

## Joint Intake Response Unit:

### Where do I go for services?

A cooperatively managed Joint Intake Response Unit will be established as the primary first point of contact with the child and family services system. The Joint Intake Response Unit will operate a common Child and Family Services phone number across the whole province, taking calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone who needs to call child and family services will simply call that one number. All calls to the Joint Intake Response Unit will be answered by highly qualified staff.

The Joint Intake Response Unit will provide a 24-hour intake service that will connect people with appropriate services, with a focus on strengthening families and finding alternatives to child apprehension. The unit will conduct initial assessments and support families in securing the most appropriate service available (both child and family services and other community resources). For non-emergency calls, Joint Intake Response Unit staff will help callers with their inquiry directly, or refer them to an appropriate agency or service (either a Child and Family Services Authority, or other community services and resources).

The Joint Intake Response Unit will also respond to emergency situations. For emergency calls from Winnipeg, Joint Intake Response Unit staff will provide an immediate response. For emergency calls outside Winnipeg, Joint Intake Response Unit staff will immediately send staff from a designated agency in the caller's area to respond to the emergency.



People already familiar with an agency or service could still call the agency or service directly. To avoid confusion, however, only the common Child and Family Service phone number will be advertised to the general public.

Prior to new cases being assigned, Joint Intake Response Unit or agencies contacted directly will be responsible for Authority determination (see next page).

The four Authorities will jointly manage the Joint Intake Response Unit, but one mutually determined Authority will be contracted to be the employer and day-to-day administrator of the service. The funding for the Joint Intake Response Unit will be based on an annual plan and approved budget. The four Authorities will share the costs for these services equitably.

## Process for Authority Determination:

### Who is responsible for services?

A central objective of the new system is to ensure that people receive services through the most culturally appropriate Authority.

To provide for this, all families and children involved with child and family services for the first time will be guided through a common Authority determination process that will stream them to the appropriate Authority. The "streaming process" is based on the belief that, in general, families will want to receive services through the Authority with which they most closely identify.

The streaming process will be based on asking people a series of questions. First Nations persons registered as an "Indian" within the meaning of the Indian Act will be streamed to the appropriate First Nations Child and Family Services Authority. Metis persons and Inuit persons will be streamed to the Metis Authority. Non-Status persons will also be streamed to the Metis Authority with some exceptions. The exceptions are:

- persons entitled to be registered as an "Indian" within the meaning of the Indian Act and who declare community connectedness to a First Nation; and
- persons who have lost their status due to the legal implications of section 6 (2) of the Indian Act, but who readily identify with First Nations culture and who declare community connectedness to a First Nation.

How these persons will be identified and what questions will be asked is a Phase 3 task.

Other persons will be streamed to the General Child and Family Services Authority. Within the General Child and Family Services Authority, Jewish people will be streamed to Jewish Child and Family Services.

## Who do I call for service?



People in need of child and family services will call a toll-free number.

**The new system will ensure no child is left at risk.**

## Who will provide services ?

People needing child and family services will be directed to the Authority with which they most closely identify, based on their culture.



The process will be respectful and simple and could be completed in a few minutes. The same process will be used throughout the new service system. In a crisis or emergency, the streaming process will be used only after immediate needs are met and the safety of the child is ensured.

The streaming process to be developed will also be able to respond to situations when family members identify with cultures served by different Authorities, or, when information is unavailable on the cultural background of the family and/or child.



Early after initial intake, families and/or children can choose to be served by an Authority other than the one to which they would otherwise be streamed. Choice will be exercised through an established process involving the relevant Authorities and the family and/or child. The new system will also respect a family's and/or child's choice to be served by a different agency within one of the Authorities.

Families and/or children will be able to request a change in either agency or Authority even after they have been involved in the child and family services system for some time. In this case, however, families will be responsible for demonstrating why a change will be in the best interest of the child or children involved.

Since decisions related to the child and family services system need to be based on the best interest of children, supports will be provided to families and/or children wishing to exercise choice to enable them to make informed decisions.

Finally, the new system will have safeguards to ensure that children remain connected to their culture when a family and/or child chooses to be served by a different Authority.

## Centralized Supports

Along with the Joint Intake Response Unit, which provides coordinated joint intake and assessment, there are other important centralized supports proposed for the new system. Once again, these supports will be put in place to coordinate the system and to ensure that people receive timely and effective service.

