

# MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

ESTIMATES  
BINDER 2024



Ministry of  
Children and Family  
Development

April 2024

# MCFD 2024 ESTIMATES

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGIC SERVICES BRANCH  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: Minister’s Mandate Letter/Service Plan/Strategic Framework**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- Since 2019, MCFD’s Service Plan and Strategic Framework have signaled a shift in the ministry’s approach – away from reactive and shorter-term “symptomatic” responses towards a systemic approach, focusing on meeting the individual needs of the children, youth, young adults and families we serve - both today and into the future.
- Our service plan reflects the items identified in my mandate letter and focuses on four key areas: Indigenous Reconciliation; Prevention and Family Supports; Youth and Young Adult Transitions; and the Network of Care.

**BACKGROUND:**

- I am honoured to have an opportunity in my role to continue the work outlined in our Service Plan, Strategic Framework, and my mandate letter, including:
  - Significant expansion to services for youth and young adults transitioning out of government care, and
  - Historic changes to provincial legislation, removing barriers and paving the way to coordination agreements that recognize the inherent right of Indigenous Peoples in exercising jurisdiction over their child and family services.
- I look forward to continuing this journey to support B.C.’s children, youth, young adults, families, and communities. In addition to the vital day-to-day work of ensuring the health, safety and well-being of children and youth throughout the province, this will involve:

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Date: January 8, 2024

- **Ongoing work and engagement with Indigenous Peoples** (alongside the federal government) to transform delivery of child and family services, including increased decision-making authority and the exercise of jurisdiction.
  - Working alongside Indigenous Governing Bodies preparing to exercise jurisdiction to develop and implement coordination agreements.
  - Working alongside Indigenous communities to plan for increased decision-making authority and/or the exercise of jurisdiction.
  - Working alongside Indigenous partners to develop policy and regulations that support service delivery in a multi-jurisdictional model.
  - Working with Indigenous Peoples and the federal government to co-develop and implement a funding model to support First Nations jurisdiction over their child and family services.
- **Supporting improved outcomes and keeping families safely together** by strengthening supports and prioritizing resources for families and children based on their needs, including:
  - Engaging in deeper consultation with parents and caregivers, First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, communities, experts and practitioners, and other people and partners with lived experience to build a better system of supports for children and youth with support needs.
  - Investing, in the interim, to better serve children with a range of support needs who are currently underserved.
  - Piloting a new “children with support needs service delivery model” through four family connections centres in the North Coast / Bulkley Nechako and Central Okanagan service delivery areas.
  - In line with B.C.’s A Pathway to Hope roadmap, continuing to

work with partners and service providers to implement child and youth mental health services and supports, including Integrated Child and Youth Teams, Early Intervention Enhancement services, and High Intensity Services.

- Building on the historic help announced under Budget 2022 – now known as the SAJE program (Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment) – for youth from care to support their transition to adulthood.
  - Continuing to provide housing agreements, support agreements, and rent supplements.
  - Hiring transition workers to support youth and young adults in planning for the transition to adulthood.
  - Expanding supports and tools, including access to life-skills, culture, and training programs, and increased access to dental and mental health benefits (e.g., counselling).
  - In collaboration with our partners, implementing an integrated network of care that provides services and supports driven by a child or youth’s needs, nurtures a sense of belonging and prioritizes cultural and family connections.
  - Through implementation of a responsive network of Specialized Homes and Support Services, providing respite, stabilization, emergency care, and specialized care services for children and youth who need more than what community-based and outreach services can provide.
  - Continuing to implement the Enhanced Out-of-Care program across the province to enable children and youth living with moderate to significant support needs to reside with extended family or people known to them.
  - Expanding efforts to recruit and retain caregivers.

**CROSS REFERENCE: N/A**

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGIC SERVICES DIVISION  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: Service Plan Performance Measures**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- Every child and youth in British Columbia—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous—has the right to live in a safe, healthy, and nurturing home, and to be strongly connected to their communities and culture.
- The ministry approaches its work through a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens, delivering services that are inclusive, intersectional, responsive, accessible, trauma informed and culturally safe; respecting the diverse backgrounds and identities of children and youth, including those who identify as Indigenous, Inuit, Métis, Black, a Person of Colour, 2SLGBTQQIA+ or a person with a disability.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development’s Service Plan outlines key performance measures to help ensure that all children and youth can access the services they need, at the right time and in the right way, to set them on the path to success.

**BACKGROUND:**

- There are seven performance measures in this Service Plan, all are the same as in the 2023/24 Service Plan. Below are the highlights for each measure:
- **“Children and Youth in care” 2023/24 targets are forecast to be met (PM 1a):** The number of children and youth in care continues to decrease and is the lowest it’s been in thirty years. The targets for the out-years for the Children and Youth in care performance measure have not changed.
- **“Children assessed with a protection concern that can safely live with family or extended family” targets have been lowered (PM 2a):** Although the forecast for 2023/24 is expected to be short of the target, the number of children and youth coming into care has remained within the range of the last few years. The out-year targets have been adjusted accordingly.
- **“Distinct People Served by CYMH services” (called “Access to Child and Youth Mental Health Services clients served” in Service Plan 2022/23) is forecast to slightly miss the target for 2023/24 (PM 2b):** The number of clients served is a

measure of the accessibility of Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) services. An increase in the use of these services will translate to improved outcomes for children and youth with mental health needs across the province.

