



Health and Supportive Care Providers
Oversight Authority

2024 HSCPOA Application Guide

Personal Support Workers

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This Guide provides information about applying for registration with the Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority (HSCPOA). Although accurate at the time of publication, subsequent changes may take place without prior notice. HSCPOA will attempt to advise applicants of important changes but reserves the right to make any changes necessary at any time, without advance notice. Please visit our website at www.hscpoa.com for the most current version of this Guide.

Part 1 – General Information

The role of the Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority (HSCPOA) is to strengthen health human resources oversight by ensuring quality care, consistency of education and training of Personal Support Workers (PSWs).

PSWs registered with HSCPOA have exclusive authorization to use HSCPOA's Visual Mark that identifies them as a registrant who is accountable for providing safe, quality and ethical care.

HSCPOA's online register of PSWs provides transparency for the public regarding the PSW workforce. Through regulation, the public and employers can be confident that PSWs registered with HSCPOA provide safe and effective services to the recipients of their care in private residences, hospitals, long-term care facilities, or other healthcare environments.

This guide is intended to help individuals applying for registration with HSCPOA. The first part of this guide provides general information about applying for registration, and the second part includes information about the specific areas of the registration application.

Application Process Overview

There are **four paths** to registration with HSCPOA. Three paths are currently available, and a fourth will be added in the coming months. The four paths are:

1. Path 1: Ontario Education:

Graduation from an Ontario PSW program that meets the requirements set by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities for the issuance of a PSW certificate.

2. Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario:

Employment as a PSW or personal support services provider in Ontario within the three years before applying for registration, and:

- A. Completion of a personal support services program (including programs outside Ontario or outside Canada) that was at least 600 hours long, and employer confirmation of your skills as a PSW, or
- B. At least 600 hours of employment as a PSW in Ontario, and employer confirmation of your skills as a PSW.

3. Path 3: Labour Mobility:

Current registration with the Alberta Health Care Aide Directory, the British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry, or the Nova Scotia Continuing Care Assistants Registry.

4. Path 4: Education and Assessment:

(Not currently available – this path to registration will be available in the coming months)

Graduation from a personal support and personal services program from outside Ontario that was at least 600 hours long, and successful completion of the HSCPOA competency assessment. (This path to registration is expected to be available in January 2025.)

Regardless of which path an applicant uses, every applicant must demonstrate that they:

- Have appropriate education and/or experience;
- Have met the language proficiency requirement for registration; and
- Are of good character and will comply with the expectations of a registered PSW as described in HSCPOA's Code of Ethics.

Registration Requirements

Education and/or Experience Requirement

Each pathway to registration has its own requirement for education and/or experience, described below:

[Path 1: Ontario Education](#)

Applicants must have successfully completed an education program that meets the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities requirements for the issuance of a PSW certificate (a diploma or certificate of completion). This includes programs completed after July 1, 2014, offered by the following Ontario institutions:

- District School Board
- Private Career College
- College of Applied Arts and Technology
- Indigenous Institution

If the applicant completed their education before July 1, 2014, they will need to use one of the other available pathways for registration.

[Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#)

Within the three years before applying, the applicant must have been employed by a 'prescribed employer' as a PSW or personal support services provider in Ontario. The types of employers that meet the requirements to be a 'prescribed employer' are listed in the Registration Regulation and included as Appendix A to this document. If the applicant's employer does not belong to one of the categories of employer listed in Appendix A, the applicant is not eligible for this path to registration.

In addition to recent employment with a prescribed employer, the applicant must demonstrate that:

- A. Their employment in Ontario included the provision of at least 600 hours of PSW or personal support services, or
- B. They successfully completed an education program (including a program outside Ontario or outside Canada) that is designed to prepare an individual to provide personal support services and that was a minimum of 600 hours in duration, counting both class time and practical experience time

Applicants using this path to registration must ask a current or recent employer (someone who has employed them within the previous three years) to complete the [Confirmation of Employment and Personal Support Worker Skills](#) form. This form

will ask the employer to confirm:

- The applicant's employment start date
- The applicant's employment end date (if applicable)
- That in the employer's opinion, the applicant has a set of skills that is equivalent to the expectations of a person who has recently completed an Ontario PSW program

For those applying under **Option A** above, the Confirmation of Employment and PSW Skills form asks the employer to confirm that the applicant provided at least 600 hours of PSW or personal support services care as part of their employment.

