

April 7, 2022

VIA E-MAIL  
Ref: 267005

<TITLE> <FIRST NAME> <LAST NAME>  
<ORG>  
<ADDRESS 1>  
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<CITY> BC <POSTAL CODE>

Dear <TITLE> <LAST NAME>:

In November 2018, at the First Nations Leadership Gathering, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) committed to increased transparency with First Nations and provided a Draft Accountability Statement for your community. MCFD has made this same commitment for Métis in the Province of British Columbia. This statement provides you with information such as the numbers of children in care from your community, the legal status of those children, and the associated residential costs.

We are pleased to provide your Draft Accountability Statement for this fiscal year. By sending this document in draft, we are encouraging feedback and input. This statement does not include any federal financial or service information. Please contact Denise Devenny, Assistant Deputy Minister, Partnership and Indigenous Engagement, at [Denise.Devenny@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Denise.Devenny@gov.bc.ca) if you have any questions regarding the accountability statement or the information included in this letter.

I also wanted to provide an update regarding some of the changes we are making at MCFD to improve services to Indigenous children, youth and families. Over the last year, MCFD has:

- Continued work with five Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs), alongside representatives from the federal government, towards exercising jurisdiction for child and family services under the federal *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, through the development of tripartite coordination agreements.
- Sent a [Letter of Commitment](#) to the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), which commits us to actively engage and co-develop policy and legislation changes with the FNLC and with Indigenous governments/peoples, in alignment with the British Columbia's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- Developed a [transformation web page](#) and issued the first [Indigenous Child and Family Service Newsletter](#) to share up to date information on child and family service transformation initiatives and engagement opportunities;

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- Budget 2022 announced investments in youth transitions over the next three years including: a no-limit earnings exemption, rent supplement, new transition workers, funding for life-skills, cultural, and skills training programs, and enhanced dental and medical benefits, including counselling. Program eligibility will also be expanded to include all youth transitioning out of care, regardless of their legal status, if they have spent a minimum of 24 cumulative months in care, and we will introduce an unconditional income supplement and support will be available for up to 84 months or up until the young adult's 27<sup>th</sup> birthday. The ministry is now creating distinctions-based advisory circles to explore how to implement these improved programs and supports for youth transitioning from care to adulthood.
- In fall 2021, announced a new needs-based service approach that will provide supports for neurodiverse children and youth and those with disabilities based on their unique needs, with or without a diagnosis. Engagement is ongoing with two early implementation areas planned to start in 2023 before the new services being launched provincewide in 2024.
- Continued work with Canada and Indigenous Peoples to co-develop a British Columbia-specific fiscal framework to support the transition of services as IGBs begin to exercise their inherent jurisdiction over child and family services.
- Working with IGBs, leadership, and rights holders to identify immediate legislative opportunities needed to affirm and uphold IGBs exercising jurisdiction;
- Began work with Indigenous Peoples, leadership, service providers and partners to co-develop reform of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, in alignment with British Columbia's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, and the federal *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. Action thus far includes:
  - Initial direct engagement with the FNLC, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, urban Indigenous coalitions, and Modern Treaty Nations;
  - Convened a Métis Advisory Circle to guide engagements with Métis communities;
  - Working with Alderhill Planning, an Indigenous consulting firm, to facilitate direct engagement with Indigenous Peoples;
  - Built an engagement Web site on [govTogetherBC](https://govtogetherbc.ca) in March 2022 that invites dialogue on both immediate and longer term legislative reform.
- Continued to engage with Indigenous Peoples, leadership, service providers and partners to design a Youth Justice Service Framework that transforms youth justice services to better support youth, victims, and community needs, and address gaps that lead to the overrepresentation of Indigenous youth in the youth justice system.

As a ministry, we continue to be focused on reconciliation with Indigenous children, youth, families, and communities. We look forward to continued collaboration to create long-lasting and positive change for Indigenous Peoples that supports their well-being. To that end, we have included information about an engagement opportunity in this package. I would ask that you provide any input on this matter by the end of April 2022, and look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your advice, which helps MCFD continue to transform its services to better meet your needs and aspirations and supports our ongoing commitment to lasting and meaningful reconciliation. It is our hope that we will continue to see better outcomes for Indigenous children, youth, families and communities as we make systemic change to move away from a system that has failed Indigenous Peoples, to a new reality in which Indigenous Nations are exercising authority regarding child and family well-being and where children have a greater sense of belonging, whether delivered by Indigenous communities directly or by MCFD.

Sincerely,

***ORIGINAL SIGNED BY***

Allison Bond  
Deputy Minister for Children and Family Development

pc: Denise Devenny

Enclosures (2)