

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: August 24, 2018 /February 19, 2019

CLIFF#: 239356

PREPARED FOR: Deputy Minister Allison Bond, **FOR DECISION**

ISSUE: Increased wages for Youth Advisory Council members that will reflect roles and experience more accurately.

BACKGROUND:

Since the formation of the Council in 2015, Youth Advisors have been receiving an hourly wage of \$15.00 for:

- Participating in monthly teleconferences (approximately 1.5 hours in duration);
- Attending and participating in the quarterly YAC Face to Face meetings in Victoria;
- Consulting on policy development for an array of government agencies; including MCFD; and
- Designing, developing and facilitating workshops, participating in panel discussions and attending events as guest speakers.

Council Members receive a flat rate of \$105.00 for the quarterly weekend meetings and events such as the Permanency Forum or conferences.

DISCUSSION:

The pay scale that 2nd and 3rd year YAC members receive does not adequately reflect the increased skills, personal and professional development members acquire through their involvement with the Council. 2nd and 3rd year YAC members take on the responsibility of mentoring and supporting the 1st year members.

In keeping with the PDCW Divisional Plan to expand youth voices in the delivery of services, policies and practice it is important that YAC members' compensation reflects this value.

PROPOSAL:

Hourly Wage

- 1st year members receive \$15.00 per hour;
- 2nd year members receive \$18.00 per hour;
- 3rd year members receive \$20.00 per hour.

Flat Rates

- 1st year members receive a flat rate of \$105.00 per day for the quarterly weekend meetings and events such as the Permanency Forum or conferences.
- 2nd year members receive a flat rate of \$126.00 per day for the quarterly weekend meetings and events such as the Permanency Forum or conferences.

- 3rd year members receive a flat rate of \$140.00 per day for the quarterly weekend meetings and events such as the Permanency Forum or conferences.

Forecasted Wage Increase

Years on YAC	Number of YAC	Payment per hour	Total hours worked	Forecasted Estimate Total
1	11	\$15.00	1534	\$23,010
2	5	\$18 .00	813	\$14,634
3	8	\$20.00	1270	\$25,400
Projected New Cost				\$63, 065
Total number of YAC Members 2014 to 2018 Current Cost	24	\$15.00	3517	\$54,255
Estimated Annual Increase to YAC Budget				\$8.789.00

OPTIONS:

Option 1: Increase wages based on the below tier system effective January 1, 2019

Implications:

- 1st year members receive \$15.00 per hour;
- 2nd year members receive \$18.00 per hour;
- 3rd year members receive \$20.00 per hour; and
- Increase cost to Adoption and Permanency Branch budget.

Option 2: s.13

s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Increase wages based on the below tier system effective January 1, 2019

Option 1 /



DECISION and SIGNATURE

Deputy Minister

March 1, 2019

DATE SIGNED

Contact

Assistant Deputy Minister:

Cory Heavener

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Page 04 to/à Page 05

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13;s.17

Attachments:

A. Appendix A: 2018/2019 Service Level Agreement

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: February 19, 2019
CLIFF#: 241281

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE: N/A
PREVIOUS CLIFF #: N/A

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister

ISSUE: Provincial Director of Adoption and Intercountry Adoption Consultant are invited to an international seminar on the search for origins in international adoption to be held in Montreal on May 27, 28 and 29, 2019 and a follow-up one day Canadian Federal/Provincial and Territorial Central Authority Conference on May 30, 2019.

BACKGROUND:

Inter-country or international adoption is a process that recognizes an individual or couple as the legal and permanent parent(s) of a child from another country. Canada and BC are signatories to the *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* (Hague Convention). The Hague Convention seeks to prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic of children. Canada ratified the Hague Convention in 1996 and BC enacted legislation enabling the provisions of the Hague Convention to have the force of law.

The BC Provincial Director of Adoption represents the Provincial Central Authority for the purposes of the Hague Convention.

DISCUSSION:

BC operates an Adoption Reunion Registry for individuals and their family members when the adoption has been completed in British Columbia. Currently, BC and all other Canadian Provinces do not offer reunion services to individuals who were adopted through an intercountry program. With the increase in technology and access to different media platforms it is becoming easier for individuals who were adopted to search for their birth family and to learn about their country of origin.

The Secrétaire à l'adoption internationale et directrice générale du Secrétariat à l'adoption internationale, as the Provincial Central Authority for Quebec, has organized an international meeting on the search for origins. The seminar will include round table and discussion group conferences on the search for international origins involving the participation of foreign delegations, professionals and other stakeholders.

Several countries have expressed their intention to be present at the event, including the Dominican Republic, Belgium, Denmark, France, Haiti, Romania, Switzerland, Tunisia, Togo, Vietnam, and Thailand. Representatives from accredited bodies, associations of adoptees and representatives of the provincial health network will also participate in this seminar. The

seminar will be an opportunity to develop methods of work and share good practices related to the challenges associated with research on international origins.

There will be no cost for registration for this conference and all lunches and nutrition break snacks will be provided. The deadline for registration is March 2019.

The Federal Central Authority for Canada is working to organize a one day follow-up conference for May 30th for the Canadian Provincial and Territorial Central Authorities. The last conference held for Canadian Central Authorities was in November 2016 in Ottawa and was attended by the Intercountry Adoption Consultant.

OPTIONS:

Option 1: s.13
s.13

Option 2: The Provincial Director of Adoption, as the Central Authority for BC, or her delegate attends the seminar on research of origins in Montreal on May 27, 28 and 29, 2019 and the F/P/T Conference on May 30, 2019.

Implications:

- Opportunity to discuss the role of the Central Authority and search options for international adoptees with counterparts both nationally and internationally.
- Opportunity to gain knowledge that may assist in the development an intercountry search for origins process. An intercountry search registry would be using a cost recovery model.
- Financial cost of approximately \$3000.00

Option 3: s.13
s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 2: The Provincial Director of Adoption, as the Central Authority for BC, or her delegate attends the seminar on research of origins in Montreal on May 27, 28 and 29, 2019 and the F/P/T Conference on May 30, 2019.

