



K'wak'walat'si
Child & Family
Services Practice
Audit Report

Report Completed:

April 2025

Practice and Quality Assurance Division
Quality Assurance Branch



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development



The Quality Assurance Branch respectfully acknowledges that we are living and working with gratitude and respect on First Nation lands throughout British Columbia. It was an honor for our team to travel to K'wak'walat'si Family and Child Services and conduct our work on their traditional lands.



'NAMGIS
FIRST NATION

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'NAMGIS
FIRST NATION

K'wak'walat'si Child & Family Services

AT A GLANCE: Practice Audit Report

Report Completed: April 2025

'Namgis is a prosperous and healthy community where future generations are supported to achieve their highest potential.

VISION

STRENGTHS

- Improvement in Voluntary Family Service work.
- Service Requests completed and documented well.
- Increase in the number of delegated staff and services provided to meet the needs of the community.
- Development of an Intake for Support Services Agreement (ISSA) form.

WHAT WE HEARD

All staff are from the 'Namgis Nation and expressed pride in the relationships they have developed with community members, the prevention services offered, and the creative practice used to support children, youth, and families in the community.



ACTIONS TAKEN

Learning Opportunities Identified

Leadership and staff identified learning needs as a result of the practice audit and have since completed training in documentation requirements for guardianship, resources and voluntary family service practice.

Implementation of Community Programs & Supports

Development of programs such as meals shared between staff and families to discuss planning, a women's group, as well as community food distributions are unique ways to meet the community's needs.



Ministry of
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Development



Background and Purpose

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) completes practice audits to inform continuous improvements in policy, practice and service delivery. Each practice audit assesses a specific area of practice within MCFD or an Indigenous Child and Family Service Agency (ICFSA) and measures compliance with legislation, policy and practice standards.

This practice audit reviewed the voluntary family services provided by [K'wak'walat'si Child and Family Services](#) (KCFS) from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2024. The audit measured compliance with the [Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators \(June 2005\)](#) is the fourth practice audit for KCFS. The last audit was completed in August 2019.

KCFS is delegated under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* (CFCSA). See [Appendix A](#) for more detailed information on delegation, community demographics, organizational structure and work environment.

Staff Perspectives

During the practice audit process, six delegated and non-delegated staff including leadership, family service workers, administrative staff and family support workers, were invited to share their perspectives about what was working well and where they saw opportunities for growth within KCFS. Five staff members participated. To honor their voice, this report includes a summary of the strengths and growth opportunities they identified in their work and workplace. See [Appendix A](#) for more detailed information.

Strengths

- Demonstrated importance of culture and language in the delivery of programs and services.
- Positive community involvement and strengthened relationships with community members.
- Prevention services have been developed to respond to specific community needs.

Growth Opportunities

- Updated training on records management procedures, supervisory skills and the Integrated Case management (ICM) system.

Voluntary Family Services Practice Audit Results

The practice audit reviews the practice of the KCFS voluntary family services program over three years, based on 15 records from the selected sample. Not all 12 standards in the audit tool applied to each record. See [Appendix A](#) for the methodology.

For standards requiring annual completion, results are shown by year.

Some standards require multiple criteria to be met for an achieved rating. See [Appendix B](#) for specific requirements.

Strength and Growth Opportunities

Strengths

- Service Requests were well documented.
- Development and delivery of services created to meet the family's needs.
- Engagement with 'Namgis First Nation and Tlowitsis First Nation.
- Thorough supervisory consultations and approvals.
- Development of an Intake for Support Services Agreement (ISSA) form.

Growth Opportunities

- Improved content in the ISSA form.
- Timely completion of the family service plans and ISSAs.
- Review voluntary family services documentation policies and procedures.

Highlights

Significant growth and refinement of the services developed are in response to the specific needs of the community.

Partnership with an ICFSA between 2020 to 2023 provided an experienced team leader who supported the Agency's practice development and recruitment of more delegated staff. Delegated staff increased from one in 2019 to three in 2024.

Improvement noted in the documentation of referrals and service provision related to the family's request for support. The documentation of the Indigenous Community's involvement in the support and planning with the family was also a strength.

Findings and Analysis

Standard (St.) 1: Receiving Requests for Services

The compliance rate was **100%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records, with all rated as achieved.

St. 2: Supervisory Approval Required for Voluntary Services

The compliance rate was **100%**. KCFS demonstrated strong practice in all key areas requiring supervisory consultation. The standard was applied to all 15 records; all were achieved.

