



Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila



PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
RESOLUTION NO. 03
Series of 2017

IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4373,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT TO REGULATE THE PRACTICE OF
SOCIAL WORK AND THE OPERATION OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCIES IN THE
PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NOS. 5175 AND 10847

Pursuant to Section 8 of Republic Act No. 4373, entitled "AN ACT TO REGULATE THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK AND THE OPERATION OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCIES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES", and Section 5 of Republic Act No. 10847, also known as "AN ACT LOWERING THE AGE REQUIREMENT FOR APPLICANTS TAKING THE BOARD EXAMINATION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS, PROVIDING FOR CONTINUING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION, AND UPGRADING THE SUNDRY PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK", the Professional Regulatory Board for Social Workers, subject to approval of the Professional Regulation Commission, hereby adopts, issues, and promulgates this Resolution embodying the Rules and Regulations to carry out, administer, and enforce the provisions of R. A. No. 4373, as amended by R. A. Nos. 5175 and 10847.

RULE I
TITLE, DECLARATION OF POLICY, AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 1. Title. – This Resolution shall be known and cited as the "Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 4373, as amended by R. A. Nos. 5175 and 10847", or for brevity, the IRR of R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the importance of Social Workers in nation-building. Hence, it shall develop and nurture competent, virtuous, productive, and well-rounded Social Workers whose standards of practice and service shall be excellent, qualitative, world-class, and globally competitive through inviolable, honest, effective and credible licensure examinations and through regulatory measures, programs, and activities that foster their professional growth.

The IRR shall be interpreted, construed and carried out in light of the above statement which embodies the legislative intent in enacting R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this IRR, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **Board** refers to the Professional Regulatory Board for Social Workers;
- b. **Board Chairperson** refers to the Chairperson of the Professional Regulatory Board for Social Workers;

- c. **Commission** refers to the Professional Regulation Commission;
- d. **Commission Chairperson** refers to the Chairperson of the Commission;
- e. **Certificate of Registration (COR)** refers to the document showing the full name and registration number of the Social Worker duly signed by the Board Chairperson and Members and the Commission Chairperson. The COR shall be the evidence that the person named therein is authorized to practice Social Work and is entitled to all the rights and privileges appurtenant thereto unless such COR shall have been suspended or cancelled for cause;
- f. **Professional Identification Card (PIC)** refers to the document showing the full name of the Social Worker, the registration number, dates of its issuance and expiry duly signed by the Commission Chairperson, after payment of the prescribed fee for three (3) years;
- g. **Registration by Reciprocity** refers to Section 18 of R. A. No. 4373 on the privilege granted to a person who is registered or licensed as Social Worker in any foreign state or country to be issued a COR and PIC as a Social Worker in the Philippines without need of examination, subject to the requirement that the registration and licensing in his/her state or country are substantially the same as those required and contemplated under Philippine laws, and that further, the laws of such foreign state or country grant the same privileges to Filipino Social Workers on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such foreign state or country;
- h. **Special Temporary Permit** refers to Section 3 of R. A. No. 10847 on the privilege granted to a foreign Social Worker to practice in the Philippines upon satisfying the requirements set forth by law;
- i. **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** refers to the inculcation of advanced knowledge, skills and ethical values in a post-licensure specialized or in inter- or multi-disciplinary field of study for assimilation into professional practice, self-directed research and/or lifelong learning;
- j. **Social Work** refers to the profession which is primarily concerned with organized social service activity aimed to facilitate and strengthen basic social relationships and the mutual adjustment between individuals and their social environment for the good of the individual and of the society by the use of social work methods;
- k. **Social Worker** refers to a practitioner who by accepted academic training and social work professional experience possesses the skill to achieve the objectives as defined and set by the Social Work profession, through the use of the basic methods and techniques of Social Work (case work, group work, and community organization) which are designed to enable individuals, groups and communities to meet their needs and to solve the problems of adjustment to a changing pattern of society, and through coordinated action, to improve economic and social conditions, and is connected with an organized social work agency which is supported partially or wholly from government or community solicited funds;
- l. **Social Welfare and Development Agency (SWDA)** refers to non-stock, non-profit corporation, organization or association engaged in providing, directly or indirectly, social welfare and development programs and services, and obtains its finances, either totally or in part, from any government agency or instrumentality, whether foreign or local or from the community by direct or indirect solicitations and other fund generating activities, as authorized by law. An SWDA may either be a **Social Work Agency** which refers to an entity, corporation or organization, private or governmental, that engages mainly and

generally, or represents itself to engage in social welfare work, whether case work, group work, or community work, and obtains its finances, either totally or in part, from any agency or instrumentality of the government and/or from the community by direct or indirect solicitations and/or fund drives, and/or private endowment; or an **Auxiliary SWDA** which refers to an entity, corporation or organization, private or governmental, which provides indirectly social welfare and development services.