- As the ministry continues to partner in the implementation of the BC Government's A Pathway to Hope framework, MCFD is participating in initiatives to promote seamless, timely and culturally safe access to mental health and substance use services.
  - Service enhancements that have an impact on this measure include Integrated Child & Youth (ICY) Teams, Early Intervention Enhancements (EIE), Step Up/Step Down: High-Intensity Outreach Services and Satellited Bed-Based Services and Foundry Expansion.
  - Participation in these services is estimated for 2023/24, as no firm data exists yet. The Ministry will continue to work with MMHA and other partners on how to capture the most accurate data possible, going forward. For that reason, out-year targets remain unchanged.
- **“Youth in care who turn 19 with a high school credential” target is on track for 2023/24 (PM 3a):** This performance measure is meeting targets and no change required to the out-year targets.
  - **Targets for “Percentage of eligible youth transitioning into adulthood that received a Post Majority Service benefit payment within the next year” have been pushed out by one year (PM 3b):** The hiring of new youth transition workers was hindered by persistent recruitment challenges in fiscal 2023/24. The new youth transition workers will be in place at the start of the 2024/25 fiscal year contributing to the attainment of the original targets.
  - **“Young Adults who receive rent supplements” targets for 2023/24 have been exceeded. (PM 3c):** Recipients receive the supplement for two years or until the month of their twenty-seventh birthday, whichever comes first. The Ministry will continue to refine forecasts and targets, including identifying the 2026/27 targets for this measure based on funding.
  - **“Children and Youth in care with no moves in the first 12 months” targets for 2023/24 were exceeded (PM 4a):** As more Specialized Homes and Support Services are implemented and additional foster homes are made available through recruitment, the ministry expects to see a positive impact on this performance measure. No change to the out-year targets were made to account for small variability in results that can occur from year to year and is not considered a trend yet.

- All these measures are publicly available on the ministry's Public Reporting Portal.

**CROSS REFERENCE:**

**1.1** - Minister/MoS Mandate Letter/Strategic Framework/Service Plan

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE:** Performance Management & Public Reporting

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- The ministry is committed to improving its supports and services to make life better for children, youth and families.
- Through a public online reporting portal, MCFD proactively reports select caseload data, performance indicators and information on how the Ministry is organized, including workforce information, and contracted and total expenditures.
- Performance is monitored using trends in 30 indicators across five of the six service lines.
  - The Early Years service line indicators, all Child Care specific, were removed following the transfer of Child Care from MCFD to ECC in 2022.
  - Starting in 2023/23, MECC's Foundational Skills Assessments (FSA) for reading and writing were combined into a single FSA for literacy, dropping the number of measures on the MCFD portal from 31 to 30.
- The last update to the portal included monthly caseload reporting as of December 2023, and annual caseload reporting, performance indicators, expenditure, and other administrative information for fiscal year 2022/23.
- Performance trends for 2022/23 (currently on the portal) are:
  - Improving in 10 indicators, including the number of days to first clinical CYMH service, the rate of CYIC per 1,000 population, the foster parent retention rate, the Youth under a Youth Agreement who finish school with a high school credential, the relative use of out of care vs in care admissions, young adults that transition into adulthood and receive financial assistance through AYA, and income assistance use for former youth in care or under a Youth Agreement.
  - Unchanged in 5 indicators, including CYIC school grade progression,

age-appropriate grade and Foundation Skills Assessments (FSA) for literacy and numeracy.

- Slightly lower in 15 indicators:
  - Family preservation rates
  - Placement Stability in the first year of care
  - CYIC Who Finish School with a high school credential
  - CYIC who exited to permanency
  - Recurrence of maltreatment of former CYIC
  - CYIC funded bed utilization rate
  - Per cent of children eligible for adoption placed in adoption homes
  - Time taken from permanent care status to adoption placement
  - All five Youth Justice indicators: Youth who did not commit a new offense (diversion, community and custody), youth court and custody cases per 10,000 population
  - Residential cost per CYIC excluding CYIC with Support Needs
  - Median residential cost per CYIC with Support Needs
- Reporting on the portal will be updated this Spring (monthly caseload reporting to March 2024, annual caseload reporting to fiscal year 2023/24), and Winter (performance measures, expenditure, and other administrative information to fiscal year 2023/24).
- Since 2012, MCFD has publicly reported on performance through the Performance Management Report. Now it is reporting through an online portal (released in February 2018, last updated in March 2024).
- Public reporting is an essential part of the ministry's commitment to transparency and accountability and helps foster public confidence in the ministry.
- B.C. compares favourably to other jurisdictions on public reporting on the Child Welfare System.
- B.C.'s reporting is broader and more exhaustive than any other Canadian jurisdiction. Most provinces publicly report on child protection, but far less extensively than B.C.