For **Option B** above, the applicant will have to submit an education program diploma or certificate demonstrating that they successfully completed a personal support services education program, and a transcript that confirms that the program was at least 600 hours long (counting both class time and practical experience time).

[Path 3: Labour Mobility](#)

An applicant who is currently registered with one of Canada's three other PSW/personal care aide registries is deemed to have met the education and/or experience requirement for registration with HSCPOA if they have provided personal support care in the three years before applying for registration.

[Path 4: Education and Assessment](#) (not yet available)

Successful completion of a personal support and personal services program from outside Ontario that was at least 600 hours long, and successful completion of the HSCPOA competency assessment (this pathway will be available starting January 2025).

Language Proficiency Requirement

Communication forms the basis for safe and effective care and applicants must demonstrate that they have reasonable fluency in English or French.

PSWs must be able to communicate effectively with recipients of supportive care services, as well as with other healthcare professionals on the healthcare team. They must also be able to communicate with HSCPOA. Being able to understand and implement requirements related to registration, quality assurance and complaints, as well as information and guidance related to the provision of personal support services, is an essential part of a PSW's accountability as a registrant with HSCPOA.

Most applicants will meet the language proficiency requirement by confirming that English or French is the first language that they learned and the language they use most often now. The requirement can also be met if the applicant completed their qualifying PSW education in English or French.

Labour mobility applicants currently registered with the British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry have already demonstrated language proficiency and do not have to demonstrate it again for HSCPOA.

For more information about how to meet the language requirement for registration, please refer to the [Language Proficiency Policy](#) on the HSCPOA website.

Criminal Record Screening (Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check)

As part of the good character requirement, applicants for registration are required to submit a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters check (sometimes referred to as a CRJM or Level 2 Check).

Personal support service providers are in a position of trust. The CRJM Check supports the principles of transparency and accountability of HSCPOA.

The CRJM report can be obtained by completing an online application with the applicant's local Ontario Police Services. The CRJM report must meet the following requirements:

- It was issued no more than six months before the date of application for registration.

- The name on the CRJM report matches the name on the application for registration with HSCPOA.
- The CRJM report must indicate that a search was conducted under all current, previous, former or maiden names of the applicant.

The applicant will upload a copy of their CRJM report with their online application. However, HSCPOA may require an applicant to submit their original criminal record check document (rather than an uploaded copy) at any time.

If the report indicates a criminal finding, the applicant must submit a detailed explanation of the circumstances that led to the criminal finding and any supporting documentation. They will be asked to provide a copy of charging documents and court transcripts related to the matter. If there is a criminal record relating to any type of driving offence, an up to date (no more than three months old) Certified Complete Driver's Record from ServiceOntario must also be submitted. Additional information and documentation related to the applicant's CRJM should be sent to registration@hscpoa.com.

Please note that not all criminal findings prevent an applicant from being registered. HSCPOA's CEO will assess whether the criminal findings affect the applicant's suitability to be registered. The applicant will also be able to appeal any decision to refuse registration or limit their practice because of previous criminal findings.

For more information, please review the [Criminal Record Check Policy](#) on the HSCPOA website.

Government-issued Photo Identification

All applicants are required to provide a copy of a currently valid, government-issued photo ID from their province/territory or federal government. Examples of acceptable government-issued ID include a driver's license, passport, or other government issued photo identification (provincial health cards are NOT accepted). The identification must:

- Include the applicant's photograph

- Include the applicant's signature
- Be valid and not expired
- Not exhibit any characteristics of being changed or altered in any way

Photograph

All applicants are required to upload a JPEG file of a headshot (head and shoulders) photo with their application, similar to a passport photo. This photograph will be used by HSCPOA for confirmation of identification. The photograph should present a professional image. You may smile, wear jewelry or glasses, and have your hair in any style of your choice.

Letter of Standing (if applicable)

If an applicant is currently or was previously registered with one of the following registries, they must have their regulator complete the [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#):

- The Alberta Health Care Aide Directory,
- The British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry, or
- The Nova Scotia's Continuing Care Assistants Registry

In addition, any applicant who is currently or was previously registered in any other profession or occupation inside or outside Canada must also submit the [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#). The Letter of Standing form must be sent to the relevant regulatory body to complete it and send it directly to HSCPOA. A letter of standing received directly from an applicant will not be accepted.

Application Processing

Fees

HSCPOA is supported by the Government of Ontario. There are currently no fees to apply for registration with HSCPOA, and no annual fee for maintaining registration.

