

BC FAMILY MAINTENANCE AGENCY

2024/25 – 2026/27

Service Plan

February 2024



**BC Family
Maintenance
Agency**

For more information on BC Family Maintenance Agency contact:

BC Family Maintenance Agency
PO Box 9216, Victoria, BC V8W 9J1
1-866-557-2427

Or visit our website at

www.bcfma.ca

Published by BC Family Maintenance Agency

Board Chair's Accountability Statement



The 2024/25 – 2026/27 BC Family Maintenance Agency Service Plan was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. This plan is consistent with government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The Board is accountable for the contents of this plan and is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information presented.

All significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks, as of February 2024 have been considered in preparing the plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, BC Family Maintenance Agency's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of BC Family Maintenance Agency's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

Signed on behalf of the Board by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. Fyfe', written in a cursive style.

Richard J.M. Fyfe, KC
Board Chair, BC Family Maintenance Agency
February 7, 2024

Table of Contents

Board Chair's Accountability Statement.....	3
Strategic Direction.....	5
Purpose of the Organization and Alignment with Government Priorities.....	5
Operating Environment.....	6
Annual Economic Statement	7
Performance Planning	8
Financial Plan	15
Appendix A: Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible	17

Strategic Direction

In 2024/25, public sector organizations will remain focused on providing the services and infrastructure that people depend on to build a good life. Public sector organizations will continue to support Government in delivering results that matter to British Columbians including helping people with costs, attainable and affordable housing, strengthened health care, safer communities, and a secure, clean, and fair economy. Public sector organizations will also continue to work closely with Government as it works collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples to implement the Action Plan for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and delivers initiatives that advance reconciliation in ways that make a difference in communities throughout the province.

This 2024/25 service plan outlines how BC Family Maintenance Agency (BCFMA) will support the government's priorities and selected action items identified in the most recent [BCFMA Mandate Letter](#).

Purpose of the Organization and Alignment with Government Priorities

BCFMA provides a free service available to families in British Columbia who are eligible to receive or pay family support. We offer supports that strengthen families so that they may achieve their full potential and secure the best possible future for their children. BCFMA is central to supporting government's foundational principle of putting people first. By putting people first, BCFMA ensures families receive the support payments to which they are entitled, contributing to financial stability and security for British Columbians.

The [Family Maintenance Enforcement Act](#) (FMEA) provides the authority for BCFMA to monitor, facilitate and enforce court ordered maintenance orders and agreements, ensuring that families receive the financial support that they are entitled to under provincial and federal law. The Agency facilitates over \$210 million in support payments annually, which produces better economic circumstances for children and families throughout the province.

Organizational activities align with government's priorities and strategic direction as identified in the BCFMA and [Ministry of Attorney General Mandate Letters](#). We support government's main foundational principles through our commitment to promote equity, anti-racism and multiculturalism, to address social and health issues such as poverty and mental health, to provide services that assist our clients with accessing justice services. Our commitment to lasting and meaningful reconciliation is demonstrated through Indigenous-specific community recognition, outreach, and relationship building. Through our partnerships with federal, provincial and community organizations, and by applying a province-wide model approach, we are better able to support B.C.'s under-served populations (women and children, people of colour, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and those who are economically disadvantaged) as we support the province in meeting [TogetherBC](#) targets.

Families affected by separation or divorce benefit from BCFMA's strategic direction as we harmonize services at both the community and provincial levels. We strive for outcomes that support healthy communities in British Columbia, including social, economic and environmental well-being. BCFMA's vision is to be a leading family maintenance organization by providing a diverse range of supports and services to ensure healthy and thriving families. Our mission is to provide the highest quality client-centric service, helping families achieve their best outcomes and future for their children. Goals for our services include being client-centric, inclusive, and able to adapt to meet the diverse needs of our clients. A balanced approach to family support services within the justice and social services environments ensures constant communication and collaboration with all clients to achieve the best outcomes for children and families.