### Executive Support Unit

An Executive Support Unit will be established to act on behalf of the Province of Manitoba in meeting its responsibilities. The Executive Support Unit will oversee the establishment of system-wide standards and ensure compliance with these standards. The Executive Support Unit will also work with and provide supports to each of the Authorities.

## Management Information Systems

Management information systems will be implemented to allow all Authorities and child and family services agencies to make use of the recent advances in electronic communications and information exchange. The Authorities and agencies will require access to technology to be able to communicate and exchange information through linked computer-based record-keeping systems.

For example, management information systems will enable staff to check whether a family or child has had previous involvement with the child and family services system, and will facilitate the transfer of cases after initial intake.

Confidentiality and security issues will be of primary concern for the design of the system. To protect sensitive and confidential information, the systems will ensure access only to authorized users.

### Joint Registries

An essential feature of the systems will be a set of common registries. These will include:

- Child in Care Registry;
- Prior Contact Registry;
- Child Abuse Registry;
- Adoption Registry; and
- Post-Adoption Registry.

Identification of additional registries will be required and ongoing.

## Supporting the New System



Centralized Supports will help the system work smoothly and efficiently. These include:

- Executive Support Unit staff will make sure the Province of Manitoba's role is fulfilled in the new system. It will ensure that standards are followed throughout the new system.
- Computer systems will be put in place to make sure the Authorities and the agencies can share information and communicate. The systems used will ensure confidentiality.
- One of the key parts of the new system is common registries of information about children in care, prior contact, child abuse, adoption and post-adoption.





## Standing Committee

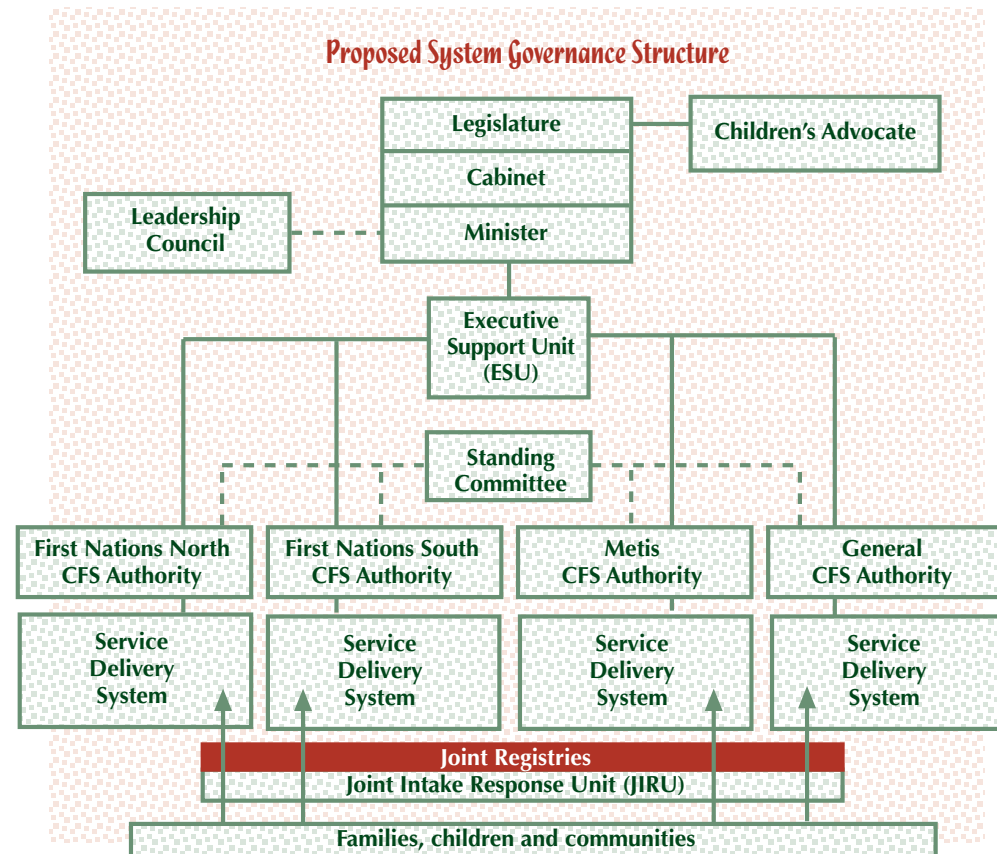
The Standing Committee will facilitate collaboration and cooperation at the executive level of the new Child and Family Services Authorities.

