



December 7, 2022

Honourable Mitzi Dean
Minister of Children and Family Development
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Dean:

Thank you for agreeing to continue to serve as Minister of Children and Family Development. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Children are precious to all British Columbians, and few issues are as profoundly important as ensuring all children are protected and supported. We want all children and youth to live in safe, healthy, and nurturing families, and to be strongly connected to their culture.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development has led historic work with First Nations, recognizing that the best support for Indigenous children comes from Indigenous communities. Your work to continue to develop and support Indigenous jurisdiction to ensure Indigenous responses to Indigenous children in crisis will be a vital priority.

Our government is properly concerned with British Columbians at risk of being left behind or excluded, and so your work to provide strong and responsive supports to families with children with support needs that don't fit into existing government initiatives or programs is essential. By working in close partnership with Indigenous leadership, families, advocates, and community, we can design programs that respond to the needs of families with children and youth with unique support needs to ensure a high quality of life for every person in our province. This work is important to ensure that all British Columbians have the opportunity to reach our full potential.

For kids in the care of government, we need to provide the supports and responses to their needs, and the needs of those providing care to them, to maximize their chances of success. By building on the work already done by the Ministry to improve programs for kids in care, and implementing our program changes to support young adults leaving government care, we can deliver better outcomes for them, and stronger communities across B.C.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Expanding and extending supports for young adults transitioning from government care to independence.
- Reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in care and working with Indigenous partners and the federal government to reform the child welfare system, including through new legislation that respects and upholds the inherent rights of Indigenous communities to provide their own child and family services.
- Supporting children, youth, and families through the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you continue to make progress on items in your previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Engage in deeper consultation with parents and caregivers, First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, communities, experts and practitioners, and other stakeholders with lived experience to build a better system of supports for children and youth with support needs.
- Continue work to expand supports for young adults transitioning from government care to support their transition to independence.
- Implement B.C.'s historic legislation on Indigenous jurisdiction over child welfare and continue to address and reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in government care.
- Continue improving B.C.'s in-care system to ensure that it meets the unique needs of every child and youth.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

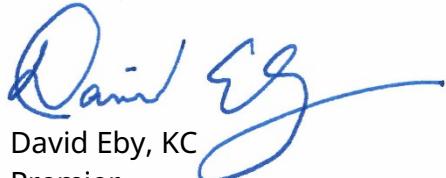
British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Eby".

David Eby, KC
Premier