Completed Application

A fully completed application includes an application form submitted through HSCPOA's online application portal which includes:

- A copy of the applicant's Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check
- PDF upload of an acceptable form of government-issued ID.
- JPEG upload of a headshot of the applicant
- PDF of the applicant's Education Program Certificate of Completion or diploma (if applicable)
- [Confirmation of Employment and Personal Support Worker Skills](#) form completed by a current/previous employer (if applicable)
- [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#) submitted directly by the regulatory body (if the applicant is currently or was previously registered on PSW Registry/Directory in Canada, or with any profession or occupation inside or outside Ontario or Canada).
- A copy of the results from a provider of an approved language fluency assessment (if this is how the applicant is meeting the language proficiency requirement)

Once a completed application and all required documents have been received, if there are no outstanding issues or concerns, the applicant will be registered within ten (15) business days.

If HSCPOA have any questions about the application, they will reach out to the applicant within 15 business days.

If an applicant does not meet the requirements for registration (or it is not clear that they meet the requirements), the applicant will be informed that their application is being referred to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for review. If the applicant does not agree with the CEO's decision, they may appeal the decision to an independent body called the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB).

Please note that it may take up to six weeks for the CEO to review an application where concerns have been raised. An applicant will be informed if their application is being reviewed by the CEO. If the applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the CEO, they may request a written review by an independent body called the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB).

Once registered, the applicant will receive a confirmation email with information about the Official Mark they will be entitled to use.

Communicating with Applicants

To respect each applicant's privacy and to ensure they receive clear and accurate information, HSCPOA communicates directly with the applicant. Only in exceptional circumstances will HSCPOA communicate with an applicant's family members or friends. Applicants are always entitled to obtain legal advice and HSCPOA may communicate with the applicant and/or their legal counsel.

Part 2 – Completing the Online Application Form

Applicants can access the online application form by creating a profile in the Applicants section of the [HSCPOA website](#).

The following information describes each section of the online application form and how it should be completed.

1. General Information

The applicant must provide their legal first name, commonly used name (if applicable), legal last name and the gender to which they identify.

The 'commonly used name' (or nickname) is intended to capture a name that the applicant will use as a PSW that is not their legal first name. For example, some people are known by their middle name, not their legal first name.

If an applicant has changed their legal name, they must provide the previous legal name(s) they have held along with official documentation. If an applicant has changed their gender and is providing documentation that identifies with a different gender, or if they express their gender differently at various times, they must attach a brief explanation so that HSCPOA can understand the documentation they have

provided and how they would like their gender expressed on HSCPOA's online public register.

Home Contact Information

The applicant must provide home mailing address, phone number and email address, and update their online profile within 10 business days if there are any changes to this contact information. This information is used primarily by HSCPOA to communicate with the applicant.

Business Contact Information

Applicants must provide the business contact information for the employer where they are currently working as a PSW. If an applicant has more than one employer, they should provide the information for the employer where they work the most hours as a PSW.

An applicant who is not currently employed as a PSW should leave this section blank.

2. Select your Application Pathway

Currently, there are three available paths to registration. For each path, the following information and documentation will be required:

[Path 1: Ontario Education](#)

- a. Certificate or diploma demonstrating successful completion of a PSW program in Ontario on or after July 1, 2014
- b. Demonstration of language proficiency as required in the [Language Proficiency Policy](#)

[Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#)

- a. [Confirmation of Employment and Personal Support Worker Skills](#) form from a current employer, or an employer the applicant worked for in the previous three years **AND**
 - A. The form confirms that the applicant provided at least 600 hours of PSW or personal support services during their employment

OR

B. The applicant submits

1. a diploma or certificate confirming that they successfully completed a personal support services program **AND**
 2. A transcript confirming that the education program was at least 600 hours long including both class time and practical experience time
- b. Demonstration of language proficiency as required in the [Language Proficiency Policy](#)

Path 3: Labour Mobility

- a. A [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#) completed by the Canadian PSW or personal care aide registry or directory of which the applicant is currently a member
- b. Demonstration of language proficiency as required in the [Language Proficiency Policy](#) (Labour mobility applicants currently registered with the British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry have already demonstrated language proficiency and do not have to demonstrate it again for HSCPOA)

3. Additional Registration Information

In addition to the information noted above for each path to registration, every applicant must submit the information required on this page of the application form.

Documents

Every applicant is required to submit a copy of the following documents:

- Valid, government-issued photo identification
- Photograph (head and shoulders)
- Criminal Record and Judicial Matters (CRJM) criminal record check.

