

## Form for Notice of Exception to Full Labour Mobility

### NOTICE OF EXCEPTION TO LABOUR MOBILITY TO MEET A LEGITIMATE OBJECTIVE UNDER CHAPTER 7 OF THE AGREEMENT ON INTERNAL TRADE

#### APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NOVA SCOTIA

**Occupation: Social Work**

**Name the Province(s)/Territory(ies) whose workers are affected:**

- (a) Registrants who have graduated from social work diploma/certificate programs in Alberta or Saskatchewan
- (b) Registrants who have graduated from non-approved (non-accredited) social work programs: Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island

**Under which legitimate objective(s) is the exception being filed:**

Consumer Protection

**Rationale/Justification:** Material Scope of Practice Difference

The scope of practice for social workers in Nova Scotia includes counselling (psychotherapy), the development of human service programs, and the development of social policies aimed at improving social conditions and promoting social equality. Consumer protection requires that social workers registered to practice in Nova Scotia have the knowledge and core competencies routinely attained through the successful completion of an acceptable degree in social work. The minimum academic standard (Bachelor of Social Work from approved/accredited institutions) for social work registration in Nova Scotia is consistent with international standards for the practice of social work.

Although there is overlap in the curricula of college diploma/certificate social work programs and accredited/approved university based social work programs, four significant differences between the programs have been identified:

- A. Intensity: In addition to knowledge and application of multiple theoretical and conceptual bases, only the BSW programs stress systematic inquiry, critical evaluation and analysis, and making professional judgements. Practicum requirements within the BSW programs are generally more stringent than college field placements.
- B. Breadth: Students are able to enter the colleges' social work programs immediately after high school. The two additional years of university study before BSW students enter a social work program help to build a general knowledge base which enhances their capacity to understand and analyse the interconnection of bodies of knowledge and to present situations in a holistic manner.
- C. Theory: the common goal of all university teaching is to enable students to think critically in an analytic manner – not only to learn what is, but to know how to assess knowledge, critique it, consider alternatives and to understand the strengths and limitations of various components of knowledge. College students are exposed to some theory, but are not expected to have the breadth of knowledge or skills to assess and test the validity of individual theories. They are not expected to have the range of theoretical perspectives required in the practice of contemporary social work.

D. Research: All accredited BSW programs require that students understand how knowledge is developed, assessed and revised. BSW graduates are required to pass research courses so that they are able to evaluate practice theories and social policies and programs, and so that they can contribute to the development of new approaches to practice and policy. This is not a requirement within college/certificate programs.

Non-accredited/approved BSW programs, and certificates and diploma programs do not undergo a standardized evaluation process. Thus, NSASW is not assured that registrants from these programs have fulfilled the minimum requirements which would demonstrate entry level competence to practice social work in Nova Scotia.

**Additional Requirements:**

The Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers (NSASW) wishes to be able to evaluate individual applicants, and when required, impose additional requirements and/or practice restrictions on:

- (a) Registrants who have graduated from social work diploma/certificate programs in Alberta or Saskatchewan, and
- (b) Registrants who have graduated from a non-approved (non-accredited) social work program, until the registrants successfully demonstrate the competence to practice the full scope of social work practice as described in the *Social Work Act*.

**Duration of the additional requirement:**

Unknown

**Date of Notification to FLMM:**

2011 / 11 / 16  
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