Operating Environment

BCFMA's organizational principles and goals as listed in our [Strategic Business Plan Overview](#) provide clarity and understanding of the overall business direction we are taking. Equity and inclusion planning ensures strategies for recruitment efforts and retaining staff focus on diversity. Enhancing BCFMA's remote working environment supports staff and leaders to assist and train one another across the province. Each one of our business areas (e.g., operations, legal, information technology, etc.) develops departmental performance measures that guide and direct staff toward achieving the outcomes we need to accomplish in order to be considered successful.

A client-focused culture and approach towards establishing policies, procedures, systems, and operations provides a framework for seamless and integrated family support services. BCFMA continues to develop our outreach services in order to collaborate with First Nations communities and leaders in support of a long-term vision of reconciliation under the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. We are also utilizing feedback provided by First Nations communities to explore and implement a distinctions-based service model that addresses the inherent right of self-government and supports the social, cultural, and economic well-being of Indigenous clients. Annual trauma-informed, systemic discrimination, mental health and truth and reconciliation training for all staff and expanded services and supports will improve client access to justice services.

BCFMA continues to enhance a citizen-centric approach to policies, procedures, systems, and operations. Through evolving recruitment/onboarding, individualized training programs, and operational support practices staff are provided with the tools necessary to provide solutions that result in positive outcomes for parents. BCFMA's workplace engagement teams promote quality assurance, green initiatives, and a positive and supportive work environment. Technology developments such as implementing and enhancing BCFMA's mobile app, moving BCFMA's on-premises telephony system into a cloud environment, updating enrolment business processes and systems to improve the speed and usability of the client enrolment process, and advancing BCFMA's Human Resources Information Systems to eliminate manual processes will be implemented.

To align with government's anti-racism priority BCFMA will implement an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Plan that encourages organizational awareness, promotes accessibility, adds to the number of languages in which services are provided, and mobilizes the implementation of equitable and inclusive behaviours and practices within the organization. BCFMA is assuring alignment with the Anti-Racism Data Act and will ensure all Accessible British Columbia Act deliverables are implemented by September 2024. Client and business information will be further protected through the implementation of an effective fraud risk management strategy and effective data and cybersecurity protections.

Annual Economic Statement

B.C.'s economy posted modest growth last year as interest rate increases weighed on the economy, and employment continued to expand, supported by immigration. Inflation in the province continued to ease and the Bank of Canada has not raised its policy interest rate since July 2023. The impact of higher rates on borrowing costs and elevated household debt led to lower consumer spending and reduced home sales. Lumber, natural gas and coal prices declined in 2023, reducing the value of the province's goods exports. Meanwhile, there was a record number of housing starts in the province in 2023. There is uncertainty over the transmission of high interest rates to the residential construction sector and the duration of slower growth for the rest of the economy in B.C. and among our trading partners. The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) estimates that B.C. real GDP expanded by 0.9 per cent in 2023 and expects growth of 0.5 per cent in 2024 and 2.1 per cent in 2025. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC estimates growth of 1.1 per cent in 2023 and projects national real GDP growth of 0.5 per cent in 2024 and 1.9 per cent in 2025. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to be broadly in line with the national average in the coming years. The risks to B.C.'s economic outlook continue to center around interest rates and inflation, including the risk of price increases stemming from geopolitical conflicts, the potential for interest rates remaining higher for longer, and uncertainty around the depth and timing of the impact on housing markets. Further risks include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies, lower commodity prices, climate change impacts and the volatility of immigration levels.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: BCFMA is effective and efficient in providing family support services and referrals for British Columbians

BCFMA strives to provide an excellent level of customer service to clients through continuous client-centric education/training of staff and improvements to technology and methodologies used.

Objective 1.1: Administer support orders and agreements filed under the *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act* and recover payments

Each year BCFMA facilitates over \$210 million in transfers between payors and recipients. Most of the families in receipt of support payments have low or modest earnings, and the monies received account for a significant proportion of their monthly income.