Option 2 /

**DECISION and SIGNATURE**

Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

March 12, 2019

DATE SIGNED**Contact****Assistant Deputy Minister:**

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: January 15th, 2019

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable): November 2, 2018

CLIFF#: 241414

PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable): 240142

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister

ISSUE: Adopting a low-fee cheque cashing option for all imprest cheques issued by MCFD

BACKGROUND:

Low-income British Columbians have historically accessed alternative financial services (such as 'payday loan' services, cheque cashing and loan products) to cash cheques, despite advertised fees in the range of \$2.99 plus 3% of the value of the cheque. Despite their high cost, there is continued demand for alternative financial services. Some British Columbians may feel their only choice is to access alternative financial services, for reasons such as not having the identification required to open a bank account.

In December 2017, government approved the Consumer Financial Protection Action Plan ("the Action Plan") as proposed by the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General (PSSG). Effective September 1, 2018, fees for cashing provincial social assistance and disability cheques were capped at \$2.00 plus 1% of the value of the cheque, to a maximum of \$10.00. The fee cap will apply to anyone who cashes a provincial social assistance cheque, including banks and credit unions operating in BC – although it is typically only alternative financial services that apply the high cheque cashing fee.

PSSG has been working with MCFD to determine if cheques issued by MCFD can also be subject to capped fees. In November 2018, it was approved that MCFD imprest cheques issued to youth and young adults would be subject to the capped fees (see CLIFF# 240142). Through further discussions with PSSG, there is now consideration as to whether the fee cap should be applied to all imprest cheques issued by MCFD – inclusive of those issued to youth, young adults, foster parents, and a very small number of service providers for services related to youth/young adults (i.e. cheque to pay for the youth/young adult's hydro).

DISCUSSION:

In 2007, the Government of British Columbia passed legislation authorizing regulations which set maximum charges for cashing a government cheque. The legislation has not been brought into force and requires a regulation to do so. As such, the Action Plan was created.

Additionally, as part of the 2019 Speech from the Throne, the government committed to "take further steps to crack down on unfair payday loan practices; new legislation will cap fees for cashing government cheques, provide oversight for installment loans and improve consumer education."

The purpose of the Action Plan is to strengthen financial protections for vulnerable British Columbians who use high-cost alternative financial services, while also ensuring that these services remain accessible. By limiting the types of cheques for which this regulation would apply to the most financially vulnerable, there is greater likelihood that cheque cashing businesses would remain available in BC.

Alternative financial services are marketed primarily to financially vulnerable British Columbians, such as youth from care who may not have the ability or support to open a bank account. These youth and other individuals who receive financial support from MCFD typically have very low incomes, and these high fees can have a significant impact on their finances.

Currently, imprest cheques are issued by local offices to youth, young adults, foster parents, and a very small number of service providers. Each of these groups also receive funding through CAS, however the ability to issue imprest cheques remains important. For example, these cheques are often issued in an effort to ensure ongoing and consistent contact between a social worker and a youth living independently.

There is a project currently underway to migrate some Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) applications off the mainframe, and the means by which MCFD and SDPR produce imprest cheques will change during the summer of 2019. The process change will drive a certain degree of practice change for MCFD, and ministry staff are working to reduce MCFD reliance on imprest cheques by facilitating transition to electronic funds transfer where practical.

There is no way to distinguish imprest cheques from one another; however, these cheques are distinguishable from other types of government cheques. Given this, PSSG has inquired if all imprest cheques issued by MCFD should be subject to the fee cap, with the understanding that the majority of those receiving these cheques are financially vulnerable people.

OPTIONS:

Option 1: All MCFD imprest cheques to be included in the fee cap, inclusive of those issued to: youth, young adults, foster parents, and a very small number of service providers providing services to youth/young adults.

Implications:

- A fee cap would benefit all groups who are receiving MCFD imprest cheques.
- By expanding the regulation to be inclusive of all MCFD imprest cheques, this removes the risk of the fee cap being applied to other imprest cheques that are not currently included in the proposed regulation language (i.e. those issued to foster parents and a very small number of service providers).

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: All MCFD imprest cheques to be included in the fee cap, inclusive of those issued to: youth, young adults, foster parents, and a very small number of service providers.

/	
DECISION and SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED
Allison Bond Deputy Minister	

Attachments:

- A. Statistics on MCFD Imprest Cheques (single representative month)
- B. Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General News Release

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A. Statistics on MCFD Imprest Cheques (single representative month)

Group	# of Monthly Cheques	Monthly Total \$
Youth living independently	2,496	\$704,000
Young adults on Agreements with Young Adults program	116	\$67,500
Foster parents, and support for children and youth in care	1,923	\$707,800
Contract advances for service providers (individuals, not a company)	29	\$27,000

For a total of 4,565 cheques and approximately \$1.5M

Province introducing tougher rules on payday loans, cheque-cashing fees

VICTORIA – The Province is starting to tighten the rules to rein in payday-lending practices, and to protect people from excessive fees when cashing BC Employment and Assistance cheques.

For some time, British Columbia's most financially vulnerable individuals have used non-traditional lenders and credit providers, who often impose high borrowing costs and debt loads on borrowers.

"Today, we're making changes to better protect British Columbians who use payday loans, and cash social assistance and disability assistance cheques," said Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. "We're also looking to make further changes to protect vulnerable consumers, who use other high-cost financial services in the province."

