

Social Workers Law, 1996  
Including amendments through 2008

**SOCIAL WORKERS LAW, 1996\***

**Chapter A – Purpose of the law**

- Purpose of the law 1. The purpose of this law is to regulate the practice of the social work profession in order:
- (1) To promote the welfare of the individual and society in Israel while maintaining human dignity and the principle of equality;
  - (2) To maintain an appropriate professional standard and standard of behavior among those who practice the profession of social work.

**Chapter B – Interpretation**

- Definitions 2. In this law –
- "practice of social work" – engaging professionally, as an occupation, in improving the personal and social functioning of the individual, the family and the community by means of the treatment, rehabilitation, advice and guidance generally provided by a social worker and by professional treatment methods customary in social work;
- "social worker" – a person who is qualified to be a social worker under this law and is registered in the Register of Social Workers;
- "the registration committee" - the registration committee appointed under Section 13;
- (Amendment No.1) "the Council" – the Social Work Council appointed under Section 2004 51
- "a threatening illness" of a social worker or applicant for registration, is one of the following –
- (1) a mental illness which is liable to cause inability to practice social work;
  - (2) illness or unfitness which is liable to deprive him of the ability to practice social work entirely, temporarily or partially;
- "Register" – the Register of Social Workers as stated in Section 10;
- "Registrar" – the person appointed as Registrar of Social Workers under Section 12;
- "the Minister" – the Minister of Social Affairs and Social Welfare.

**Chapter C – The practice of social work**

- Uniqueness of The practice 3. (a) A person shall not practice social work unless he is a social worker.

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\* Published in 5756 Statute Book No. 1574 of 8.3.1996 p. 152 ( 5755 Bill No. 2347 p. 230, 5755 Bill no. 2411 p. 510).

5764 Statute Book No. 1946 of 30.6.2004 p. 424 (5764 Government Bill No. 99 p. 406) – amendment no. 1; see Section 10 regarding commencement and transitional provisions.

5765 Statute Book No. 2020 of 8.8.2005 p. 744 (5764 Government Bill No. 77 p. 298) - amendment no. 2 in Section 14 of the Administrative Courts Act (amendment no. 15), 5765 - 2005; see Section 45 regarding transitional provisions.

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- (b) A person whose registration in the Register has been suspended under the provisions of this law may not practice social work during the period of suspension.
- (c) A social worker in respect of whom restrictions have been recorded in the Register under this law may practice social work subject to the restrictions.
- (d) An act in good faith performed by someone who is not a social worker, in the course of his profession or occupation, which is not the practice of social work, shall not be deemed to be practice of social work.
- (e) The provisions of this law do not preclude a student at an institution of higher education as stated in Section 9(a)(1) from practicing social work in the course of his studies.

Prohibition of employment

4. A person shall not employ someone who is not a social worker in social work.

Impersonating a social worker

5. A person shall not impersonate a social worker and shall not use the title 'social worker' or a title so similar thereto as to be misleading, unless he is a social worker.

Functions which are partly social work

6. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 3 and 4, the Minister, after consultation with the Council, may prescribe that a person who is not a social worker shall also be permitted to engage in a function or position which is only partly the practice of social work, and an employer shall be permitted to employ a person who is not a social worker in the function or position prescribed as aforesaid.
- (b) The Minister, after consultation with the Council, may prescribe with regard to a function or position as stated in sub-Section (a), that only a social worker shall be permitted to engage in them, and after this has been prescribed only a social worker may be employed in them. Engaging in a function or position prescribed under this sub-Section shall be deemed to be practice of social work.

Receipt of information

- 7.(a) A person is entitled to receive information from a social worker about the social worker's dealings with his affairs, except information concerning another person and the social worker's personal notes.
- (b) A social worker is permitted not to furnish all or some of the information mentioned in sub-Section (a) if in his opinion serious harm will be caused to the person requesting the information or to another person as a result of the information being furnished.
- (c) Failure to furnish information under sub-Section (b) requires the authorization of the social worker's superior if the superior is a social worker, and in the absence of such a superior – the authorization of a social worker whom the Minister shall designate in general or for a particular matter.
- (d) A person who considers himself harmed by a social worker's decision not to furnish information under this section may approach the information committee appointed under Section 54(b), which shall be authorized to order a social worker to furnish full or partial information as aforesaid.