Key Strategies

- Update business practices and services to better meet the needs of clients and to enhance supports for individuals and families.
- Design, implement and evaluate a Quality Assurance Framework to support better client outcomes through continuous improvement and quality assurance.
- Update operational and payment service delivery models to provide more positive outcomes for clients through an efficient user experience.

Discussion

As one of B.C.'s most effective supports to combat child poverty, BCFMA services support the province in meeting [TogetherBC](#) targets. BCFMA's increased focus on client and public outreach activities is expected to provide Indigenous and under-served communities with improved access and supports.

Updating business practices and technology systems and focusing on accessibility and connectivity with clients are expected to improve service delivery. Integrated service delivery and improved connections with external service providers are also expected to result in improved outcomes for clients.

As a representative of the public sector, BCFMA is working towards aligning our client-centric services with government's priorities and expectations. Through feedback received directly from enrolment applicants, and in an effort to align government priorities with our business transformation, we have updated our services in order to ensure barrier-free experiences for our clients. As a part of government and in support of BCFMA's accessibility strategies, over the past two years BCFMA has introduced significant changes to our dated enrolment process. Specifically, online enrolment was implemented in 2022 to appeal to the next generation of parents by reducing the need for data entry and to expedite the enrolment process. Over 70 per cent of BCFMA's applications are now received online.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[1a] Maintain or improve the ratio of support payments received over support payments due	88.0	89.0	90.0	91.0

Data source: BCFMA

Discussion

The ratio of support payments recovered over support payments due tracks payment activity and clearly assesses the health of support payment collections by BCFMA. As mature, funded cases depart the program (when children age out) they are replaced by new cases that require significant effort to establish (to put effective support payment arrangements in place). Maintaining a high ratio ensures that both current and missed support payments are being made by payors. As BCFMA continues to update and enhance service delivery to a client-centric model that focuses on service coordination, the measure is intended to assess the organization's ability to continue to successfully transfer funds between parents.

A constant ratio of support payments received relative to the amount of support payments due is an indicator of program effectiveness in collecting and distributing payments. The measure may be influenced by external economic factors, including federal and provincial economic support payments, labour market changes, and changing economic conditions (such as rising and falling interest rates). The measure is also impacted by changes in the value of arrears payments, which tend to increase in a slowing economy (that includes higher unemployment rates and higher costs of living). Non-payment of support payments due to inability to pay (i.e. increasing arrears) and higher amounts of interest applied to a client account (in a higher interest rate economic environment), including interest due on existing arrears payments, have been driving this metric lower in recent years.

The ratio has fallen in recent years as a result of higher interest rates and cost of living increases that families are currently challenged with. The targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 have been changed from 90 and 91 to 89 and 90 respectively, and the performance measure wording modified to "maintain or improve" (from simply "maintain"). These changes reflect BCFMA's measured approach to working closely with families in order to achieve a high ratio of support payments received.

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[1b] Maintain or improve (reduce) the time it takes to enrol (median number of calendar days)	15	14	13	12

Data source: BCFMA

Discussion

Significant gains in enrolment time have been achieved as a result of a thorough re-design of enrolment processes and the implementation of online enrolment. With a commitment to ongoing enhancements and continuous improvement, the 2024/25 target has been changed to 14 days from receipt of enrolment submission, down from 35 days. The wording of the performance measure has been modified to more accurately reflect what is being measured; the median number of calendar days for an applicant to enroll with BCFMA.

Goal 2: BCFMA's services are reflective of the clients we serve and support the needs of individuals and families

BCFMA's marketing and outreach strategies endeavour to address the diverse needs of our client population through inclusion and accessibility. We are expanding our community and service provider outreach services to provide more opportunities for collaboration with our stakeholders, service delivery partners, Indigenous communities, and under-served groups. Improvements to integrated service delivery and enhanced connections with external service providers are expected to result in improved outcomes for British Columbian families.

