

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2008CFD0056-001789  
Nov. 21, 2008

Ministry of Children and Family Development

### **B.C.'S FIRST COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS OPENS DOORS**

VICTORIA – People who receive registered social work services in B.C. will be better protected thanks to the creation of a new B.C. College of Social Workers, announced Children and Family Development Minister Tom Christensen.

“Our first priority is to protect British Columbia’s most vulnerable citizens,” said Christensen. “A new college will help us do that by protecting and representing the public interest while serving the professionalism of registered B.C. social workers.”

The self-governing college was established yesterday following cabinet’s approval of a new Social Workers Act. The legislation replaces the almost 40-year-old original act, bringing it up to date with other modern statutes for professional self-governance.

Under the new act:

- Public protection will be enhanced by strengthening the college’s disciplinary powers and by requiring employers to report terminations for misconduct, incompetence or incapacity to the college.
- All registered social workers will be required to report suspected abuse of clients by another registered social worker.
- A business associate who has reason to believe a registrant might harm a member of the public and dissolves their business association as a result will also be required to report that to the college.
- The college will be required to provide public notification of disciplinary decisions.
- The college will have the authority to make bylaws in all areas necessary for professional governance.

“B.C. social workers have worked hard to realize the changes to the act announced by the minister,” said Jim Campbell, chair of the Board of Registration for Social Workers. “We are very pleased the government has passed this legislation creating a College of Social Workers.

“The new act modernizes the regulatory requirements to match today’s responsibilities, and improves the professional foundations to guide the practice of social workers provincially.”

The college will have a board with two-thirds of its members elected by registrants and the remainder appointed by the minister, increasing the board’s accountability to the social workers it regulates.

“Registered social workers were consulted on how to better protect the public and strengthen regulation of their profession,” said Christensen. “These changes are enhanced by their advice.”

Registered social workers provide a wide range of services in schools, hospitals, mental health and treatment facilities, private practice, acute and long-term health settings, child and family programs, resource and counselling centres, and non-profit and government organizations.

Media        Carolyn Heiman  
contact:     Media Relations Manager  
               250 356-1639

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province’s news feeds using RSS, visit the Province’s website at [www.gov.bc.ca](http://www.gov.bc.ca).