Limits on fees for cheque cashing, and high-cost loans, will go into effect on Sept. 1, 2018, as follows:

Strengthen payday-loans protections:

- Lowering the maximum fee to \$15 from \$17, for every \$100 borrowed, matching the lowest rate in Canada.
- Extending the payday-loan agreement cancellation period, so a payday-loan borrower now has two full business days to cancel the loan without penalty.
- Prohibiting payday lenders from requiring, requesting or accepting consent from a borrower, to use or disclose their personal information for anything other than for arranging or providing a payday loan.
- Clarifying payday lenders' data-reporting timelines. The receipt of more timely data will help Consumer Protection BC to focus its education and compliance efforts, and the data will help to inform government about trends and changes in the industry.

Limit fees for cashing social and disability assistance cheques:

- Capping the fee for cashing a provincial social assistance or disability cheque at \$2, plus 1% of the value of the cheque, up to a maximum fee of \$10. Note: this change applies to anyone in B.C. who cashes cheques.

Starting June 25, 2018, on the government's website, the ministry is providing practical advice and information to all British Columbians, to help them make informed choices about borrowing money, and using expensive alternative financial services, like cheque-cashing services.

"Our government is working to provide opportunities to help lift people out of poverty," said Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. "Today's announcement will ensure people, who are receiving income and disability assistance, and who rely on these services, are protected from unscrupulous practices, and have more money

left in their pocket after they cash their cheque.”

These changes are part of government’s overall Consumer Financial Protection Action Plan led by Farnworth. By reducing costs to consumers, and introducing additional consumer protections, the action plan supports the Province’s goal of reducing poverty, and helps make life more affordable.

Although the actions are intended to protect the most-vulnerable consumers, the changes will benefit all British Columbians who use high-cost alternative financial services. Government will continue to consider taking steps to protect vulnerable consumers.

“We’ve been regulating the payday-lending sector for almost a decade, and we have first-hand knowledge of how it works. British Columbians are borrowing an increasing amount of money from payday lenders, and our data shows that number is approaching \$400 million a year,” said Rob Gialloreto, president and CEO, Consumer Protection BC. “We support efforts of this nature by the Province, that are designed to protect vulnerable consumers who use the services of any high-cost lender.”

Advances in the protection of consumers, with more to come in the future on other high-cost alternative financial services, will strike a balance between industry and consumer needs as part of a well-regulated industry. Further research and work is underway in this policy area, including looking at other high-cost loans and cheque-cashing services, to determine what needs to be done to further strengthen consumer protections and affordability.

As part of its public education efforts, the Province has launched a new website called Borrowing Money. This website will provide people with information to consider before taking out a loan of any kind. The content on this website will allow anyone in B.C. to become informed and educated on various credit products and services, what rights borrowers have, and where to go for assistance.

Quick Facts:

- In 2016, more than 160,000 British Columbians used payday lenders (approximately 4% of the population over 18 years of age).
- On Jan. 1, 2017, B.C. reduced the maximum permissible charge for a payday loan to \$17 per \$100 borrowed, down from \$23.
- In 2016, British Columbians borrowed more than \$369 million, and took out nearly 805,000 payday loans.
- In 2016, the average payday loan was around \$460.
- Consumer Protection BC, a provincial regulator created by government, licenses certain sectors, and enforces the Province’s consumer-protection laws.

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: January 16, 2019

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable): December 28, 2018

CLIFF#: 241454

PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable): 241252

PREPARED FOR: Deputy Minister Allison Bond

ISSUE: Revised Relocation Expenses in Excess of Policy

BACKGROUND:

s.22 was recently hired as a SPO MH 25 Child and Youth Mental Health Clinician and was required to move from s.22

The employee is now residing in s.22 and is providing services as a Child and Youth Mental Health Clinician, which is a hard to recruit area with limited housing.

Due to the estimate received from BC Movers of \$10,292.04 to \$11,321.24, s.22 personal relocation expenses will exceed the maximum allowable under policy. In the previous Cliff 241252 this amount was listed as \$2,676.07. There was an error in addition on Cliff 241252 and the actual amount that is exceeded under policy is \$3,504.83.

DISCUSSION:

Under section 4.1 of Human Resources Policy Number 15, a move within 2,500 kilometres may be reimbursed to a maximum of \$12,150.

The estimated moving expenses total is \$14,826.07 which is \$3,504.83 in excess of the maximum allowable under policy. Previous Decision note had an error in addition and was approved for \$2,676.07 which is \$828.76 less than required for relocation.

The employee started work in s.22 on January 2, 2019.

The cost breakdown is as follows:

BC Movers Estimate	\$11,321.24
Ferry Cost – s.22 (\$34.20 for two passengers and \$57.50 for vehicle)	\$91.70
Two nights hotel (approximately \$119 per night + tax)	\$275.80 (approximately)
Gas Costs (3 tanks of gas at \$65 each = \$195)	\$195.00
Ferry Travel – s.22 (\$80.60 for two passengers, \$143.00 for vehicle, \$110 for cabin)	\$333.60

Food x 3 days (2 adults x \$50.00)	\$300.00
Return flight for spouse s.22 s.22	\$558.73 (approximately)
Duplicate rent/mortgage expenses until January 15, 2018 (*new tenant moves in Jan. 15, 2018 in s.22 accommodation)	\$750.00
Miscellaneous Costs (Connection fees for utilities and Winter Tires and Installation)	\$1,000
Total:	\$14,826.07
Amount in Excess of Policy (Revised Amount)	\$3,504.83

OPTIONS:

Option 1: Approve Revised Reimbursement of Expenses in Excess of Policy

Implications:

- Supports recruitment in hard to recruit area of the province.
- Employee is already ins.22 and believes relocation was approved by prior decision note.
- Amount exceeds maximum allowable under policy by \$3,504.83

Option 2: s.13

s.13,s.22

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Approve Revised Reimbursement of Expenses in Excess of Policy. These funds would be managed within the existing SDA budget.

