

PROPOSAL OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WORK (CFESS) OF BRAZIL FOR THE DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK

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Federal Council of Social Work • 'Critical Attitude to Advance in the Struggle' Management



The Federal Council of Social Work (CFESS), Brazilian organization recognized by the Federal Law number 8662/1993, was created in 1957 and today has around 90,000 social workers. In the process of review about the definition of Social Work, we are going to present a contribution to the discussion, understanding that a world definition should be wide in order to comprehend the differences and particularities of the countries.

DEFINITION The social assistant or social worker acts in the social relations context with the individuals, groups, families, community and social movements, developing actions that strengthen their autonomy, participation and citizenship exercise aiming to a change in their conditions of life. The principles of defense of human rights and social justice are fundamental elements for the social work in order to overcome the social inequality and the situations of violence, oppression, poverty, hunger and unemployment.

COMMENT The formation of the social worker is based on principles that respect the differences and strengthen the potentialities of the subjects with whom the professional works, without any kind of discrimination. For doing so, the social worker must have an ethical attitude, theoretical competence and technical habilitation to develop his/her competences and attributions articulated to a set of values, theories and practices of human rights defense.

VALUES The development of the social work takes into consideration the ideals of democracy, and the human rights motivate and legitimate its actions. It has, as values, the respect of equality, freedom; the inequality confrontation; participation; equity; the elimination of all kinds of prejudice; the respect for cultural diversity, ethnicity, thought, sexual orientation, theoretical and methodological movements and the defense of a society free of wars, violence and oppression. In the professional work, these values are used in the strengthening of the democratic institutions; in the strengthening of the social movements; in the defense of economic policies for growth and income redistribution; in the proposition of broad and universal social rights; in ensuring the qualified professional formation. The subjacent values to social work are present in the professional codes of ethics in national and international level.

THEORY The methodology of the social work has a support of a group of theoretical and empirical knowledge resulting of investigation and socialization of experiences, including specific knowledge inherent to particular local contexts, analyzed in a full perspective. To understand the complexity of social relations and the conditions of life of the users with whom the professional work, the social work incorporates social and economical theories that helps it analyze and make intervention in complex situations with individuals, groups, families and communities.

PRACTICE The social work deals with barriers, inequalities and injustices present in the society. It acts in situations of crisis and emergency. It works in the elaboration and execution of policies and social projects; orients individuals and groups; plans, organizes and manages social benefits; advisor organs, enterprises and social movements; conducts research and socio-economic studies for access to benefits and social services. In order to do so, the professional has to be proactive, with a solid ethical background, able to inform about social rights and the ways to access them. The social worker acts has advisor in administrative and judicial processes, conducting evaluations, document analyses, technical studies, data collection and research. The professional also elaborates findings, advices, reports and study cases. His/her intervention includes the management of organizations, community services and involvement in political and social actions to influence the social policy and the economic development. The social work intervention is universal, but the priorities of its exercise vary from country to country and from time to time, according to cultural, historical, social and economic conditions.

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