**CROSS REFERENCE:** N/A

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: 2024/25 OPERATING BUDGET**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- The Ministry of Children and Family Development's (MCFD) 2024/25 budget increased by \$209.1 million to \$2,121.2 billion. Budget highlights include:
  - \$129.5 million year-over-year increase for child safety, family support and children in care services. This increase consists of:
    - \$41.2 million for direct services,
    - \$77.1 million for wage increases to support front-line recruitment and retention, and
    - \$11.2 million for Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment program (SAJE).
  - SAJE funding supports for youth as they transition out of care through the Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment program (formerly known as Youth Transitioning into Adulthood).
  - Funding to increase the number of ministry staff focused on child welfare practice improvements, oversight, and child protection audits.
  - \$61.3 million for services for children and youth with support needs, including increasing access to existing programs and investing in social sector wages.
- Over 90% of MCFD's budget is allocated to service delivery to support clients and communities with over \$1.9 billion directly invested in programs and services.

**BACKGROUND:****CORE BUSINESS CHANGES:**

<b>Core Business</b> (\$ millions)	<b>23/24</b> <b>Estimates</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>23/24</b> <b>Estimates</b> <b>Restated</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>24/25</b> <b>Estimates</b>
Early Childhood Development	41.9	0.0	41.9	3.8	45.7
Services for Children & Youth with Support Needs	528.9	0.0	528.9	61.3	590.2
Child & Youth Mental Health Services	122.2	0.0	122.2	6.0	128.2
Child Safety, Family Support & Children In Care Services	935.2	0.0	935.2	129.5	1,064.6
Adoption Services	38.0	0.0	38.0	2.3	40.2
Youth Justice Services	51.3	0.0	51.3	3.0	54.3
Service Delivery Support	173.2	0.0	173.2	0.9	174.1
Executive & Support Services	21.5	0.0	21.5	2.3	23.8
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY</b>	<b>1,912.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,912.1</b>	<b>209.1</b>	<b>2,121.2</b>

**2024/25 Estimates**

The MCFD operation budget for 2024/25 budget increased by \$209.1 million to \$2,121.2 billion. This is an 10.9% net increase over the 2023/24 budget, and provides for the following increases:

- \$49.8 million for **caseload** for *Budget 2024* which includes:
  - \$8.6 million – increase to address growth in Autism program of 11% per year.
  - \$37.9 million – increase for ongoing rates of maintenance payments and spending on in-care and out-of-care contracted resources.
  - \$ 2.3 million - increase for Director’s Legal Counsel due to rising legal costs.
  - \$ 1.0 million – increase to stabilize funding for staffing of ICFSA Secretariat.
- \$138.9 million for sector increased in salaries and benefits from the **Shared Recovery Mandate** in *Budget 2024* for:
  - \$131.6 million – Social sector, contracted staff.



- \$7.3 million – MCFD staff.
- \$1.4 million increase to **rent supplement** starting in 2024/25 for 190 additional supplements increasing the bi-annual supplements available from 810 to 1,000.
- \$0.8 million for **CYSN** in *Budget 2024* for continued rollout of the framework engagement and evaluation.
- \$0.1 million increase to for minor adjustments **Minister's Office** in *Budget 2024*
- \$8.7 million for the salaries and benefits increases for MCFD staff resulting from the **shared recovery mandate** from *Budget 2023*.
- \$2.2 million increase for **CYSN Framework** for the continued implementation of the family connections centres from *Budget 2022*.
- \$9.8 million increase to continue wrap around services for Youth Transitions under the **Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE) program** from *Budget 2022*.

### **Shared Recovery Mandate**

- During 2022/23 government embarked on negotiating the three - year wage mandates for 2023/24 – 2024/26, for both internal employee and social sector service providers.
- *Budget 2024* includes lifts which acknowledged the first two years of the three-year mandate investing in social sector wages.
- *Budget 2024* adds the 2023/24 cost of living adjustment for MCFD employees to the *Budget 2023* funds provided for the three-year wage mandate.

### **Beyond 2024/25**

Further budget changes for subsequent years are outlined as follows:

- **CYSN: Engagement, Evaluation and Serving the Underserved**, as

projects are transitioned into regular operations, there is a reduction of one-time, project funding received as part of *Budget 2023* (\$4.1 million) in 2025/26.

### STOB CHANGES:

Major STOBs (\$ millions)	23/24 Estimates	Change	23/24 Estimates Restated	Change	24/25 Estimates
Salaries & Benefits	463.7	0.0	463.7	17.2	480.8
Operating Costs	70.9	0.0	70.9	(1.0)	69.9
Government Transfers	1,478.6	0.0	1,478.6	196.1	1,674.7
Other Expenses	30.0	0.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Internal Recoveries	(46.1)	0.0	(46.1)	0.0	(46.1)
External Recoveries	(84.9)	0.0	(84.9)	(3.2)	(88.1)
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY</b>	<b>1,912.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,912.1</b>	<b>209.1</b>	<b>2,121.2</b>

- Salaries and Benefits increase due to the Shared Recovery Mandate wage increases, CYSN New Investments, and SAJE.
- Operating and Other Expenses decrease reflecting the completion of some project work for CYSN: Engagement, Evaluation, and Serving the Underserved was completed. Operating funding was provided for Directors Legal Counsel which support increased legal caseload volumes.
- Government transfers increase because of SRM social sector wage increases to support recruitment and retention, funding for direct child protection and child welfare, CYSN Framework, and Youth Transitioning to Adulthood (SAJE).
- Recoveries from federal government associated with increased child protection services.