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- (e) The Minister of Justice, after consultation with the Minister, shall prescribe the legal procedures before the information committee. As long as regulations have not been enacted as aforesaid, or in a matter for which a provision has not been prescribed in the regulations, the committee shall act in the manner which it considers to be just and most advantageous.

Professional confidentiality 8. (a) A social worker has a duty to keep information about a person, which has been received in the course of his professional work, secret, and he may not disclose it except in one of the following cases:

- (1) The person to whom the information relates has consented in writing to the disclosure after the significance of the consent has been explained to him, unless the social worker is convinced that the disclosure is liable to harm that person or a member of his family;
- (2) The disclosure is of information which was furnished to the social worker other than by the person to whom the information relates, provided that the social worker is convinced that the information is required for the treatment of that person or a member of his family;
- (3) The disclosure is of information furnished to the social worker by the person to whom the information relates, provided that the social worker is convinced that the information is required for the treatment of that person's minor children;
- (4) The disclosure is necessary in order to prevent harm to the person to whom the information relates or to another person;
- (5) There is a legal duty or right to disclose the information or to collect the information;
- (6) The disclosure is required by the disciplinary committee as defined in this law.
- (7) The disclosure is required for the purpose of professional supervision of the work of social workers or their training, provided that the information is only furnished to officials and according to rules prescribed by the Minister after consultation with the Council.

(Amendment no. 2)  
2005

- (8) A Court, before which the need for disclosure of the information has arisen, has permitted disclosure of the information, if convinced that there are special circumstances justifying this.
- (b) The provisions of sub-Section (a) also apply to any person who has received information under the said sub-Section.
- (c) In this section, "member of family" – spouse, parent, brother or sister, son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter.

**Chapter D – Qualification and registration in the Register**

Qualification for social work 9 (a) A person who has one of the following is qualified to be a social worker:

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- (1) He has a bachelors degree in social work from an institution of higher education in Israel which is recognized under the Council for Higher Education Act, 1958, or from an institution of higher education which has been recognized or has been given a permit as stated in Section 28A of the said law, or has another degree in social work from an institution as aforesaid and the Minister has recognized the degree after consultation with the Council;
- (2) He has a bachelors degree or another degree in social work from an institution of higher education for social work studies abroad, and the Minister has recognized the institution and the degree after consultation with the Council<sup>1</sup>;
- (3) He has a diploma awarded by an institution of social work studies outside Israel which gives its holder the right to work or be registered as a social worker in that country, and the Minister has recognized the institution and the diploma after consultation with the Council<sup>1</sup>;
- (Amendment no. 1) 2004 (4) Immediately prior to the commencement of this law he was qualified for social work under the Welfare Services Act, 1958 and was registered under the said law as qualified for social work before the commencement of this law, and if not registered – the Registrar, in consultation with the registration committee, has confirmed that he was qualified under the said law.
- (b) With regard to sub-Section (a)(2) and (3), the Minister may recognize an institution of social work studies while distinguishing between the types of diplomas awarded by that institution or between degrees, different syllabi or different study tracks at that institution.
- Registration in the 10 (a) A person who is qualified to be a social worker is entitled to be Register of Social Workers (b) The Minister shall prescribe rules concerning methods of registration in the Register, the registration details therein, the details which the applicant must furnish, details of the application form for registration and the manner of submitting it.
- (c) The Register shall be open for perusal by the public.
- Updating information 11. Anyone registered in the Register must notify the Registrar within 30 days of any change which has occurred in his registration details, and he or his employer must furnish the Registrar, at his request, with all information concerning the matter of registration.
- The Registrar 12. The Minister shall appoint an employee of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, who has an academic education, to serve as the Registrar of Social Workers.

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<sup>1</sup> See Official Announcements Gazette No. 5485 of 25.1.2006 p. 1374.

