



ALBERTA COLLEGE OF
SOCIAL WORKERS

Continuing Competence Program Manual

March 2023

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THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

Social workers respect a client's right to competent social worker services. Social workers analyze the nature of social needs and problems, and encourage innovative, effective strategies and techniques to meet both new and existing needs and, where possible, contribute to the knowledge base of the profession. Social workers have a responsibility to maintain professional proficiency, to continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills, and to apply new knowledge in practice commensurate with their level of professional education, skill and competence, seeking consultation and supervision as appropriate. (CASW Code of Ethics, 2005, Value 6).

The *Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW)* recognizes the vast diversity of its members' professional activities. Social workers practice in many different settings, using a variety of methods and interventions, and offer a spectrum of specialized skills to the populations that they serve. The *Continuing Competence Program* is designed to accommodate these differences while promoting commonalities. This is done by encouraging social workers to reflect on their practice through a consistent set of values as embodied in the *Standards of Practice* and *Code of Ethics*. These values provide the basis for the *Continuing Competence Program* and the various tools social workers utilize to document their professional learning journey.

Registered Social Workers (RSW) reflect on their practice and continually engage in intentional learning activities, that increase their professional competence. The ACSW *Continuing Competence Program* is a self-directed professional development program designed to maintain public confidence and meet the requirements of the *Health Professions Act (HPA)*. The program is designed to provide a structure to allow and facilitate social workers to document their professional learning journey in both a professional portfolio and annual data submission for renewal.

Continuing Competence Program

- self-directed and self-reflective
- designed to enhance professional integrity
- our ethical responsibility to grow and develop as professionals to keep our commitment to protect the public
- our ethical commitment to our clients and the communities that we serve

The Competence Program goes beyond acquiring formal education and qualifications. It involves consistently and thoughtfully reflecting on individual practice and seeking out new opportunities to grow as helping professionals.

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

A professional portfolio must be maintained for a minimum of five years and include at least the following documents:

- Annual Self-Assessments
- Annual Learning Plans
- Documentation of continuing competence activities
 - Summary Documentation
 - Certificates of Completion
 - Transcripts

A social worker must, on the request of the Registrar, Competence, Registration, or Discipline Committees, submit anything from the portfolio. Professional Portfolios are subject to audit. This is to meet our accountability to the public in demonstrating that the social work profession participates in continuing competence. See the Portfolio Audit section for more information.

Submission of annual continuing competence activities is required in the ACSW member portal, before completing annual renewal. Should the minimum requirements not be met, registration renewal cannot be completed, and registration will be suspended and subsequently cancelled after 30 days. Suspensions and cancellations are published on the public register on the ACSW website. Social work practice is not permissible without active registration and a practice permit. (See the Extenuating Circumstances and Leaves of Absence section for more information when exceptions from continuing competence requirements may be requested.)



SELF-ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING PLAN

The self-assessment and learning plans are to be completed annually and maintained in your own professional portfolio. They are live documents which can be modified throughout the year to allow for changes. A new position may require a new self-assessment. Learning goals may change throughout the year.

In a learning plan, social workers should focus on the knowledge, skill, ability and judgement that are needed to perform well in their jobs including what is required to maintain or enhance their social work practice, to practice ethically within the existing position or to broaden competence to include new areas of social work practice. Social workers should consider past and present experience and future aspirations while reflecting on their social work practice.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment is where the Continuing Competence Program begins. The self-assessment is the first step of the reflective process to be completed in a structured manner. By using the *Standards of Practice* and *Code of Ethics* as guides, social workers can reflect upon and assess social work practice, document strengths and areas for continued growth and development. These factors will later shape the creation and implementation of the *Learning Plan*.

Thoughtful and intentional reflection on practice and regular self-assessment are integral components of the continuing competence process. There are two options in completing a self-assessment.

OPTION A

The ACSW *Self-Assessment Form* can be utilized during this step. All forms can be found in the **Library** linked in the online ACSW Member Portal.

OPTION B

Complete a *Personal Narrative*, which is typically 300 to 500 words. This option permits the social worker to express their reflections about their self-assessment in their own words.

Other tools that may be useful in the self-assessment process include current job descriptions, feedback from practice supervisor(s)/colleagues/clients, and/or a recent performance evaluation. The self-assessment will be used to identify learning goals. For example, if the self-assessment identifies a need to develop communication skills, this is an appropriate area to target in the learning plan.

LEARNING PLAN

Building upon the *Self-Assessment*, the annual learning plan will help establish goals to strengthen, maintain and/or grow social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement. There is an expectation of continuity between the self-assessment, learning plan, and competence activities.

Learning plans should minimally address 1-3 areas of competence to target, and 2-4 goals per targeted competency. Consider developing S.M.A.R.T. goals.

S.M.A.R.T. goals

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely

goals pertaining to professional development that will help to enhance and/or maintain competence. By prioritizing S. M. A. R. T goals, social workers are more likely to achieve success in their learning outcomes.

A learning plan should include competencies targeted, goals, planned strategies to meet the goals, and at the end of the competence year, activities completed, evaluation of outcomes and reflection on future directions. This will help inform the next year's self-assessment and learning plan.

OPTION A

The ACSW *Category A Learning Plan Form* can be utilized during this step. All forms can be found in the **Library** linked in the Member Portal.

OPTION B

Complete a *Personal Narrative*. This option permits the social worker to express their reflections about their learning goals in their own words and does not have a minimum word count requirement.

