



Health and Supportive Care Providers  
Oversight Authority

# **2024 HSCPOA Application Guide**

## **Personal Support Workers (PSWs)**

*This Guide provides information about applying for PSW 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](http://www.hscpoa.com) for the most current version of this Guide and for new or revised policies.*

## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Part 1 – General Information</b> .....                    | <b>3</b>  |
| Introduction.....  | 3         |
| Pathways to Registration .....                               | 4         |
| Path 1: Ontario PSW Education.....                           | 4         |
| Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario .....                   | 5         |
| Path 3: Labour Mobility.....                                 | 7         |
| Path 4: Competency Assessment.....                           | 7         |
| <b>Registration Requirements</b> .....                       | <b>9</b>  |
| Education and/or Experience Requirement .....                | 9         |
| Language Proficiency Requirement.....                        | 9         |
| Criminal Record Checks.....                                  | 10        |
| Government-Issued Photo Identification .....                 | 11        |
| Photograph .....   | 11        |
| Name Changes .....   | 11        |
| Letter of Standing.....                                      | 12        |
| Application Processing .....                                 | 12        |
| Fees .....   | 12        |
| Completed Applications .....                                 | 12        |
| Communicating with Applicants.....                           | 13        |
| Fraudulent Documentation.....                                | 13        |
| <b>Part 2 – Completing the Online Application Form</b> ..... | <b>14</b> |
| General Information .....                                    | 14        |
| Home Contact Information .....                               | 14        |
| Employment Contact Information.....                          | 15        |
| Select Your Application Pathway .....                        | 15        |
| Attestations and Declarations.....                           | 15        |
| Appendix A: Prescribed Employers .....                       | 17        |

## Part 1 – General Information

### Introduction

The Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority (HSCPOA) has a mandate to register and provide oversight of individuals providing health and supportive care services, beginning with personal support workers (PSWs) in Ontario. Other potential classes of registrants that may be prescribed by government in future regulations to be made under the [\*Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority Act, 2021\*](#).

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

HSCPOA's online [Public 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, retirement homes, or other healthcare environments.

This guide is intended to help individuals applying for registration with HSCPOA.

## Pathways to Registration

There are [four paths to registration with HSCPOA](#). 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](#).

**The four pathways to registration with their documentation requirements are outlined below. Except for [Letter of Standing](#), all documentation will be uploaded by applicants through their online application form.**

### **[Path 1: Ontario PSW Education](#)**

You are eligible for this registration pathway if you graduated from an Ontario Personal Support Worker (PSW) program that meets the requirements set by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities to issue a PSW certificate (a diploma or certificate of completion).

This includes PSW education programs completed on or after July 1, 2014\* offered by the following Ontario education institutions:

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

\* If you completed your PSW education before July 1, 2014, you must use one of the other available pathways for registration.

## Documentation Requirements:

- ☑ A certificate or diploma demonstrating you have successfully completed a personal support services education program in Ontario that meets the Ministry of Colleges and Universities requirements,
- ☑ A transcript from your Ontario personal support services education program,
- ☑ **NOTE:** If your certificate/diploma or transcript does not confirm your personal support services education program was at least 600 hours long (including both class time and practical experience time), you must submit other supporting documentation,
- ☑ Government-issued Photo ID - a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued photo identification,
- ☑ Headshot photo - for confirmation of identification,
- ☑ [Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check \(Vulnerable Sector checks also accepted\)](#),
- ☑ Name change documentation, if applicable, and
- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – If you are currently or were previously registered with another profession or occupation inside or outside of Canada (excludes membership in a professional association).

## **Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario**

You are eligible for this registration pathway if you are currently employed or have been previously employed as a Personal Support Worker (PSW) or equivalent, in Ontario, within the past three years before the date of your application for registration with HSCPOA. Your employer must be listed in [Appendix A: Prescribed Employers](#).

There are two options:

**A.** You have been employed as a PSW (or equivalent) within the past three years and worked a minimum of 600 hours in Ontario, **OR**

**B.** You have been employed as a PSW (or equivalent) within the past three years and worked less than 600 hours in Ontario, but you completed a 600-hour personal support services education program outside of Ontario or Canada.