- m. **Accredited and Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO)** refers to the single national organization of Social Workers accredited by the Board and the Commission, membership to which by all Social Workers shall be automatic and mandatory upon payment of the required fees and dues;
- n. **Registration Certificate** refers to the document issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) certifying that the applicant is a registered SWDA after having complied with all the requirements for registration;
- o. **License to Operate** refers to the document issued by the DSWD authorizing an SWDA to operate as such, after satisfying all the prescribed requirements;
- p. **DSWD** refers to the Department of Social Welfare and Development; and
- q. **PSA** refers to the Philippine Statistics Authority;

RULE II THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Section. 4. Creation and Composition of the Board. – There shall be created a Professional Regulatory Board for Social Workers, hereinafter referred to as the Board, under the administrative control and supervision of the Professional Regulation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, composed of a Chairperson and four (4) Members who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines from a list of three (3) nominees for each position submitted by the Accredited Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) for Social Workers and ranked by the Commission, and who possesses the following qualifications at the time of their appointment:

- a. A citizen and resident of the Philippines;
- b. At least thirty (30) years of age;
- c. Of good moral character;
- d. A holder of a Master's Degree in Social Work (M.S.S.W., M.S.S., M.A.S.W., or its equivalent) conferred by a reputable school, college or university duly recognized by the government, and also by a duly accredited school, college or university abroad;
- e. Have had at least two (2) years of social work practice after receiving the Master's degree;
- f. A registered Social Worker duly qualified to practice Social Work: *Provided however*, that this qualification shall not be required of the first appointees to the Board under R. A. No. 4373; and

- g. Must not be a member of the faculty of any school, college or university conferring the Bachelor's and/or Master's degree in Social Work at the time of appointment nor during the year immediately preceding the appointment as a Board Member, or shall have any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any such institution.

Section 5. Term of Office of the Board Members. – The Board Chairperson and Members shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until their successors shall have been appointed and duly qualified: *Provided*, that the Members of the first (1st) Board appointed under R. A. No. 4373 shall hold office for the following terms: the Chairperson for three (3) years; two (2) Members for two (2) years, and two (2) Members for one (1) year, which shall be specified in their appointment. Any vacancy occurring within the term of a Member shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only. Each Board Member shall qualify by taking the proper oath of office prior to entering upon the performance of his or her duties.

Section 6. Functions and Duties of the Board. – The Board shall have the following powers, functions, duties and responsibilities:

- a. Promulgate, administer and enforce the rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of R. A. No. 4373, as amended;
- b. Supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of Social Workers in the Philippines;
- c. Administer oaths in connection with the administration of R. A. No. 4373, as amended;
- d. Prescribe the official seal of the Board;
- e. Issue, suspend or revoke and reinstate the Certificates of Registration (CORs), Professional Identification Cards (PICs) or Special Temporary Permits (STPs) for the practice of Social Work;
- f. Look into the conditions affecting the practice of Social Work in the Philippines, and whenever necessary, adopt measures as may be deemed necessary for the maintenance of the good standing and ethics of the profession. For this purpose, the Board may conduct inspection in places where Social Workers are employed or working;
- g. Ensure, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), that all educational institutions offering the Social Work course comply with the policies, standards and requirements prescribed by the CHED in the areas of curriculum, faculty, library and facilities;
- h. Hear or investigate any violation of R. A. No. 4373, as amended, this IRR and the Code of Ethics and Code of Professional Standards for the Practice of Social Work, and for this purpose, to issue *subpoena ad testificandum* or *subpoena duces tecum* to secure the appearance of witnesses and the production of documents in connection therewith; *Provided*, that the decision of the Board shall, unless appealed to the Commission, become final and executory after fifteen (15) days from receipt of judgment or decision;

- i. Maintain a roster of Social Workers;
- j. Prescribe a Code of Ethics and Code of Professional Standards for the Practice of Social Work;
- k. Prescribe the subjects in the Social Workers Licensure Examination, determine the syllabi and Tables of Specifications (TOS) of the examination subjects and their relative weights, construct test questions, score and rate the examination papers, and submit the examination results to the Commission;
- l. Prescribe guidelines and criteria in the implementation of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for Social Work; and
- m. Perform such other powers and functions as it may deem necessary to carry out the objectives of R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

The policies, resolutions, rules and regulations, orders or decisions issued or promulgated by the Board shall be subject to the review and approval of the Commission.