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- Registration committee
13. (a) The Minister shall appoint a registration committee of five whose functions shall be as set out in this law.
- (b) The members of the committee shall be -
- (1) An employee of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, who is qualified to be appointed as a Magistrates' Court judge, who shall be the chairman of the committee;
  - (2) Two members whom the Council shall choose from among its members, and if they have not been chosen as aforesaid within 45 days of the date of the Minister's request, they shall be appointed by the Minister;
  - (3) A social worker representing the workers' organization to which the greatest number of social workers in Israel belong (hereinafter – the Social Workers' Association);
  - (4) A director of a school of social work or one of the social work teaching staff at an institution of higher education under the Council for Higher Education Act, 1958, who shall be proposed by the Council of Directors of Schools of Social Work, and if not proposed as aforesaid within 45 days of the date of the Minister's request, shall be appointed by the Minister.
- (c) The committee members mentioned in sub-Section (b)(2), (3) and (4) shall be appointed for three years and may be reappointed.
- (d) The committee may act if at least two of its members are present at a meeting.
- (e) The Registrar may participate in the registration committee's meetings, without the right to vote.
- The Registrar's functions
14. (a) If the Registrar finds that an applicant for registration has met one of the provisions of Section 9, he shall register him in the Register.
- (b) The Registrar is permitted to refrain from registering an applicant in the Register, even if he has met one of the provisions of Section 9, if he has found any of the following:
- (1) The applicant for registration has been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude or of a crime in view of the seriousness or circumstances of which he is not fit to be a social worker and five years have not yet elapsed from the date of his conviction or even if five years have elapsed as aforesaid – if there are special circumstances in view of which he should not be registered in the Register;
  - (2) There are other circumstances in view of which the applicant for registration is not capable of or fit for practicing social work.
- (c) If a person who has been registered in the Register has furnished false data or has concealed facts and there are reasonable grounds for assuming that if they had been known to the Registrar he would not have registered him, the Registrar may delete his registration.
- (d) If it has been determined under this law that a person's registration must be deleted from the Register, that his registration must be suspended or that his registration must be restricted by conditions – this shall be done by the Registrar.

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- Proceedings concerning refusal of registration in the Register or deleting from the Register
- 15 (a) The Registrar shall not make a decision under Section 14(b) or (c) until after he has done all the following :
- (1) He has given the applicant for registration or the person registered in the Register, as the case may be, an opportunity to present his arguments;
  - (2) He has consulted with the registration committee.
- (b) The Registrar shall notify the applicant for registration or the person whose registration has been deleted of his decision and the reasons for it.

(Amendment No.2) 16. (Revoked)  
2005

**Chapter E – Disqualification for health reasons**

- Medical examination
17. If the Registrar has a reasonable suspicion that an applicant for registration in the Register or someone who is registered in the Register suffers from a threatening illness, he may require them to appear before a medical board as stated in Section 18 for an examination of their physical or mental fitness, at a time and place to be fixed by the board.
- Medical board
- 18.(a) With regard to this Chapter, the Minister shall appoint a medical board of three physicians or psychiatrists (hereinafter – medical board), as the case may be. An appointment of a medical board may be general or for a particular case.
- (b) The medical board shall present its findings and conclusions, for which reasons shall be given, to the Registrar.
- Refusal of medical examination
- 19.(a) If the applicant for registration refuses the Registrar's demand under Section 17, the Registrar shall not register him in the Register as long as he has not appeared and been examined.
- (b) A person registered in the Register shall be exempt from the duty to appear before the medical board if he notifies the Registrar in writing that he wishes his name to be deleted from the Register. If he has done so, the Registrar shall delete his name from the Register.
- Time of appearance
20. The medical board shall not fix a time for appearance before it before 30 days have elapsed from the date on which the applicant for registration or the person registered in the Register has been given notice of the Registrar's demand under Section 17.
- Suspension of registration until examination
21. The Registrar may suspend the registration of a person registered in the Register who is required to appear before a medical board and has not appeared at the time and place which have been fixed, until he is examined.
- Suspension
22. (a) If the Registrar is convinced that a threatening illness of a person registered in the Register is causing a recurring danger to the extent that one should not wait for the completion of the proceedings under

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this Chapter, he may suspend his registration until the final decision is given but for not more than three months, provided that immediately after making his decision he shall refer the matter to the medical board for its attention.

- (b) If the medical board does not complete the proceedings by the end of the period prescribed in sub-Section (a), the Registrar, with the agreement of the medical board, may extend the period of suspension for up to three additional months.
- (c) If the proceedings have not been completed by the end of the second period as aforesaid, the Registrar, with the agreement of the medical board, and if the urgency of the suspension remains unchanged, may again extend it for one further period of up to three months.

Obtaining evidence 23. If the medical board has reason to believe that information or a document likely to attest to a threatening illness of a person registered in the Register or of an applicant for registration is in the possession of a medical institution, doctor or other person, it may, notwithstanding anything stated in any law, call upon the holder of the information or the document to furnish same to it, and after having been called upon as aforesaid the holder of the information shall furnish the document or information.