DECISION and SIGNATURE
 Allison Bond
 Deputy Minister

DATE SIGNED

Attachments:

- BC Mover's Estimate
- 241252 Decision Note

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: January 14, 2019

CLIFF#: 241503

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond – Deputy Minister

ISSUE: Procurement Community of Practice symposium in Victoria from April 30 – May 2, 2019 at the Commons Block, University of Victoria

BACKGROUND:

There is a Procurement Community of Practice symposium in Victoria April 30 – May 2, 2019 at the Commons Block, University of Victoria. This symposium is being organized by the Ministry of Citizens' Services. This event is held every year, and this year's theme is *The Changing World of Procurement*.

DISCUSSION:

This symposium is an excellent opportunity for MCFD staff to enhance learning in procurement practices. Staff's ability to develop the procurement lifecycle – from planning to vendor management will be increased and staff will learn about case studies from local and international speakers concerning engaging with Indigenous audiences. Some of the interactive discussions include:

- Opportunities for innovation in procurement
- Developing the procurement lifecycle – From planning to vendor management
- Sharing of experiences – Case studies from locally and around the world including the Engaging with Indigenous audiences and Transforming Procurement in the Cayman Islands

Cost for this symposium is \$395. MCFD is requesting to send 11 staff to this event, 10 from SDD, and 1 from PLD. The FCS Division will be sending a separate request for approval for their staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Projected Expenses per person	Description
\$395	Conference registration
\$320	Hotel accommodation 2 nights
\$150	Per diem (meals)
\$ Varies depending on location	Travel
\$865	Total per person
\$9,515	Approximate total for 11 people attending (not including travel costs)

OPTIONS:

Option 1:

Approve 11 MCFD staff to attend the Procurement Community of Practice symposium in Victoria from April 30 – May 2, 2019.

Implications:

- Costs managed in existing program area budgets
- The conference will provide an opportunity for staff to develop their procurement knowledge and engage in discussions with colleagues on new procurement practices
- Gain knowledge and insight on engaging with Indigenous audiences

Option 2:

s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Approve 11 MCFD staff to attend the Procurement Community of Practice symposium in Victoria from April 30 – May 2, 2019.

_____/_____
DECISION and SIGNATURE
Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

DATE SIGNED

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: January 24, 2019
CLIFF#: 241565

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE : January 21, 2019
PREVIOUS CLIFF #: 241500

PREPARED FOR: Deputy Minister Allison Bond and Assistant Deputy Minister Philip Twyford

ISSUE: Requesting approval for \$90,000, currently available in the Adoption and Permanency Branch budget, to finance CHOICES Adoption and Pregnancy Counselling for 2 months in order to implement a closure plan.

BACKGROUND:

The Office of the Provincial Director of Adoption in the Ministry of Children and Family Development has licensed CHOICES Adoption & Pregnancy Counselling Services (CHOICES) pursuant to the *Adoption Act* and Regulations to facilitate both local infant adoption and international adoption services, including the placement of children from foreign jurisdictions into approved adoptive homes.

CHOICES is a non-profit charitable adoption and counselling agency led by an Executive Director and governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. CHOICES employs social work staff, including sub-contracting with over eighty-five registered¹ social workers and an administrative support.

The Provincial Director of Adoption monitors the activities of the licensed adoption agencies in BC through a quality assurance process that supports the agencies in complying with domestic and international adoption laws. The agency is responsible for funding and operating decisions.

Licensed agencies operate on a fee for service basis with the adoptive families. Agency fees have increased over time with administrators explaining that the need for fee increases is due to rising costs and decreasing adoptions with the overhead for agency services borne by fewer clients. Agencies have been facing increasing difficulties as international adoptions are taking longer to complete and fewer countries are placing children for international adoptions. As a result of these factors Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) ceased adoption services in September 2018.

CHOICES currently has approximately 100 registered domestic and intercountry adoption homestudies and has received 30-35 files (domestic and intercountry) from Family Services of Greater Vancouver due to that agency's closure in September of 2018. The families' whose files transferred paid a \$250.00 transfer fee for this process.

DISCUSSION:

On Friday, January 18, 2019 CHOICES Executive Director and staff from the board attended a meeting and informed the Provincial Director of Adoption and ADM Cory Heavener, that

¹ All social work staff employed by the adoption agency maintains current registration with the BC College of Social Workers.

CHOICES cannot remain open past February 1, 2019 due to their financial position. They have not made a public announcement and as of January 18, 2019 had not informed staff.

Financial analysis by Financial Services Branch/Financial Practice & Controls (review and not audit of 2015 financials) in September of 2018 indicated that over a 3 year period expenses had declined and revenue had increased but despite this, CHOICES was still not breaking even. Grant revenue was important to their ability to be sustainable but upon review the 2015 data did not support sustainability. (See Appendix A)

CHOICES will require \$45,000 per month to remain operational to allow for the transition of their current files to the appropriate service provider. It is anticipated they will close permanently on March 31, 2019.

OPTIONS:

Option 1: Approval is granted for \$90,000 to finance CHOICES for a 2 month period to implement a closure plan.

- Financial cost of \$90,000.
- Provides a window of time for the Provincial Director of Adoption to work with CHOICES Executive Director to transition files to the appropriate service provider.
- Minimizes impact to clients (BC residents) of FSGV and CHOICES who have a financial and emotional investment in their adoption process.

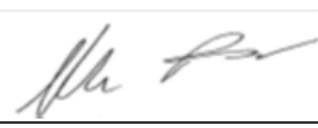
Option 2: s.13

s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Approval is granted for \$90,000 to finance CHOICES for a 2 month period to implement a closure plan.

