

# Youth Justice Services Service Framework Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document outlines some of the frequently asked questions regarding the Youth Justice Services Service Framework (the Framework). These questions are not intended to be exhaustive and will be updated as needed.

## SECTION ONE: GENERAL FAQs

### Youth Justice Services

#### 1. Who is Youth Justice Services (YJS)?

Youth Justice Services (YJS) is the youth justice division in the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). YJS is comprised of over 400 staff, guided by provincial and federal legislation, who work with justice-involved youth across British Columbia. MCFD has the mandate to deliver youth justice services for youth aged 12-17 at the time of their offence and, in certain circumstances, up to age 20. YJS are responsible for the delivery of community youth justice, youth custody, and youth forensic psychiatric services across B.C.

#### 2. Why was the YJS Division created?

The creation of the YJS Division in 2025 was a direct response to calls from partners and staff to increase collaboration, communication, and transparency amongst MCFD's justice services to improve outcomes for justice-involved youth. The YJS division puts all youth justice-related staff within MCFD together, to respond in a coordinated and streamlined way to the changing landscape of youth justice in B.C. The establishment of a consolidated YJS division enables MCFD to better develop and deliver services, programs and supports for justice-involved youth and their families that facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration, while also protecting public safety.

#### 3. How does YJS work with service providers to support youth and families?

YJS works collaboratively with a network of service providers across the province to support justice-involved youth and their families. Through this model, service providers

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deliver programs and supports within communities, enabling responses that reflect local context and the diverse needs of youth and families.

### **4. What is the role of YJS in the youth justice system in B.C.?**

YJS works as a part of BC's youth justice system alongside Indigenous and community partners, police services, courts, and other youth sector partners, while maintaining a distinct mandate. YJS collaborates closely with partners to fulfill this mandate while respecting others' jurisdiction. YJS is committed to ongoing and intentional collaboration with our Indigenous partners, youth, service providers and the communities we serve.

### **5. How does YJS collaborate with Indigenous partners and communities?**

YJS is committed to ongoing and intentional collaboration with our Indigenous partners, youth, service providers and the communities we serve. Currently, YJS collaborates monthly with the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) and Metis Nation BC (MNBC) to explore service, legislative, and policy opportunities to better address systemic inequities and poor outcomes for Indigenous justice-involved youth.

## **MCFD Service Frameworks**

### **6. What is a Service Framework?**

A service framework is intended to be visionary and enduring, purpose-driven, and evidence informed. It serves as a long-term guide, a statement of mandate and provides YJS a common language and structure to define and deliver services.

### **7. What Service Frameworks are not?**

A service framework is not intended to be an implementation plan or strategy, duplicative of partner justice strategies, or fixed. It does not serve as a funding plan, program catalogue, policy manual, or evaluation report. It is also not a short-term or

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temporary initiative. A service framework does not replace the work that is already happening with partners or in communities; rather, it clarifies how that work fits into a shared provincial approach. Youth, families, and communities remain at the centre of this work.

### **Youth Justice Services Service Framework**

#### **8. What is the purpose of the Framework?**

The purpose of the Framework is to provide a foundation and direction for YJS. The framework will guide us in how we define, deliver, and change services to better meet the needs of justice-involved youth and their families.

#### **9. Why does YJS need a Service Framework?**

The Framework is the result of calls from partners and staff who have continuously urged MCFD to make improvements to justice services for youth, families, and communities in B.C. The Framework is also a response to ongoing ministry and government commitments, including advancing reconciliation, responding to overrepresentation of Indigenous and racialized youth, delivering culturally grounded services, expanding trauma-informed practice, and supporting successful transitions for youth.

#### **10. What informed the development of the Framework?**

The Framework was informed by the following:

- Collaboration with justice-involved youth, sector service providers, MCFD staff, and Indigenous communities, rights and title holders;
- Lived experience and diverse perspectives, incorporating the voices and experiences of justice-involved youth, ministry staff, and sector partners;
- Research drawing on relevant data, academic literature, and cross-jurisdictional analysis; and

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- Review of past and current policies, external reports, external and internal recommendations for improvement, and an understanding of current opportunities and successes, including the BFNJC and MCBC's Justice Strategies.