Duty of confidentiality (Amendment no. 2) 2005 24. A person who has acquired knowledge of a threatening illness under this Chapter must keep it secret and not disclose it except in one of the following cases:  
(1) If it is necessary to do so in order to carry out the provisions of this Chapter;  
(2) If authorized to do so by the Court before which the need for disclosure of the information has arisen.

The Registrar's powers in accordance with the board's finding 25. If the medical board finds that an applicant for registration or a person registered in the Register is unable to practice social work on account of a threatening illness, or that he is able to practice social work with certain restrictions, all absolutely or for the time being, the Registrar is permitted to refuse to register him in the Register, to delete his name from the Register or to record restrictions on his practice as a social worker in the Register or to suspend his registration in the Register, all in accordance with the medical board's decision.

(Amendment no. 2) 2005 26.(Revoked)

**Chapter F – Disciplinary hearing**

Disciplinary offences 27. A social worker who has done one of the following has committed a disciplinary offence:  
(1) Behaved in a manner not befitting the profession;  
(2) Contravened the rules of professional ethics which the Minister has prescribed after consultation with the Council;  
(3) Obtained his registration in the Register through misrepresentation;

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- (4) Shown lack of responsibility or gross negligence in performing his duties;
- (5) Been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude or of an offence from which it appears that he lacks the responsibility required in order to practice social work;
- (6) Contravened any of the provisions of Sections 7 and 8.

Composition of disciplinary committee 28. (a) The Minister shall appoint a disciplinary committee of three members whose function is to deliberate and decide on disciplinary offences (hereinafter - disciplinary committee).  
(b) The members of the disciplinary committee shall be –  
(1) A person who is qualified to be appointed as a Magistrates' Court judge, whom the Minister of Justice has proposed, and who shall be the chairman of the committee;  
(2) An employee of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare who has an academic education;  
(3) A social worker with at least five years' experience, in accordance with the Council's recommendation. If the Council does not make a recommendation as aforesaid within 45 days of the date of the Minister's request - a social worker as aforesaid whom the Minister shall designate.

Period of office (Amendment no. 1) 2004 29. (a) A member of the disciplinary committee shall be appointed for a period of three years, but may be reappointed provided that he is not appointed for more than three successive periods of office. The completion of the period of appointment does not disqualify a member of the committee from completing a matter which he has begun to deliberate upon.  
(b) The appointment of members of the disciplinary committee shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Termination of term of office 30. The term of office of a member of the disciplinary committee shall be terminated by the giving of notice thereof by the Minister, on the occurrence of one of the following:  
(1) He has resigned his membership of the disciplinary committee by submitting a letter of resignation to the Minister;  
(2) In the Minister's opinion he is permanently unable to perform his function;  
(3) He has been convicted of a disciplinary offence under the law, including this law, or has been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude.  
(4) He has gone bankrupt or a receiver has been appointed for his assets by the Court;  
(5) With regard to a member of the disciplinary committee who is a social worker – if he has ceased to be a social worker.

Suspension from office 31. The Minister may suspend a member of the disciplinary committee from office by giving notice thereof, on the occurrence of one of the following:



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- (1) He has been put on disciplinary trial under the law, including this law – until the end of the disciplinary proceedings against him;
- (2) An indictment has been filed against him on account of a crime of moral turpitude – until judgment is given;
- (3) With regard to a member of the disciplinary committee who is a social worker – if his registration in the Register has been suspended or restricted under this law – until the due revocation of the suspension or restriction.

Independence 32. In performing his function, a member of the disciplinary committee is not subject to any authority except the authority of the law.

Legal Quorum 33. The disciplinary committee shall not deliberate in a panel of fewer than two members, one of whom shall be the chairman.

Prosecutor and investigator and their functions (Amendment no. 1) 2004 34 (a) The prosecutor before the disciplinary committee shall be the legal adviser of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare or an advocate whom he has authorized to act. The Attorney General or his representative may act as prosecutor, if the Attorney General has decided to do so in the circumstances of the matter.

(b) A legal complaint about a disciplinary offence shall be filed by a prosecutor.

(Amendment no. 1) 2004 (c) Complaints about disciplinary offences by social workers shall be investigated by social workers who are State employees whom the Minister shall appoint (in this section – **investigators**), unless the prosecutor has decided, with regard to all or part of a complaint about a particular disciplinary offence, to carry out an investigation himself. The investigators who have been appointed under this sub-Section shall act in accordance with the prosecutor's directions.