## Documentation Requirements:

### Option 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,
- ☑ [Proof of language proficiency](#), if required in the Language Proficiency Policy,
- ☑ Government-issued Photo ID - a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued photo identification,
- ☑ Headshot photo - for confirmation of identification,
- ☑ [Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check \(Vulnerable Sector checks also accepted\)](#),
- ☑ Name change documentation, if applicable, and
- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – If you are currently or were previously registered with another profession or occupation inside or outside of Canada (excludes membership in a professional association).

### Option B:

- ☑ [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,
- ☑ A certificate or diploma demonstrating you have successfully completed a personal support services education program,
- ☑ A transcript from your personal support services education program,
- ☑ **NOTE:** If your certificate/diploma or transcript does not confirm your personal support services education program was at least 600 hours long (including both class time and practical experience time), you must submit other supporting documentation,
- ☑ [Proof of language proficiency](#), if required in the Language Proficiency Policy;
- ☑ Government-issued Photo ID - a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued photo identification,
- ☑ Headshot photo - for confirmation of identification,
- ☑ [Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check \(Vulnerable Sector checks also accepted\)](#),
- ☑ Name change documentation, if applicable, and
- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – If you are currently or were previously registered with another profession or occupation inside or outside of Canada (excludes membership in a professional association).

### **Path 3: Labour Mobility**

You are eligible to apply for registration under the Labour Mobility pathway if you are currently registered with:

- British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry,
- Alberta Health Care Aide Directory, OR
- Nova Scotia Continuing Care Assistant Registry.

You must have also provided personal support care in the three years before applying for registration with HSCPOA. Applicants who have not provided care in the previous three years are not eligible for registration through the Labour Mobility pathway, but can undergo a competency assessment or alternatively, gain employment as a PSW in Ontario and apply through [Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#).

#### **Documentation Requirements:**

- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – From your current provincial care aide/health care assistant registry or directory,
- ☑ [Proof of language proficiency](#), if required in the Language Proficiency Policy,
- ☑ Government-issued Photo ID - a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued photo identification,
- ☑ Headshot photo - for confirmation of identification,
- ☑ [Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check \(Vulnerable Sector checks also accepted\)](#),
- ☑ Name change documentation, if applicable, and
- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – If you are currently or were previously registered with another profession or occupation inside or outside of Canada (excludes membership in a professional association).

### **Path 4: Competency Assessment**

You are eligible to complete a competency assessment if you do not have Ontario PSW work experience and you are:

- Internationally educated, **OR**
- Trained in Canada outside of Ontario and not eligible for registration through the Labour Mobility pathway.

You must have completed a personal support services education program outside of Ontario that was a minimum of 600 hours in duration, including both class time and practical experience time.

The competency assessment will determine if you have a set of skills that is equivalent to someone who has completed an Ontario program that met the requirements set by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to prepare an individual to provide personal support services.

### **Documentation Requirements:**

- ☑ A certificate or diploma demonstrating you have successfully completed a personal support services education program,
- ☑ A transcript from your personal support services education program,
- ☑ **NOTE:** If your certificate/diploma or transcript does not confirm your personal support services education program was at least 600 hours long (including both class time and practical experience time), you must submit other supporting documentation,
- ☑ [Proof of language proficiency](#), if required in the Language Proficiency Policy;
- ☑ Government-issued Photo ID - a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued photo identification,
- ☑ Headshot photo - for confirmation of identification,
- ☑ [Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check \(Vulnerable Sector checks also accepted\)](#),
- ☑ Name change documentation, if applicable, and
- ☑ [Letter of Standing](#) – If you are currently or were previously registered with another profession or occupation inside or outside of Canada (excludes membership in a professional association).



# Registration Requirements

## Education and/or Experience Requirement

Each pathway to registration outlines the documentation required to demonstrate education and/or experience as a PSW. Applicants must provide the required documentation as specified in the online application form for the pathway they are applying to.

