

Terms of Reference

Youth Leadership Council for the Minister of Families

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many challenges for Manitobans. Among those, the challenges faced by children and youth have been particularly acute. For the Department of Families, this has significant implications for how services to children and youth are delivered going forward, whether they be in child and family services, disability services, employment and income assistance, housing or homelessness.

The Minister of Families is creating a Youth Leadership Council to hear directly from children and youth about their concerns, their ideas for improving services, and to ensure that their voices are reflected in government decisions.

Mandate and Scope

The Youth Leadership Council for the Minister of Families (Council) has been established to:

- Provide advice to the Minister on policy and service delivery issues related to children and youth up to the age of 21
- Provide research and recommendations on specific issues at the request of the Minister
- Provide feedback to the Minister on upcoming Department of Families initiatives
- Serve as a continuing link to children and youth, advocacy organizations, and service delivery agencies

Services provided by other departments or governments are not in scope.

The Youth Leadership Council will take a whole-of-government approach to improving outcomes for children and youth up to the age of 21 who have been in contact with Department of Families programs, including child and family services, disability services, income support, housing, and homelessness.

The Council will also serve as a mentorship opportunity for youth to connect with experienced service delivery professionals and with other engaged youth.

Membership

- The Council shall be composed of an appointed Co-Chair and a youth Co-Chair, five community expert members connected with advocacy and service delivery agencies and five youth members representing diverse community stakeholders.
- Appointments of members shall be made by the Minister.

- For all positions except that of appointed Co-Chair, membership is open to all eligible Manitobans through an open call for interest process. The position of youth Co-Chair is open to all eligible youth.
- Members shall sit for a one year term.
- The five community experts shall come from community-based organizations. One community expert will be appointed for each the service sectors of the department that affect children and youth:
 - Child and family services
 - Disability services
 - Employment and income support
 - Housing
 - Homelessness
- The six youth members shall represent the diversity of Manitobans, with particular attention on representing Indigenous people, newcomers, rural and northern communities, youth with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ and youth with experience in the child and family services system.
- Youth members will:
 - Be Manitoba residents between the ages of 15-21 who have experience with Department of Families programs
 - Demonstrate a proven engagement and interest in children and youth issues
 - Be ready to engage in respectful, open discussion and be accepting of differing viewpoints
 - Not be employed by the Manitoba government

Council Projects

- For its initial project, the Council will produce a high-level report on the effect of COVID-19 on children and youth in contact with Families systems, including recommendations for government and community agencies on how to modernize and adapt.
- Additional projects may be requested by the Minister as the need arises.

Resources and Support

- The Department of Families shall provide secretarial support to the Council.
- The Council will use the existing resources of the department in conducting its work.

Duties

- The Appointed Co-Chair shall:
 - Call and preside Council meetings
 - In consultation with the Department of Families, develop an agenda for meetings

- Work collaboratively with the department to determine which material may be necessary to support meetings
- Work collaboratively with the department to prepare research to support the Council's work
- Provide periodic updates on the work of the Council to the Deputy Minister of Families
- Community expert members shall:
 - Serve as mentors to the youth and the overall Council on matters related to the service sector that they are representing
 - Attend all Council meetings
 - Undertake consultations with other community organizations as needed
 - Participate in research to complete the projects requested by the Minister
- The Youth Co-Chair shall:
 - Work collaboratively with the Appointed Co-Chair in fulfilling the duties of the co-chairs.
- Youth members shall:
 - Provide insights and perspectives related to department programs affecting children and youth up to age 21
 - Participate in mentoring activities with community expert members as is beneficial
 - Attend all Council meetings
 - Participate in consultations with their communities and community organizations as needed
 - Participate in research to complete the projects requested by the Minister

Meetings and Term

- The Council shall exist for two years, beginning in fall 2022.
- The Council shall meet at the call of the Co-Chairs.
- Members, except the appointed co-chair, shall sit for one year terms.

Remuneration

- Youth members shall receive honoraria based on criteria of the General Manual of Administration.