Section 7. Compensation of the Board Members. – The Board Chairperson and Members shall receive compensation and allowances comparable to those being received by the Chairpersons and Members of existing professional regulatory boards under the Commission, as provided for in the General Appropriations Act.

Section 8. Suspension and/or Removal of the Board Members. – Any Board Member may, upon the recommendation of the Commission, be suspended or removed by the President of the Philippines from office for continued neglect of duty, incompetence, unprofessionalism, immorality, unethical or dishonorable conduct, for commission or toleration of irregularities in the examination, after having been given the opportunity to defend himself/herself in a proper administrative investigation.

Section 9. Supervision of the Board, Custodian of its Records, Secretariat and Support Services. – The Board shall be under the administrative control and supervision of the Commission. All records of the Board including applications, examination papers and results, minutes of deliberation, administrative cases, and other investigations shall be kept by the Commission.

The Commission shall designate the Secretary of the Board who shall provide the secretariat and other support services necessary to implement the provisions of R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

Section 10. Annual Report. – The Board shall, at the close of the fiscal year, submit an annual report to the President of the Philippines and Congress, through the Commission, giving a detailed account of its proceedings and accomplishments during the year and recommending measures to be adopted, with the end in view of upgrading and improving the conditions affecting the practice of Social Work in the Philippines.

RULE III LICENSURE EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

Section 11. Examination Required. – Unless otherwise provided, all applicants for registration for the practice of Social Work shall be required to undergo a licensure examination to be given by the Board at such dates and places as may be fixed by the Commission.

Section 12. Qualifications of Applicants. – In order to be admitted to the Social Workers Licensure Examination, an applicant must be, at the time of filing of application therefor:

- a. A citizen of the Philippines;
- b. At least eighteen (18) years of age;
- c. In good health and of good moral character;
- d. Have a bachelor's degree or master's degree or its equivalent in Social Work from an institution, college, or university duly accredited and legally constituted: *Provided*, that the provisions of Republic Act Number Twenty – Two Hundred and Sixty (R.A. No. 2260), otherwise known as the Civil Service Act of 1959, as amended, insofar as cultural minorities are concerned, shall be applied. The Board, in consultation with the CHED, shall determine the academic degrees/courses deemed equivalent to B. S. and M. S. in Social Work for purposes of admission to the licensure examination; and
- e. Have completed a minimum period of one thousand (1,000) case hours of practical training in an established Social Work Agency under the direct supervision of a fully trained and qualified Social Worker: *Provided*, that in the institution, college, or university's undergraduate program, the academic courses preceded the required supervised field practice of one thousand (1,000) case hours: *Provided further*, that the required field practice complies with the Social Work curriculum approved by the CHED and the Board.

Section 13. Documentary Requirements for Licensure Examination. – For purposes of admission to the Social Workers Licensure Examination, all applicants shall submit the following requirements:

- a. Original and Photocopy of Certificate of Live Birth in Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) security paper;
- b. Marriage Contract in PSA security paper for married female applicants;
- c. Original and photocopy of Transcript of Records, with scanned picture and Special Order (S.O) number unless exempted;
- d. Original and photocopy of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Clearance;
- e. Certificate of one thousand (1, 000) case hours of supervised field practice signed by the faculty supervisor and/or head of the social work program; and
- f. Such other documents as the Board may deem necessary.

Section 14. Scope of Examination. – The examination for the practice of Social Work shall consist of a written test, the scope of which shall be determined and prescribed by the Board, taking into consideration the curriculum of all the Social Work courses offered in schools legally constituted in the Philippines: Provided, that no change or alteration in or addition to the subjects for examination shall be made within two (2) years from the date of the promulgation of said subjects.