The membership of the Standing Committee will be comprised of:

- Senior executive officer of the Northern First Nations Child and Family Services Authority;
- Senior executive officer of the Southern First Nations Child and Family Services Authority;
- Senior executive officer of the Metis Child and Family Services Authority;
- A second representative from the Metis Child and Family Services Authority;
- Senior executive officer of the General Child and Family Services Authority; and
- Senior executive officer of the Executive Support Unit.

The purpose of the Committee will be to provide a forum for ongoing communication at the most senior staff level among the Authorities and the Province (represented by the Executive Support Unit). Committee members will meet to address system-wide issues.

The Standing Committee will also be pivotal in promoting cooperation and collaboration with other governmental systems, working in such areas as education, justice, health and housing. The members of the Standing Committee will be in a position to develop joint approaches in working with these other systems. They will ensure that jointly developed protocols and procedures are adhered to by their respective Authority and service agencies.



## Leadership Council

The Leadership Council will facilitate ongoing and effective collaboration among the Province and Aboriginal leaders.

The Leadership Council will be comprised of political leaders from the First Nations, Metis, and the Provincial Government. The Council will provide a forum for “government-to-government” discussions surrounding child and family services issues. Aboriginal leadership will provide advice to the Provincial Government or the Minister may seek direction and input from them.

The purpose and principles of this body are to be included in the new child and family services legislation.

## Transition to the New System

The changes proposed will require a careful and planned process to establish the new system as described in the preceding pages. Some of the major tasks will include:

- Drafting of new or amended legislation for consideration by the Legislative Assembly;
- Transferring responsibility for services to Aboriginal children and families to the new Aboriginal Authorities and their agencies in a manner least disruptive to those currently receiving services;
- Developing the human resources required by the new Aboriginal Authorities and their agencies while respecting the collective agreements of the current workforce;
- Redistributing funding and other resources among the new Authorities and their agencies; and
- Reviewing arrangements with external agencies that provide residential care – for example, Knowles Centre Inc., MacDonald Youth Services, Marymount Inc., and New Directions for Children Youth and Families Inc.

## Standing Committee



The Standing Committee, with members from the Authorities and the Province, will help all parts of the system to work together for the benefit of Manitoba children and families.

## Leadership Council

The Leadership Council will provide a place for political leaders from First Nations, Metis and the Provincial Government to discuss issues.

## Transition

The change from the old system to the new system will need careful planning to ensure that it is as smooth as possible.

## Enabling Legislation

The current child and family services system is governed by The Child and Family Services Act and The Adoption Act. Changes to these Acts or new enabling legislation will need to be drafted to govern the new system.

The amended or new legislation to be drafted and considered by the Legislative Assembly will include the following related changes in the administration and governance of the child and family services system:

- Powers and duties of the Minister;
- Powers and duties of the four Authorities;
- Relationship between the Minister and the Authorities;
- Duties of the agencies;
- Establishment of the Standing Committee; and
- Establishment of the Leadership Council.

Work on these and other legislative changes will begin in Phase 3.

## Transferring Responsibility for Services

While the new system will not be fully implemented until October 2003, the transfer of responsibility for services will begin much earlier. Current timelines may see transfers begin as early as January 2002, after the completion of the public feedback process and detailed planning activities in Phase 3.

Responsibility for services to children and families already receiving services through the child and family services system will be assigned based on the same “streaming process” to be used for those becoming involved in the system for the first time (see page 19). Families and/or children will also have the option of choosing to be served by an Authority other than the one to which otherwise they would have been streamed.

However, the actual transfer of responsibility of these services will proceed according to the ability of newly created Authorities and/or their agencies to take over this responsibility. The transfer of funding and human resources will be critical to the readiness of the newly created Authorities and/or their agencies (see next three pages). Until the receiving Authority and/or its agencies are ready, services will continue to be provided by the existing service provider.

A key concern in the transfer of responsibility for services will be to ensure that it is done in a way that is least disruptive to children and families who are involved in the child and family services system and ensures the safety of children at all times.