**2024/25 CAPITAL BUDGET CHANGES:**

<b>Asset Category (\$ millions)</b>	<b>23/24 Estimates</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>23/24 Estimates Restated</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>24/25 Estimates</b>
Specialized Equipment	0.202	0.0	0.202	0.0	0.202
Office Furniture and Equipment	0.028	0.0	0.028	0.0	0.028
Vehicles	2.165	0.0	2.165	(0.2)	2.000
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY</b>	<b>2.395</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2.395</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>2.230</b>

- Vehicle capital is allocated to MCFD based on government's vehicle replacement strategy. The 2024/25 strategy has resulted in a \$0.165M decrease to the MCFD allocation.

**Attachments:**

- Appendix A - MCFD Estimates and Supplements to the Estimates
- Appendix B – MCFD Material Assumptions
- Appendix C – Resource Summary
- Appendix D - Resource summary comparison by Core business

## Appendix A – MCFD Estimates and Supplements to the Estimates

### MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

The mission of the Ministry of Children and Family Development is to work together to deliver inclusive, culturally respectful, responsive, and accessible services to support the well-being of children, youth, and families.

#### MINISTRY SUMMARY

(\$000)

	Estimates 2023/24 <sup>1</sup>	Estimates 2024/25
<b>VOTED APPROPRIATION</b>		
Vote 18 — Ministry Operations.....	1,912,095	2,121,197
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<u>1,912,095</u>	<u>2,121,197</u>
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES <sup>2</sup></b>	2,395	2,230
<b>LOANS, INVESTMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS <sup>3</sup></b>	(31)	(31)
<b>REVENUE COLLECTED FOR, AND TRANSFERRED TO, OTHER ENTITIES <sup>4</sup></b>	—	—

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For comparative purposes, figures shown for the 2023/24 operating expenses; capital expenditures; loans, investments and other requirements; and revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2024/25 Estimates. A reconciliation of restated operating expenses and capital expenditures is presented in Schedule A.

<sup>2</sup> A listing of estimated capital expenditures by ministry is presented in Schedule C.

<sup>3</sup> A summary of loans, investments and other requirements by ministry is presented in Schedule D.

<sup>4</sup> A summary of revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities by ministry is presented in Schedule E.

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
(\$000)

VOTE 18 Ministry Operations

Description	Total 2023/24 Operating Expenses	50	51	52	54	Total Salaries and Benefits	55	57	59	60	63	65	67	68	69
Early Childhood Development	41,856	2,217	11	563	—	2,791	—	70	—	112	—	—	—	—	—
Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs	528,889	23,541	132	5,979	—	29,652	—	265	—	400	1,670	294	—	—	83
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	122,197	56,479	1,015	14,417	—	71,911	—	778	—	437	222	641	—	—	357
Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services	935,155	152,359	3,415	38,741	—	194,515	—	2,918	23,949	246	1,213	50	83	22	84
Adoption Services	37,951	8,726	23	2,224	—	10,973	—	49	—	—	—	7	—	—	—
Youth Justice Services	51,320	29,565	876	7,513	—	37,954	—	285	—	27	—	112	—	—	831
Service Delivery Support	173,225	87,771	864	22,673	—	111,308	—	3,757	4,600	6,523	5,920	6,028	—	—	—
Executive and Support Services	21,502	17,254	12	4,415	58	21,739	—	410	2	—	9	1,217	—	—	—
Minister's Office	722	516	—	155	58	729	—	80	—	—	7	19	—	—	—
Corporate Services	20,780	16,738	12	4,260	—	21,010	—	330	2	—	2	1,198	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,912,095</b>	<b>377,912</b>	<b>6,348</b>	<b>96,525</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>480,843</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>8,532</b>	<b>28,551</b>	<b>7,745</b>	<b>9,034</b>	<b>8,349</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1,355</b>

70	72	73	75	Total Operating Costs	77	79	80	Total Govt Transfers	81	83	85	Total Other Expenses	86	88	Total Internal Recoveries	89	90	Total External Recoveries	Total 2024/25 Operating Expenses
—	—	—	—	182	—	10	43,289	43,299	—	—	1	1	—	(570)	(570)	(1)	(1)	(2)	45,701
20	—	—	—	2,732	4,125	48,606	544,156	596,887	—	—	22	22	—	(36,801)	(36,801)	(1)	(2,284)	(2,285)	590,207
152	—	—	1,032	3,619	500	130	61,596	62,226	—	—	—	—	—	(8,768)	(8,768)	(660)	(115)	(775)	128,213
8	—	—	100	28,673	1,000	98,620	807,352	906,972	—	—	633	633	—	(1)	(1)	(148)	(66,014)	(66,162)	1,064,630
—	—	—	—	56	—	144	29,054	29,198	—	—	—	—	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	40,224
131	—	—	—	1,386	500	299	32,141	32,940	—	—	1	1	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(17,984)	(17,985)	54,295
1,853	—	1,494	1,353	31,528	500	—	1,843	2,343	—	—	29,163	29,163	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(198)	(199)	174,142
—	—	21	79	1,738	—	—	830	830	—	—	160	160	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(680)	(681)	23,785
—	—	—	—	106	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	835
—	—	21	79	1,632	—	—	830	830	—	—	160	160	—	(1)	(1)	(1)	(680)	(681)	22,950
<b>2,164</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1,515</b>	<b>2,564</b>	<b>69,914</b>	<b>6,625</b>	<b>147,809</b>	<b>1,520,261</b>	<b>1,674,695</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>29,980</b>	<b>29,980</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>(46,144)</b>	<b>(46,144)</b>	<b>(814)</b>	<b>(87,277)</b>	<b>(88,091)</b>	<b>2,121,197</b>