The Social Workers Licensure Examination shall cover the following subjects:

- a. Human Behavior and Social Environment;
- b. Social Welfare Policies, Programs, and Services;
- c. Social Work Practice I, II and III; and
- d. Field Instruction

The Board, subject to the approval of the Commission, may revise or exclude any of the subjects or add new ones thereto as the need arises.

Section 15. Rating in the Examination. – To pass the Social Workers Licensure Examination, a candidate must have obtained a general average of seventy percent (70%) with no grade lower than fifty percent (50%) in any of the subjects.

Section 16. Report of Rating. – The Board shall, as early as practicable, submit to the Commission the ratings obtained by each candidate, but in no case later than one hundred twenty (120) days after examination.

Section 17. Oath of Social Workers. – All those who qualify for registration shall be required to take the Oath of Professionals before any Board Member or any government official authorized by the Commission to administer the oaths prior to practising Social Work in the Philippines.

Section 18. Registration by Reciprocity. — CORs may be issued without examination to Social Workers who are registered under the laws of any foreign state or country: *Provided*, that the requirements for the registration or licensing of Social Workers in said foreign state or country are substantially the same as those required and contemplated by R. A. No. 4373, as amended: *Provided further*, that the laws of such state or country grant the same privileges to Filipino Social Workers on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such foreign state or country.

Section 19. Issuance of Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card. – The Commission, upon recommendation of the Board, shall issue Certificates of Registration (CORs) and Professional Identification Cards (PICs) to those who successfully qualify for registration as Social Workers, with or without examination. The COR shall bear the signatures of the Commission Chairperson, Board Chairperson and Members, stamped with the official seals of the Commission and of the Board, indicating that the person named therein is entitled to practice Social Work with all the rights and privileges appurtenant thereto. The COR shall remain in full force and effect until revoked or suspended in accordance with R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

PICs showing the full name of the registrant, registration number, dates of its issuance and expiry, duly signed by the Commission Chairperson shall likewise be issued to registrants who have paid the prescribed fee. The PIC shall be renewable every three (3) years.

Section 20. Issuance of Special Temporary Permits. – Special Temporary Permits (STPs) may be issued by the Board, subject to the approval of the Commission and payment of the prescribed fees, to any of the following:

- a. Foreign Social Workers called by the Philippine Government for a specific public purpose or project;
- b. Foreign Social Workers to be employed by any domestic private firm/establishment;
- c. Foreign Social Workers to be engaged as professors or lecturers in a higher educational institution or university for the enhancement of the Social Work education in the country; and
- d. Foreign Social Workers, including volunteers, whose services are engaged during disasters, calamities, or any emergency case as may be determined by the Board.

The STP shall provide, among others, that: (1) the practice of the foreign Social Worker shall be limited to the particular work for which the foreigner is being engaged; (2) the validity of the STP shall be for one (1) year only, subject to renewal; and (3) the practice of the foreign Social Worker shall be subject to the applicable domestic laws and regulations.

Section 21. Refusal to Register. – The Board shall not issue a COR to a person who has been convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any criminal offense involving moral turpitude; or found guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct; or judicially declared to be of unsound mind or suffering from an incurable or infectious disease after investigation by the Board. The reason for the refusal shall be set forth in writing, and incorporated in the records of the Board.

Section 22. Revocation or Suspension of Certificates of Registration and Professional Identification Cards. - The Board shall also have the power to revoke or suspend the validity of a COR of a Social Worker for any of the causes mentioned in the preceding Section, or for unprofessional conduct, malpractice, incompetency, or serious ignorance or negligence in the practice of Social Work, or for fraud, deceit, or falsity in obtaining a COR. A COR shall be revoked only after due notice and hearing in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Procedure of the Commission.

Section 23. Reissuance and/or Replacement of Revoked Certificates of Registration, Professional Identification Cards and Special Temporary Permits. – The Board may, for reasons of equity and justice, and upon proper application and explanation therefor, issue another copy of the COR, PIC or STP upon payment of the prescribed fees. A new COR, PIC or STP to replace any lost, destroyed, or mutilated COR, PIC or STP may be issued, subject to the rules of the Board and upon payment of the required fees.

RULE IV CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Section 24. Continuing Professional Development (CPD). – All Social Workers must provide proof of forty-five (45) CPD units earned from any CPD provider duly accredited by the CPD Council for Social Workers as a requirement for the renewal of the PIC.

