

## Chapter 16: Social Work Services

### (i) Departmental Social Workers

<b>Intent:</b>	To provide an overview of the role of departmental social workers
<b>Act:</b> (if applicable)	N/A
<b>Regulations:</b>	N/A
<b>Overview:</b> (if applicable)	<p>The role of the social workers is varied, but typically involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serving as a liaison with community agencies/other government departments (e.g. NL.Housing; Regional Health Authorities; advocacy groups)</li> <li>• Assisting income support recipients who are required to pursue spousal support when there is potential, or who voluntarily require assistance in pursuing child support</li> <li>• Assisting clients who are entering or exiting the Income Support system such as youth transferring from other programs of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development or recipients transitioning to a different income source such as Old Age Security</li> <li>• Supporting staff in delivering services to clients with complex social issues</li> <li>• Assisting Departmental staff and community partners in building capacity to increase self-reliance and decrease dependence of Income Support recipients through participation in education and training, and attachment to the labour market.</li> <li>• Creating multi-disciplinary teams, including staff persons from the Department and other agencies/departments, to coordinate services/supports for clients</li> <li>• Working on committees that address issues impacting clients (e.g. family violence, homelessness or youth issues)</li> </ul>

- Providing crisis intervention
  - Consulting with staff regarding community resources
  - Acting as an advisor to management/program specialists if required, in the development of programs designed to meet the needs of Departmental clients, especially those with multiple and complex needs
  - Assisting with staff training (i.e. domestic violence, suicide intervention, homelessness, community resources, etc.)
  - Working with other Departmental staff as part of the Department's Emergency Social Services response team to:
    - address issues with Income Support clients who need additional support due to a disaster/emergency
    - assist managers in identifying employees who are showing signs of unusual stress due to the impact of the event
  - Providing intervention and support, including the completion of a social work assessment, advocacy and referrals; to clients with complex social issues such as:
    - homelessness/problems finding and maintaining housing
    - a transitory lifestyle
    - a history of involvement with the child welfare system
    - mental illness
    - addictions
    - a lengthy criminal history/multiple incarcerations
    - intellectual/physical disabilities
    - frequent requests for emergency assistance/frequent contacts with department
    - difficulty navigating government/community systems
    - post-traumatic stress
    - exposure to violence/victim of violence
    - chronic illness
    - few supports (i.e. few connections with family/friends who can assist)
    - concerns with personal safety/well being
    - ties to many service providers, but inadequate service coordination
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**Policy:**

- Clinical management and case consultation for social work staff is provided by the Client Services Manager (CSM) of Income Support and Social Work Services.
  - Referrals should be made to Departmental social workers in relation to:
    - youth who are transferring from other programs of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development and;
    - recipients who will soon turn 65 and will leave the Income Support Program to receive Old Age Security.
  - Consideration should be given to referring a client to a Departmental social worker when:
    - A client is connected to many helping agencies/professionals, but there does not appear to be any case coordination/consultation.
    - A client is engaged with Employment and Training Services and may benefit from social work involvement to assist them in attaching to the labour market.
    - A client is not connected to other helping agencies/professionals and:
      - is chronically homeless
      - is availing of emergency accommodations with no plan to find stable housing
      - is a victim of violence with few resources/supports
      - is transitory, from another part of the province or country, and needs an assessment to determine background/supports required
      - appears to have an intellectual or physical disability and is not connected to a Regional Health Authority
      - requires assistance from a helping agency, but has difficulty navigating the system
      - appears to have mental health concerns that have not been assessed
      - makes frequent requests for service (i.e. transportation, emergency food)
      - is a [youth who is in a conjugal relationship](#) has complex social issues that have not been addressed
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- Prior to, the referring agent should discuss making the referral with the client when possible.

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**Procedure: Referral Process**

- Staff should contact their manager to determine the social work referral process within their region.
- Once referred and assigned, the social worker will assess the case and should:
  - contact the client to advise of the referral and their role
  - ensure that the client provides consent prior to seeking or exchanging information as part of the assessment process (please refer to policy on [Managing Client Information/Client Confidentiality](#)), and
  - conduct a thorough assessment of the client's needs. As part of the assessment, the social worker will gather information such as the client's:
    - demographics,
    - family history,
    - social supports,
    - health history including mental and physical health, addictions, and/or intellectual or physical disabilities,
    - strengths,
    - barriers,
    - connections to other agencies/helping professionals and
    - current service needs.
  - Part of the assessment may involve organizing a case plan meeting with others involved with the client and working with other agencies/professionals that are connected with the client.
  - The social worker will:
    - advocate on behalf of the client for necessary services,
    - make referrals for required supports,
    - coordinate and participate in case planning, and
    - maintain client records in CAPS/TRIM.
  - To close a case, the social worker should ensure that they have:

- completed their assessment,
  - advocated for the client,
  - made the necessary referrals for supports/services with other agencies/government departments,
  - coordinated case planning if required,
  - notified the client of the closure; and
  - discussed closure with their manager and documented the consultation/reason for closure.
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**Authority Level:** N/A

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