



Child and Family Services Standing Committee

Summary of Priorities 2024/25

The role of the Standing Committee is set out in section 30(2) of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, which states: “The Standing Committee is to serve as an advisory body to the authorities and the government and is responsible for facilitating cooperation and coordination in the provision of services under this Act.” Standing Committee members include the Chief Executive Officer from each of the four child and family services authorities and the Director of Child and Family Services from the Department of Families.

Standing Committee met on nine separate dates throughout 2024/25. One of the highest priorities was to collaborate on activities to support the service system adapting to the changing child and family services landscape in Manitoba. In particular, working together to actively support the jurisdictional transition process to Indigenous governments and supporting implementation of important changes to provincial legislation that came into force in October 2024.

Preparing the Provincial System for the Transition to Indigenous Jurisdiction

In 2024/25, Standing Committee continued to prioritize the devolution of Child and Family Services (CFS) in a manner that aligns with coordination of service delivery with Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGB's) and Indigenous Service Providers (ISPs). A key part of this was to support preparation for the enactment of the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) own child and family services legislation. This required that a new intake agency be identified for the Parkland Region. Designating a new intake agency requires agreement from all four authorities. Through discussions at Standing Committee, a process was initiated to transfer the Designated Intake Agency (DIA) responsibility in the Parkland Region from Michif CFS to Rural and Northern CFS (under the General Authority). Through collaborative efforts involving the General and Métis authorities, Rural and Northern CFS and the Michif Agency, Rural and Northern CFS became the DIA for the Parkland Region in late June 2024.

Given the scope of the proposed MMF legislation, the Métis Authority will no longer be the authority of service for Inuit children youth and families. An interim plan was needed as Inuit rights holders work on their own path towards jurisdiction. Through discussions at Standing Committee, the



General Child and Family Services Authority was identified as the Authority of Service and assumed this responsibility in July 2024. As of March 31, 2025, the General Authority had provided service for 42 Inuit families.

Throughout 2024/25, Standing Committee continued to work collaboratively to ensure placement priorities are respected and maintained. As Indigenous Governing Bodies take jurisdiction through their own legislation, access to services depends on families' alignment with their community via Métis Citizenship or First Nation status. To support this, a joint process with the Child Protection Branch, the CFS Authorities, Vital Statistics and Indigenous Services Canada, is being created to expedite registration for children and youth in care, enabling them to be served under their respective IGB's jurisdiction.

To facilitate Manitoba's transition of child and family services (CFS) jurisdiction to Indigenous governments, Standing Committee supported the development of a guiding document to clarify information sharing between provincial CFS Authorities, agencies, and Indigenous governments. Amendments to Manitoba's CFS Act create a positive obligation for CFS Authorities and agencies to share CFS information to support Indigenous child and family services law, service delivery, and administration of related federal legislation.

Supporting the Implementation of Legislative Amendments

Bill 32, *An Act Respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction and Related Amendments)* received Royal Assent in May 2023. In October 2024, key sections of these important amendments came into force introducing four new types of agreements that agencies could use to support their work with children, youth and families. The four new agreements are: Family Support, Kinship Care, Customary Care, and Voluntary Care (which replaces the former Voluntary Placement Agreement). These amendments focus on preserving family and community connections in Child and Family Services. The agreements aim to keep children with their families, allowing parents to retain guardianship and participate actively in planning. They align with federal legislation supporting placement priorities for Indigenous children and families.



Many discussions occurred at Standing Committee to put plans in place to support agencies to implement these new agreements. Provincial standards came into effect for an interim period of one year to allow time for agencies to collaborate with Indigenous Nations to develop their own policies and standards for using these agreements.

To support implementation, the Department of Families held information sessions with CFS Authorities and agencies and met with Nations and community groups to outline how the new agreements can be used to support children, youth and families. New training modules that provide step-by-step instructions and explanations for required documentation in the case management system were created for the Child and Family Services Learning Management System. Authorities also offered their own training for agencies.

Serious Injury Reporting Framework

As of July 1, 2023, Manitoba implemented the Serious Injury Reporting Regulation, requiring serious injuries to be reported to the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY). In response, MACY created a Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations program to monitor services and analyze data for trends. A working group was formed to address challenges and develop a framework to help agencies with reporting. The finalized framework to support agencies understanding their reporting responsibilities was approved by Standing Committee in March 2025. Training Webinars and Authority-specific training sessions will be offered.

Other

Any exceptions for province-wide Child and Family Services Application (CFSA) User Access require approval by Standing Committee. In 2024/25, Standing Committee approved six (6) requests for province-wide access.

During 2025/26, Standing Committee will continue to discuss the implications of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families* and how jurisdictional transition affects current and future practice. This will remain as a standing item on the Standing Committee agenda to ensure transparency, consistency in interpretation and practices related to compliance with the Federal Act and seamless service delivery for children, youth and families in the province.