OPTION C

A learning plan already developed with employer or practice supervisor if it is well aligned with competence year, addresses social work competence, and meets the sections described in the ACSW learning plan. As employer's plans often do not meet these requirements, a separate learning plan for continuing competence may be more appropriate.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE ACTIVITIES

Annual registration renewal requires the submission of continuing competence credit hours to meet the minimum requirements of your registration category. 40 credit hours per year is the standard continuing competence requirement (requirements can vary based upon registration status).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Professional development can include a number of different activities to meet a social worker's maintenance or growth of self-determined areas of social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement. In-person and virtual learning, live or asynchronous, are permitted. Consider diversifying how your learning is delivered. The following is a non-exhaustive list of typical professional development activities:

- attendance at university or college courses or lectures, or at conferences or seminars
- providing a presentation as part of a university or college course or lecture, conference or seminar
- receiving social work practice supervision
- providing social work practice supervision to social workers or social work students
- providing or attending workplace in-service training
- learning from Indigenous Elder
- publication of research results
- volunteering with community social service organizations in a direct service capacity
- volunteering as a board or committee member for a community agency or attending meetings of the board or a committee
- participating in organized group discussion
- undertaking individualized learning activities
- participating as a member of the ACSW Council or a committee established by Council

Approved Continuing Education

Three ways to find ACE credit



ACE providers

ACE providers' offerings can be discovered on ACE Search



Individual course and conference approval

Approved individual courses and conferences are listed on our spreadsheet



Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education

ASWB authorizes some Joint Accreditation providers to offer ACE credit to social workers

ASWB's Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program identifies providers and courses appropriate for professional development; delivered in person and many via distance learning. Official Continuing Education (CEs) or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are offered by providers, however, they are not required for ACSW social worker's continuing competence programs. See www.aswb.org to learn more.

Social Work Associations are another useful source of professional development for their members at a discounted rate. Consider options provided by the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW), the Social Work Association of Alberta (SWAA) and the Alberta Association of Black Social Workers (AABSW) for example.

Universities and Colleges with social work programs are another reliable source of continuing education. Explore options that meet current needs or future goals.

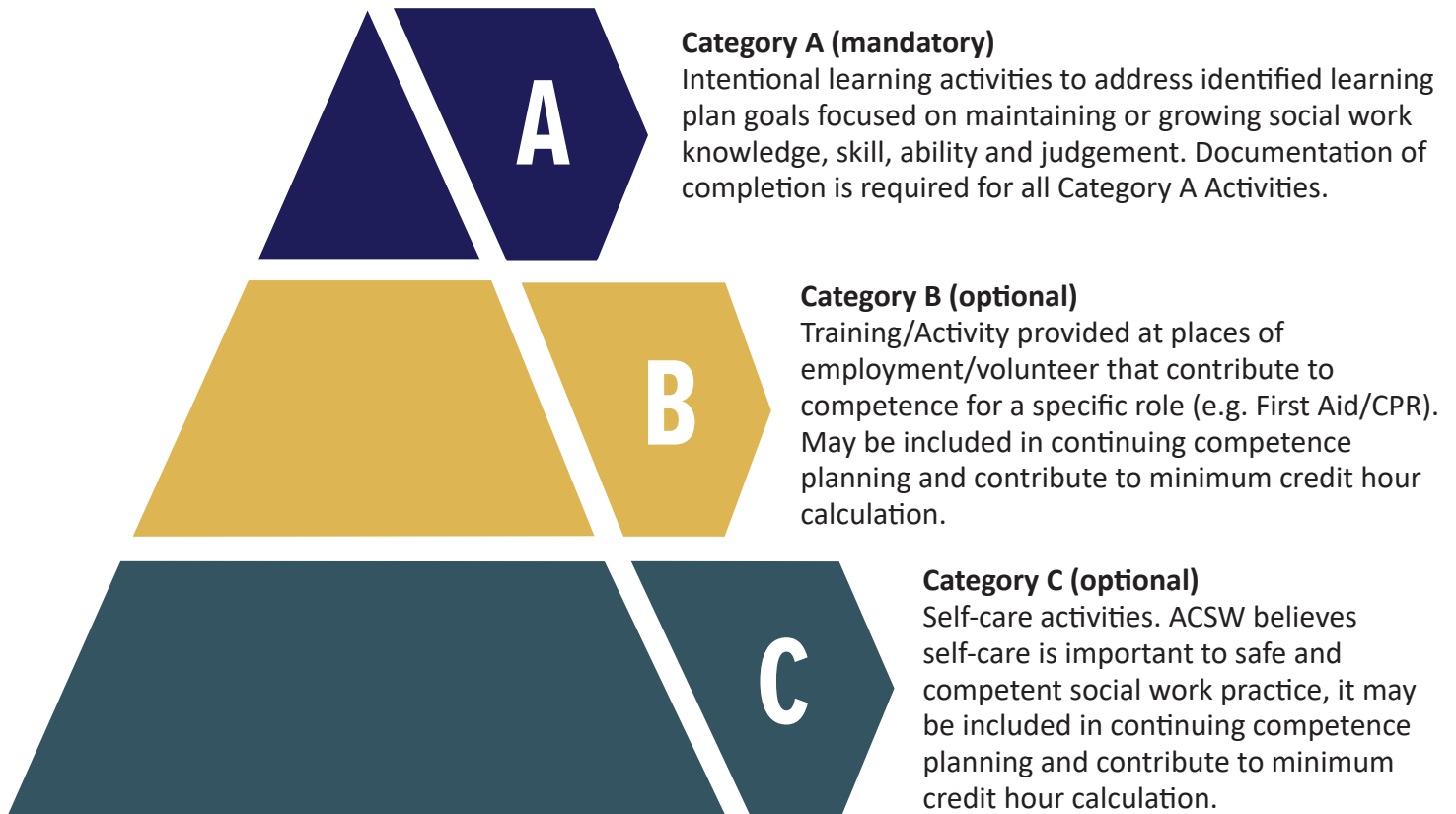
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Participation in the program will vary based upon registration type and status:

Registration Status	
• Active Registration	Participation Required
• Inactive Registration	Participation Recommended
Practice Status	
• Full time practice	Full requirements
• Part time practice (<1000 hours)	Half requirements
Registration type	
• General & Provisional Registry	Full Requirements
• Clinical	Additional Requirements
• Courtesy	Home jurisdiction requirements only

CATEGORIES

ACSW continuing Competence Program recognizes three categories of continuing competence:



Category A activities are mandatory. Category B and C activities are optional and designed to recognize other contributions to professional development.

CATEGORY A DOCUMENTATION

Documentation of participation/completion of all Category A activities is required. Documentation is achieved with a certificate, transcript, or Category A summary. Summary documentation is a good self-reflection exercise to consider what was learned, what learning plan goal was addressed, and how it maintained or grew your social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement.

A summary document may be kept in narrative form in the professional portfolio or entered in the Category A summary box when entering credit hours in the online ACSW member portal. Certificate or transcript may be kept in the portfolio or uploaded when entering credit hours in the online ACSW member portal. Documentation is not required for Category B & C activities, but it may be kept a part of the professional portfolio.

CREDIT HOURS

One hour spent in a continuing competence activity equals one credit hour. There are maximum hours permitted for each activity and within each category. All credit hours should be reported in the competence year they are earned. **1 hour = 1 credit hour**

MAXIMUM CREDIT HOURS

The ACSW continuing competence program encourages a diversity of activities by employing some minimums and maximums. Duplicated activities do not reflect diversity. Continuing competence planning only requires Category A credit hours. Category B & C are helpful additions when continuing competency planning is less focused on individual learning goals.

A

Category A (mandatory)

Minimum number of required hours and maximum of 20 credit hours per activity.

Examples

- semester long social work course, even though more than 20 hours spent learning, can only document 20 credit hours to this activity
- two semester long social work courses can count as 20 credit hours each
- 3 hour directed web-based learning activity, can credit 3 credit hours

B

Category B (optional)

Maximum of 10 credit hours per activity

Examples

- Two-day first aid training may take 14 hours, can only document 10 credit hours to this activity
- 50 minute mandatory webinar on new computer system, can document 1 credit hour to this activity

C

Category C (optional)

Maximum of 5 credit hours per activity

Examples

- Mandarin language course 50+ hours, can only document once at 5 credit hours
- 30 min run every morning, can document only once for a total of 5 credit hours

These maximums are intended to encourage diversity; the same activity should not be repeated, just because the hours participated are greater than the maximum.

MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS

Category A is the only category with a minimum requirement. All continuing competence program requirements can be met in Category A. If the minimum requirement of Category A credit hours is met, the remainder of the annual requirement can be fulfilled with Category B & C credit hours.

Group	Minimum Category A Credit Hours	Required Annual Credit Hours
Full Time Active General & Provisional Registry	10 credit hours	40 Credit Hours
Part Time Active (<1000 hrs/year) General & Provisional Registry	5 credit hours	20 Credit Hours
Full Time Active Clinical	20 credit hours	50 Credit Hours
Part Time Active Clinical	10 Credit hours	25 Credit Hours
Inactive ¹	0 Credit Hours	0 Credit hours
Courtesy ²	0 Credit Hours	0 Credit Hours

¹Full participation encouraged but not required, see inactive registration section

²Participation in home jurisdiction continuing competence requirements only

ADDITIONAL CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS

This section applies to Registered Clinical Social Workers (RCSW), who have an additional clinical enhancement and are listed on the clinical registry. Carrying the advanced title of a RCSW comes with the additional continuing competence requirement of documenting clinical supervision/consultation. This is effectively an additional Category A requirement that specifically applies to receiving clinical supervision. However, the receipt of clinical supervision can be additionally documented in Category A. It is recommended that the amount, source, and dates of clinical supervision/consultation is documented in the professional portfolio.

PRACTICE ENHANCEMENTS & SPECIALTIES

Social workers with practice enhancements are expected to target at least some of their annual continuing competence plan to their area of practice enhancement.

Restricted Psychosocial Intervention Authorization: RSW's with individual authorization to perform restricted psychosocial interventions should include a learning plan goal that addresses treatment of grossly impairing substantial mental health disorders.

Clinical Social Worker: RCSW's should include a learning plan goal that specifically addresses clinical social work practice.

Approved Clinical Social Work Supervisor: RCSW's who are approved as a clinical social work supervisor should include a learning plan goal that addresses clinical social work supervision.

Social workers with a specialty should demonstrate ongoing maintenance of the specialty in their continuing competence program participation.

CATEGORY A CARRY OVER

When the number of Category A credit hours exceeds the annual competence requirements, the continuing competence program allows for the **carry over up to 20 Category A credits** that will be applied to the next continuing competence year. Carry over is calculated automatically and is only applied in the following year.