(Amendment no. 1) 2004 (d) For the purpose of exercising their powers under this law the prosecutor and investigator shall have the powers under Section 2 of the Criminal Procedures Ordinance (Evidence), and Section 3 of the said Ordinance shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to an investigation conducted by a prosecutor or investigator.

Deletion does not preclude the filing of a legal complaint 35. If a social worker's name has been deleted from the Register or his registration in the Register has been suspended, this does not preclude the prosecutor from filing a legal complaint against him with the disciplinary committee, provided that the legal complaint is filed within 12 months of the date of the deletion or suspension. If a restriction concerning a social worker has been recorded in the Register this does not preclude the prosecutor from filing a legal complaint against him with the disciplinary committee.

The disciplinary committee hearing 36. (a) The disciplinary committee shall sit in camera.  
(b) A disciplinary hearing shall be conducted in the presence of the prosecutor and the person against whom the legal complaint has been filed (hereinafter – the defendant), but the disciplinary committee may conduct a hearing at which the defendant is not present if his advocate appears in his place, or if the defendant is absent from the

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- meeting without a satisfactory reason, after he has been warned that if he is absent without a satisfactory reason the committee is permitted to deliberate upon his matter without him being present.
- (c) The disciplinary committee may, for special reasons which shall be recorded, permit a person other than those mentioned in sub-Section (b) to be present at the entire hearing or part thereof.
- Disqualification of a member of the disciplinary committee 37.(a) A prosecutor or defendant may request a member of the disciplinary committee to recuse himself from sitting in judgment if there are circumstances creating a real fear of perversion of justice in the investigation of the legal complaint.
- (b) If a disqualification argument has been raised against a member of the disciplinary committee, the disciplinary committee shall decide upon it immediately and before any other decision is given.
- (c) The prosecutor or defendant may appeal to the District Court against the disciplinary committee's decision on the matter of disqualification within 30 days of the date of furnishing the decision.
- Legal Procedures 38. The Minister of Justice, after consultation with the Minister, shall prescribe the procedures before the disciplinary committee. As long as regulations have not been enacted, or in a matter for which there is no provision in the regulations, the committee shall act in the manner which it considers just and most advantageous.
- Rules of evidence 39. The disciplinary committee is not bound by the rules of evidence except insofar as this is prescribed in the regulations enacted by the Minister of Justice in consultation with the Minister.
- Disciplinary penalties 40. If the disciplinary committee finds that the defendant has committed a disciplinary offence it may impose one or more of the following penalties on him:
- (1) Warning;
  - (2) Reprimand;
  - (3) A fine<sup>2</sup> of up to 10,000 new shekels. The Minister of Justice may change the said sum by order in accordance with changes which have occurred in the Consumer Price Index, in the manner prescribed in Section 64 of the Penal Law, 5737 - 1977 (hereinafter – Penal Law)
  - (4) Suspension of registration in the Register for a period of up to 5 years, including the period of suspension under Section 47, if any
  - (5) Deletion from the Register.
- Suspended sentence 41.(a) If the disciplinary committee decides to impose a disciplinary penalty mentioned in Section 40(4) or (5) on a defendant, it may order that the disciplinary penalty on which it has decided shall be suspended.
- (b) If it has been decided to impose a suspended disciplinary penalty on a defendant, this penalty shall not be imposed on him unless, during the period stated in the disciplinary committee's decision, which shall not

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<sup>2</sup> The Fines, Fees and Expenses Collection Center Act, 1995 shall apply to a fine under this from 31.7.2003. See the Fines, Fees and Expenses Collection Center (Commencement of the law in respect of a fine for a disciplinary offence under the Social Workers Act) Order, 2003.

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be less than a year and shall not exceed three years (hereinafter – the suspension period ) he has committed one of the disciplinary offences stated in the decision (hereinafter – further offence) and the disciplinary committee has found, during the suspension period or thereafter, that the defendant committed a further offence as aforesaid.