Attachments: Appendix A: Financial Snapshot provided by Financial Services Branch/Financial Practice & Controls

Option 1 / 
DECISION and SIGNATURE
Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

January 30, 2019
DATE SIGNED

Option 1 /

DECISION and SIGNATURE

Philip Twyford,
Assistant Deputy Minister Finance and Corporate Services

January 30, 2019

DATE SIGNED

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Appendix A: Financial Snapshot provided by Financial Services Branch/Financial Practice & Controls

Most Recent Financial Statement Year	2015
Quick Ratio ¹	0.31
Total Revenue	613,390
GM %	68%
Net Income as % of Revenue	-1%
Salaries as % of Revenue	39%

Note 1: Quick ratio is calculated as Current Assets / Current Liabilities. Deferred revenue is excluded from the current liabilities for this analysis as the goal is to determine short term solvency. A ratio of less than 1 indicates that the agency does not have enough cash to pay its short term debt.

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION NOTE**

DATE: February 4, 2019
CLIFF#: 241682

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE: November 27, 2018

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister

ISSUE: To provide a briefing on FY19 Quarter 3 purchase card charges that may be questioned.

BACKGROUND:

- Each quarter, the Ministry's purchase card transaction details (supplier name and dollar amount) are released to the general public through Open Data BC. Purchases that appear unusual or questionable are often queried by Open Data consumers.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) staff review all purchases monthly. Any transactions that fall outside of government or ministry policies are investigated and action is taken where necessary.
- Government Communications and Public Engagement staff prepare an issue note for the Minister in preparation for public inquiries.
- There were 10,990 transactions in this review period (Q3), totaling \$2,123,512.

DISCUSSION:

Purchase Card Transactions found to be inconsistent with ministry/core policy and procedures:

- Hotel accommodations for employees on travel status (a corporate travel card, or a personal card should be used).
- A cardholder made a personal purchase at Tigh-Na Mara Resort.
Actions: A receivable has been established to recover the amount. A review is being conducted to assess the failure of processing controls and the risk of similar transactions occurring.
- Rental cars and fuel for rental cars were purchased while on travel status.
Issues: Travel card should have been used. Risks include: the potential for duplicate payment and inaccurate financial reporting.
- Staff appreciation costs for events and gifts were purchased and approved, but at times did not include adequate justification according to ministry policy and procedures. These included;
 - team building and staff appreciation events,
 - luncheons held in restaurants and pubs,
 - gift cards and gifts from various vendors bought for staff: e.g., Home Depot, Fluid Creations, Urban Yarns, North West Origins, Tim Hortons, Walmart, Dollarama, Panago, Judy Hill Gallery Gift, Wishes, Fluid Creations, Bella Coola Valley Inn, Brentwood Bay Resort, La Piazza Dario Ristor, Safeway, Costco, Purdy's Chocolate, Kelly Obrien's Restaurant, John B Pub Wine and Beer, Spice Hut Comox, and Starbucks.

ACTIONS: The above transactions have been addressed by reminding card holders and expense authorities of the related policy and procedures. In addition, Financial Policy and Controls staff are working with Corporate Operations Support Branch (COSB) and Service Delivery Area (SDA) staff to discuss amendments to SDA guidelines, procedures, and payment controls to improve consistency in the approach to staff appreciation across MCFD.

The following transactions are consistent with ministry and government's core policy and procedures, however may appear unusual and/or may be queried:

Staff appreciation

- BELLA COOLA VALLEY INN – Staff appreciation lunch.
- BRENTWOOD BAY RESORT – Staff appreciation lunch.
- COSTCO – Staff appreciation event.
- FLUID CREATIONS INC. – Gift certificates for staff appreciation.
- KELLY O'BRIENS RESTAURANT – Admin team staff appreciation lunch.
- LA PIAZZA DARIO RISTOR – Staff appreciation lunch.
- PANAGO – Staff appreciation lunch.
- PURDY'S CHOCLATE – Staff appreciation.
- RIVER ROCK – Staff appreciation event.
- SAFEWAY – Staff appreciation event.
- SPICE HUT COMOX – Staff appreciation for the Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) team.

Program, event or therapy supplies

- AUSTIN GOURMET – Service Delivery Area Leadership event.
- BIKE SHOP CAFÉ & CATERING – Meals for training event.
- COQUITLAM FABRICANA – Supplies to make traditional ribbon skirts for ceremony.
- HAYASHI SUSHI – Food served during Dialectical Behavior Therapy sessions.
- HYDRO FIT INC. – Wet vest air collar to help with swimming therapy.
- MICHAELS – Craft supplies for a therapeutic group for teen moms.
- MICHAELS – Breakfast with Santa event.
- SC.GOV – online training for ministry CYMH staff. It is Cognitive Behavioral Training-Therapy Focus training, hosted by the Medical University of South Carolina.
- STARBUCKS – Outreach family therapy session.

Gifts and supplies for children in care (CIC)

- AMAZON – Cultural book for a CIC.
- COSTCO – Movie passes for a CIC.
- COSTCO WHOLESALE – CIC Christmas event.
- DONEX PHARMACY – CIC Christmas gifts.
- EB GAMES 857 – CIC Christmas gifts.
- FUNK N FROST BEAUTY – CIC Christmas gifts.
- GUILFORD TOWN CENTRE – CIC Christmas gifts.
- MCDONALDS PRESCRIPTION – Feeding bag for a CIC.
- NETFLIX – Monthly payment for a television program subscription for a CIC lounge.
- WALMART – Craft supplies for CYMH team.

Family supports

- CCI*HOTEL@GETAROOM – Accommodation to facilitate a family visit.
- COQUIHALLA MOTEL – Emergency accommodation for a mother and her children.
- EXTRA FOODS #8581 – Cell phone minutes for family to stay in contact with social worker.
- HOWARD JOHNSON HOTEL – Accommodation for a mother and her child.
- LONDON DRUGS – Prepaid gas cards for rural family visits.
- SAFEWAY – A fruit tray for a family group conference.
- WALMART – A crib and mattress.