Full-Time Active RSW Example:

A *full-time* RSW requires a *total of 40 credit hours* this renewal period, with a *minimum of 10 in Category A*. The credit hours acquired are:

Category A: 37

Category B: 14

Category C: 10

Total from all 3 categories: 61

Carry Over: 20

The minimum requirement of 10 Category A credits will be used first then Category B (14) and Category C (10) will be used giving a total of 34. Then to make up the total of 40 credit hours, 6 more credit hours will be used from Category A leaving 21 Category A credit hours remaining. 20 Category A credits carry over to the next renewal period.

Part-Time Active RSW Example:

A *part-time* RSW requires a *total of 20 credit hours* this renewal period, with a *minimum of 5 in Category A*. The credit hours acquired are:

Category A: 12

Category B: 10

Category C: 2

Total from all 3 Categories: 24

Carry Over: 4

The minimum requirement of 5 Category A credit hours will be used first then Category B (10) and Category C (2) will be used giving a total of 17. Then to make up the total of 20 credit hours, 3 more credit hours will be used from Category A leaving 7 Category A credit hours remaining to carry over to the next renewal period.

WHAT CATEGORY IS THIS ACTIVITY?

This is the most frequent question ACSW receives. The answer is, “it depends.” It mostly depends on your Category A learning plan goals. If it is an activity that meets a learning plan goal maintaining or expanding your social work knowledge, skill, ability and/or judgement, its likely an appropriate Category A Activity.

See the following examples illustrate how an activity can fall into Category A, B or C depending upon the intention and your individualized continuing competence program. Sometimes, professional judgement is necessary when deciding if an activity is a Category A activity. RSW’s can back their judgement with well-designed SMART learning goals and good documentation.

Each category has a different maximum number of credit hours per activity to encourage a diversity of topics and learning approaches. (See Maximum Credit Hours section)

Activity: Training Class	
Category A	Expanding private practice to include families with a child who is deaf. Want to increase cross cultural competence and inclusion by increasing use of sign language in family treatment sessions.
Category B	Position with the Federal Government requires sign language training, even though I do not have any non-hearing clients, and this is not on my learning plan.
Category C	I love learning languages and do this for self-care. I am going to learn sign language next.

Activity: Indigenous Elder Teachings	
Category A	Practicing with Indigenous clients addressing impacts from the residential school system. Seeking support, guidance, and wisdom from Elder to bolster my cultural competence and effectiveness.
Category B	Position with Community College requires training the Teachings of Indigenous Elders. This area is not on my learning plan, but it is still good training.
Category C	Meeting with the Elder as part of my monthly spiritual or wellness practice. It is an important part of my self-care.

Activity: Volunteering	
Category A	I am seeking experience and supervision in a new area of social work practice to get my dream job. My job does not offer this area of practice so I am volunteering at an agency to gain some competence in this new skill.
Category B	My job is requiring that I volunteer at a job fair and promote our social work positions. I am not learning anything new here and its therefore not included on my learning plan.
Category C	I like to volunteer with my Community League. It is an important part of my self-care and gets me positively involved with my neighbours without having to be a social worker.

Activity: Supervision	
Category A	Receiving and providing social work practice supervision is an appropriate Category A when maintaining and growing social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement.
Category B	The provision of practice supervision is a job requirement, but I do not have any social workers or social work students under my supervision. But I supervise a few Child & Youth and Addiction Counsellors.
Category C	I provide supervision, direction and training of volunteers at my Theatre Company. I view volunteering as a self-care activity.

Activity: Presenting	
Category A	Researching and organizing a presentation on a new social work topic may be a good learning activity if it addresses a learning plan goal.
Category B	My job requires me to give this presentation a few times a year on social work documentation. It does not involve new learning and is not a learning plan goal.
Category C	I research and create brief presentations from the Bible for youth every Sunday. This is part of my religious practice and self-care.

Activity: Exam Preparation	
Category A	Return-to-practice social work exam assigned while on the provisional registry. Exam preparations would be appropriate within learning plan.
Category B	My job requires me to pass a test related to documentation and release of information. It does not involve new learning and is not a learning plan goal.
Category C	I am preparing for a standardized graduate college entrance exam. It does not focus on social work practice, but I need to explore my options to advance my education. This is part of my self-care.

Activity: Reading	
Category A	Reading recent articles from an academic journal on trauma informed practice to better understand current practice in this area to ensure I am up to date. This is included in my learning plan.
Category B	New job requires reading a book on support group facilitation. I read this book in my last semester of my BSW too. It was a good re-read, but not on my learning plan.
Category C	I enjoy reading about technology and financial planning. This is an important part of my self-care.

As continuing competence is driven by the social worker, to meet the social worker's individualized needs, it is impossible to create an exhaustive list of examples. Examples listed herein are designed to inspire your learning activities; not limit them.

Our participation in continuing competence, to maintain or enhance our social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement, is part of what makes us professionals. While employers may provide social work training, pay for social work training, or allow use of work time for social work training – **none of this is the employer's responsibility**. The continuing competence program is self-directed by the social worker themselves.

Documentation of participation in the annual continuing competence program is an annual registration renewal requirement to meet our commitment to the public to be safe and competent social workers.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The ACSW strives to be understanding during difficult times experienced by registered social workers. In the event an RSW has experienced a significant personal crisis related to health or natural disaster (e.g. fire or flood) and will not be able to meet annual continuing competence requirements, please contact the ACSW in a timely way. Each case is reviewed individually with the goal to support the registrant to meet continuing competence requirements or temporarily amend the requirements or timelines.