St. 3: Information and Referral for Voluntary Services

The compliance rate was **100%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records.



KCFS demonstrates strong relational practice. The Agency provides a monthly family dinner on a rotational basis to families they are working with. This helps to build trust and rapport, while also providing opportunity to discuss family planning and services. Please see **Actions Taken** section of this report for other examples.

St. 4: Involving the Indigenous community in the Provision of Services

The compliance rate was **100%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records.

St. 5: Family Service Plan Requirements and Support Services, Voluntary Care and Support Needs Agreements

The compliance rate in 2024 was **25%**, in 2023 was **29%**, in 2022 it was **33%** and in 2021 it was **20%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records.

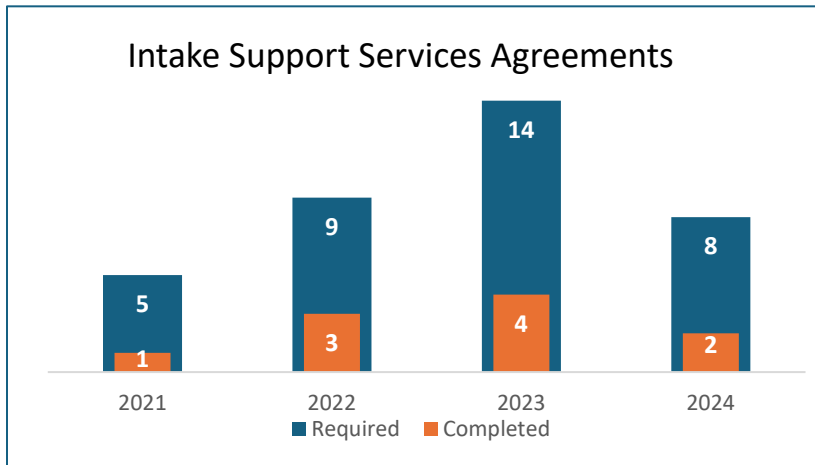
The Agency developed an Intake form (ISSA) which includes the goals, family service plan and duration of the agreement. The completion for this standard and the standard below are the same, as the ISSA is the reference document for both. The findings for both standards are noted in the chart below.



KCFS recognized the need to improve their practice in this area and collaborated with Aboriginal Services Branch (ASB) to enhance it through training. This strength applies to both St. 5 and 6. Please see **Actions Taken** section of this report for details.

St. 6: Support Service Agreements

The compliance rate in 2024 was **25%**, in 2023 was **29%**, in 2022 it was **33%** and in 2021 it was **20%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records.



Over the three year timeframe, 15 records required an ISSA. Of these, three records had ISSAs completed, and six records had ISSAs completed but not every six months. Four open records require 2024 ISSAs to be completed.

St. 7: Voluntary Care Agreements (VCAs)

No applicable records for this standard.

St. 8: Support Needs Agreements (SNAs)

No applicable records for this standard.

St. 9: Case Documentation

Opening recordings were required on 13 records. The compliance rating was **85%**, with 11 records rated as achieved.

Review recordings were required on 14 records. The compliance rating was **29%**, with four records rated as achieved. Of the 10 rated as not achieved:

- Six did not contain review recordings.
- Four contained review recordings but they were not completed every six months.

St. 24: Transferring Voluntary Family Service Files

The compliance rate was **100%**. The standard was applied to six records.

St. 26: Closing Voluntary Family Service Files

The compliance rate was **50%**. The standard was applied to two records. One record was rated achieved and one was rated not achieved as it did not contain a closing recording.

St. 27: Voluntary Services Protocols

The compliance rate was **100%**. The standard was applied to all 15 records.



KCFS is a leader within ICFSAs by providing unique, tailored and supportive programs to the families and communities it serves. Many of these programs are one of a kind and generated through the input of the community.

Actions Completed To Date

KCFS implemented the following:

1. Learning Opportunities

- ASB provided in person learning sessions in Alert Bay, from October 15 to 17, 2024. The learning sessions were presented via PowerPoint along with some screensharing of resources on iConnect and ICM. There was also an opportunity to ask practice and KCFS specific questions which led to further discussion and learning. The training covered:
 - Service Requests (SR), including record reviews, documentation and Voluntary Family Services (FS).
 - Opening, review and closing recordings, FS practice cycles and various agreements such as Voluntary Care Agreements, Support Needs Agreements and Extended Family Plans (EFPs).
 - When to refer to MCFD for assessments related to Section 13 concerns, reportable circumstances, action plans and practice scenarios.
 - Initiating, supporting and renewing EFPs. Which included caregiver documentation and reviewing duty to report requirements for KCFS and local school staff.
- Staff accompanied a group of youth to the Gathering Our Voices youth conference in Vancouver in March 2025.
- The Signs of Well Being training was offered to the staff in April 2025.

