



## 1. ABOUT THE WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY EVENT

### **PURPOSE**

Commemoration of Social Work Day is held annually worldwide on the 15<sup>th</sup> March. The Department of Social Development in the Eastern Cape will be celebrating this prestigious event on the **10 March 2026 in Port Alfred, Sarah Baartman District**.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Social Development is one of the leading Departments mandated to respond to the social ills experienced in the communities through provision of a basket of services using a variety of professional approaches and levels of intervention to improve the lives of children, youth, adults and older persons in our communities.

The Department has a responsibility therefore to ensure that these services are rendered by a capable cadre that upholds the values, principles, knowledge and ethics of the social work profession. Social Workers are an important part of a collective social response system and should take a shared responsibility for upholding human rights at all levels. The main focus is to advocate for the rights of people and facilitate outcomes where people take responsibility for each other's wellbeing, realize and respect inter – dependence among people and between people and the environment.

Whilst Social Workers are expected to make a difference to the lives of their clients, healthy interactions and relationships even with the best will in the world are often inhibited by all sorts of embedded attitudes, experiences, systems and structures. Of importance to note, however, is that Social Workers are expected to conduct themselves in a proficient and ethical manner in the performance of their duties.



It is against this background that the Eastern Cape Department of Social Development will be hosting this event to recognise the efforts, hard work and commitment of Social Workers in the Eastern Cape Province in commemoration of the World Social Work Day that is celebrated worldwide during the third Tuesday of March annually. The third Tuesday of March is the key day in the year that Social Workers worldwide stand together to celebrate the achievements of the profession and take the theme message to their communities, workplaces to raise awareness of the social work contributions.

### **BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL WORK DAY**

The month of March was officially recognized by the White House as the National Professional Social Work Month since 1984. The World Social Work Day is commemorated throughout the World annually on the third Tuesday of March. From 1984 – 1998 the centennial year of the profession the National Association of Social Workers selected a social issue to promote every year. From 1998 to 2004, Social Work Month themes promoted the profession with general campaigns about who social workers are and how they benefit society. The National Association of Social Workers has coupled a specific area of practice or workforce need with general promotion of the profession during Social Work Month. Social Workers are the heart and soul of the helping profession, and therefore they need to be recognised as such.

In an effort to recognise the contribution made by Social Workers in improving the lives of communities; the Eastern Cape Department of Social Development will be hosting an event to commemorate the World Social Work Day.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE**

- To motivate Social Workers to recommit to the professional conduct and ethics and application thereof.
- To recognize the contribution of Social Workers to improve the lives of communities.
- To revive the spirit of professionalism and deeper understanding thereof.



### **INTENDED OUTCOMES**

The event will assist in the improvement of service delivery and will ensure that the development needs of the target group are addressed multi - sectorally in a holistic and integrated manner.

This event will encourage an increased collaboration between the Department of Social Development, Professional bodies and other stakeholders like South African Council for Social Service Professions and the Institutions of High Learning.

The event will assist Social Workers to regain the professional status of Social Work in the context of its professional values, ethics, interventions and principles.

### **THEME:**

***"Co-Building Hope and Harmony: A Harambee Call to Unite a Divided Society".***

### **NATURE OF THE EVENT**

The commemoration of the World Social Work Day will be conducted in the form of a talk by a Motivational Speaker preceding the keynote address that will be delivered by the Honourable MEC for Social Development. The Social Workers will present their professional pledge that will be led by the South African Council for Social Service Professions.

A wellness session preceding the formal programme will be conducted as a way of providing support to the social work cadre who are faced with complex problems and traumatic situations in the performance of their professional duties.

### **TARGET GROUP**

The target group for this Event will be the following:

- South African Council for Social Service Professions
- National Service Standards (1- Service Standards Professional Support)
- Motivational Speaker
- Retired Social Workers
- MEC and 3 Guests
- HOD and 2 Guests
- DDG
- Chief Directors



- Directors (Provincial Office) Programmes 1-5 (2 per Programme)
- District Directors
- Programme 1 - 5 District Social Work Managers
- Provincial Social Work Policy Managers
- Office of the MEC
- Office of the HOD
- Social Workers
- Social Work Supervisors
- Programme 5 Social Workers Provincial Office
- Provincial NPO Unit Social Workers
- Protocol Officers
- Communication Team
- Wellness Programme Leader