Much of the time, however, life events and circumstances allow for planning when an RSW knows it might be difficult to meet annual continuing competence requirements. There are three main options:

- **Pre-Planning | Meet requirements early**
Use the Category A carry over by recording additional Category A credits in the renewal year before the planned leave of absence (see description of carry over for more details).
- **Part-time Practice Status | Reduce requirements**
If a planned leave of absence will reduce number of hours worked below 1000 in the renewal year, changing status to part-time can reduce requirements by half (see description of part-time status for more details).
- **Inactive Status | Remove requirements**
If the planned leave of absence involves no social work practice and no need for a practice permit, changing status to inactive temporarily removes the annual competence requirements and reduces professional dues (see description of inactive status for more details).



CONTACT ACSW

In any of these unique circumstances, it is recommended that RSWs contact the ACSW office and consult with Continuing Competence and/or Registration staff (as appropriate) to fully understand the best option(s) for the circumstance as soon as possible after the issue is known. **Do not save these questions until registration renewal is due.**

MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE CONSIDERATIONS

If an RSW is not planning to practice while on maternity/parental leave, registration would not be required.

Instead of letting registration lapse and reinstating later, RSWs can choose to change their status to inactive once maternity/parental leave has started and then convert their status back to active **before** returning to practice. Maternity leave is typically 12-18 months in duration and that year usually crosses two renewal periods. The RSW may exercise this flexibility for one renewal period.

Alternatively, an RSW on maternity/parental leave may also choose to maintain their continuing competence and their active registration. The preparation for parenthood and coping with new family dynamics might be rich areas for new learning plan goals that may additionally increase knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement as a social worker.

DISASTER OR ILLNESS RELATED LEAVE CONSIDERATIONS

If a disaster or illness causes a social worker to take extended leave from practice, there often isn't the time for pre-planning or ACSW consultation.

RSWs can consult with ACSW, when it makes the most sense to do so, to avoid letting registration lapse and reinstating later. Individualized options will be discussed including those described above.

Alternatively, an RSW dealing with an unexpected crisis may also choose to maintain their continuing competence and active registration. There may be many opportunities to learn about the issue(s) at hand and seek support for the new or temporary reality that may also serve to improve social work knowledge, skill, ability, and judgement as a social worker.

FULL-TIME PRACTICE STATUS

RSWs that work/practice more than 1000 hours within the year will be listed with Full-Time Status competence requirements: 40 Credit hours per year | minimum of 10 Category A credit hours.

PART-TIME PRACTICE STATUS:

RSWs that work/practice less than 1000 hours within the year can convert their status to Part-time/Casual. Part-time employment status has half of the continuing competence requirements. It is recommended to continue participating in the full continuing competence program because you are only practicing part-time or casual, but, if necessary, this is an option: 20 Credit hours per year | minimum of 5 Category A credit hours.

INACTIVE REGISTRATION STATUS:

Inactive registration is a registration status that can be used when a social worker is temporarily not practicing in the scope of social work for less than 5 years. They must be transparent in identification as inactively registered by indicating inactive before or after use of title (e.g. RSW – inactive or inactive social worker). A practice permit is not provided to those on inactive status and the public register will indicate the inactive registration status. **Social work practice, paid or volunteer, is not permissible on inactive registration status.**

There are no continuing competence requirements to renew while inactively registered. There is a reduction in fees for this option.

While documenting participation in the continuing competence program is not required, it is still strongly recommended. It is good ethical practice for social workers to remain fresh and up to date on current social work issues and trends. Potential continuing competence needs are reviewed at the time of activation and additional requirements may be applied. If Category A requirements are met throughout an extended inactive status, additional requirements may not be applied. However, five years of no participation in the continuing competence program or inactive status, a return-to-practice exam and supervised practice hours will be applied.

CHANGING STATUS

Social workers may change their status in the ACSW member portal following these directions. Please note, this is not an automated process, and requires staff review and approval.

Go to ACSW website (www.acsw.ab.ca)

1. Logon to your Member Portal
2. Click on View/Edit My Profile (located on the left side of the screen in the “Action Menu”)
3. Click the “Additional” tab drop down arrow so the list shows
4. Select “Membership Conversion”
5. Click “Add New”
6. Fill out the form
7. Click next
8. Review your entry and save it (this submits it to ACSW Staff)

You should be notified once the change has been made and the status can be viewed in your portal any time.

REGISTRATION LAPSE/CANCELLATION:

If a social worker chooses to cancel their registration or let registration lapse during their leave, a reinstatement will be required **before** returning to practice/work. Continuing competence needs are assessed during reinstatement. If the leave or participation in continuing competence program exceeds three years, RSWs will be required to take a return-to-practice exam based on the highest level of social work education and complete 1500 supervised practice hours.

PORTFOLIO AUDIT

The Registrar or Competence Committee must periodically select social workers for a review and evaluation of all or part of the social worker's continuing competence program.

All social workers are required to maintain a five-year professional portfolio documenting their participation in the continuing competence program. Most of your professional portfolio will be maintained in your own records, with some of it stored or duplicated in your online ACSW profile.

Portfolios can be requested at any time and may include anywhere from one to five years of documentation to be audited. Social workers are selected randomly and supplemented by some who were specifically included as directed by Registrar, Complaint Director, Registration Committee, or Continuing Competence Committee.