Most documentation, including certificates/diplomas of program completion and transcripts may be submitted directly by applicants. If applying through [Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#), applicants must request their employer complete the [Confirmation of Employment and Personal Support Worker Skills Form](#). Applicants will then be required to upload the completed employer form in their online application.

## 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.

An applicant may demonstrate that they have met the language proficiency requirement by doing one of the following:

1. A self-declaration indicating that their first and primary language is English or French.
2. Providing evidence of their successful completion of qualifying PSW education in English or French.
3. Providing evidence of their successful completion of other post-secondary education in English or French.

4. Providing test results from an approved standardized language fluency test, within the past two years, demonstrating that they have achieved the minimum scores determined by HSCPOA.

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

NOTE: Labour mobility applicants currently registered with the British Columbia Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry meet HSCPOA's language proficiency requirements.

### **Criminal Record Checks**

As part of the good character requirement, all HSCPOA applicants are required to submit, at minimum, a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check (sometimes referred to as a CRJM or Level 2 Check). HSCPOA will also accept Vulnerable Sector (VS) Checks.

A criminal record check is valid if the report was issued no more than 12 months before the date of application for registration with HSCPOA.

If you have a valid CRJM or VS check obtained for another purpose, applicants can upload this with your application to HSCPOA. Alternatively, you can complete an automated enhanced Canadian criminal record check through Certn (cost = \$22.48 + HST), available through HSCPOA's online application form. Once you receive the criminal record check report from Certn, please upload this with your HSCPOA application.

If the report indicates a criminal finding, you must submit a detailed explanation of the circumstances that led to the criminal finding and any supporting documentation. You 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](mailto:registration@hscpoa.com).

Please note that not all criminal findings prevent an applicant from being registered. HSCPOA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will assess whether the criminal findings affect your suitability to be registered. Applicants 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 current/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, and
- Not exhibit any characteristics of being changed or altered in any way.

### **Photograph**

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

### **Name Changes**

If an applicant's current legal name on their government-issued photo ID is different from the name on any other documentation submitted to HSCPOA (e.g., PSW certificate or diploma), they must provide formal documentation confirming their name change, such as a marriage licence or certificate, or change of name certificate.

## Letter of Standing

Any applicant who is currently or was previously registered with a regulatory body in any profession or occupation inside or outside Canada must submit the [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#).

The applicant must send the [Letter of Standing Form for Registration with HSCPOA](#) to the relevant regulatory body to complete it and **the regulatory body must send it directly to HSCPOA at: [registration@hscpoa.com](mailto:registration@hscpoa.com)**. A letter of standing received directly from an applicant will not be accepted.

Labour mobility applicants who have already requested their Canadian PSW directory/registry to complete this form do not need to submit another form, unless they are also registered with another profession or occupation.

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.

## Application Processing

### Fees

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

### Completed Applications

All applications must be submitted through HSCPOA's online application portal. The documents required will be specified in the online application form and depend on [which pathway you are applying to](#) and your individual circumstances (e.g., name change, registration in another occupation, etc.).

Once your completed application form and all required documents have been received by HSCPOA, your application will be reviewed. If there are no outstanding issues or concerns, you will be registered with HSCPOA within 15 business days. Once registered, a confirmation email will be sent with information about the PSW Visual Mark that HSCPOA registrants will be entitled to use.

If HSCPOA has any questions about your application for registration, we will reach out to you within 15 business days.

If you do not meet the requirements for registration (or it is not clear that you meet the requirements), you will be informed that your application is being referred to the CEO for review.

Please note that it may take several weeks for the CEO to review an application where concerns have been raised. You will be informed if your application is being reviewed by the CEO. If you are not satisfied with the decision of the CEO, you may request a written review by an independent body called the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB). Instructions will be provided on how to request an HPARB review.

### **Communicating with Applicants**

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

### **Fraudulent Documentation**

Where there is reason to believe that an applicant's documentation may have been tampered with or is fraudulent, HSCPOA may verify documentation with source institutions, including PSW education programs. HSCPOA will also conduct an audit of application documentation to verify authenticity.