Objective 2.1: Expand awareness of the BCFMA mandate and services

BCFMA exists to support the people of British Columbia. Through improved client access and community outreach, BCFMA will continue to raise organizational awareness so that the families who need our services may access them.

Key Strategies

- Increase BCFMA services awareness through enhanced communications and by increasing outreach opportunities.
- Conduct community outreach in order to raise awareness of BCFMA support services and to collect user experience feedback and suggestions that inform policy, procedures, and practices.
- Continue relationship-building discussions with First Nations communities and leadership to form a long-term vision of reconciliation under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.
- Engage continuing legal education with lawyers and advocates by speaking at and attending provincial court practice conferences, legal education conferences and other professional development events to discuss, educate, and share BCFMA efforts, issues, and developments within the family law legal community.

Discussion

BCFMA is strengthening relationships with communities, government partners and social service agencies by working closely and more frequently with key client outreach partners such as Legal Aid BC, the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations, government partners, and national/international expert teams. While some client groups know BCFMA well, we recognize that further brand awareness with Indigenous organizations and under-served groups is

needed to ensure that all potential client groups know who we are. Partnering and coordinating with Indigenous and under-served communities when identifying and developing best practices for supporting all clients will result in BCFMA providing more comprehensive family support services for all client groups. We will support the Anti-Racism Data Act by collaborating with Indigenous Peoples and with government regarding how BCFMA data is collected and used.

BCFMA is becoming more involved in working with partner groups such as Indigenous organizations and with the Hague Convention (to establish international standards of practice in the recovery of child support). Working with partner groups allows BCFMA to support industry policy decision-making and more fully participate in the execution of judicial decisions regarding child support (and other forms of family support) between two authorities who have signed onto the convention. Engaging with Indigenous organizations (including First Nations communities and advocates such as the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations) will support relationship building and enable policy development towards mutually beneficial decision-making.

Performance Measure

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[2a] Annual number of outreach or educational presentations with communities or partner organizations that serve Indigenous governments and under-served groups	12	12	15	18

Data source: BCFMA

Discussion

BCFMA holds outreach discussions with Indigenous, under-served, and strategic partners to build relationships, highlight the Agency’s profile so our clients and partners know who we are, and to increase the guidance and support options that BCFMA can provide to clients through partner organizations. BCFMA’s community and service provider outreach programs incorporate Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) analysis (i.e., how diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives differently) and are informed by opportunities to participate in reconciliation and engagement with Indigenous self-governments and First Nations.

Outreach planning supports BCFMA by raising awareness of programs and services and by seeking input that informs changes to our program. The development and implementation of BCFMA’s outreach program, including conducting presentations to advocacy groups, impacts our organization by improving knowledge and awareness and by increasing the number of Indigenous and under-served clients.

Outreach communication efforts support BCFMA's inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility strategies by participating in activities that better support under-served groups. Outreach and educational events aligned with BCFMA's Indigenous Service Delivery project target Indigenous accessibility to our services.

Goal 3: BCFMA is a resilient, diverse, inclusive, and engaged organization

BCFMA values the importance of diversity and acceptance and understands the impact the organization has on the learning and development of staff. Strong employee skills-development and engagement practices will ensure an inclusive workplace that embraces differences, leading to increased employee confidence and improved workplace performance.

Objective 3.1: Provide a workplace that promotes employee engagement and satisfaction

Effective staff engagement leads to a healthy work environment and a successful organization. Through collaborative workplace engagement opportunities, staff will lead aspects of workplace decision-making and creating ownership of outcomes, resulting in a productive and healthy workplace environment.

