

Performance Standards

Purpose

The Health Professions and Occupations Regulatory Oversight Office (the Oversight Office) has published the following performance standards to support high-quality regulation in the interest of the public by providing a shared framework for describing, reviewing, and strengthening how health professional regulatory colleges in British Columbia carry out their legislated mandates under the Health Professions and Occupations Act (HPOA).

Performance Standards

There are 25 published performance standards split across 5 themes to align with the HPOA and Guiding Principles (s.14).

Themes are as follows:

- **Transparency, Accessibility and Engagement**
- **Regulatory Effectiveness**
- **Governance**
- **Complaints**
- **Cultural Safety and Humility**

Approach

The performance standards are a tool the Oversight Office uses to evaluate health professional regulatory colleges in BC. They provide a common framework to review and identify opportunities for improvement on how colleges carry out their responsibilities under the HPOA.

The standards are designed to inform good practice at a high level, and health regulatory colleges are asked to demonstrate how they meet each standard in their own regulatory context and share the evidence that best supports their work.

The Oversight Office uses key audit questions to structure this conversation and guide the auditors' review, rather than fixed indicators or compliance tests. The HPOA's guiding principles, including transparency, fairness, anti-discrimination, and cultural safety, are applied as lenses across all the standards rather than as a stand-alone theme.

The framework recognizes there is no single formula for measuring regulatory impact and that health professional regulatory colleges differ significantly in size, mandate, profession, and risk profile. It emphasizes clear links between regulatory processes and the public-interest outcomes they are intended to support, while allowing colleges to explain their own logic, to use proxies where direct outcome measures are not yet feasible, and to build baselines over time.

Early cycles of reviews will focus on continual improvement and setting benchmarks. This will help to build a shared understanding of what effective regulation looks like and help to identify specific areas for continual improvement. The performance standards are also scoped to complement, rather than duplicate, the mandates of other oversight bodies, such as the Health Professions Review Board and the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner.

The Oversight Office’s focus is on how regulatory colleges govern and manage their regulatory functions (for example, risk-based approaches, clarity of policies, supports for fair decision-making), not on re-adjudicating individual cases or re-auditing technical compliance that already sits within these other organizations.

It is key to also acknowledge that Theme 5: Cultural Safety and Humility, reflects the importance of culturally safe and respectful regulatory practices for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous People and communities in British Columbia. In addition to adhering to the legislation which was informed by the recommendations of the In Plain Sight report to address Indigenous-specific racism in the health care system, the Oversight Office drew on existing work, specifically the BC Cultural Safety and Humility Standard to develop the performance standards. It is important to note that these performance standards are intended to evolve over time. As we carry out audit work and continue learning, we will review and update performance standards as part of our approach to support continuous improvement. This will include ongoing and future engagement with First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous People and communities to ensure the audits conducted by the Oversight Office and the performance standards remain relevant and meaningful.

Theme 1: Transparency, Accessibility and Engagement	
1.1	The regulatory college’s public-facing information is accurate, up-to-date, plain-language and accessible.
1.2	The regulatory college publishes information about its role, regulatory processes, policies, guidance, and decisions that are up-to-date accurate, and fully accessible for use by the public.
1.3	The regulatory college collaborates with other regulatory colleges, partners, and other organizations to inform, enhance and coordinate its work and look for opportunities for alignment and improved performance.
1.4	The regulatory college periodically reviews its performance, learns from concerns and external findings, and acts on lessons and recommendations for change.

Theme 2: Regulatory Effectiveness	
2.1	The regulatory college develops, maintains, communicates and ensures compliance with professional and ethical standards and related practice expectations that prioritise safe, competent and ethical care in the public interest and supports licensees to act professionally, practice safely and prioritize the safety of the public.
2.2	The regulatory college identifies and addresses concerns about a licensee's ability to practice safely and effectively in accordance with standards and legal requirements and assesses and supports licensees' ongoing competence where necessary.
2.3	The regulatory college operates quality assurance and practice support programs that are proportionate to risk and are designed to help licensees maintain up-to-date sound professional judgment and ethical, competent practice.
2.4	The regulatory college has a licensing process that is fair, efficient, transparent and proportionate, and does not create unnecessary barriers for qualified applicants including extra-jurisdictional applicants.
2.5	The regulatory college maintains and publishes an accurate and accessible register of licensees, including any restrictions on their practice, and provides timely notifications of significant licence status changes to employers.
2.6	The regulatory college takes proportionate action in response to unauthorized practice and unauthorized use of titles.

Theme 3: Governance	
3.1	The regulatory college's board and committees use established processes within their legal authority, that maintain public interest.
3.2	The regulatory college plans and manages its fiscal responsibilities in a way that is transparent and aligned with its legislated mandate, regulatory priorities and areas of greatest regulatory risk.
3.3	The regulatory college has and follows an information governance and privacy framework that supports secure, and appropriate handling of information.
3.4	The regulatory college sets proportionate requirements for licensees to keep their professional knowledge and skills up to date, with professional developments, standards and emerging risks in the profession.
3.5	The regulatory college sets proportionate requirements for the education and training needed for licensing and suitability for practice.

Theme 4: Complaints	
4.1	The regulatory college's complaint process is accessible, transparent, and procedurally fair, and allows for a thorough, evidence-based proportionate response to complaints.
4.2	The regulatory college provides access to information and supports, upon request, for people involved in complaints about sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, or discrimination, and applies trauma informed approaches in handling these matters, within its legal framework.
4.3	The regulatory college keeps complainants, respondents, and other respective parties informed about the complaints and investigations progress in a clear, sensitive and timely way.
4.4	The regulatory college manages complaints in a manner that is consistent, risk based and aligned with procedural fairness requirements.
4.5	The regulatory college's complaint outcomes are consistent with its policies and authorities and are fair, transparent and proportionate to the identified risks and concerns.
4.6	The regulatory college identifies and manages risk in all cases where licensees pose serious risk of harm to any person receiving health care services and takes timely action to restrict practice where necessary.

Theme 5: Cultural Safety and Humility	
5.1	The regulatory college operates in ways that seek to be culturally safe and trauma informed for First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous peoples.
5.2	The regulatory college seeks to identify and address inequities affecting First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous peoples in its policies, processes, and decisions.
5.3	The regulatory college develops and reviews its policies and decision-making frameworks on Indigenous matters in ways that are informed by Indigenous specific anti-racism efforts and distinctions-based approaches.
5.4	The regulatory college engages with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous peoples and organizations in respectful, ongoing ways that are intended to inform and improve its regulatory work.