- (c) The suspension period shall commence on the day of giving the disciplinary committee's decision concerning the imposition of a suspended disciplinary penalty.
- (d) If the disciplinary committee decides to impose a disciplinary penalty on the defendant on account of a further offence, the committee shall not rule that the imposition of the disciplinary penalty shall be suspended.
- (e) When a suspended disciplinary penalty has been imposed on a person and the disciplinary committee has decided to impose a disciplinary penalty as stated in Section 40(4) or (5) on him on account of a further offence, the disciplinary committee shall order the implementation of the suspended disciplinary penalty, unless it has decided to extend the suspension period as stated in sub-Section (f). The disciplinary committee may order that the implementation of the suspended disciplinary penalty shall be subject to the results of the appeal against the imposition of the disciplinary penalty on account of the further offence.
- (f) The disciplinary committee which has decided to impose a disciplinary penalty on a defendant on account of a further offence may, instead of implementing the suspended disciplinary penalty, extend the suspension period, once only, or renew it for a further period which shall not exceed two years. If the disciplinary committee extends the suspension period for a further period before the end of the first suspension period, the further suspension period shall commence at the end of the first suspension period. If the disciplinary committee renews the suspension period after the first suspension period has ended, the further suspension period shall commence from the day of giving the decision, if the disciplinary committee has not ordered otherwise.

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| Reinstatement of registration | 42. A person whose name has been deleted from the Register under Section 40(5) may, after 5 years have elapsed from the giving of the decision to delete, submit an application to the Registrar for re-registration, and if the Registrar is convinced, after consultation with the registration committee, that there are circumstances justifying this, he may reinstate the registration. |
| Notice to the complainant     | 43. If a legal complaint about a disciplinary offence was filed on the basis of a complaint by a particular person the prosecutor shall inform the said complainant of the disciplinary committee's decision regarding his complaint.   |
| Appeal                        | 44. Within 45 days after the disciplinary committee's decision under Section 40 or 41 has been furnished, the prosecutor and defendant may appeal   |

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against it before the District Court. The lodging of an appeal does not prevent or delay implementation of the disciplinary committee's decision against which the appeal has been lodged, unless the District Court decides otherwise.

- Unfitness due to mental illness 45. If the disciplinary committee has a reasonable suspicion that due to mental illness the defendant is not able to stand trial or that he is not responsible for the act or omission which is the subject of the legal complaint, it may request the Registrar to act in accordance with the provisions of Chapter E. However if the defendant is not deleted or suspended from the Register under the provisions of Chapter E the disciplinary committee shall continue with the disciplinary proceeding.
- Publication 46. The disciplinary committee may, after it has heard the prosecutor and the defendant, order publication of the decision or part thereof, with or without the defendant's name, in the manner which it prescribes.
- Suspension (Amendment no. 1) 2004 47. (a) The disciplinary committee, at the prosecutor's request, may order the Registrar to suspend the registration in the Register of a defendant or of a social worker against whom an indictment has been filed in respect of an offence as stated in Section 27(5) until a final decision has been given by the disciplinary committee or the Court, as it shall prescribe. If a final decision has not been given after the passage of nine months from the date of suspension of registration, the suspension is void. However the disciplinary committee may extend the said period by further periods which shall not exceed nine months each, until the time of giving the final decision.  
(b) The provisions of Section 44 shall apply to the suspension decision under this section, mutatis mutandis.
- Double jeopardy 48. Sentencing or acquittal in criminal proceedings does not preclude the disciplinary committee from taking disciplinary steps against a person who is registered in the Register on account of the same act or omission, and the taking of steps or the acquittal by the disciplinary committee does not preclude his indictment in criminal proceedings.
- Disciplinary hearing and criminal hearing (Amendment No. 1) 2004 48A If an indictment has been filed against a social worker on account of an act or omission which also serves as grounds for a hearing before the disciplinary committee under this law, the disciplinary committee shall stop its deliberations on the legal complaint until a final judgment is given in the criminal trial, unless the committee decides otherwise for special reasons which shall be recorded.
- Disciplinary jurisdiction under another statute 49. A social worker who is also subject to disciplinary jurisdiction under another statute may be tried for a disciplinary offence under this law even if he has already been tried for the same act or omission under the other statute, and may be tried as aforesaid under the other statute even if he has already been tried for a disciplinary offence under this law, provided that he shall not be fined more than once for the same act or omission.

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Judgment in criminal trial 50. The findings and conclusions of the verdict in the final judgment in a criminal trial which convicts the defendant shall be deemed to have been proved in the disciplinary proceeding against that defendant.