Key Strategies

- Hold all-staff meetings and support staff-led engagement teams (Workplace Engagement Team, Green Team, etc.) that work together to build upon successes and address concerns identified in our workplace engagement survey.
- Implement the action items identified in BCFMA's IDEA Plan that are scheduled for completion by 2024/25.
- In compliance with the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, identify, remove, and prevent barriers to access to BCFMA's services and throughout the workplace by September 2024.

Discussion

BCFMA recognizes that promoting inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in the workplace is both an individual and a shared responsibility. By implementing our IDEA Plan BCFMA will effectively carry out our goals and meet our commitment to our organization and the families we serve.

BCFMA values the importance of building a workforce that reflects British Columbia's diversity and commits to the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. We will enhance our ongoing learning and development plan in the areas of IDEA and enhance our GBA+ lens to ensure equity is reflected throughout the organization. In accordance with government's areas of focus, we will develop our diversity and inclusion best practices through leadership and education, structure and alignment, recruitment and retention, and flexibility.

Objective 3.2: Provide employees with the skills and development opportunities needed to perform their jobs effectively

Providing employees with the skills and resources they need to be successful in the workplace supports job satisfaction, professional development, and contributes to the effective delivery of family maintenance services.

Key Strategies

- Ensure staff have the opportunities to advance their personal growth and abilities through professional development.
- Update staff training processes to ensure that new and existing staff have the supports and resources necessary to be safe, competent, and effective in their new positions sooner.
- Equip staff with the skills and knowledge needed to identify and address the mental health of themselves and clients through supplemental training and development.

Discussion

A skills and development program, seen as an essential step towards attracting, engaging, and retaining staff, was implemented in 2023. New learning opportunities that address diversity and inclusion and provide mental health awareness are now delivered annually to all staff. BCFMA's skills and development program ensures that key indicators (including performance feedback, client feedback, changes to the number and themes of critical incidents and complaints received, etc.) are assessed annually to evaluate program effectiveness. Annual cultural awareness, systemic discrimination, trauma informed, and mental health training will improve staff engagement practices in support of working towards reconciliation, recognizing trauma/mental health, and avoiding re-trauma of individuals and communities. In alignment with supporting Indigenous clients, annual distinctions-based service delivery and trauma-informed education and training help to inform staff understanding of the barriers and challenges that Indigenous parents experience when accessing family justice services.

BCFMA's human resources planning sets goals and actions towards providing an inclusive, diverse and safe workplace, career growth and leadership development opportunities, and offering supports for health and well-being. Enhancing employee skills and development ensures staff have the education and tools needed to expand their foundational knowledge and to utilize their skills and training to best support our culture and clients. By providing specific skills and learning opportunities that support trauma informed practice, mental health resiliency, interpersonal skills, diversity and inclusion, cultural agility and business de-escalation techniques, staff will be best able to address the increasing complexity of caseload management and client interaction. Enhanced client-centric and communication skills ensure that staff have the key abilities they need to more fully understand and support BCFMA clients. Improved client interactions and staff satisfaction are expected outcomes.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[3a] Improve the Overall Employee Engagement Work Environment Survey score	63	n/a	65	n/a

Data source: BCFMA

Discussion

BCFMA’s first Work Environment Survey (WES) conducted in June 2021 set a baseline to measure against future results. The 2021 survey established an overall engagement baseline score of 58. Our second WES occurred in May 2023 and achieved an overall score of 63.

Using collaborative action groups involving staff and management, work environment successes and best practices are identified and addressed throughout the organization. Issues are reviewed and action plans developed and implemented that support continuous organizational improvement. The biennial survey is scheduled to next occur in 2025, and a 2025/26 target revision from 62 to 65 reflects the successful increase in the score achieved between the first two WES surveys. Further progression is expected as we continue to actively engage and involve staff in the development and implementation of solutions that improve BCFMA’s workplace environment.

