

## 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 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> <li>• Providing crisis intervention</li> </ul>

- 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

**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 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
  - 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,
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ made the necessary referrals for supports/services with other agencies/government departments,</li><li>▪ coordinated case planning if required,</li><li>▪ notified the client of the closure; and</li><li>▪ discussed closure with their manager and documented the consultation/reason for closure.</li></ul> |
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<b>Authority Level:</b>	N/A
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