When RSWs are selected to submit a portfolio, they receive an email to the address indicated in the ACSW profile as their primary email address detailing how many years they are required to submit. The email will identify required documents and submission instructions. Audited RSWs will not be able to complete their renewal until the portfolio is submitted. This process is not automated and requires staff review and approval.

Portfolios are typically requested six months prior to your renewal, giving sufficient notice before the current competence cycle has completed. Portfolio submissions must include the following:

1. A completed self-assessment for all requested years, this could be a Narrative or the ACSW Self-Assessment forms (the self-care section is not required).
2. A completed Learning Plan for the beginning and end of each requested year in the ACSW format, a Narrative format, or an appropriate professional learning plan completed for employment purposes containing social work-related goals.
3. Self-assessment and learning plan for the next renewal year
4. A current CV/Resume
5. Annually submitted credit hours entered in ACSW Member Portal. Documentation already recorded in the ACSW Member Portal does not need to be submitted.
6. Clear copies of all supporting documentation (transcripts, certificates, summaries, etc.) for Category A activities in chronological order. Documentation already uploaded in the ACSW Member Portal does not need to be submitted.
7. If carry over credits were used in order to meet your Category A requirements you will need to submit the supporting documentation from those activities as well, if not already uploaded in the ACSW member portal.

Portfolios will be reviewed quarterly by the Competence Committee. Please do not send original hard copies for review. Documents are subject to destruction and will not be returned by ACSW. An email with feedback from the committee will be sent out following review at the competence committee meeting.

If the competence committee determines that an RSW has not maintained proper records or has unsatisfactory results on the audit the RSW may be subject to:

- Complete a specific continuing competence requirement or professional development activity; and/or
- Direction on what is required next year; and/or
- Require re-submission addressing errors or deficiencies; and/or
- Submit to another annual audit.

The Competence Committee may refer issues or concerns to the Registrar, Complaints Director, or Registration Committee for further consideration of action. Non-compliance and identification of violations of Standards of Practice of Code of Ethics may be subject to suspension and/or complaint.

PRACTICE VISITS & OTHER COMPETENCE ASSESSMENTS

Practice visits and other competence assessments allowed by the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) are not currently a part of the ACSW continuing competence program.

COMPETENCE COMMITTEE

The *Health Professions Act* (HPA) empowers the ACSW Council to establish a Competence Committee comprised of social workers and a Council liaison which may include a public member. The Competence Committee (a) makes recommendations to Council on continuing competence requirements and the assessment of those requirements, (b) may provide for practice visits as part of the continuing competence program and conduct a practice visit of regulated members, and (c) may undertake any other power or duty given to it under the HPA or ACSW Bylaws. The Competence Committee meets quarterly to audit social workers participation in the continuing competence program. Competence Committee members are appointed by Council and are drawn from the pool of social workers who select this as a committee of interest on their member profile.

INPUTTING CREDITS

MEMBER PORTAL

After logging in, on the homepage of the member portal there is a Continuing Competence Program table. It highlights 4 important things:

1. Current Competence Period identifies the RSW's registration and competence year. This information can be recorded on annual learning plans.
2. The next box highlights the minimum and total required credit hours based upon registration and practice status.
3. *Credit Requirements Chart and Your Progress*: reiterates the **minimum** and total requirements per category on the first line. The second line identifies **progress within the current competence year**. Numbers in this chart re-sets to the new competence year upon submitting a renewal application.
4. The last area provides access to submitting credit hours, viewing/editing submissions within this competence year, helpful information, and print logs of credit hour submissions.

Continuing Competence Program

Current Competence Period: From 1-Jul-2022 to 1-Jul-2023

A minimum of **10 Clinical Supervision credits**, **20 Category A credits** and a minimum **50 credits total** are required.
Please enter more credits.

Credit Requirements Chart and Your Progress:

	Carry Over (from previous year)	Clinical Supervision	Category A	Category B	Category C	Total
Minimum		10	20	0	0	50
Your CURRENT Credits	20	0	0	0	0	20

- Submit New Credits
- View/Manage your Credits
- Clarification of Categories
- Credit Requirements Chart
- Print Continuing Competence Credits log (Current Year)
- Print Continuing Competence Credits logs All years
- Additional Member Resources for Competency Program

ANNUAL ONLINE CREDIT REPORTING:

Select the *Submit new credits* option to submit a continuing competence record describing the activity, credit hours, and include Category A documentation.

Continuing Competence Program

A minimum of **10 Category A credits** and a minimum **40 credits total** are required.
Please enter more credits.

Upload Documentation

Credit Requirements Chart and Your Progress:

	Carry Over (from previous year)	Category A	Category B	Category C	Total
Minimum		10	0	0	40
Your CURRENT Credits	16	0	0	0	16

- Submit New Credits
- View/Manage your Credits
- Clarification of Categories
- Credit Requirements Chart
- Print Continuing Competence Credits log (Current Year)
- Print Continuing Competence Credits logs All years
- Additional Member Resources for Competency Program

\$ My Invoices

Select the *category* that that activity belongs and *Next*.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE CREDITS -

Click here for [Renewal and Competence Reporting Instructions](#) or the [CCP Handbook](#)

Select the Category for the credits being submitted *

☒ **Category A**
☐ Category B
☐ Category C

Next Cancel

Enter the required information:

