

Ministry of Children and Family Development Communication

Review and Update of Third-Party Accreditation of Contracted Community Social Service Providers Policy (Accreditation Policy) 1999, amended 2017, updated 2024)

[Accreditation Policy - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca)

Background

The Third-Party Accreditation of Contracted Community Social Service Providers Policy (Accreditation Policy) 1999, amended 2017, updated 2024, requires that Contracted Community Service Providers (Service Providers) be accredited if they receive \$500,000 or more in annual funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and/or Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) for directly provided programs and services. As of March 2024, 251 MCFD Service Providers were accredited.

MCFD's Accreditation Program in the Quality Assurance Branch provides support and resources to help service providers prepare for accreditation including information about accreditation requirements, how to contact accreditation organizations and their representatives, information about training opportunities, and mock-survey arrangements.

The policy update was carried out by the Operational Quality Assurance Policy (OQAP) team. A policy drafting approach was informed by an initial assessment of the accreditation program/policy, a jurisdictional scan, and two rounds of targeted engagement and consultation with identified key partners.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy update is to strengthen MCFD's Accreditation program and support to MCFD-funded Service Providers by providing more clarity on roles and responsibilities and oversight and monitoring measures for MCFD Accreditation team, Service Providers, MCFD Contract Managers/Directors of Operations/Office of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare, and Accreditation Organizations.

The updated policy clarifies the policy accountabilities, defines potential consequences of not achieving accreditation, and describes the key oversight roles of the relevant parties. Additionally, the updated policy addresses the complexity of MCFD's contracts with Service Providers that can operate across MCFD's defined Service Delivery Areas (geographical areas) and for different accredited programs. Compliance with the accreditation policy is to be specified in existing and future contracts.

Scope of Policy Update

The scope of the policy update includes:

- Describing what happens in case of failure to achieve accreditation.
- Minimizing changes for MCFD staff and contracted service providers
- Providing more clarity on roles/responsibilities and oversight/monitoring measures

Partner Engagement

Two rounds of targeted engagement and consultation with identified key partners were conducted to ensure key partners' feedback and perspectives are integrated into the policy work while achieving the expedited review within the tight timeline.

The first round of the engagement was for information gathering and sharing purposes and included representatives of the Accreditation Team, Service Providers, Contract Managers, Accreditation Organizations, subject matter experts, Community Living British Columbia.

The second round¹ of consultation focused on consolidating feedback and finalizing the policy draft. In addition to the key partners of the first round, the OQAP team also engaged with several branches within the Ministry including Child Welfare, Legal, Finance and Corporate Operations and Procurement.

Q&A on the Policy Update:

1. What the policy update is about?

This policy update is about bringing more clarity to requirements and procedures for when a contracted service provider fails to become accredited. The updated Accreditation Policy provides new clarity in three areas:

1. requirements for becoming and maintaining accreditation;
2. consequences in the case of non-compliance with the policy; and,
3. roles and duties for key parties in providing oversight and monitoring (i.e. the Provincial Director of Child Welfare, Ministry/Director, Accreditation Team, Service Provider, Contract Manager, and Accreditation Organizations).

2. Why there is a change to the existing policy?

MCFD decided to make a change to this policy to clarify existing monitoring and accountability measures, to define potential consequences of results whereby Service Providers fail to achieve accreditation, and to describe the key oversight roles of the relevant parties. Additionally, the updated policy addresses the complexity of MCFD's contracts with Service Providers that can operate across MCFD's defined Service Delivery Areas (geographical areas) and for different accredited programs. Compliance with the accreditation policy is to be specified in existing and future contracts. MCFD provides Accreditation Policy implementation services on behalf of Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) through a Service Level Agreement. CLBC was consulted during the review and this policy update does not alter or change in any way the Service

¹ *Can include for internal release:* Child Welfare branch, Practice Improvement and modernization branch, Finance and Corporate Service division (Corporate Operations and Procurement branches), Strategic Service division, Legal Service branch, Provincial Resources, and Specialized Home and Support Service (SHSS) Transformation team.

Level Agreement with Community Living British Columbia. Accreditation contributes to service excellence for children, youth and families, as defined in the relevant accreditation program areas that are delivered by MCFD-funded accredited Service Providers across the province.

How will it affect Service Providers?

Changes to the policy are minimal and do not change the delivery of the accreditation program or the accreditation process for Service Providers.

Newly accrediting Service Providers can apply for up to one year extension on the application process to become accredited.

How will it affect Community Living British Columbia (CLBC)?

MCFD provides Accreditation Policy implementation services on behalf of Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) through a Service Level Agreement.

CLBC was consulted during the review and drafting of this policy update which does not alter or change in any way the Service Level Agreement with Community Living British Columbia; the Service Level Agreement will continue to be honoured unchanged.

How will it affect Accreditation Organizations?

There is no change to the work of accreditation organizations such as CARF and CoA with MCFD and CLBC service providers (agencies).

CARF and CoA were consulted during this policy review and provided valuable feedback reflected in clarifications on requirements for becoming accredited and maintaining accreditation.

How was the policy update done?

The policy update was done through a consultative process internally within the ministry and externally with partners through an expedited process.

How can partners bring their concerns or questions forward?

MCFD welcomes questions and comments or concerns with this policy update; please contact: Kyle Liu, Manager of the Operational Quality Assurance Policy team on the policy: Kyle.x.Liu@gov.bc.ca or Kate Frieson, Senior Policy Analyst, catherine.frieson@gov.bc.ca

For specific questions, comments or concerns from Service Providers about the MCFD Accreditation program, please contact: mcf.accreditationUC@gov.bc.ca