## Appendix B – MCFD Material Assumptions

### Material Assumptions from *Budget 2023*

Ministry Programs and Assumptions (\$ millions unless otherwise specified)	Updated Forecast 2022/23	Plan 2023/24	Plan 2024/25	Sensitivities
<b>Children and Family Development</b>				
Average children-in-care ..... caseload (#)	4,952	4,817	4,738	The average number of children-in-care is decreasing as a result of ministry efforts to keep children in family settings where safe and feasible. The average cost per child in care is projected to increase based on the higher cost of contracted residential services and an increasing acuity of need for children in care. A 1% increase in the cost per case or a 1% increase in the average caseload will affect expenditures by \$2.8 million (excluding Indigenous CFS Agencies).
Average annual residential ..... cost per child in care (\$)	109,248	127,771	141,129	

### Material Assumptions from *Budget 2024*

Ministry Programs and Assumptions	Updated Forecast 2023/24	Plan 2024/25	Plan 2025/26	Plan 2023/24 Sensitivities
Average children-in-care caseload (#)	4,860	4,822	4,767	The average number of children-in-care is decreasing as a result of ministry efforts to keep children in family settings where safe and feasible. The average cost per child in care is projected to increase based on the higher cost of contracted residential services and an increasing acuity of need for children in care. A 1% increase in the cost per case or a 1% increase in the average caseload will affect expenditures by \$3.3 million (excluding Indigenous CFS Agencies).
Average annual residential cost per child in care (\$)	\$ 137,657	\$ 154,040	\$ 171,671	

1. What are the drivers for the change in per-child costs?

- Evolving composition of the children-in-care cohort** – A great percentage of children and youth that are involved with the child welfare system are temporary or permanently housed with family and community, in out of care placements (not included in the material assumption calculation). And a greater proportion of the smaller number of children-in-care have more complex needs, requiring greater supports. Since 2019 we have seen the percentage of children-in-care within staffed housing increase from 19% to 26%. As staffed housing is much more expensive, it drives up the overall cost per child.
- Complexity of care** – Over time, the ministry has observed the need for greater supports for children coming from unstable to sometimes violent family situations. The complexity in addressing the needs of children-in-care has increased, increasing the per child cost.

- **Basic needs costs** – BC, as other regions across Canada and the world, is impacted by the economic situation of rising costs. The cost to feed, cloth, transport, educate, etc. our children is much greater than it was three years ago.
2. Why is this happening now?
- Increased cost trend not new** – For all the above reasons, MCFD has been reporting gradual increases in the material assumptions cost per child over the past five or more years. *Budget 2024* increases are pronounced for the following reasons:
- **Budget 2023 Affordability rate increases** – *Budget 2023's* Affordability initiative provided for rate increases of up to 47% for foster parents.
  - **Shared Recovery Wage Mandate** service providers in the social sector will receive contract wage lifts of approximately 16% between 22/23 – 24/25. These are the highest wage increments as part of a wage mandate in over 10 years. Wages within staffed housing become part of the contracts, used to determine average cost per child.
  - **Inflationary impact on Staffed Housing** – although wage and maintenance costs within staffed housing contracts are aligned with other costs drivers, all other costs are impacted by market rates. Market inflation, which has been the highest it has been since the early 1990s, is passed onto the ministry, increasing the average cost per child.

## Appendix C – Resource Summary Financial Summary

(\$000s)	2023/24 Restated Estimates <sup>1</sup>	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Early Childhood Development	41,856	45,701	45,701	45,701
Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs	528,889	590,207	585,489	585,489
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	122,197	128,213	128,213	128,213
Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services	935,155	1,064,630	1,064,630	1,064,630
Adoption Services	37,951	40,224	40,224	40,224
Youth Justice Services	51,320	54,295	54,295	54,295
Service Delivery Support	173,225	174,142	174,731	174,731
Executive and Support Services	21,502	23,785	23,785	23,785
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,912,095</b>	<b>2,121,197</b>	<b>2,117,068</b>	<b>2,117,068</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>				
Service Delivery Support	2,395	2,230	2,230	2,230
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,395</b>	<b>2,230</b>	<b>2,230</b>	<b>2,230</b>
<b>Other Financing Transactions</b>				
<b>Executive and Support Services</b>				
(Human Services Providers Financing Program)				
Disbursements	0	0	0	0
Receipts	(31)	(31)	(31)	(31)
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	(31)	(31)	(31)	(31)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>
<b>Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>(31)</b>

<sup>1</sup> For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2023/24 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2024/25 Estimates.