1. Select the provider of the activity from the drop down list provided (or other if not included, and spell out the other provider in the next box).
2. Documentation is required for all Category A activities. Category A summary box can be used to reflect, describe the activity, how it addresses learning plan goals, and contributes to social work knowledge, skill, ability, and/or judgement. This summary can act as the required Category A documentation.
3. Add the title of the activity and presenter.
4. Documentation is required for all Category A activities. Digital documentation proving successful completion, such as a certificate of completion or a transcript, can be uploaded here. This document can act as the required Category A documentation.
5. Select the start date of the activity by clicking the calendar provided. If this activity was multiple days, this date reflects only the start date. This date should be within the current competence year.
6. Enter the number of credit hours to complete the activity. The number of credit hours should not exceed the number of hours reflected on submitted documentation, where relevant.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE CREDITS -

Provider Other
Alberta Health Services

Reason for Other

Category A Summary Form
Please briefly describe the activity in the box below:
Please state which of your learning goals this program/activity addressed:
How did this activity add to your practice knowledge, skills, or abilities? Note: If we don't approve this provider submitted credits will be rejected

I attended a workshop on Grief and Loss. This has helped me to achieve my goal of getting more familiar with ways of dealing with clients who have experienced grief or loss. This has allowed me to better relate to the needs of my clients to be able to provide the support and resources needed.

Summary A Form

Title/Activity Grief and Loss

Presenter/Organization/Publication Dr. Jill Smith

If you have any supporting documents you would like to upload

Supporting Documents Browse... No file selected.

Upload Documentation

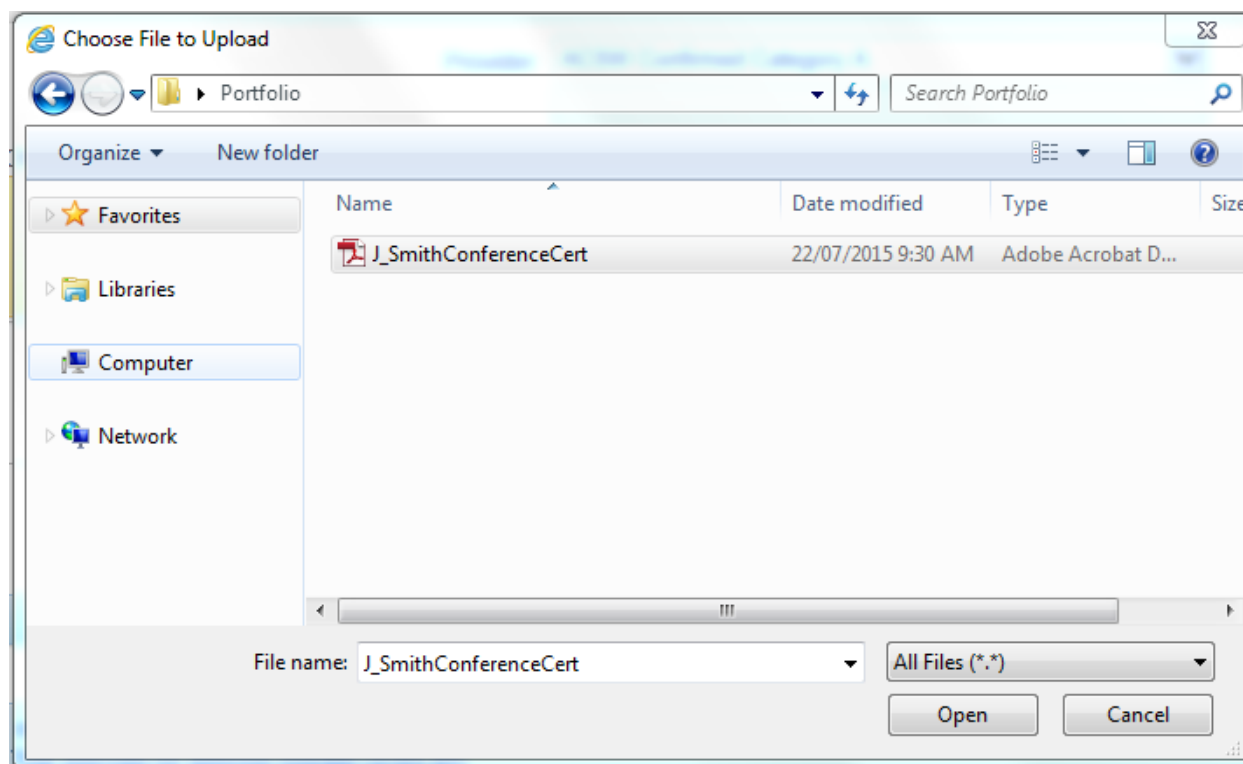
You can only enter credits related to current Competency Year.
Competency Year intervals for different renewal cycles are:
- January - enter credits from January 1 (Current Year) to December 31 (Current Year),
- April - enter credits from April 1 (Previous Year) to March 31 (Current Year),
- July - enter credits from July 1 (Previous Year) to June 30 (Current Year),
- October - enter credits from October 1 (Previous Year) to September 30 (Current Year),

Start Date 03/09/2018

Number of Credits (A) 6

Back Next Cancel

To upload a document you will need to click on the **Browse** button, which will open up a window for accessing information on your device.



Find the document to be uploaded and either double click on the file or click the file and then the **Open** button at the bottom of the window (or follow the directions on the device). This will attach the document to activity entry similarly to adding a file to an e-mail.

The file name will then appear to the left of the browse button, continue by hitting **Next**.