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[3b] Develop and implement Professional Development Plans for all staff	n/a	Plan framework completed	75% of staff have a plan	100% of staff have a plan

Data source: BCFMA

Discussion

With the implementation of BCFMA’s skills and development program, performance measure 3b has been updated. The new measure captures the development and actioning of staff Professional Development Plans (PDPs). PDPs ensure alignment of employees’ professional development and career aspirations with organizational goals, performance measures, and business needs. By establishing and monitoring action plans for career-specific training, skills development, and experiential opportunities BCFMA will be better able to identify, provide and track growth opportunities for staff. Expected outcomes for the organization include providing better support for internal talent that is in alignment with succession and replacement planning, improved employee retention, and a positive WES score.

Financial Plan

Financial Summary

[\$m]	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
Revenues				
Provincial Transfers ¹	21.594	21.895	21.895	21.895
Interest	0.079	0.024	0.020	0.008
Total Revenue	21.673	21.919	21.915	21.903
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	17.766	17.878	17.878	17.878
Travel	0.096	0.098	0.098	0.098
Contracts	0.147	0.105	0.105	0.105
Information Technology	1.054	0.931	0.931	0.931
Office Expenses and Equipment	0.335	0.335	0.344	0.344
Facilities	2.105	2.216	2.192	2.182
Miscellaneous	0.170	0.344	0.354	0.354
Total Expenses	21.673	21.919	21.915	21.903
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Debt	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Capital Expenditures	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Note: The above financial information was prepared based on current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

¹ Provincial transfers include \$0.366 million in federal flow-through funding.

Key Forecast Assumptions, Risks and Sensitivities

BCFMA operations are funded through provincial government appropriations. The organization allocates this funding to programs that deliver on its mandate. BCFMA is subject to financial pressures/risks/uncertainty resulting from increasing salaries and benefits costs, changes to inflation and interest rates, and costs associated with managing information (e.g., digital strategies, cyber security). Current budgeted increases to general operating costs are in line with the consumer price index and mainly reflect employee compensation and building occupancy costs.

A stable and engaged staff complement is essential to continuity of service to BCFMA clients. Risks to succession planning such as knowledge transfer are associated with ongoing changes in the labour market. These risks will be mitigated through the development of a succession management plan and modernized recruitment practices to ensure knowledge sharing and to build a long-term pool of strong internal talent.

Budget pressures/risks are managed through optimization of operational efficiencies and business effectiveness, including making investments in continual improvement of business/workforce productivity and employee engagement, and through the pursuit of increased collaboration and discussion with partners to explore business development opportunities. BCFMA undertakes active cost containment and frequent and detailed forecast reporting to the Ministry of Attorney General and central agencies to monitor and assess strategies that mitigate financial risk.

Management's Perspective on Financial Outlook

As a Crown agency, BCFMA is accountable to the public to be fiscally responsible. BCFMA's application of a provincial model framework supports the organization's financial bearing in much the same way that it provides strategic direction to the organization. Implementation of province-wide technology solutions and streamlined operational processes ensure efficiencies are captured and costs are controlled. Effective financial oversight is further accomplished through the development of strategies that manage expenditure growth in a cost-effective manner, effective usage of established budgeting and forecasting models, and monitoring of performance against targets.

BCFMA is not a capital-intensive organization and has no capital projects valued at more than \$50 million. Modernizing BCFMA includes the replacement of key legacy information technology infrastructure in order to maintain organizational functionality. BCFMA risks operational inefficiency and utilizing inaccurate information in support of operational planning and the protection of sensitive client information unless technology systems and business process upgrades are addressed.

Appendix A: Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible



June 22, 2023

Richard J. M. Fyfe, KC
Chair, Board of Directors
BC Family Maintenance Agency

Dear Richard Fyfe:

On behalf of Premier Eby and the Executive Council, I would like to extend my thanks to you, your board members and your organization's leadership for your dedication, expertise, and service to the people of British Columbia.

