

VIA E-MAIL
236984

Keith Henry
E-mail: k.henry@bcmetis.com

Dear Mr. Henry:

Thank you for your letter of March 22, 2018, to Deputy Minister Allison Bond regarding the proposed amendments to the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA). I am pleased to respond on her behalf.

I would like to acknowledge that there are many barriers in the current CFCSA that hinder our ability to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities. While these amendments are not able to address all of these barriers, they are an important and immediate interim step. Specifically, they will address the immediate need to improve collaboration and information sharing with Métis, First Nation and Inuit communities.

These barriers are impacting our work on the ground now, and need to be addressed to ensure we have the tools we need to keep Indigenous children out of care, connect them with their communities and preserve their cultural identities.

While we were able to address some of Grand Chief Ed John's recommendations with these amendments, we also recognize that more needs to be done to meet our commitment to this important document. This includes addressing the recommendations related to custom adoption.

The government has announced its intention to introduce the proposed amendments in the Legislative Assembly in the Spring 2018 Session. If you would like to have a briefing prior to that time, we are able to offer a teleconference within the next couple of weeks.

However, these amendments won't be brought into force when the legislation passes. They will come into force at a later date via regulation. This will allow more time to provide feedback related to policy and implementation. The Ministry would be happy to book a face to face time with you in late April or May to continue the conversation regarding policy and implementation.

These amendments are an incremental step; work will continue moving forward.

Sincerely,

Cheryl May
Assistant Deputy Minister
Policy and Legislation
Ministry of Children and Family Development