Detailed planning for the transfer of service will occur in Phase 3. Planning will also include focus on the transfer of three other types of services:

**Abuse** – Abuse investigations will not be transferred while they are in progress. They will be completed by the agency already involved.

**Post Adoption Registry** – These services will continue to be provided by the Province until Authorities indicate a readiness to assume responsibility.

**Foster Care Resources** – Following the completion of an inventory of foster and residential resources during Phase 3, protocols will need to be developed that deal with the sharing of homes and with the issue of more than one agency licensing a foster home. Agreement will also be required on the protocols and procedures to be used in transferring resources from one agency to another. Foster parents will be included, whenever possible, in this developmental process.

## Implementing a Human Resources Strategy

The new system will require a transition towards a culturally competent workforce. This transition will create the need to train and hire more Aboriginal people to work in the child and family services system.

A preliminary plan has been developed to provide for this transition respecting:

- The need to maintain quality and continuity in service delivery and the continued safety and protection of children;
- Each Authority’s right to define skilled, appropriate and the criteria through which the workforce is hired; and
- The available child and family services funding.

## Legislation

The current system is governed by The Child and Family Services Act and The Adoption Act. These laws will be changed to reflect the new system.

## Transferring Services

The change from the old system to the new system will be done in stages as agencies become ready. Transfers will begin in January 2002 and be completed by October 2003.

## Workforce

The new system will mean changes to the present workforce. At first, to assist with case transfers, employees from the non-Aboriginal child and family services system will be loaned to the Aboriginal agencies. As more Aboriginal people are trained and ready to be hired, the loaned employees will be offered reasonable employment in other areas.





A workforce adjustment strategy is an important part of this plan. The strategy will see experienced and skilled workers in the mainstream child and family services system seconded to the three Aboriginal Child and Family Services Authorities and their affiliated agencies until a greater number of qualified Aboriginal people are ready to fill these positions.

In order to respect the collective agreements of the existing workforce, the Province has made the commitment to assume full responsibility for ensuring reasonable employment offers are made to existing regular child and family services employees who are affected by transition to the new child and family services system. Under the proposed plan, First Nations and Metis Authorities will have the option to offer permanent employment to seconded employees but will be under no obligation to do so. Those employees returning from secondments with the Aboriginal Authorities will be employed with the General Authority, within the provincial civil service, or with other employers.

Under the plan, an inventory of existing human resources available to the child and family services system will be developed along with detailed workforce projections by each of the Authorities. This information will be used as the basis to develop and implement new and expanded training programs with various educational institutions. These programs will place an emphasis on:

- Meeting future workforce requirements;
- Meeting skills and qualifications for workers set by each Authority;
- Recognition of previous work and experience as well as other indicators; and
- Accessibility to candidates in all regions of Manitoba, including those living in remote regions.

## Funding the Transition and the New System

New funding arrangements will be required to support the new child and family services system. The new funding arrangements will be designed to achieve the following goals:

- Support the least intrusive child and family services interventions appropriate to meet needs;
- Be needs-based and flexible enough to respond to operational needs;
- Provide longer-term predictability by incorporating multi-year allocations;
- Provide fair and equitable distribution of funding;
- Encourage best practices;
- Be province-wide in its application;
- Provide for a continuum of services/resources;
- Identify workforce requirements;
- Recognize caseload/work demand;

- Recognize unique needs, regional disparities, cultural differences and community-based service delivery;
- Encourage cost-effectiveness;
- Be understandable and easily administered; and
- Include an evaluation and review process.

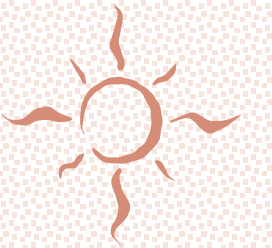
The development of these new funding arrangements will require careful consideration and will be established by October 2003. During the transitional period, the reallocation of resources will be proportional to the work (e.g., number of cases) being transferred. Key features of the transition will include:

- Transferred resources to incorporate all direct and indirect costs;
- Resource transfers do not jeopardize the ability of the sending or receiving Authority to fulfill its responsibilities; and
- Authorities work together to develop mutually agreeable plans for transfers of work and resources.

Additional one-time only funding will be required to cover a variety of developmental and transitional costs. These could include such things as training and other human resource initiatives, transfer of case loads, and a range of administrative costs.