## Appendix D – Resource summary comparison by Core business

### Ministry of Children & Family Development

#### RESOURCE SUMMARY COMPARISON- DETAILED CHANGES BY CORE BUSINESS

2022/23 to 2025/26

(\$000s)

Core Business Areas	2021/22 Restated	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan	2025/26 Plan
Early Childhood Development	40,256	40,256	40,256	40,256	40,256
Services for Children & Youth with Support Needs	441,091	480,381	486,404	488,582	488,582
Child & Youth Mental Health Services	116,408	119,471	122,197	122,197	122,197
Child Safety, Family Support & Children in Care Services	807,579	835,781	841,156	851,001	851,001
Adoption Services	35,829	36,451	36,451	36,451	36,451
Youth Justice Services	51,320	51,320	51,320	51,320	51,320
Service Delivery Support	152,195	161,426	161,386	161,386	161,386
Executive & Support Services	16,730	16,959	17,021	17,021	17,021
<b>MINISTRY TOTAL</b>	<b>1,661,408</b>	<b>1,742,045</b>	<b>1,756,191</b>	<b>1,768,214</b>	<b>1,768,214</b>

#### Change - including Decisions for *Budget 2023* by Core Business:

Early Childhood Development	0	1,600	1,950	1,950	
Services for Children & Youth with Support Needs	0	42,485	45,391	40,673	
Child & Youth Mental Health Services	0	0	0	0	
Child Safety, Family Support & Children in Care Services	-1,400	93,999	97,999	97,999	
Adoption Services	0	1,500	1,800	1,800	
Youth Justice Services	0	0	0	0	
Service Delivery Support	0	11,839	9,758	10,347	
Executive & Support Services	0	4,481	5,201	5,201	
<b>MINISTRY TOTAL</b>		<b>-1,400</b>	<b>155,904</b>	<b>162,099</b>	<b>157,970</b>

#### Resource Summary as of *Budget 2023* :

Core Business Areas	2022/23 Estimates	2023/24 Plan	2024/25 Plan	2025/26 Plan
Early Childhood Development	40,256	41,856	42,206	42,206
Services for Children & Youth with Support Needs	480,381	528,889	533,973	529,255
Child & Youth Mental Health Services	119,471	122,197	122,197	122,197
Child Safety, Family Support & Children in Care Services	834,381	935,155	949,000	949,000
Adoption Services	36,451	37,951	38,251	38,251
Youth Justice Services	51,320	51,320	51,320	51,320
Service Delivery Support	161,426	173,225	171,144	171,733
Executive & Support Services	16,959	21,502	22,222	22,222
<b>MINISTRY TOTAL</b>	<b>1,740,646</b>	<b>1,912,095</b>	<b>1,930,313</b>	<b>1,926,184</b>
		171,449	18,218	(4,129)

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: Ministry Frontline Recruitment**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- Direct service ministry employees have some of the hardest jobs in BC — that’s why the ministry is making improvements to help them provide vulnerable families with the quality services and supports they need and deserve.
- The ministry is continuously recruiting direct service positions with the aim to ensure quality service to children, youth and families.
- The ministry continues to support Indigenous recruitment.
- The ministry established a Hiring Services team that focuses on recruiting priority positions for the ministry. This has reduced total time to hire. This prioritization has resulted in a substantial number of direct service hires.
- The ministry has operationalized a continuous annual cycle of hiring for direct service positions.

**BACKGROUND:**

- MCFD has seven divisions. The majority of MCFD’s employees work in the Service Delivery Division.
- In February 2019, the ministry broadened the acceptable education and experience requirements for direct service positions requiring delegation under child welfare legislation to recruit more staff into Social Program Officer (SPO) 24-30 positions.
- In the summer of 2023, the ministry further amended experience requirements to reduce the requirement from two years to one year, as well as expanded relevant experience to include attributes such as working with adults.
  - A Social Work or Child and Youth Care degree is preferred but an equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered for some positions.
- In 2017, a Recruitment and Retention Incentive Program was created to further support recruitment and retention in hard-to-recruit (HTR)

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Date: January 2, 2024

communities:

- Eligible SPO positions in hard-to-recruit areas of BC receive an annual incentive payment based on a Memorandum of Agreement between the BC Government and the BCGEU.
- The next round of incentive payments will occur in May 2024.
- A review of the Recruitment and Retention Incentive Program for positions in hard-to-recruit locations is underway.
- MCFD also hires travelling Child Protection Workers. They work a schedule of seven days on, seven days off and serve the communities of Ashcroft, Dease Lake, Lillooet, Fort Nelson, Bella Coola, Fort St. James, McBride, Smithers/Hazelton, Terrace/Kitimat, and Williams Lake as outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement.
- The Provincial Remote Support Team (PRST) was established to address recruitment and retention challenges in northern and remote areas. PRST members collaborate with rural and remote district offices to deliver child protection services, prioritizing in-person service. Local offices access PRST for remote work.
- The Provincial Mobile Response Team (PMRT) continues to provide staffing support for hard-to-recruit communities.
- A new SPO R21 Child, Youth and Family Support Worker position has been created to support the SPOs and to create a bridge between a SPO Assistant and SPO R24.
- The requirements for recruitment of non-delegated SPO positions has been expanded to include both lived experience and education as meeting requirements for hiring these positions.
- To reduce barriers in hiring, the ministry has revised job profiles and expanded relevant credentials to accept a variety of degree types for positions in the ministry.
- The SPO Growth Series is moving from two years to one year to align with training requirements. This will benefit the workforce, as the growth positions will be able to work at full capacity sooner than before.
- The ministry has implemented a lateral transfer application process for service delivery employees to move into hard-to-recruit locations for specific positions and locations.