2. Community Programs and Supports

- Two Agency staff completed a train the trainer session for the Circle of Security parenting program. They subsequently offered the parenting program to the community in March 2025.
- In December 2024, the Agency provided family photo sessions to the K'wak'walat'si community.
- KCFS provides a number of ongoing support programs including:
 - Weekly Women's support group.
 - Monthly community lunch.
 - Monthly family dinner is provided to one of the families they support, offering a shared meal and a chance to discuss planning and services.
 - Quarterly school food bag and meat box distributions for community members.
 - Mental health counselling and art/play therapy available two days per week.

With the training provided, KCFS has addressed all audit-identified areas for improvement, eliminating the need for an action plan.

Appendix A

1. Delegation

Delegation for ICFSAs refers to the transfer of authority and responsibility for decision making in child safety services from the Designated Director to Indigenous Communities or organizations. This process enables ICFSAs to exercise greater control over the care, protection and well-being of their children, youth and families in accordance with cultural values, traditions and needs.

The level of delegation an Agency has depends on the agreements made with the Designated Director, as well as the Agency's capacity to meet the standards required for child welfare service delivery. KCFS operates under C3 delegation. This level of delegation enables the Agency to provide the following services:

- Support Services to Families
- Voluntary Care Agreements
- Support Needs Agreements
- Support Services for Youth
- Agreements with Child's Kin and Others
- Establishing Resources

KCFS has provided C3 services since 2006. Their current delegated services agreement is from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2029.

In addition to the delegated programs, KCFS, within 'N̄amgis Community Services department, provides the following support services to the members of their Nations and urban Indigenous children and families.

- Milk and eggs program – food security and nutrition to new and expecting parents once a week.
- Welcome Bags – newborn necessities to new parents and provides staff with an opportunity to introduce themselves and to talk about their programs and services.
- Food Security – this is a low barrier community pantry for community members to access food and provides all school students with a food bag 3 times per year.
- Cultural Care kits and Box of Treasures program – access to cultural items and exposure to language, for 'N̄amgis children and youth in care across the province.
- Family activities – opportunities to spend supported time together through activities such as skating, on-the-land lake days and movie nights.
- Youth program – for youth 12 to 18, a space to be together with their peers in a safe environment, share a nutritious meal together and participate in healthy activities.

- Early Childhood Development.
- Aboriginal Infant Development program.
- Head Start Parents and Tots program.
- Amilias daycare.
- Youth and family support.
- Lawrence Ambers Memorial Recreation Centre and Afterschool program.
- Youth Justice support.
- Victim Services.
- Legal Services Society.
- Youth team.
- Income Assistance.
- Assisted living.
- Meals on Wheels.
- School nutrition programs.
- Community garden.

2. Community Demographics and Staffing Context

KCFS serves the 'Namgis First Nation and Tlowitsis First Nation residing within Rivers Inlet, Kingcome, Woss, Gilford and Cormorant Island. KCFS also provides non-delegated prevention, education and support services to Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and families residing on Cormorant Island and on lands north of the community of Woss on North Vancouver Island.

Organizational Structure, Training and Work Environment

KCFS is an Agency governed by the Chief and Council for 'Namgis Community Services (NCS). KCFS has a Board of Directors including two 'Namgis First Nation councilors, two community members and one representative appointed by Whe-La-La-U Area Council. The board has a constitution and bylaws. Historically, KCFS was a program under the responsibility of the 'Namgis Health Centre (2005) however in 2006, the program separated and became its own Agency.

KCFS has one central office located on Cormorant Island (Alert Bay) and one satellite office in Port Hardy used for the Aboriginal Infant Development program.

The Director has been in their position since 2019 and has a dual role of overseeing both 'Namgis Community Services and KCFS.

The Director moved internally within NCS. They started first in a management position within the Early Childhood Education program, before acting as Director, and then permanently moving to the Director position.

The acting program manger has been with the Agency since 2020 and has several years of child protection experience at another Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency (ICFSA).

