

**Board Resources and Development**

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**Governance Services Branch**

# **New Board Member Application Information Package**

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**Alberta Child and Family Services  
Authorities**

**Government of Alberta** ■  
Children and Youth Services

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## The Child and Family Services Authorities

There are ten regional Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs) in Alberta. The CFSAs deliver child and family services on behalf of the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Each CFSA is an agent of the Crown under the Minister's direction.

The business and affairs of each CFSA is governed by its board. Board size varies from seven to fifteen members, depending on the size of the region.

The CFSAs are responsible for services related to child intervention, child protection, foster care, adoptions, children with special needs, prevention of family violence and day care support services. Services may also include the delivery and coordination of a variety of other services developed through partnerships and protocols with community agencies, other regional authorities and government departments.

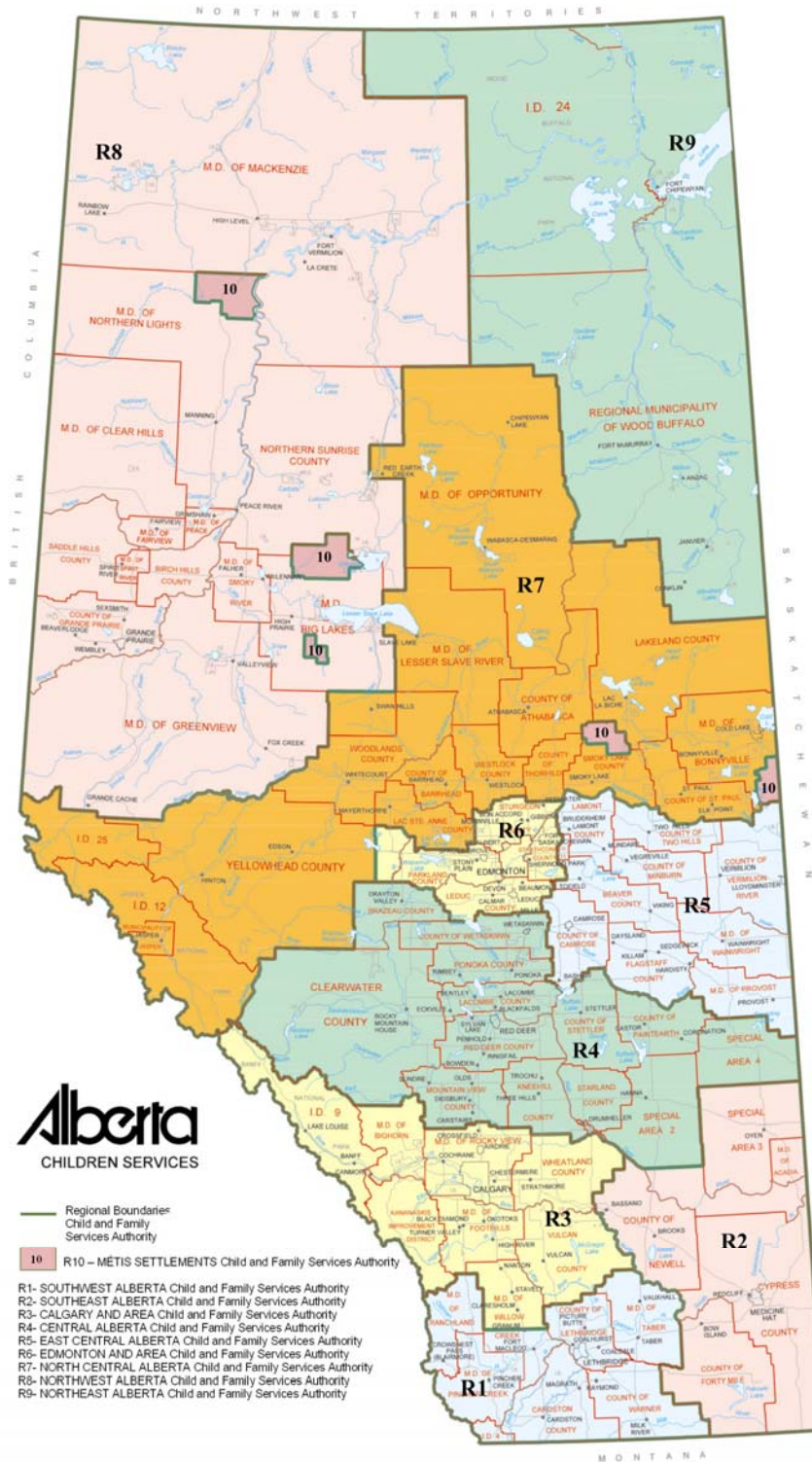
A map of the CFSA boundaries is included on the following page.

### **THE ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVE**

Research on populations in Canada and Alberta indicates that Aboriginal children face greater challenges than non-Aboriginal children in most indicators such as health and education. This is also reflected in the work of Children and Youth Services. While Aboriginal children represent 9% of the total child population in Alberta, they currently represent over 60% of the children currently in care.