- The BCGEU 19<sup>th</sup> Main Agreement includes Temporary Market Adjustments (TMAs) for ministry classifications as a tool for recruitment and retention. In addition to the TMAs implemented in 2022, the ministry, effective April 1, 2024, has reduced the growth series steps from four to two for frontline SPO24s.
- An agreement for recruitment and retention incentivization bonuses for Sheriff and Corrections classifications was reached in 2023.

**CROSS REFERENCE:**

- 2.4 – Workforce Planning and Initiatives

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**  
**FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES**  
**ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: Ministry Workforce Summary**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- Direct service employees have some of the hardest jobs in BC — that’s why the ministry is making improvements to provide vulnerable families with quality services and supports.
- The ministry’s overall budget increase for 2024/25 will allow better support to vulnerable children, youth, and families. Increased funding will be used to support the continuation of services and programs for youth and young adults transitioning from government care.
- Increased work flexibility because of work from home policies have increased both geographic and overall diversity of the ministry’s workforce.
  - Work from home policies have also increased access to opportunities working with the ministry.
- Ministry-specific strategies are being developed to support equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism employees in the workplace.
- The ministry has developed several plans, strategies, and frameworks to support the development and review of its workforce on an ongoing basis.

**BACKGROUND:**

- MCFD has seven divisions. The majority of MCFD’s employees work in the Service Delivery Division.
- Most MCFD employees are regular status.
- Most MCFD employees are unionized employees.
- The ministry published the People and Culture Plan in August 2021 with an update in July 2022. A new ministry workforce plan is in development, with an anticipated publication date of July 2024.
- MCFD’s largest occupational group is comprised of professionals (i.e., Social Program Officers and Mental Health Clinicians) in Health, Education, and Social Work; the remaining staff complement is comprised of excluded management, administration, corrections, and other corporate positions.

- The region with the highest number of employees is the Lower Mainland (Vancouver and Fraser Valley) and next highest is the Capital Region (Greater Victoria).
- Correctional Services, Licensed Psychologists, Nurses, Office Assistants and Social Program Officers roles are subject to a number of employees who are currently eligible to retire with an unreduced pension.
- To foster diversity, equity, and inclusion the following Communities of Practice (CoP) and Employee Resource Groups are available to employees: Gender Based Analysis + (GBA+); Accessibility; Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour; Indigenous Employees Network; Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, other diverse sexual orientations, and gender identities (2SLGBTQIA+) groups.
- The Public Service Agency developed a “Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Employees in the Workplace” guide for supervisors, managers, and employees.
- The number of Indigenous employees that self-disclosed in 2022 decreased from 2020. Employees will have the opportunity to self-disclose in the upcoming 2024 Work Environment Survey (WES).
- The ministry is working on “Truth and Reconciliation” discussion forums with the intent to de-colonize ministry practices and policies and increase the cultural safety for Indigenous employees.
- The most current diversity data, from the 2022 WES, shows the ethnicity most self-declared was “White” followed by “Another Ethnicity” (e.g., Arab, Black, Iranian, Latin American, West Asian).

**CROSS REFERENCE:** N/A

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: Ministry Workforce Pressures**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- Direct service workers have some of the hardest jobs in BC — that’s why the ministry is making improvements to provide vulnerable families with quality services and supports.
- Supporting families to keep children and youth safe is always the top priority of our employees and administrative staff.
- Workforce pressures include labour market competition, inflation, caseload volumes, and other complexities associated with the child and family service sector.
- Recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in rural and remote communities has been an ongoing challenge for many years and it is a reality faced by many employers, both provincially and nationally.
- MCFD has implemented strategies across the employee lifecycle – attraction, recruitment, onboarding, retention, career development and separation in response to current workforce pressures.
- The ministry has developed several plans, strategies, and frameworks to address workforce pressures both internally and within the sector. The ministry updated its workforce plan in 2022 and has developed a Child and Family Service Sector Workforce Plan expected to be released in 2024.

**BACKGROUND:**

- MCFD experienced low exit rates during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020/21) compared to previous years.
- In 2022 the ministry experienced a high exit rate and in 2023 the exit rate decreased compared to previous years.
- The number of employees in the ministry that are eligible for a pension is lower than the BC Public Service.
- The direct service Correctional Services, Licensed Psychologists, Nurses, Office Assistants and Social Program Officers roles are subject to a number of employees who are currently eligible to retire with an unreduced pension.