Gifts for parents, caregivers, or hosts.

- BRAMBLES BAKERY – Foster parent appreciation event.
- HARRISON BEACH HOTEL – Foster parent appreciation event.
- IKEA – Vases were purchased as a foster parent appreciation Christmas gift.
- IMAGINE THE ARTISANS – Foster parent appreciation gift.
- JUDY HILL GALLERY – Foster parent appreciation gift.
- MISSION GOLF & COUNTRY – Foster parent appreciation dinner.
- NANAIMO GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB – Foster parent appreciation event.
- SQ*SAKIHTA DAY SPA – Gift certificate for foster parent appreciation.

Routine, compliant transactions that may be queried:

- Arts, craft and hobby stores: Supplies for therapy programs, cultural events, Indigenous ceremonies, office décor and foster parent appreciation events.
- Automotive related purchases: Detailing of vehicles after exposure to bedbugs or biohazards.
- Clothing/shoe/fashion accessory stores: Clothing, work footwear and gifts for CICs and staff uniforms.
- Convenience stores/supermarkets/other: Phone cards, fuel cards, bus passes and food for: CICs, client families and youth.
- Golf courses: Venues for foster parent appreciation, employee conferences and meetings.
- Home and furniture stores: Beds and mattresses for CICs.
- Hotels: Venue, accommodation and catering for family mediations, meetings, training, youth/family visits and cultural education.
- Movie theatres, movies or music: Outings, milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Netflix: Monthly Netflix subscription for office waiting rooms for CICs.
- Restaurants/pubs/bakeries/caterers: Catering and venues for business meetings, staff training, staff appreciation, family conferences, gift cards for foster parent appreciation, and CICs.
- Shopping centre gift cards: For foster parents to purchase necessary items for CICs, and milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Sports stores, sports, fitness, camps, parks and recreation: Recreational programs, fitness memberships and milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Various municipal agencies: transit tickets for CICs.

CONCLUSION: Note is for information purposes only.

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: February 19, 2019
CLIFF#: 241898

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable): [Date]
PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable): [CLIFF #]

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister

ISSUE: Approval of Background Information document on the Wet'suwet'en Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding

BACKGROUND:

On July 11th, 2018 Minister Katrine Conroy approved the signing of the Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The parties to the MOU include the Wet'suwet'en Nation (as represented by the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, the elected chiefs of the Hagwilget Village Council and Moricetown Band), Canada (as represented by the federal department of Indigenous Services Canada and Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs) and British Columbia (as represented by the Minister of Children and Family Development) (the Parties).

On October 11th, 2018, the provincial, federal and Wet'suwet'en representatives formally signed the MOU at a traditional Wet'suwet'en ceremony or "Bahtlats" in the community of Witset.

DISCUSSION:

Since the signing ceremony in October, the technical working group supporting the implementation of the MOU has been working on a communications document to be attached to the MOU. The purpose of the communications document is to support information sharing with other communities and organizations that request a copy of the MOU and to provide background information on the development of the MOU.

The communications document provides information on the MOU in the following areas:

- What is the motivation for creating the MOU?
- Who was involved in its development?
- How did the parties arrive at this point?
- What does the MOU do?
- How will work proceed from this point forward?
- Contacts for further information.

On February 13th, 2019, the technical working group met and reviewed/revised the final draft of the Background Information document. All Parties to the MOU are now seeking approval of the document (attached as Appendix A) from their respective authorities.

The Background Information document has been reviewed by MCFD Government Communications and Public Engagement branch representatives with no concerns noted.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (Recommended Option): Approve the attached Background Information document
Implications:

- Supports the ongoing collaborative relationship between the Parties.
- Provides context and history of the MOU that can be shared with stakeholders, both internally and externally.
- No resources are required to complete this work.

Option 2: s.13
s.13

Option 3: s.13
s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: Approve the attached Background Information document

Option 1 / 
DECISION and SIGNATURE
Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

February 21, 2019
DATE SIGNED

Attachments:

- A. Background information for the Attached Memorandum of Understanding Between the Wet'suwet'en Nation, British Columbia and Canada

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION NOTE**

DATE: May 21, 2019
CLIFF#: 243489

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE: February 4, 2019

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister

ISSUE: To provide a briefing on FY19 Q4 purchase card charges that may be questioned.

BACKGROUND:

- Each quarter, the Ministry's purchase card transaction details (supplier name and dollar amount) are released to the general public through Open Data BC. Purchases that appear unusual or questionable are often queried by Open Data consumers.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) staff review all purchases monthly. Any transactions that fall outside of government or ministry policies are investigated and action is taken where necessary.
- Government Communications and Public Engagement staff prepare an issue note for the Minister in preparation for public inquiries.
- There were 11,811 transactions in this review period (Q4), totaling \$2,119,898
- This review period included Social Worker Appreciation week March 4th - 10th.

DISCUSSION:

The following are purchases found to be inconsistent with ministry/core policy and procedures:

- A former employee made multiple personal purchases on a regular basis. The expense authority (EA) did not appear to question the transaction registers prior to approval.

ACTIONS: MCFD is currently working to recover funds. Finance staff are assessing other areas where this employee had financial responsibility and are developing a briefing for discussion of the internal control issues with the EA and management.

- FOUR POINTS HOTEL; HOTEL*RESERVATIONS.COM - accommodation for two employees on travel status.
- SURREY FLOWER SHOP – Flowers for the office building's owner for a death in the family.
- TLF*TELEFLORACOM PICKS - Flowers for employee whose family member passed away.
- BLOOMEX CA – Flowers for funeral of employee that passed away.
- BARK BOX INC - Personal purchase which has been repaid.
- Various Staff Appreciation events and gifts which were approved but, did not include adequate justification, documentation, and/or reporting to payroll of taxable benefit.

