General Introduction

This section is an introduction to provincial (foundational) standards for child and family services and adoption services in Manitoba.

Need for Manual

The Department of Family Services and Housing has a statutory obligation to establish standards for the delivery and administration of child and family services and adoption services in Manitoba.

With proclamation of The Child and Family Services Authorities Act, responsibility for the development of standards is now shared with child and family services authorities. The province retains responsibility for the establishment of provincial standards.

Existing provincial standards are currently in various manuals. The format and content of these manuals vary. Also, the manuals have not been consistently updated and distributed.

The Director of Child and Family Services (Child Protection Branch) and child and family services authorities have jointly identified the need for an on-line manual that is readily available and revisable.

Manual Organization

The foundational standards in this manual are divided into four main categories or volumes:

- Volume 1 – Agency Standards
- Volume 2 – Facility Standards
- Volume 3 – Authority Standards
- Volume 4 – Branch Standards

Each volume is divided into chapters covering broad categories. Each chapter is further divided into sections or modules that deal with specific areas. For example, Chapter 1 of Volume 1 covers case management standards. Section 1 of Chapter 1 covers intake.
The numbering system used in this manual reflects the way it is organized. For example, Section 1.1.1 refers to Volume 1, Chapter 1, Section 1. Page numbering is limited to each section.

Each chapter begins with an introductory section identified by the numbering system. For example, the introduction to case management standards is Section 1.1.0.

**Manual Content**

Manual content is standardized for easy use. At a minimum, each section contains:

- references and hyperlinks to relevant provisions in statute and regulation
- provincial policy requirements
- relevant standards (except for introductory sections)

Introductory sections list the chapters in a volume or sections in a chapter with hyperlinks to the chapter or section.

Manual sections may contain additional material when necessary. For example, detailed procedures may be required in addition to standards.

**Legislation**

Each section of the manual contains references and hyperlinks to applicable provisions in Acts (statutes) and regulations.

**Note:** The Acts (statutes) are in HTML format allowing links to specific provisions. The regulations are in PDF format and require Acrobat Reader.

Key provincial Acts (statutes) applicable to the delivery of child and family services (including adoption services) in Manitoba are:

- The Adoption Act
- The Child and Family Services Act
- The Child and Family Services Authorities Act
- The Family Maintenance Act
- The Fatality Inquiries Act
- The Financial Administration Act
- The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- The Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Act
- The Ombudsman Act
- The Personal Health Information Act
Regulations are delegated or secondary legislation. They are an integral part of the statutes under which they were created.

All persons working in child and family services in Manitoba are expected to have a sound working knowledge of legislation and regulations that directly apply to their work.

Policy

Each section of the manual contains information on applicable provincial policies and hyperlinks to documents that are available on-line.

It is important not to confuse policy with legislation. Acts and regulations are written or codified law. Policies are not law. They are executive or administrative decisions. Rules established through policy must be followed, but can be changed by executive decision.

The standards in this manual are policy, not law. They are also based on provincial policies as well as legislation and regulations. For example, the requirement for all agencies to use the automated Intake Module is a matter of policy.

Standards

The provincial standards in this manual are compliance standards that describe a minimum level of performance expressed in precise, measurable terms. They are mandatory minimum requirements for the delivery of child and family services (including adoption services) to be used as a basis for service delivery and quality assurance.

The Director of Child and Family Services (director) has a duty under section 4 of The Child and Family Services Act and section 5 of The Adoption Act to establish standards of services. Under section 16 of the Child and Family Services Authorities Regulation, authorities have the duty of the director to ensure that agencies are providing the standards of service. The authorities also have a duty under section 19 of The Child and Family Services Authorities Act to develop culturally appropriate standards and ensure that they are consistent with provincial standards, objectives and priorities.

Procedures

Some manual sections may contain procedures listing detailed steps required to carry out a service or function. Procedures are added only when they are clearly indicated.