All parties to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative have also made a commitment to a joint examination of the continued suitability of current resources available to support the child and family services system.

## Funding the New System



The new system will have a different way of funding which will be in place by October 2003.

The existing funds and resources will be transferred to the new Authorities. In turn, the Authorities will give funding and resources to the agencies.

Start up funding will be required.



## Reviewing Arrangements with External Agencies Providing Residential Care

The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative deals with the full range of services provided under the Acts. Programs and services that are currently being managed and provided by the existing child and family services agencies and the Province’s regional offices, including the level of provincial funding support, are the principle focus of the Province’s commitment to restructuring the system.

However, it is acknowledged that there is a broader array of programs and services that are of great importance and are of particular significance to Aboriginal children and families but fall outside the current responsibility and management of child and family services agencies.

Following agreement on the detailed implementation plan for the restructured system (to be developed in Phase 3), the Province will begin discussions with the Authorities in regard to residential resources operated by external agencies to support children who are not living with their families. Children are placed in the resources because they are experiencing serious psychological, emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Currently, the Department of Family Services and Housing manages decisions and the considerable financial resources required to place children in these residential care facilities. Aboriginal peoples have consistently expressed their concerns regarding the continuing relevance, cultural appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of these services, and have recommended that major structural changes be made to these programs.



The Province, First Nations and Metis are committed to working together by engaging in timely discussions with service providers once the implementation process is well underway. It is reasonable to expect that these discussions will lead, in all likelihood, to new organizational and funding relationships, which more closely reflect the cultural priorities and service objectives of the proposed new Authorities.

## Phases and Timelines



**Phase 1:** September 2000 to December 2000 - Working Groups developed proposals and recommendations for the draft plan.

**Phase 2:** January 2001 to July 2001 - Implementation Committee prepares consolidated draft conceptual plan based on Working Groups’ proposals and recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee.

**Phase 3:** August 2001 to December 2001 - Following public feedback, a detailed implementation plan will be developed, and initial changes can begin.

**Phase 4:** January 2002 to March 2003 - Plan substantially implemented.

**Phase 5:** April 2003 to October 2003 - Stabilization of changes implemented.

## Residential Care



As the changes are being implemented, the Province, First Nations and Metis will develop new ways of working together with residential care providers.

## How You Can Participate

### Want to Provide Feedback?

#### 1. Attend a Town Hall Meeting

Come to one of the town hall meetings being held throughout the province. Each meeting will include a presentation on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative. Individuals and groups can make presentations at the town halls. Pre-registration is not required, but is recommended to ensure that time is available for each presentation. Each town hall will include a question and answer period, as well as an “open floor” for anyone interested in providing additional feedback.

*Watch for dates and times to be advertised, or call 945-1183.  
Outside Winnipeg 1-800-300-7503.*

Please call 945-1183 (1-866-300-7503 toll-free) at least five days before the meeting you plan to attend if you want to:

- make a presentation
- find out about possible child care and interpreter assistance

#### 2. Send in a Written Submission

Provide your feedback in a letter or a written submission. Send your written feedback to:

**Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative**  
c/o 216 – 114 Garry Street  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4V4

*All written submissions should be received by September 30, 2001.*

#### 3. E-mail your comments

Send your feedback by e-mail to the following address: [ajicwi@gov.mb.ca](mailto:ajicwi@gov.mb.ca)

*All e-mail submissions should be received by September 30, 2001.*

### Want More Information?

#### 1. Visit the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative Web Site

Visit our web site to view more information on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative and the public feedback process. Please go to:  
<http://www.aji-cwi.mb.ca>

#### 2. Call our Central Information Line

Got a question? Want more information? Please call our Central Information Line.

In Winnipeg call: 945-1183  
Outside Winnipeg call toll-free: 1-866-300-7503

#### 3. Call One of the Parties to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative:

Want to speak with any of the parties involved in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative? Please call them directly.

##### Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Trudy Lavallee  
(204) 956-0610

##### Manitoba Metis Federation

Cynthia Kolada  
(204) 586-8474

##### Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak

Winnipeg Sub-Office  
Colin Kinsella or Inez Vystrcil  
(204) 927-7500

##### Province of Manitoba

Family Services and Housing  
Patrick Falconer  
(204) 945-6731

