to show proof of current liability insurance.
 - e. Peer Consultation: Applicants must provide proof of having access to professionals in their area of specializations for the purposes of consultation.
8. Minimum Requirements: A social worker who wishes to apply for an endorsement for private practice must:
 - a. Be a registered social worker in good standing and authorised to engage in the practice of social work in Prince Edwards Island;
 - b. Hold the degree of Master or Doctor of Social Work;
 - c. Have a minimum of four years, or the equivalent hours, within the most recent ten years, of paid experience relevant to the area of specialization in which the social worker proposes to practice;
 - i. In a position for which the primary professional designation is social work or for which a social work qualification is required or preferred; and
 - ii. That was clinically supervised or supervised by a practicing social worker with experience in that area of specialization;
 - d. Provide two letters of reference from qualified professionals who have experience in that area of specialization;
 - e. Meet the requirements of the Act and these regulations respecting continuing professional education.

(Social Work Act Certificate Regulations; s 11(2))

9. Competency: It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate competency in the proposed area of practice in their application for endorsement. Applicants for private practice must demonstrate competence through a combination of education, ongoing training, supervision, and experience. This may include but is not limited to:
- a. Education: Master of Social Work degree with coursework that focuses on the relevant areas of proposed practice; theories and evidence-based skills, modalities, or interventions; and a practicum experience where knowledge, skills, and aptitudes are assessed.
 - b. Advanced training and certification: Post-degree training, academic coursework, or workshops at an advanced level. Training will be evaluated by the length, depth, and breadth of the coursework. Training that requires the applicant to demonstrate learning will be weighted higher than those without an assessment.
 - c. Experience: Relevant experience includes supervised practice in a setting where the applicant's primary job responsibility is to deliver social work services in an area relevant to the proposed area of practice. Experience must include supervision by a social worker with expertise in the area of practice. Supervision by another clinically trained registered professional may also be approved.
 - d. Ongoing Supervision: Participation in ongoing clinical supervision or consultation with experienced practitioners.
 - e. Prescribed Exam: Successful completion of the relevant exam offered through the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), provided other mandatory requirements in the Act and Regulations are met.

Note: Some contract positions offer training and supervision that will be provided as part of onboarding. Applicants should include this in their application; applicants may be endorsed with conditions that restrict their practice until this training or onboarding is completed.

10. Ongoing Training Requirements: Social workers in private practice must commit to ongoing professional development to maintain and enhance their skills and knowledge in accordance with the PEI *Social Work Act* and Regulations. Private practice social workers have a responsibility to remain current in best practices within their area of practice.
11. Supervision and Consultation: Social workers in private practice must have access to professionals in the area of the applicant's specialization for the purposes of peer consultation to support their work and ensure adherence to ethical and professional standards. This may involve regular meetings with a qualified supervisor or participation in peer supervision groups.
12. Payment and Fees: All payments and fees to apply for and maintain certification as prescribed by the PEISWRB must be received in full to approve or maintain endorsement.
13. Determination: The Registrar will review the application and request additional information or clarity from the applicant when necessary. The registrar may request that an application be reviewed by the Board or a private practice review subcommittee prior

to making a determination. Upon review of the application, the Registrar will provide the applicant with written notification of the determination. Applications that are not approved will reference the reason for denial. Approved applications will note, if applicable, any restrictions or conditions to endorsement not already covered through this policy.

14. Request for Review: Social workers who have applied for private practice endorsement and have not been approved may request, in writing, to the Registrar, that the application be reviewed by the Board. Requests for review must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the date of the decision. The applicant may include, with their request for review, any additional supplementary information that was not included in the original application. The PEISWRB Chair will provide written notification of the decision of the Board within 60 days.
15. Amendments or Changes to Endorsements: Social workers who wish to add areas of practice or remove conditions imposed on the certificate/endorsement may do so by submitting supplemental information to the Registrar that outlines the proposed changes and the demonstration of competency to support the request using the form in Appendix B.
16. Temporary/Out of Province Applications: Social workers seeking a temporary registration to engage in private practice in PEI must meet the conditions outlined in the PEI Social Work Act and Certification Regulations. Permission to engage in private practice in another jurisdiction does not guarantee the applicant will be approved for private practice in PEI.
17. Transparency: All social workers who are endorsed to practice social work in PEI will be listed on the PEISWRB website. Information provided to the public will include:
 - a. Name
 - b. Education (Degree, year of completion)
 - c. Conditions or restrictions on practice, if applicable
 - d. Contact information

Private practice social workers must provide adequate information on their website, pamphlets or other advertising medium to allow members of the public to confirm they are able to practice in the private sector.

Note: Social workers who wish to practice using a name other than their legal name should consult with the Registrar.

18. Policy Review and Revision: This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Amendments may be made as necessary to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or professional standards impacting social work practice in private settings.

Approval Date: August 1, 2025
Review Date: August 1, 2027