All local government units (LGUs) and employer organizations shall allocate the necessary funding to support the professional development of Social Workers under their employ, regardless of employment status, for the purpose of complying with the CPD requirement.

Section 25. Integration of the Social Work Profession. – All Social Workers shall be united and integrated into one (1) national organization which shall be accredited by the Board, subject to approval by the Commission, as the AIPO for Social Workers. All Social Workers shall become members of the AIPO and shall consequently be entitled to all the benefits and privileges incidental thereto, upon payment of the required fees and dues. Membership in the AIPO shall not be a bar to membership in any other professional organizations.

RULE V REGISTRATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Section 26. Registration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). – No SWDA, as defined herein, shall operate and be accredited as such unless it shall first have registered with and secured a license from the DSWD which shall then issue the corresponding Registration Certificate and License to Operate: *Provided*, that existing SWDAs at the time of the approval of R. A. No. 10847 shall have a period of one (1) year within which to secure the corresponding Registration Certificate and License to Operate.

Before any SWDA shall be registered and licensed, the following requirements must be established to the satisfaction of the DSWD:

- a. That the applicant must be engaged mainly or generally in social welfare and development activities;
- b. That the applicant has employed a sufficient number of duly qualified staff and/or Social Workers to supervise and take charge of its social welfare and development activities in accordance with the set standards;
- c. That the applicant must show in a duly certified financial statement that at least seventy percent (70%) of its funds are disbursed for direct social work services; and
- d. That the applicant keeps a record of all social development and/or welfare activities handled by it.

The DSWD shall issue and promulgate policy guidelines to implement the provisions of Section 4 of R. A. No. 10847 on the registration of SWDAs.

Section 27. Penal Provisions. – The following shall be penalized with a fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00), or imprisonment for not less than six (6) months but not more than two (2) years, or both, at the discretion of the court:

- a. Any person who shall practice or offer to practice Social Work in the Philippines without being registered or exempted from registration in accordance with the provisions of R. A. No. 4373, as amended;
- b. Any person presenting or attempting to use as one's own the COR of another;
- c. Any person who shall give any false or fraudulent evidence of any kind to the Board or any Member thereof in obtaining a COR as a Social Worker;
- d. Any person who shall impersonate any registrant of like or different name;
- e. Any person who shall attempt to use a revoked or suspended COR;
- f. Any person who shall in connection with one's name, otherwise assume, use, or advertise any title or description tending to convey the impression that one is a Social Worker without holding a valid registration;
- g. Any person who shall violate any provision of R. A. No. 4373, as amended; and
- h. Any person or corporate body who shall violate the rules and regulations of the Board or orders promulgated by it for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of R. A. No. 4373, as amended.

Any person, corporation or entity operating as a SWDA without a valid Registration Certificate and/or License to Operate issued by the DSWD shall be penalized with a fine of not less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php500,000.00) and/or imprisonment for not less than one (1) year but not more than three (3) years, at the discretion of the court. These penalties shall be without prejudice to the seizure of equipment, instruments and other facilities of the SWDA.

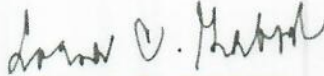
Section. 28. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this IRR is held invalid or not constitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue in operation.

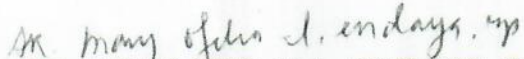
Section 29. Repealing Clause. – All issuances or part/s thereof which are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 30. Effectivity. – This IRR shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Let copies of this Resolution be furnished the U. P. Law Center, DSWD, Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc. (PASWI), National Association for Social Work Education, Inc. (NASWEI) and other relevant agencies and associations for information.

Done in the City of Manila this 28th day of July, 2017.


LORNA C. GABAD
Chairperson


SR. MARY OFELIA L. ENDAYA, RGS
Member


ROSETTA G. PALMA
Member


FE J. SINSONA
Member


ELY B. ACOSTA
Member

ATTESTED:


ATTY. LOVELIKA T. BAUTISTA
OIC, Secretary to the Professional Regulatory Boards

APPROVED:


TEOFILO S. PILANDO, JR.
Chairman


ANGELINE T. CHUA CHIACO
Commissioner


YOLANDA D. REYES
Commissioner