Public sector organizations – including Crowns, Health Authorities and Post Secondary Institution Boards – support British Columbians by delivering vital public services and are accountable to the public through their responsible Minister. Your leadership in advancing and protecting the public interest strengthens trust in public institutions.

You are serving British Columbians at a time when people in our province continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, an ongoing toxic drug crisis, climate-related natural disasters, and while global inflation is driving up costs. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a prosperous, low-carbon, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – in rural areas, in cities, and in Indigenous communities.

This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for the BC Family Maintenance Agency, sets out overarching principles relevant to the entire public sector and specific direction on priorities and expectations for your organization for the remainder of Government's term.

Government and public sector organizations must continue to advance results that people can see and feel in these key areas: strengthened health care, safer communities, attainable and secure housing, and a clean and fair economy that delivers affordability and prosperity.

In doing so, you will continue working towards lasting and meaningful Reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the province we are building together, and delivering on specific commitments as outlined in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* action plan.

As required by the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, please ensure your organization implements targets and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate risk, including achieving carbon neutrality each year and aligning with the CleanBC target of a 50% reduction in public sector building emissions and a 40% reduction in public sector fleet emissions by 2030. Your organization is expected to work with government to report out on these plans and activities as required by legislation.

1

Our province's history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government and their lives. The public sector has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every public sector organization has a role in this work. As part of this work, your organization is expected to adopt the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to ensure gender equity is reflected in your operations and programs.

British Columbians expect that public sector organizations operate in a responsible manner to deliver quality services equitably in all regions of the province. This requires strategic stewardship of planning, operations, and policies in the areas of financial, risk, and human resource management including information security and privacy protection.

The protection of government data and networks is a priority, especially where it concerns personal information of British Columbians. Public sector organizations must maintain up to date systems and effective cybersecurity practices, including maintaining current information management and cybersecurity policies, guidelines and standards; evaluating your organization against industry standards; and maintaining appropriate security and privacy practices. The Office of the Chief Information Officer within the Ministry of Citizens Services is available to support and offer guidance to your organization in any of these areas.

Public sector organizations must also implement and maintain an effective fraud risk management strategy. The Office of the Comptroller General and the Risk Management Branch in the Ministry of Finance are available for consultation.

The Crown Agencies Secretariat (CAS) in the Ministry of Finance supports public sector organizations to operate effectively, in the public interest, and aligned with government's strategic direction and priorities. Within CAS, the Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office (CABRO) will continue to support you and your board on recruitment, appointments and professional development, as well as ensuring Board composition and governance reflects the diversity of our province. CAS can support you in public sector governance best practices, policy and planning.

In addition to continuing to make progress on your [2021 mandate letter](#), I expect you to ensure the important priorities and areas of focus listed in this letter are incorporated into the practices of your organization and develop plans to address the following new priorities within your approved budget:

- Undertake consultations with First Nation communities and leadership to explore new service delivery models that contribute to reconciliation and support the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- Modernize BC Family Maintenance Agency business practices and service delivery levels to better meet the modern service needs of clients and enhance support of individuals and families.

Each board member is asked to sign this letter to acknowledge this direction from government to your organization. The signed letter is to be posted publicly on your website by summer 2023.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your Board colleagues to meet the high standards set for us by all British Columbians.

Sincerely,



Niki Sharma, KC
Attorney General

Date: June 22, 2023

cc: Honourable David Eby, KC
Premier

Shannon Salter
Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the BC Public Service

Heather Wood
Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board
Ministry of Finance

Mary Sue Maloughney
Associate Deputy Minister, Crown Agencies Secretariat
Ministry of Finance

Barbara Carmichael, KC
Deputy Attorney General
Ministry of Attorney General

Kevin Jardine
Director
BC Family Maintenance Agency

Joanne Hanson
Chief Executive Officer
BC Family Maintenance Agency



Richard J. M. Fyfe, KC
Board Chair, BCFMA
Date: July 11, 2023



Kevin Jardine
Director, BCFMA
Date: July 11, 2023