- Following the release of the *BC Public Service Guidelines and Considerations for Expanding Flexible Work*, the ministry reviewed and updated the telework policies as of June 2023. The ministry expanded the use of telework where possible given client facing roles.
- Programs have been implemented to support the psychological health and safety of workers, such as:
  - Critical Incident and Cumulative Stress Management sessions through our Employee and Family Assistance Services provider.
  - A Peer-to-Peer project that was piloted in the South Island Service Delivery Area.
- A program for rural and remote communities involves highly qualified employees who temporarily leave their base positions and voluntarily deploy for short-term assignments at their current rate of pay to meet operational and child safety requirements. These assignments are in child protection guardianship.
- A new SPO R21 Child, Youth and Family Support Worker position has been created to support the SPOs and to create a bridge between a SPO Assistant and SPO R24. The SPO Growth Series is moving from two years to one year to align with training requirements. This will benefit the workforce, as the growth positions will be able to work at full capacity sooner than before.
- The ministry has developed several plans, strategies, and frameworks to support the engagement and development of employees on an ongoing basis.
- A centralized hiring team has been established within the ministry to provide recruitment services for priority positions and develop and implement new strategies for marketing and talent acquisition.
- An agreement for recruitment and retention incentivization bonuses for Sheriff and Corrections classifications was reached in 2023. A review of the Recruitment and Retention Incentive Program for positions in hard-to-recruit locations is underway.

#### **CROSS REFERENCE:**

- **2.2 – Ministry Frontline Recruitment**



**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION  
ESTIMATES CORPORATE BRIEFING NOTE 2024/25**

**ISSUE: MCFD Contracting – Compensation & Funding**

**KEY MESSAGES:**

Shared Recovery Mandate (Compensation)

- On March 28, 2023, the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) and the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) ratified 3-year collective agreements, retroactive April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025, under the Province's Shared Recovery Mandate (SRM).
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is in the process of implementing the final year of the three-year mandate (SRM) providing wage increases to public sector employers with unionized employees.
- To avoid disruption in service due to the delay in ratification, MCFD renewed contracts that expired in 2022 and 2023 at existing rates until bargaining was finalized.
- SRM has nine funding components recommended by PSEC that are separated into 3 funding categories (1) Core wage and benefits funding lift, (2) Targeted funding approach, and (3) Indigenous Services (IS) collective agreement incremental funding lift.
- Under SRM, non-union, and hybrid (partially certified) agencies received unprecedented core wage and benefit funding lifts that were equivalent to their CSSEA counterparts.
- Agencies were also eligible to receive targeted funding and lifts for management costs upon completion the 2022 CSSEA Compensation and Employee Turnover Report and authorized data sharing with MCFD.
- Management positions also received an equivalent rate increases as not to exacerbate wage compression/inversion.
- Indigenous Services Incremental Lifts were also extended to equivalent IS non-union agencies.

## HEABC Agencies

- On March 31, 2023, the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) and Nurses' Bargaining Association (NBA) ratified SRM, retroactive April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025.
- HEABC agencies are subject to collective agreements in Community Health, Facilities, Nurses, and Health Science Professionals sub-sectors which all receive slightly different increases.
- The majority of HEABC funding is distributed by the Ministry of Health, and MCFD absorbs the cost of wage increases for the small number of agencies that fall within these agreements.
- HEABC agencies received a single core wage and benefit lift that serviced the same components as CSSEA and its non-union counterparts, however they received no targeted funding.
- HEABC agencies also received management lifts for the general wage element, distributed as a blended weighted average of the various collective agreements.

## Implementation

- Government committed to SRM implementation within four months of ratification (July 28, 2023).
- Community Social Sector funders collaborated in the development of an implementation strategy to provide funding lifts and compensation increases that were consistent amongst funders and endorsed by PSEC.
- MCFD requested agency level data from the 2022 CSSEA Employee Compensation and Turnover Survey and required agencies to provide data authorization in order to access targeted funding.
- Distribution of contract modifications aligning with the new mandate began July 24, 2023.
- Retroactive lump sum payments were included for FY22/23 wage increases as well as a six-month lump sum payment for the period of April 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023. Regular increased monthly payments commenced October 2023 for many agencies.

- Agencies who have not authorized data sharing or completed the CSSEA survey have been granted a multitude of extensions to be able to receive a targeted funding lift included in the April 1, 2024, contract renewal cycle.

## **BACKGROUND:**

### Compensation for Non-Union Agencies:

- Historically non-union service providers and the sector have expressed concerns regarding the wage comparability between the union and non-unionized sector.
- Recruitment and Retention (RR) funding began as part of a *Budget 2020* commitment to support the non-union social service agencies and to support the overall and long-term strength of the sector.
- In 2023, recruitment and retention funding became permanent baseline funding for eligible non-union and partially- certified agencies.
- Under SRM, non-union and partially certified agencies received unprecedented equivalent core wage and benefit increases as their unionized counterparts.
- In 2023, SRM paired with permanent recruitment and retention funding has significantly narrowed the wage gap between union and non-union agencies that was amplified by previous mandates, specifically the Low Wage Redress component of the Sustainable Services Negotiated Mandate (SSNM).

### Current Work Underway – SRM

- Third year implementation is underway. Increases will include the full COLA increase for April 1, 2024, ahead of annual average BC CPI data to avoid additional contract modifications or service interruptions.
- MCFD reserves the right to claw back increases through future adjustments if deemed necessary.
- A 30-day SRM inquiry period has just closed January 31<sup>st</sup> allowing service providers to bring any specific contract related questions, concerns and feedback forward. Inquiries have been triaged to the appropriate area and are being responded to.

## **CROSS REFERENCE: N/A**

