



## Introduction

Section 1.2.1 covers agency involvement in the community through work with other human services systems and community participation in the work of the agency. It applies primarily to mandated child and family services agencies and, with respect to the use of volunteers, to licensed adoption agencies.

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## Legislation

[The Child and Family Services Act](#)  
[The Adoption Act](#)

### ***The Child and Family Services Act***

The [Declaration of Principles](#) state, among other things, that communities have a responsibility to promote the best interests of their children and families and have a right to participate in services to their families and children.

[Subsection 7\(1\)](#) requires a child and family services agency to work with other human services systems to resolve problems in the social and community environment.

[Section 11](#) provides for assistance to community groups and the participation of volunteers in the work of an agency.

Section 3 of the [Child and Family Services Regulation](#) sets out the requirements for child abuse registry, criminal record and prior contact checks. They pertain to any person who provides work or services to an agency, whether as an employee, volunteer, student trainee or in any other way.

### ***The Adoption Act***

Section 4 of the [Adoption Agencies Licensing Regulation](#) sets out the requirements for child abuse registry, criminal record and prior contact checks. They pertain to any person who provides work or services to an agency, whether as an employee, volunteer, student trainee or in any other way.



## **Policy**

Community involvement refers to agency work with other human services systems and community participation in the work of the agency.

Agencies have a duty under [clause 7\(1\)\(a\)](#) of *The Child and Family Services Act* to work with other human service systems to resolve problems in the social and community environment. They may carry out this duty in a variety of ways with due regard to the social needs and cultural practices of a community. Other human services must include health services, mental health services, educational authorities, the police as well as other social services available to families.

Under [section 11](#) of the Act, agencies are expected to assist interested community groups in resolving community problems and to facilitate the participation of volunteers in the provision of services. They have discretion as to how best to carrying out these responsibilities subject only to community expectations and policy direction from their mandating authority.

It is important to note that statutory responsibility for services under the Act remains with an agency and cannot be delegated or assigned to a committee or volunteer.

## **Standards**

The standards in this section fall under the following headings:

**Community Development** – policies and practices with regard to identifying service needs, working with other human service systems, and community participation in the work of the agency.

**Community Committees** – committees established by an agency to assist in the work of the agency.

**Use of Volunteers** – the recruitment, training and use of persons to work as volunteers for an agency.

### ***Community Development***

1. **Community Development Policies** – An agency has written policies in regard to responding to community needs, working with other human services, and community participation in the work of the agency. The policies include requirements for community profiles and inventories and for service planning and resource development. They may be developed under the direction of or in collaboration with



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the agency's mandating authority. They may also include culturally relevant policies and standards.

2. **Community Profiles** – An agency maintains current profiles on the communities it serves. The profiles include community characteristics, needs and problems that impact negatively on the ability of families to care adequately for their children. The profiles are shared at least once a year with agency staff and board members and with the agency's mandating authority.
3. **Community Inventories** – An agency maintains inventories of other community services and resources essential to the delivery of agency services to families in a community. The inventories list individuals, groups and organizations that may assist in meeting the needs of families. They include the names, addresses, phone numbers and a brief description of services provided and are readily available to agency workers and supervisors. An agency may develop inventories in collaboration with its mandating authority, other child and family services agencies and authorities, and other human service organizations.
4. **Community Development Planning** – Agency planning processes and activities include a community development component which involves:
  - community participation in the identification and articulation of community needs and problems
  - strategies for addressing community needs including agency initiatives, advocacy and collaboration with other human services
  - implications for organizational and human resource planning
  - expectations and mechanisms for reporting activities and results
5. **Community Resource Development** – Agency community development policies include requirements for identifying community needs and gaps in services. Efforts to identify community needs and develop resources may be carried out in collaboration with other human services and participation of community groups.
6. **Assistance to Community Groups** – Consistent with the intent of [subsection 11\(1\)](#) of *The Child and Family Services Act*, all requests for assistance in resolving community problems are recorded and reviewed by a person or persons designated to work with community groups. The agency advises a person or group requesting assistance of its decision or plan of action *within one month* from the date it received the request.



### **Community Committees**

7. **Establishing Community Committees** – No community committee is authorized to perform or otherwise participate in the work of an agency without the written approval of the agency’s mandating authority. For non-government agencies, the agency board may approve the creation of a committee or may delegate this authority to the executive director. For regional offices of Family Services and Housing, an executive director may approve the creation of a committee or may delegate this authority to a regional manager.
8. **Committee Terms of Reference** – An agency community committee must have written terms of reference that include the following:
  - name, address or location, and region, community or neighbourhood served
  - purpose and objectives
  - applicable roles and responsibilities including:
    - accountability to agency management and, when applicable, the board
    - responsibilities for identifying and communicating concerns about community needs, problems and issues
    - recommending strategies and policies for dealing with community needs, problems and issues
    - participation in agency planning activities
    - involvement in case planning and evaluation (see Standard 9 below)
  - legal and other limitations relating to such matters as involvement in cases, conflict of interest, confidentiality and access to information
  - membership (for example, who, terms of admission, rights and obligations, termination)
  - composition and structure (for example, executive positions, length of term, removal)
  - meetings (for example, types and frequency, how decisions are made, minutes and records)



- financial management (for example, fiscal year if applicable, budget, signing officers, expenses, accounting and auditing, non-budget expenses)
9. **Involvement in Case Planning and Reviews** – When the role of a committee includes involvement in case [planning](#) and [evaluation](#), the terms of reference include a statement that the committee does not have authority to make case decisions. The statement limits the role of the committee to providing advice and making recommendations regarding the case management process case.
10. **Agency Records of Community Committees** – An agency maintains a list of proposed, approved and terminated community committees. The list is updated at least once every six months and whenever there is a change in the status of a committee. The record also contains:
- any proposals received from a community group, a summary of agency work with a community group and any correspondence or other communication
  - the approved terms of reference for a committee
  - a current list of community members (see Standard 11 below)
  - the date a committee ceased to operate and the reasons for termination
11. **Community Committee Member Records** – When the role of a committee includes involvement in case planning and evaluation (see Standard 9 above), the agency also maintains a record for each committee member that includes:
- identifying information (name, age or birth date, sex)
  - the results of a child abuse and criminal record check and, when required by regulation, a prior contact check
  - recruitment interviews and screening assessments (see Standard 13)
  - reasons for a person ceasing to be a member

### ***Use of Volunteers***

12. **Volunteer Program Management** – An agency assigns the management and co-ordination of an agency volunteer program to one or more persons who are designated as a volunteer coordinator or supervisor.



**13. Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers** – Agency practices for recruiting and selecting volunteers, including persons volunteering for work on an agency committee, include:

- identifying and publicizing available agency volunteer work through appropriate methods such as bulletin boards, communications to staff, contact with community members and advertising in the media,
- screening of each volunteer applicant including a child abuse registry, criminal record and, when required by regulation, a prior contact check as well as references from three persons other than a parent or guardian, spouse or partner, sibling or child of the applicant,
- a recruitment interview with each volunteer applicant to assess the person's strengths and interests, select appropriate people for particular work and counsel applicants into other avenues when indicated, and
- a written description of the roles and responsibilities for each volunteer function including the nature of the work, time commitments, skills and qualifications required, orientation or training required, supervision to be given and documentation required of the volunteer