### 11. What is the Framework intended to achieve?

The Framework is intended to create shared language to improve clarity and transparency, support collaboration, increase consistency, and strengthen coordination and integration across all sectors. From this, partners and staff can expect greater accountability in how priorities, investments and service approaches are determined over time. The Framework is not a set of immediate instructions; it is a shared reference point that will guide how we practice and work together over time.

### 12. What are the next steps now that the Framework has been released?

YJS is approaching implementation of the Framework deliberately, recognizing that real change happens through consistent alignment and intentional action over time. An implementation plan is currently under development. Please watch for continued updates from YJS as implementation progresses. We will provide updates on priorities, progress, and opportunities to collaborate as the Framework is embedded into practice and our services. Throughout this process, YJS will continue to identify key priorities requiring change and work with staff, service providers, partners, youth, families, and communities to implement the Framework.

### 13. How can I support the release of the Framework?

We invite you to read the Framework and share it within your networks. Your engagement helps ensure the Framework is widely understood and embedded across YJS and the youth justice system. As mentioned, the Framework is not intended to be a new policy manual or a change in expectation. Nor does it require any overnight change

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to roles or services. Please send us any questions, concerns or insight to [CFD.YouthJusticeP4@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CFD.YouthJusticeP4@gov.bc.ca).

### 14. How is YJS approaching implementation of the Framework?

YJS is approaching implementation of the Framework deliberately, recognizing that real change happens through consistent alignment and intentional action over time.

### 15. Will YJS provide updates as implementation moves forward?

Please watch for continued updates from YJS as implementation progresses. We will provide updates on priorities, progress, and opportunities to collaborate as the Framework is embedded into practice and our services.

## SECTION TWO: MCFD and YJS Staff

### 16. What does the Framework represent for YJS as a new division?

This is the first step in bringing a shared vision into our daily work as a new division. The Framework articulates our shared identity – who we are, how we understand our role in the youth justice system, how we deliver services, what services we deliver and the outcomes we intend to achieve. The Framework articulates a clear vision and purpose for our division.

### 17. What is the purpose of the Framework?

For MCFD, the Framework is intended to:

- Clarify MCFD's mandate for YJS and its priorities within the youth justice sector;
- Define what YJS is responsible for and how we contribute to the youth justice system alongside our partners;
- Provide information about who we are, what services we deliver, how we intend to deliver those services and the intended outcomes for youth and communities accessing those services;

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- Align all YJS with broader ministry and community services to create a cohesive and coordinated network of services;
- Guide decision-making, service delivery and resource allocation, ensuring investments are prioritized effectively; and
- Improve coordination between YJS and other youth serving systems, including health, education, and child welfare.

For the YJS Division, the Framework is intended to:

- Communicate a clear foundation and direction for the division;
- Create shared understanding and common language across roles, regions and functions of YJS to support consistency;
- Enhance navigation of YJS available to youth and families;
- Shape and align policy, practice guidance, and service development over time;
- Promote consistent service delivery, coordination, and communication across the sector, while allowing for individualized responses to youth and families;
- Define intended outcomes of YJS services to enable monitoring and evaluation and ensure continuous improvement and responsible allocation of resources; and
- Help YJS move toward consistent procurement and contract language.

### 18. How does the Framework support shared understanding and language across YJS?

As a new division, we are building shared language, shared understanding, and shared ways of working across roles, regions and functions. The Framework supports collaboration and clarity by giving us a common reference point for decisions and dialogue.

### 19. How does the Framework define YJS' responsibilities and connect to daily work?

It defines what YJS is responsible for and how we contribute to the youth justice system alongside our partners. It connects our daily work – whether frontline, policy, practice, quality assurance, partner relations or leadership – to a shared vision, set of service principles, outcomes and priorities, for the youth and communities we serve.

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### 20. What are the expectations for staff at this early stage?

Expectations at this point are about orientation, not action or execution:

- Read and reflect on the framework.
- Begin using it as a lens for thinking and discussion.
- Bring questions, concerns, and insights forward.

### 21. What if I have questions, concerns, or feedback?

Questions, concerns, and feedback are not only expected, but essential to embedding the Framework in a positive way in our daily work. Staff insight, experience, and advice will be essential to bringing it to life. We want to assure you that:

- You are not expected to “do everything” right now.
- Learning and adjustment will take time.
- Your experience matters as we move forward.

Please speak with your supervisor or reach out to YJP4 [CFD.YouthJusticeP4@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CFD.YouthJusticeP4@gov.bc.ca).