ACTIONS: The above transactions have been addressed by reminding card holders and expense authorities of the related policy and procedures. Repayment was arranged for personal purchases.

The following transactions are consistent with ministry and government's core policy and procedures, however may appear unusual and/or may be queried:

Gifts for parents, caregivers, or hosts:

- CARL'S FLOWERS – Gift for a caregiver.

Staff appreciation:

- 1009 SAJE – Gift for one employee.
- BLOOMEX.CA – Gift for one employee.
- BROWNS SOCIALHOUSE – Learning event for the CYMH and CYSN team.
- BIN 4 BURGER LOUNGE – Gift cards for employees.
- CHARLIE'S CHOCOLATE FACTORY – Gifts for social workers during Social Work Week.
- CHATEAU VICTORIA – Staff appreciation event for Adoption team.
- DM CAKES ETC – Food for Team Day events.
- GLO RESTAURANT & LOUNGE – Staff appreciation lunch.
- GOLF TOWN – Gift card for one employee.
- GUTHRIE WOOD PRODUCTS – Commemorative coins for staff celebration event.
- LACHI FINE INDIAN CUISINE – Social worker appreciation lunch.
- L'OCCITANE EN PROVENCE – Gift for one employee.
- LULULEMON – Gift for one employee.
- ONCE UPON A TEA LEAF – Gifts for five employees.
- PARTY CRASHERS – Staff appreciation event supplies.
- PURDY'S CHOCOLATE – Chocolate bars for staff appreciation gifts.
- ROYAL MUSEUM SHOP – Mugs for three employees.
- SNOW MOUNTAIN MARKET – Staff appreciation gift.
- SPORT CHEK – Gift for one employee.
- STEINER BAKERY – Staff appreciation for team work.
- STARBUCKS – Gift cards for three employees.
- WILD WING – Gift cards for seven employees.
- WOODS SPORTS PUB – Team staff appreciation lunch.

Program, event or therapy supplies:

- APPLE STORE – USB cable for team leader cell phone.
- AUDIBLE.CA – Audio book account for management team to complete team goals.
- CAMPBELL RIVER GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB – Gift certificates as honoraria for two Indigenous leaders at the Sacred Gifts Golden Threads Cultural Gathering.
- CHEERS OKANAGAN TOUR LTD – Shuttle for client.
- HUDSON BAY MOUNTAIN RESORT – First Aid course training.
- MOOSE CROSSINGS – Gifts for Elders that attended Aboriginal Services event.
- NORTHWEST ORIGINS – Gifts for Elders that attended Aboriginal Services event.
- ORIGINAL CUPCAKE – Snacks for mental health parent/child training.
- PAYPAL*OPEN A PARTY – Toys for booth at early years fair and foster parent recruitment.
- PAYPAL*VIMEO INC – Online learning video for behavior therapy.
- PETSMART – Supplies for Koi pond and Youth Rabbit Program.
- ROYAL BC MUSEUM – IMAX admission for nine Protection team staff to attend Great Bear Rainforest movie as training.
- STARBUCKS – Gift cards for foster parent recruitment.
- THE GLOW STORE – Glow sticks for earthquake preparedness.
- THE WATER GARDEN BOUTIQUE – Gift for a youth advisory council member.
- THRIVE MASSAGE THERAPY – Care for child's extensive health issues.

Gifts and supplies for children in care (CIC):

- BATH & BODY WORK – Birthday gift for CIC.
- LADYBELLE BRIDAL INC – Graduation dress for CIC.
- LUSH – Birthday gift for CIC.
- ODDBALL – Specialized shoes for youth in care.
- PANDORA – Birthday gift for CIC.
- PARADISE SEASIDE RESORT – Mini golf for CIC.
- PROMNOVA - Graduation dress for CIC.

Routine, compliant transaction categories that may be queried:

- Arts, craft and hobby stores: Supplies for therapy programs, cultural events, Indigenous ceremonies, office décor and foster parent appreciation events.
- Automotive related purchases: Detailing of vehicles after exposure to bedbugs or biohazards.
- Clothing/shoe/fashion accessory stores: Clothing, work footwear and gifts for CICs and staff uniforms.
- Convenience stores/supermarkets/other: Phone cards, fuel cards, bus passes and food for: CICs, client families and youth.
- Golf courses: Venues for foster parent appreciation, employee conferences and meetings.
- Home and furniture stores: Beds and mattresses for CICs.
- Hotels: Venue, accommodation and catering for family mediations, meetings, training, youth/family visits and cultural education.
- Movie theatres, movies or music: Outings, milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Netflix: Monthly Netflix subscription for youth centres and office waiting rooms for CICs.
- Restaurants/pubs/bakeries/caterers: Catering and venues for business meetings, staff training, staff appreciation, family conferences, gift cards for foster parent appreciation, and CICs.
- Shopping centre gift cards: For foster parents to purchase necessary items for CICs, and milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Sports stores, sports, fitness, camps, parks and recreation: Recreational programs, fitness memberships and milestone or birthday gifts for CICs.
- Various municipal agencies: transit tickets for CICs.

CONCLUSION: Note is for information purposes only.

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: April 12, 2019

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE: June 4, 2018

PREVIOUS CLIFF #: 237897

CLIFF#: 242683

PREPARED FOR: Deputy Minister Allison Bond

ISSUE: Memorandum of Understanding with BC Aboriginal Child Care Society regarding implementation of an Indigenous early learning and child care system in BC

BACKGROUND:

Responsibility for Indigenous early years policy, programs, and service delivery has been shared between the federal, provincial, First Nations and Métis governments. Unlike health and education, there is no national legislation that directs Indigenous early learning and child care.

On September 17, 2018 the Federal government released the national Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Framework co-developed with national Indigenous partners, including Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council. The document outlines a vision and principles for an Indigenous-led early learning and child care system in Canada and includes distinct goals and actions through distinct First Nations, Métis and Inuit frameworks.