Applicants found to be submitting inaccurate or fraudulent documentation will not be registered with HSCPOA. A registrant who was found to have submitted fraudulent documentation may have their registration revoked, subject to the HSCPOA CEO's discretion. If your registration is revoked, a notation will be included and remain indefinitely under your profile on HSCPOA's online public register.

## Part 2 – Completing the Online Application Form

Access to the online application will be available made available beginning in the fall 2024 through [HSCPOA's website](#). You will create an account and you will be guided through the application process.

The following information describes each section of the online application form and how it should be completed. You will be able to save information in the application process and return as often as you need, until your application is complete and ready to submit.

### General Information

#### **Name**

Provide your legal first and last name, and any commonly used names (including nicknames and abbreviations), if applicable.

The 'commonly used name' (including nickname and abbreviations) is intended to capture a name that you may use as a PSW that is not your legal first name. For example, you may use your middle name, not your legal first name. Your 'commonly used name' may be used to identify yourself as a PSW and will be displayed on HSCPOA's Public Register.

#### **Gender and Preferred Pronouns**

Specify the gender to which you identify. If you have changed your gender and are providing documentation that identifies you with a different gender, or if you express your gender differently at various times, please send an email to [registration@hscpoa.com](mailto:registration@hscpoa.com) providing a brief explanation so that HSCPOA can understand the documentation you have provided and how you would like your gender expressed on HSCPOA's online public register.

#### **Home Contact Information**

All applicants must provide a home mailing address, personal phone number, and email address.

## **Employment Contact Information**

Provide the contact information for all employers where you are currently working as a PSW. If you have more than one employer, please list all employers and specify which is your primary employer (e.g., the employer where you work the most hours). If you work at more than one site for the same employer, you are only required to provide the site that represents the mailing address or head office. Home care PSWs: do not list any home addresses of your recipients of PSW care.

If you are not currently employed as a PSW, leave this section blank.

Please update your online profile within 30 business days if there are any changes to your personal or employer contact information.

## **Select Your Application Pathway**

There are [four available paths to registration](#). For each pathway, the documentation required will be listed. Applicants will upload most of their documentation themselves through the application portal.

## **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 and declaration questions on the online application form. Please note that, even though all previous misconduct or findings must be reported, this may not necessarily prevent you from being registered with HSCPOA.

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.com](mailto:registration@hscpoa.com). 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 to HPARB.

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 several provincial offences as well.
- **Definition of Professional Misconduct, Incompetence, or Incapacity:** Professional misconduct involves any conduct that is viewed by the profession or occupation 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/oversight 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 [Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#) must have been employed as a PSW or to provide personal support services in Ontario in the three years prior to applying for registration with HSCPOA. In addition, their employer must be a 'prescribed employer', meaning they must be one of the categories of employers listed below in the [Registration Regulation](#), under the [Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority Act, 2021](#):

1. A licensee of a long-term care home within the meaning of the *Fixing Long-term Care Act, 2021*.
2. A hospital within the meaning of the *Public Hospitals Act*.
3. A licensee of a retirement home within the meaning of the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010*.
4. A private hospital operating under the authority of a license issued under the *Private Hospitals Act*.
5. A psychiatric facility within the meaning of the *Mental Health Act*.
6. A home established, approved, or licensed under the *Homes for Special Care Act*.
7. An integrated community health services centre within the meaning of the *Integrated Community Health Services Centres Act, 2023*.
  - A list of integrated community health services centres is available on the [Government of Ontario website](#).
8. The University of Ottawa Heart Institute/Institut de cardiologie de l'Université d'Ottawa.
9. 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*, excluding an individual who employs an individual to provide a home and community care service with funding received from a health service provider or an Ontario Health Team to purchase the service pursuant to subsection 21(1.1) of the *Connecting Care Act, 2019*.

The employer completing the [Confirmation of Employment and Personal Support Worker 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 Path 2: Employed as a PSW in Ontario](#) and should review the other registration pathways to see if they can meet the registration requirements another way.