(Amendment no. 1)  
2004

**Chapter G – The Social Work Council**

Appointment and composition of the Social Work Council

(Amendment no. 1)  
2004

51. The Minister shall appoint a Social Work Council which shall have 31 members and shall be comprised as follows:
- (1) The Minister or a person appointed by him, who shall be the chairman of the Council;
  - (2) Two representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, one of whom shall be a social worker;
  - (3) A representative of the National Insurance Institute;
  - (4) A representative of the Ministry of Health;
  - (5) A representative of the Ministry of Defense;
  - (9) Two representatives of voluntary welfare organizations, designated by the Minister;
  - (10) Three social workers representing the Union of Local Authorities;
  - (11) Six social workers representing the Social Workers' Association;
  - (12) Three representatives of the public, designated by the Minister;
  - (13) A social worker who practices the social work profession independently, designated by the Minister;
  - (14) Three representatives of organizations representing the population in need of welfare services, designated by the Minister.

The Council's function 52.

The Council shall advise the Minister on matters about which he is obliged to consult with the Council and on other matters concerning the practice of social work.

Period of office 53.

A member of the Council shall hold office for three years, and may be reappointed. If a member's place becomes vacant, another member shall be appointed in his place in the same manner, and shall hold office until the end of his predecessor's period of office. A person who holds office as a member of the Council for two consecutive periods may only be reappointed to it after an interval of 3 consecutive years.

Committees 54.

- (a) The Council, from among its members and other than from among its members, may appoint permanent committees and committees for particular matters and may prescribe their functions and powers and delegate some of its powers to them.
- (b) The Council, from among its members and other than from among its members, shall appoint a permanent committee which shall serve as an information committee for the purposes of Section 7. The said information committee shall be made up of 3 members, one of whom shall be a person qualified to be appointed as a Magistrates' Court judge, who shall be the chairman, and another member shall be a social worker.

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Participation in meetings 55. The Registrar and the chairman of the registration committee may participate in meetings of the Council and its committees, without the right to vote.

Work procedures 56. The Council and any committee which it has appointed may determine their work procedures if they have not been prescribed under this law.

**Chapter H – Penalties and miscellaneous**

Penalties 57. (a) A person who does one of the following shall be subject to a year's imprisonment or a fine as stated in Section 61(a)(2) of the Penal Law:  
(1) Practices social work contrary to the provisions of Section 3;  
(2) Contravenes the provisions of Sections 4 or 5;  
(3) Discloses information contrary to the provisions of Section 8;  
(4) Discloses knowledge of a threatening illness contrary to the provisions of Section 24.  
(b) A person who is called upon to furnish information or a document under Section 23 and refuses to furnish it shall be subject to six months' imprisonment.

Auxiliary powers 58. (a) The medical board or the disciplinary committee may, if this is necessary for the performance of their functions -  
(1) Summon a person to appear before them in order to testify or exhibit something;  
(2) Compel a witness to testify under oath or by solemn affirmation in accordance with the provisions which apply in Court;  
(3) Request the Court in whose area of jurisdiction the board or committee sits to give an order under Section 13 of the Evidence Ordinance [New Version], 5731-1971, for the purpose of interrogation;  
(4) Award traveling and accommodation expenses and detention allowance for witnesses summoned under this section in the same manner as for a witness summoned to testify in Court.

(Amendment no. 2) 2005 (b) If the board or committee has called upon a person to testify or exhibit something as stated in sub-Section (a) and he has refused to do so without an excuse satisfactory to the board or committee, the Court in whose area of jurisdiction the board or committee sits may, at the request of the chairman of the board or committee, enforce compliance with the orders of the board or committee by means of imprisonment which shall not exceed one month or the imposition of a fine which shall not exceed what is stated in Section 40(2) of the Penal Law.

(Amendment no. 2) 2005 (c) In this section, "Court" – with regard to a medical board – an administrative court, and with regard to a disciplinary committee – the District Court.

Procedures 59. The Minister of Justice, in consultation with the Minister, may prescribe procedures with regard to Section 58.

