

No. 272/2005

Act on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Professionals

Issued in Helsinki on 29 April 2005

General provisions

Section 1

Purpose of the Act

The purpose of this Act is to promote the right of social welfare clients to quality social welfare and to good treatment by requiring that social welfare professionals shall have the necessary education and training as well as be familiar with the area of their work.

Section 2

Scope of application

(1) This Act is applied to qualifications that are required of social welfare professionals, unless otherwise provided elsewhere in the law.

(2) In this Act social welfare means:

1) functions referred to in section 13 of the Social Welfare Act (710/1982), the provision of which is the responsibility of an organ under section 6 of the Social Welfare Act, of other organ of the municipality or joint municipal board, or of the State:

2) functions that are part of the social services referred to in the Act on Supervision of Private Social Services (603/1996).

(3) This Act is not applied to the qualifications required for giving the supportive services linked with home service referred to in section 20 of the Social Welfare Act.

Qualification requirements

Section 3

Social worker

The qualification requirement for the post of a social worker is a higher university degree including, or in addition to which the person has completed major subject studies or university studies in social work corresponding to the major subject.

Section 4

Social services ombudsman

The qualification requirement for the post of a social services ombudsman referred to in section 24 of the Act of the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients (810/2000) is the qualification completed according to section 3 of this Act or a suitable higher university degree and knowledge of the sector.

Section 5

Child supervisor

(1) The qualification requirement for the post of a child supervisor referred to in the Paternity Act (700/1975) is the qualification laid down in section 3 or a higher university degree suitable for the job.

(2) The qualification referred to in paragraph 1 also applies to a person whose duties include responsibility for preparing the agreements referred to in section 8 of the Child Custody and Right of Access Act (361/1983) or in section 8 of the Child Maintenance Act (704/1975).

Section 6

Social instructor

The qualification requirement for the post of a social instructor is a suitable polytechnic degree in social services and health care in a line of study of social work.

Section 7

Kindergarten teacher

The qualification requirement for the post of a kindergarten teacher is at least Bachelor of Education including kindergarten teacher education, or Bachelor of Health Care and Social Services (polytechnic) including studies in early childhood education and care and social pedagogy to the extent as laid down by Government decree.

Section 8

Practical nurse

The qualification requirement for the post of a practical nurse for social care is a suitable initial vocational qualification in social services and health care or other comparable qualification.

Section 9

Special social worker

(1) The qualification requirement for the post of a special social worker is the basic education required for the post and suitable specialisation studies or postgraduate degree in addition to it.

(2) Further provisions on the specialisation studies or postgraduate degree required for the post of a special social worker can be issued by Government decree.

Section 10

Management posts in social services

(1) The qualification requirement for a management post that is principally of an administrative nature in social services or social services and health care of a municipality or joint municipal board is the qualification according to section 3, or a higher university degree suitable for the post and knowledge of the sector and, in addition, adequate management skills.

(2) The qualification requirement for a post encompassing professional management functions in social services is the qualification laid down in section 3 plus adequate management skills.

(3) The qualification requirement for a post encompassing professional management functions in child day care is the qualification laid down in section 7 plus adequate management skills.

(4) The qualification requirement for other management posts in social services encompassing supervision of the work with clients is a suitable university degree, knowledge of the sector and adequate management skills.

Section 11

Other professional functions in social services

The qualification requirement for attending to other professional functions in social services is a suitable vocational degree or other suitable education.

Miscellaneous provisions

Section 12

Temporary exemption from qualification requirements

(1) If it is not possible to obtain a person fulfilling the qualifications required in the law for a post of a social welfare professional, to the post can be appointed for a maximum of one year a person who has, based on his or her studies, adequate competence for managing the job.

(2) The right referred to in paragraph 1 to make an exemption from the qualification requirements for posts in social services is not applied to a social worker who has the right referred to in section 12 (2) of the Social Welfare Act to decide in urgent cases on giving care against a person's will and to undertake related measures.

Transitional provisions and entry into force

Section 13

Entry into force

(1) This Act enters into force on 1 August 2005.

(2) In case there is a reference in other legislation to the Decree on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Personnel (804/1992) that was in force at the entry into force of this Act, this Act shall be applied instead of it.