Registration with another Profession or Occupation

An applicant who is currently registered, or was previously registered, to practise any regulated profession or occupation in any jurisdiction, or an applicant who is currently registered as a PSW in another Canadian jurisdiction, must arrange to

have their regulatory body send a [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#) directly to HSCPOA. Their application will not be processed until this form has been received directly from the regulator.

An applicant using the Labour Mobility pathway who has already submitted a Letter of Standing related to their **current** registration as a PSW or health care aide in another Canadian jurisdiction does not have to submit it again.

Applicants should not include membership in a professional association in their application. A professional association has a different mandate than a regulatory body whose mandate is public interest and protection under the authority of legislation.

4. Attestations and Declarations

The regulations require that applicants disclose past and/or present conduct issues in specific areas. Every applicant must answer all the declaration and attestation questions on this page of the online application form. Please note that, even though all previous misconduct or findings must be reported, this will not necessarily prevent the applicant from being registered.

If an applicant answers “yes” to any of the questions in the attestation section of the form, they must send a detailed explanation of the circumstances and any supporting documentation to registration@hscpoa.ca. Where applicable, the applicant may be asked to provide a copy of court transcripts related to the matter. This information will be assessed by the CEO. If the past or present conduct results in a decision to prevent or limit the applicant's registration, they have the right to appeal that decision.

The following definitions will help applicants understand the questions on the Attestations and Declarations page of the online application form:

- **Definition of Offence:** An offence is a finding by a court (administrative tribunal findings do not count) of a breach of something labeled as an offence in a statute. Typically, an offence is punishable by a fine or jail,

however, the report must be made even if the court imposed a conditional or an absolute discharge. The best-known offences are breaches of the Criminal Code of Canada or of federal drug legislation. However, there are a number of provincial offences as well (e.g. failing to report a child in need of protection contrary to the Child and Family Services Act).

- **Definition of Professional Misconduct, Incompetence or Incapacity:** Professional misconduct involves any conduct that is viewed by the profession as unethical or unprofessional. Incompetence usually involves a lack of knowledge, skill and judgment in the care of a patient, client or recipient. Incapacity is a physical or mental condition warranting supervision, monitoring or other restrictions so that the registrant can provide safe and effective care. Usually findings of professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity are made by a discipline or fitness to practise committee of a regulatory body.
- **Definition of Current Proceeding:** A current proceeding for professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity occurs when a decision has been made to hold a hearing into allegations. The simple filing of a complaint or initiation of a preliminary investigation does not need to be reported. However, if a complaint or investigation results in a decision to hold a hearing, the registrant must notify HSCPOA immediately.

Appendix A: Prescribed Employers

An individual applying for registration using the 'Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario' pathway to registration must have been employed as a PSW or to provide personal support services in Ontario in the three years prior to applying for registration. In addition, their employer must be a 'prescribed employer', meaning they must be one of the categories of employer listed below:

- A licensee of a long-term care home within the meaning of the *Fixing Long-term Care Act, 2021*.
- A hospital within the meaning of the *Public Hospitals Act*.
- A licensee of a retirement home within the meaning of the *Retirement Homes Act, 2021*.
- A private hospital operating under the authority of a licence issued under the *Private Hospitals Act*.
- A psychiatric facility within the meaning of the *Mental Health Act*.
- A home established, approved or licensed under the *Homes for Special Care Act*.
- An integrated community health services centre within the meaning of the *Integrated Community Health Services Centres Act, 2023*.
 - o A list of integrated community health services centres is available on the [Government of Ontario website](#).
- The University of Ottawa Heart Institute/Institut de cardiologie de l'Université d'Ottawa.
- An organization or individual delivering publicly funded home and community care services under the *Connecting Care Act, 2019* or the *Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Act*. This includes:
 - o Home and Community Care Support Services organizations and Ontario Health at Home;
 - o Health Service Providers funded by Ontario Health to provide home and community care services that include Personal Support Services
 - o Home care service providers, including residential hospices and retirement homes, that deliver publicly-funded Personal Support Services under a contract with Home and Community Care Support Services, Ontario Health at Home or a Health Service Provider

- Indigenous organizations funded by the Minister of Health to provide home and community care services for Indigenous communities, and their contracted providers.

The employer completing the Confirmation of Employment and PSW Skills form on the applicant's behalf will be asked which of these employer categories they belong to. If the employer does not fall into one of the employer categories listed above, the applicant will not be eligible for the 'Employed as a PSW in Ontario' pathway to registration and should review the other registration pathways to see if they can meet the registration requirements another way.