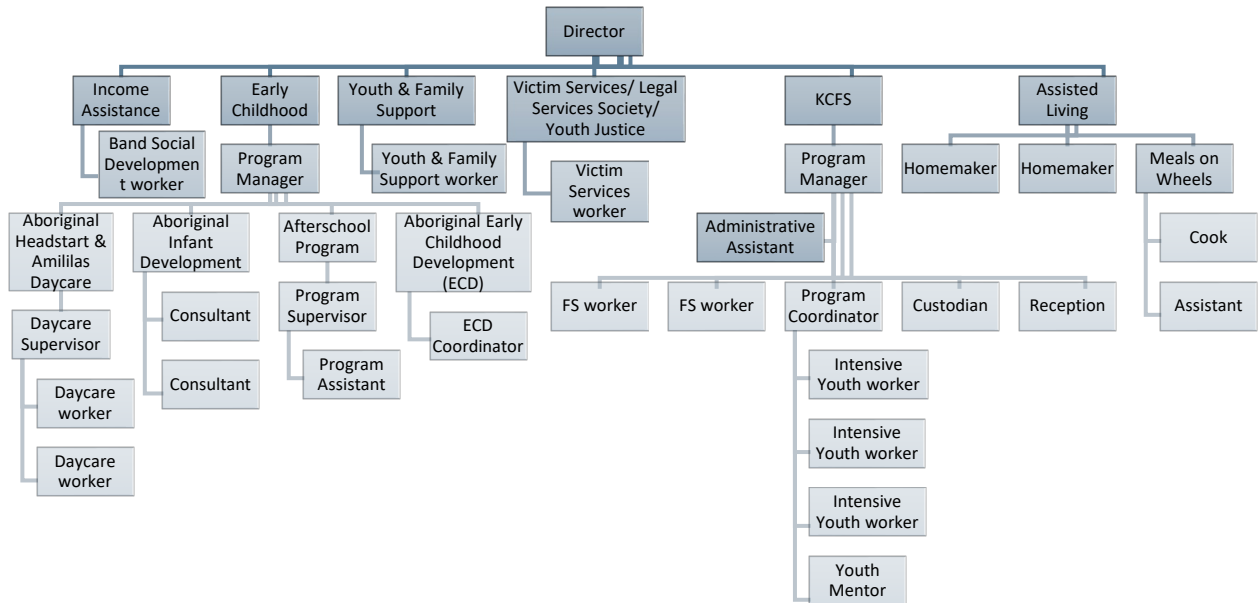
The two family service workers have been with the Agency since 2022 and 2024 and came to the Agency with experience working in resources at another ICFSA and many years experience as an Indigenous youth and cultural worker.

The Agency is currently fully staffed with an acting program manager, two family service workers, a program coordinator, three intensive youth workers, a youth mentor, an administrative assistant, a receptionist and a custodian. Additionally, staffing within KCFS has increased to almost 40 positions.

The Director and administrative assistant are delegated at C1, and the acting program manager and family service workers are delegated at C3. All staff completed their delegation training through Indigenous Perspectives Society. Additional training and professional development opportunities are supported by the Agency. The acting program manager and family service workers are new in their positions and expressed interest in receiving supervisory training and additional practice support and training. There are also professional development opportunities available to staff such as the Our Children, Our Way conference, Circle of Security training and Trauma Informed Practice.

When the acting program manager was hired in 2020 as a family service worker, they reported to a team leader who was on secondment from another ICFSA. Since becoming the acting program manager in 2023, they report to the Director and meet as needed. The family service workers report to the acting program manager. They have individual, scheduled clinical supervision biweekly as well as can meet whenever needed. There are biweekly team meetings which include the Director and administrative assistant. The staff report they feel well supported with the current supervision structure.

'N̄amgis Community Services, K'wak'walat'si Child and Family Services



3. Staff Perspectives: What We Heard

Eighty-three percent of invited staff participated in interviews, sharing their insights on strengths and growth opportunities, themed as follows:

Strengths:

- **Culture and Language** – Staff shared the importance of prioritizing culture and language in the delivery of their programs and services. The foundation of their work is deeply rooted in the culture and language of the people they support.
- **Relationships with the Community** – All staff are from the 'N̄amgis Nation. Staff are proud of the collaborative and positive relationships developed with community members. Services and community events are focused on meeting the needs of the families they serve as well as providing opportunities for meaningful cultural connections.
- **Support Services** – Staff expressed pride in their prevention services and the creativity used to support children, youth and families in the community. The programs and services have been uniquely curated to respond to the specific needs of the community. The staff have worked hard to change past perceptions of the Agency. This positive change is evidenced by an increase in participation, involvement and engagement with the programs and services delivered.