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- Termination of term of office 60. (a) The resignation of a member of the Council or a member of one of its committees, or a member of the registration committee or a member of the medical board shall be in writing and addressed to the Minister, and shall come into effect 15 days after the date of delivery thereof.
- (b) The Minister may remove a member of the Council or a member of a committee as stated in sub-Section (a) from office if :
- (1) In the Minister's opinion he is permanently unable to perform his functions;
- (2) He has been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude;
- (3) He has gone bankrupt or a receiver has been appointed for his assets by the Court;
- (4) He has left Israel permanently;
- (5) He has been absent consecutively and without reasonable excuse from three successive meetings of the Council or the aforesaid committee, and after he has been given the opportunity to state his case.
- (c) If a person who works in a particular Ministry or body or holds any position therein and is a member of the Council or of a committee as stated in sub-Section (a) as a representative of that Ministry or body ceases to work in that Ministry or body or to hold that position, the Minister may remove him from office as a member of the Council or as a member of the aforementioned committee and may appoint another representative of that Ministry or body, as the case may be, in his place.
- Implementation and regulations 61. (a) The Minister is responsible for implementation of this law, and he may enact regulations in anything concerning its implementation.
- (b) The Minister, with the consent of the Minister of Finance and with the approval of the Knesset Labor and Welfare Committee, may prescribe fees for registration in or perusal of the Register.
- Amendment of the Compulsory Education Act – no.22 62. In the Compulsory Education Act, 1949, in section 4 -
- (1) In sub-Section (b)(3), the words "a person who is qualified for social work, as defined in the Welfare Services Act, 1958" shall be replaced by "a social worker as defined in the Social Workers Act, 1996".
- (Amendment no. 1) 2004 (2) (deleted)
- Amendment of the Welfare Services Act – no. 5 63. In the Welfare Services Act, 1958 –
- (1) In Section 1 –
- (a) The definition "welfare officer" shall be replaced by:  
""welfare officer – a social worker whom the Minister of Social Affairs and Social Welfare has appointed as a welfare officer with regard to this law".
- (b) The definition "qualified for social work" shall be replaced by:  
""social worker"- as defined in the Social Workers Act, 1996".

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(2) In Section 2(e), the words "qualified for social work" shall be replaced by "social worker".

- Amendment of the Welfare (Treatment of Retarded Persons) Act – no. 3    64. In the Welfare (Treatment of Retarded Persons) Law, 1969, in Section 1, the definition "welfare officer" shall be replaced by:  
"welfare officer – a social worker as defined in the Social Workers Act, 1996, who has been appointed as a welfare officer under the provisions of Section 21(c).
- Amendment of the Evidence Ordinance- no. 12    65. In the Evidence Ordinance [New Version], 1971, after Section 50 the following shall appear:  
"Social worker's evidence  
50A. (a) A social worker as defined in the Social Workers Act, 1996, is not obliged to give evidence on a matter concerning a person who is in need of his services which has reached him in the course of his occupation as a social worker, and is a matter which by its nature is generally conveyed to a social worker in the belief that it will be kept secret, unless the person has waived confidentiality or the Court has found that the need to disclose the evidence in order to do justice overrides the interest in not disclosing it.  
(b) The provisions of sub-Section (a) shall apply even after the witness has ceased to be a social worker.  
(c) If confidentiality is claimed under this section, the hearing shall be in camera. If the court decides to hear the evidence, it may hear it in camera."
- Amendment of the Special Education Act- no. 3    66. In the Special Education Act, 1988, in section 6(a)(5), the words "qualified for social work within the meaning thereof in the Welfare Services Act, 1958" shall be replaced by "a social worker as defined in the Social Workers Act, 1996".
- Commencement    67. This law shall commence three months after its promulgation.

Shimon Peres  
Prime Minister

Ora Namir  
Minister of Social Affairs and Social Welfare

Ezer Weizmann  
State President

Shevach Weiss  
Knesset Speaker



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**Social Workers Regulations (Rules of Professional Ethics) (Amendment), 2008**

By virtue of my authority pursuant to sections 27(2) and 61(a) of the Social Workers Act, 1996<sup>3</sup>, and after consultation with the Social Workers' Council, I hereby introduce these regulations:

- Amendment to Regulation 1      1. In Regulation 1 of the Social Workers' Regulations (Rules of Professional Ethics), 5759-1999<sup>4</sup> (hereinafter: "the Principal Regulations"), add at the end: "and as long as three years have not passed since the provision of the said help or treatment ended".
- Amendment to Regulation 4      2. In Regulation 4 of the Main Regulations, paragraph (2), replace "treatment requiring skill" with "treatment or an opinion requiring skill".
- Amendment to Regulation 6:      3. In Regulation 6 of the Main Regulations, replace paragraph (2) with the following:
- “(2) He shall not exploit connections with the client or with a client's family member for his personal benefit; the contents of this paragraph shall also apply with regard to a client who is not under the care of that social worker but their acquaintance arose in the framework of the social worker's professional work; in this paragraph, "family member" means one of the following: spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandchild.”

(24.9.2008)

(Signed)  
Yitzchak Herzog  
Minister of Social Affairs and Social Welfare