Federal Bill C-92 was introduced on February 28, 2019 and seeks to affirm Indigenous people's inherent right to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services. The bill focuses on the child welfare and protection system; however, it defines "child and family services [to mean] services to support children and families, including prevention services, early intervention services and child protection services." This bill is anticipated to come into effect in June 2019.

Meanwhile in BC, the Province has committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, including to the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) *Calls to Action*. This extends to the work underway through in the *Child Care BC Plan* for universal child care and implementation of the *Early Years Service Framework* to define and support consistent non-child care early years services. The accompanying investments (\$1B in Child Care BC over the next 3 years and over \$9.7M in Early Years Services) are intended to extend to all families in BC – including Indigenous families living on and off reserve.

In addition, in fulfilment of the Child Care BC Plan commitment to further work with Indigenous partners to understand the unique needs of Indigenous children and families in the context of early care and learning, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) worked with Indigenous partners to identify the programming, service, governance and administration needs for Indigenous partners in the short, medium and long term.

DISCUSSION:

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OPTIONS:

Option 1:s.13

s.13

Option 2:s.13

s.13

RECOMMENDATION:

Option:s.13

s.13

Approved 
DECISION and SIGNATURE
Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

May 7, 2019
DATE SIGNED

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DECISION NOTE**

DATE: May 9, 2019
CLIFF#: 243278

DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE: May 18, 2018
PREVIOUS CLIFF #: 237878

PREPARED FOR: Allison Bond, Deputy Minister
Philip Twyford, Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive Financial Officer

ISSUE: Japan adoption program suspension update and updating of homestudies for prospective adoptive parents

BACKGROUND:

On January 25, 2019, the Provincial Director of Adoption was informed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) that the BC Japan Adoption program was not illegal. However, there were concerns raised regarding the birth parent consents.

BC worked with LSB and counsel in Japan to draft a written consent and an entrustment document that align with the laws in both countries. These documents were provided to the Federal Government for review on April 1, 2019.

Moving forward, agreements between BC and any Japanese adoption agency will only be made with Japanese adoption agencies that are authorized by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

On April 24, 2019 the Federal Director General of the Immigration Program Guidance Branch responded regarding the review of the consent and entrustment documents informing BC that IRCC is ready to lift the pause on processing of immigration applications on May 1, 2019 for Japanese children being adopted in BC.

On April 4, 2019 a letter was sent to Baby Life requesting an update on their licensing status. A follow up email was sent to Baby Life on April 24, 2019.

On April 25, 2019 legal counsel in Tokyo was instructed by the Provincial Director of Adoption to contact Baby Life and obtain a status update on their authorization application. Due to the Golden Week in Japan (abdication of the Emperor) there were government and business office closures in Japan from April 27, 2019 to May 6, 2019.

On May 6, 2019, Legal counsel in Tokyo spoke with the Chief Director of Baby Life and confirmed that Baby Life is able to provide intercountry adoption services while their application for authorization is being processed.

On May 7, 2019 legal counsel in Tokyo provided Baby Life with the consent and entrustment documents for review.

On May 9, 2019 the Chief Director of Baby Life confirmed that the consent and entrustment documents are acceptable, and the agency can begin matching and placing children with BC adoptive families in June 2019.

The suspension of the Japan adoption program can be lifted by May 13, 2019. The Provincial Director of Adoption will work to create agreement(s) with authorized agencies in Japan utilizing the strengthened consent and entrustment documents.

DISCUSSION:

Homestudies are required to be updated every year. Due to the length of time the suspension has been in place the homestudies for the families that had been completed or started for Japan will require updating in order to be eligible for a match and placement. It would be a show of good faith for all the stress the families have incurred due to BC suspending the program to fund updates of homestudies.

There are seven BC families whose adoption dossiers were sent to Baby Life, prior to the suspension.

- Three of these families were former Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV) clients who paid to transfer to Sunrise and now require a homestudy update.
- Three families are Sunrise clients who have continued to pay their annual update fee and currently have updated homestudies.
- The remaining family had a birth child and are currently waiting the birth of another child. At this time, it is unknown whether they will re-apply to the Japan program.

The above families will also require new Medical Forms and Criminal Record Checks.

Families Registered in Program Prior to the Suspension

- Sunrise has five families, whose homestudies were completed prior to the suspension and will require updating.
- CHOICES has five families whose homestudies were completed prior to the suspension that will require an update.
- CHOICES has one family that has paid for the update and may request a refund.

Of these eleven families, ten will require a homestudy update due to the length of time the suspension has been in place.

The fee for a homestudy update is \$600.00 for Sunrise and \$500.00 for CHOICES.

Cost Table for Required Homestudy (HS) Updates

	Dossier in Japan with up to date HS *need new Medical Form and Criminal Record Check-not included in HS Update fee	Dossier in Japan HS update required	Completed HS before May 14, 2018	HS in progress for Japan program on May 14, 2018	Cost per family of updating HS (does not include Medical Form and Criminal Record Check)	Total cost of HS update
Sunrise	4 ¹	3	5	3	\$600	\$9 000
CHOICES	0	0	6 ²	2 (+1 family who has just completed their HS)	\$500	\$4 000
TOTAL	4	3	11	5		\$13 000

1. This would be a reimbursement for funds already paid by the family for annual HS update.
2. This will include a reimbursement for funds already paid by one family for annual HS update.

OPTIONS:

Option 1: s.13,s.17
s.13,s.17

Option 2: s.13,s.17
s.13,s.17

Option 3: s.13,s.17

s.13,s.17

RECOMMENDATION:

Option 1: s.13,s.17
s.13,s.17

|

DECISION and SIGNATURE
Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

DATE SIGNED

DECISION and SIGNATURE
Philip Twyford
Assistant Deputy Minister

DATE SIGNED

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s.12;s.13