Challenges and Growth Opportunities:

- **Training** – Staff stated that they would like more training on records management procedures, the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system and supervisory skills. Some of the staff are new to their positions and identified gaps in their knowledge.
- **Housing** – The community has limited available housing available. This impacts the Agency’s ability to hire staff from outside of the community. The Agency hopes to invest in staff housing which would encourage ‘N̓amg̓is community members to complete practicums locally and eventually be hired with KCFS.

4. Methodology

This audit assessed the voluntary family services provided by K’wak’walat’si Child and Family Services (KCFS) from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2024, measuring compliance with [Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators \(June 2005\)](#).

A quality assurance practice analyst from MCFD conducted the audit. Collected data, compliance tables and a compliance report for each record audited was stored on a SharePoint site. Discussions with staff occurred by telephone or a virtual meeting after the data collection was completed.

The census audit, based on population and sample sizes collected from ICM, reviewed every record in the population, with a **100%** confidence level. The following were the counts of records reviewed for the sampled type of record:

Record Types	Population
Open Voluntary Family Service Cases	13
Closed Voluntary Family Service Cases	4

This census audit used the following parameters:

- 1) Open Voluntary FS: FS records open in ICM on April 30th, 2024, and managed by KCFS for at least six months (continuously) with a service basis listed as Non-Protection.
- 2) Closed Voluntary FS: FS records closed in ICM between November 1, 2021 and April 30th, 2024, and managed by KCFS for at least six months (continuously) with a service basis listed as Non-Protection.

Appendix B

Audit Tool

Voluntary Family Services Audit Tool

AOPSI Standards related to Voluntary Family Services		
Standard (St) #	Standard Name	Achieve Criteria
St. 1	Receiving Requests for Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information was recorded about the family and the family's history. The service requested was within the delegation of the Agency. A prior contact check was completed.
St. 2	Supervisory Approval Required for Voluntary Services	<p>The social worker consulted a supervisor at the following key decision points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving a child protection report. Approving a Family Plan. Approving a Support Services Agreement. Approving a Voluntary Care Agreement. Approving a Support Needs Agreement. Approving a record transfer. Approving a record closure.
St. 3	Information and Referral for Voluntary Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The services provided were appropriate to the needs of the child or youth. The referrals to services were consistent with the identified needs of the child or youth.
St. 4	Involving the Indigenous Community in the Provision of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efforts were made to identify and involve the Indigenous Community. Efforts were made to involve the family in planning. Efforts were made to involve the extended family in planning. Efforts were made to involve the child or youth in planning.
St. 5	Family Service Plan Requirements for Support Services, Voluntary Care, and Support Needs Agreements	<p>The Family Plan included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goals for services with timeframes for review. The roles and responsibilities for all those participating in the plan.
St. 6	Support Service Agreements	<p>Support Services Agreements were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed by the Agency. Signed by the parents. Consecutive and reviewed every six months.

St. 7	Voluntary Care Agreements	<p>The Voluntary Care Agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was completed and signed by the custodial parent(s) or the child, if over the age of 12. • Involved the family, extended family, child or designated community representative in the planning of the agreement. • Included an initial plan of care, services that would be provided, and a time period for the agreement.
St. 8	Support Needs Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SNA that was completed and signed by the custodial parent(s) or child, of over the age of 12. • Involved the family, extended family, child, or designated community representative in the planning of the agreement. • An assessment from a qualified professional regarding the support needs of the child and a multidisciplinary team in place to meet the needs of the child.
St. 9	Case Documentation for Voluntary Family Service Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opening recording signed by social worker and supervisor. • Review recordings signed by social worker and supervisor and completed every six months throughout the audit period.
St. 24	Transferring Voluntary Services Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transfer recording. • The transfer recording was signed by the social worker. • The transfer recording signed by a supervisor. • The social worker met with the family prior to transfer; efforts documented. • The service providers were notified of the transfer. • The Band was notified; efforts documented. • The social worker met with the family within 5 days of the transfer; efforts documented.
St. 26	Closing Voluntary Services Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A closing recording. • The closing recording was signed by the social worker. • The closing recording was signed by a supervisor. • The social worker met with the family prior to closure; efforts documented. • The service providers were notified of the closure. • The Band was notified; efforts documented.
St. 27	Voluntary Services Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All protocols related to the delivery of voluntary family services that the Agency has established with local and regional agencies have been followed.