Each CFSA board includes Aboriginal representatives and is chaired by two Co-Chairs, with one being Aboriginal (except for the Métis Settlements CFSA, where both are Aboriginal). This reflects the need to ensure a strong emphasis in finding ways to resolve the large proportion of Aboriginal children involved with the Ministry of Alberta Children and Youth Services. It is recognized that significant input and recognition of the needs of Alberta's Aboriginal communities can only be assured with adequate Aboriginal representation on the Authority boards. For this reason, if you are an Aboriginal individual, we would appreciate that you self-identify in the application attachment (refer to Page 11).

# Map of the Child and Family Services Authorities



## Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Board Members

Board members are appointed by and accountable to the Minister of Alberta Children and Youth Services.

In governing the business and affairs of the Authority, the key board responsibilities can be categorized as follows.

### 1. Direction Setting

- Set the strategic direction for the CFSA, ensuring the direction is complementary to the Ministry's strategic direction and providing strategic input into the Ministry's Business Plan.
- Exercise independent judgment in overseeing the operations within the directions given under the *Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, the Mandate and Roles Agreement, and the three-year business plans.

### 2. Monitoring and Reporting

- Ensure processes are in place to monitor the activities of the CFSA to ensure its mandate is being fulfilled, and that it is in compliance with all relevant government policies and all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Understand the significant risks to which the CFSA is exposed and obtain assurance, on a regular basis, that the CFSA has an appropriate and effective risk management process and policy.

### 3. CEO Selection and Performance Evaluation

- In collaboration with the Deputy Minister:
  - assess candidates for the position of CEO before making its CEO selection recommendations to the Minister; and
  - develop and monitor performance expectations for the CEO that meet both board and department requirements.

### 4. Responsibility to the Community

- Provide a connection between the community and the Ministry.

### 5. Board Operations

- Evaluate objectively, on an annual basis, the board's effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities and use the results to continuously improve board performance.

Each board is responsible to ensure that it is following sound, recognized governance practices. To support the governance role, the Ministry provides regulations, core board governance principles and policies including a code of conduct.

The board ensures that its discussions and decisions focus on governance responsibilities. Functions may also be delegated to committees.

In contributing to the fulfillment of the board's responsibilities, board members also have the following individual responsibilities:

- be familiar with and comply with relevant legislation, directives from the Minister and policies (including the Core Governance Policies);
- be familiar with the business and affairs of the CFSA, and contribute to board decisions in order to provide the best solutions possible for the support of children, youth and families within the region;
- be familiar with the needs and concerns of the communities in the Region and communicate this information to the board;
- participate in community consultations and community engagement activities as required by the board;
- communicate public information from the board and the Department back to communities in the region in accordance with the Communications Protocol and the board's communication plan;
- read and understand meeting agendas, reports, and related materials;
- attend board meetings, workshops, orientation and planning sessions;
- actively listen, participate in, and contribute to board decisions and to be respectful of board processes and working culture;
- exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reasonable and prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances;
- act honestly and in good faith in the best interests of the CFSA;
- comply with the Code of Conduct and the board member's oath;
- keep confidential information confidential;
- participate in board, individual board member and Co-Chair performance assessments; and
- engage in personal development approved during the individual board member assessment, and share information and materials with the board when attending board approved development activities.

## Board Member Competencies

The CFSA boards oversee the performance of its Authority. Each member brings varied experience, education and skill sets to the board. Below are the competencies that a fully-functioning board member will need to demonstrate. Candidates are required to have most of the skill sets listed below, and new board members will have fundamental skills learning opportunities.

Board members are able to:

- understand general principles of governance;
- demonstrate a working knowledge of the CFSA governance model, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- understand the business and affairs of the CFSA (including child and youth services, relevant legislation and policies, and directives from the Minister);
- demonstrate commitment to setting strategic direction for the CFSA and achieving the outcomes in Ministry and CFSA Business Plans;
- demonstrate a working knowledge of the reporting relationships, responsibilities and accountabilities among the CFsAs, the board, the CEO, the Minister and the Deputy Minister;
- demonstrate commitment to participating in board work and in carrying out board responsibilities;
- apply critical thinking in determining information necessary for decision-making. Is able to make timely and sound decisions based on information available;
- demonstrate commitment to the board's ongoing development of its capacity to govern; and
- objectively evaluate performance of the CFSA.

Each board engages stakeholders in the planning and delivery of services. Board members are able to:

- identify key stakeholders in the region;
- identify trends and needs impacting children, youth and families within the communities served by the CFSA;
- assist the board in developing formal and informal governance relationships with all stakeholders;
- demonstrate effective connection to communities served by the CFSA; and
- effectively advocate within his/her role.

Board members share and demonstrate the following values:

- commitment to the delivery of quality services responsive to the needs of children, youth and families served by the CFSA;
- recognizing the perspectives of, and challenges facing Aboriginal and other people;
- ensuring that the Aboriginal perspective is an on-going priority and is strongly reflected in the work of the board;
- open to new and different ideas and approaches;
- commitment to consensus;

- respect, accountability, integrity and excellence;
- understanding and meeting expectations respecting personal conflict of interest, code of conduct, eligibility and confidentiality; and
- personal accountability for his/her actions.