Title/Activity	Annual Conference
Presenter/Organization/Publication	ACSW
If you have any supporting documents you can upload it	
Supporting Documents	SmithConferenceCert.pdf <input data-bbox="922 1444 1068 1472" type="button" value="Browse..."/>
ts related to current Competency Year. als for different renewal cycles are: from January 1 (Current Year) to December 31 (Current Year), n April 1 (Previous Year) to March 31 (Current Year), n July 1 (Previous Year) to June 30 (Current Year), from October 1 (Previous Year) to September 30 (Current Year),	
Start Date	03/26/2015
Number of Credits (A) *	12
<input data-bbox="584 1768 673 1801" type="button" value="Back"/> <input data-bbox="685 1768 774 1801" type="button" value="Next"/> <input data-bbox="786 1768 891 1801" type="button" value="Cancel"/>	

The submission can be reviewed on the next screen to ensure accuracy before saving. Upon clicking save, the competence log is illustrated, where submissions can also be edited within the current competence year. New records can be submitted here using **Add New**.

<input type="checkbox"/>		Renewal Year	Title/Activity	Start Date	Carry Over Credits from last year	Clinical Supervision Hours	Number of Credits (A)
<input type="checkbox"/>		2018	Grief and Loss	03/09/2018	0	0	6
<input type="checkbox"/>		2018	ACSW Carry Over	03/12/2018	16	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	Competency Workshop	10/25/2017	0	0	3
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	juggling	12/07/2017	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	Outside Supervision	07/03/2017	0	0	20
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	Suicide Prevention	03/21/2017	0	0	5
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	jogging	02/23/2017	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>		2017	Healing and treating Trauma, Addictions	02/14/2017	0	0	10

Once all credits have been submitted, **Member Home** returns to the member portal home page.

Continuing Competence Program

CONGRATULATIONS, you have met requirements! Eligible number of credits for carry over for next year:
4.00

ON-LINE RENEWAL

Please take a moment to **renew your membership** by clicking on the **renew on-line** button below. If you have any questions please email registrationcoord@acsw.ab.ca

Note: A partially completed application cannot be saved for completion later.

Your current membership type is: **Registered, Active, Full-time**

If your current Membership and Employment status is the same please continue with the online renewal by clicking the "Renew Online" button below.

If you require a **change to your Membership and/or Employment status**, please click here " **CHANGE MEMBERSHIP TYPE** " .

You will be notified when your **Membership Changes** has been applied so you can continue with your renewal.

Renew Online

Thank you for your cooperation during this time of transition. We appreciate your patience and support.

Renewal can be completed once minimum credit hours have been documented and its within **90 days** of registration expiration. This will be evident with a **Renew Online** button. The renewal application can be started by clicking **Renew Online**.

Reminder: Once you submit your renewal application, the competence year closes and the next competence year starts. If activities are entered in the wrong competence year you will need to ask ACSW staff for some assistance to correct your record. competency@acsw.ab.ca

COMPETENCE PROGRAM HISTORY

The continuing competence program has a long history. Several factors played a part in the need for development of an official continuing competence program. *The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)* came into force on July 1, 1995, impacting over 400 occupational regulatory bodies in Canada, including the *Alberta Association of Registered Social Workers (AARSW)*. The aim of the agreement was the removal or reduction of interprovincial barriers to the movement of workers, goods, services and capital across provincial boundaries. Criteria in the agreement stipulated that registration procedures “should relate principally to competence.” With this goal in mind, the AARSW formed the Practice Review Board (PRB).

The Practice Review Board of the *Alberta Association of Registered Social Workers* began researching continued competence models in 1997 in anticipation of new legislation coming into effect for Alberta social workers. The board explored various models, concepts, and reporting structures across a number of professions. Continuing competence was differentiated from continuing education with the determination that continuing competence was most reflective of what social workers do to maintain competence throughout their careers.

In 1999, 21 focus groups were held across the province and information compiled to help inform development of criteria and basis for a *Continuing Competence Program*. In addition, members were invited through a series of articles in *The Advocate*, to provide feedback. After reviewing a number of models and processes for continued competence, the Practice Review Board found that the portfolio model which calls for self-reflection and self-directed lifelong learning, best represented a basis for attempting to assure the continued competence of social work professionals.

Throughout 2001 a handbook and tools were developed. The system of categorizing learning activities was drawn from a model used by the *Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)* with which the *Alberta Association of Registered Social Workers (AARSW)* became affiliated.

The introduction of the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* was another key factor necessitating development of a competence program. The *Health Professions Act* was proclaimed in 1999. Social workers obtained professional designation under the HPA effective April 1, 2003. Under the HPA, the AARSW became the Alberta College of Social Workers (ACSW) with a key role “to establish, maintain and enforce standards of practice, ethics, registration and continuing competence for the practice of the regulated profession.” The Practice Review Board was renamed the *Competence Committee*.

Colleges were given 5 years from the date of the proclamation of their profession to develop a continuing competence program. The member guideline book and self-assessment tools for the program were completed in May 2003. The ACSW decided to use the first few years to test the model and the material and to seek input from the membership during the implementation period. RSW’s with a registration renewal date of July 1, 2004, were the first group of social workers to undertake the registration renewal process as required under the HPA. The program was evaluated through a benchmark study in 2005 and again formally evaluated in 2008.

In more recent history, the competence program was streamlined in 2014. And due to 2021/2022 changes in the *Health Professions Act* and *Social Work Profession Regulation*, the competence program was refreshed.

As a self-governing profession, the responsibility to demonstrate accountability to the public for the services social workers provide directly linked to the need for a competence program. Social workers can have confidence that the competence program is not only evidence-based but was developed through extensive consultation with diverse members.