Board members demonstrate interpersonal skills, including:

- building and maintaining an effective working relationship with the Co-Chairs, board members and CEO;
- working effectively with individuals and diverse groups of people;
- engaging in effective, on-going and culturally sensitive communication;
- conflict resolution and negotiation skills;
- encouraging others to speak and contribute; and
- giving and receiving constructive feedback.

Board members demonstrate strategic thinking skills, including:

- identifying significant risks and assessing the capacity of the CFSA to manage those risks;
- identifying and analyzing strengths, needs, opportunities and expectations of communities that the CFSA serves (including Aboriginal communities), as well as related gaps in CFSA services; and
- contributing to shaping the vision for the CFSA (including outcome-based strategies).

As well as the above, Co-Chairs are able to:

- work effectively within the unique Co-Chair partnership role;
- develop and maintain a working relationship with the Assembly of Co-Chairs of the Child and Family Services Authorities;
- effectively manage the work of the board and meet all legislative requirements;
- provide effective leadership to the board;
- build and maintain working relationships with the Minister and Deputy Minister; and
- build, maintain and manage the working relationship with the CEO.

## BOARD MEMBER ASSESSMENT

Individuals who are appointed to the CFSA boards are selected by the Minister to perform a significant role on behalf of the ministry. As such, board members are accountable to the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Board members are assessed on an annual basis to enhance accountability and performance within the governance model currently being used by the CFSA's. The assessment process also bridges into board development through the identification of learning needs for the entire board and individual members.

## TIME COMMITMENT

- The time commitment for **board members** is approximately 35-40 hours per month but will vary by region and committee work. Travel is required.
- There is a greater time commitment for board **Co-Chairs** (average of 64 hours per month but will vary by region). Travel is required.

## The Appointment Process

Each application will be screened based on CFSA board member competencies, as well as any additional screening criteria deemed necessary to meet specific board needs in the region.

1. A panel will interview applicants who meet the screening criteria.
2. As part of sound risk management practices, reference checks, a Criminal Records Check (CRC) and a Child Intervention Record Check are part of the screening process before recommendations are finalized. Note:
  - The CRC includes Vulnerable Sector Verification, a process to verify whether an individual has a criminal record, including the existence of any pardoned sex offences.
  - If a CRC reports that the same gender and birth date match that of someone registered in the Convicted and Pardoned Sex Offender Registry, fingerprints are required. This protects both the ministry and the individual, as it ensures that the RCMP does not wrongly link an individual with no criminal record to another person's criminal record.
  - Having a criminal record does not necessarily preclude appointment to the board; it will be dependent on the nature of the offense.
  - All information from these checks will be held in strictest confidence and protected from unauthorized access.
3. Based on the results of the selection process, individuals will be recommended to the Minister of Children and Youth Services for further consideration.
4. Board appointments are approved by Cabinet. Thereafter, the Minister will notify successful candidates in writing.
5. Appointed board members will receive orientation for the board position.

*Note:* The selection of new board members process can take three to five months from the interview date. If you would like to know the status of your application or have any questions regarding this process, please call 780-422-5679. To be connected toll-free, dial 310-0000.

## Eligibility for Board Membership

***The following information is in accordance with Sections 3 and 4 of the Child and Family Services Authorities Regulation (Alberta Regulation 192/2004).***

### **All applicants must be**

- 18 years of age or older;
- a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant; and
- a resident of the region for which they are applying.

*Note: A person who resides on a reserve within the meaning of the Indian Act (Canada) that is contiguous to a region may be a member of that region's board.*

### **The following persons are not eligible for board membership**

- An employee (or their spouse/adult interdependent partner) of the Ministry of Alberta Children and Youth Services.
- A service provider (or their spouse/adult interdependent partner) who receives a significant portion of income or funding, including grants and contributions, from an Authority and/or the department.
- A director or officer of a corporation (or their spouse/adult interdependent partner) that is a service provider where the corporation receives a significant portion of its income or funding, including grants and contributions, from either the Authority and/or the department.
- A person (or their spouse/adult interdependent partner) who has a significant role in the operation of a service provider.
- A Member of Legislative Assembly, a Member of Parliament, a Senator, a Justice of the Peace, or a sitting judge of any court in Alberta.
- A person who has been convicted of an offence under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act or the *Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act*.

### **Change in circumstances**

If you are ineligible and you have the option of changing your circumstances in a way that will make you eligible to serve on the CFSA board, include in your application information about your intentions to become eligible.

## Remuneration

Board members and Co-Chairs will receive an honorarium and reimbursement for travel expenses.

Honoraria rates are as follows.

1. Board members, other than the Co-Chairs:
  - (a) \$164 for up to and including four hours in any day, or
  - (b) \$290 for over four hours and up to and including eight hours in any day, or
  - (c) \$427 for over eight hours in any day,  
spent on the business of the board.
  
2. Board Co-Chairs:
  - (a) \$219 for up to and including four hours in any day, or
  - (b) \$383 for over four hours and up to and including eight hours in any day, or
  - (c) \$601 for over eight hours in any day,  
spent on the business of the board.

Board members and Co-Chairs are entitled to be paid travel and living expenses in accordance with the Subsistence and Travel Allowance Regulation.