

# National Children's Chiefs Commission Webinar

August 6, 2025 | Q&A Document

## Resources available at the NCCC website/ Ressources disponibles sur le site Web du NCCC ([link here/cliquer ici](#))

- National Children's Chiefs Commission progress report/Rapport d'étape de la Commission nationale des chefs pour les enfants
- Questionnaire: Your Feedback (please respond!) / Questionnaire: Vos commentaires (SVP répondez)
- 2025 Aug 06 National Children's Chiefs Commission Webinar Video
- 2025 Aug 06 National Children's Chiefs Commission Webinar Slides

## Question & Answer

### Bringing Canada back to Negotiations

#### **1. What role, if any, has Minister Mandy Gull-Masty of Indigenous Services Canada played and has she met with this group?**

- Minister Mandy Gull-Masty is scheduled to meet with Chief Pauline Frost, Chair of the Commission, for the first time on Monday, August 18.
- Below is an overview of communications sent by the Commission to the Minister Gull-Masty.
  - June 4 letter to the new Minister of ISC inviting her to meet as soon as possible;
  - July 4 letter to the Minister of ISC inviting her to meet with the Commission in person in Ottawa;
  - July 28 joint letter with Dr. Cindy Blackstock and Regional Chief Joanna Bernard to PM Carney and Minister of ISC requesting a commitment to return to negotiations;
  - July 29 letter to Minister and Deputy Minister of ISC following up on the CHRT's request for Canada to meet with the Commission.
- On July 30, Minister Gull-Masty sent a reply to the Commission's letter of June 4. The reply noted that Canada would "continue to focus on reforms to the First Nations Child and Family Services Program that will enhance greater First Nation control and decision making." The letter did not address the Commission's multiple requests for a meeting. Instead, the Minister noted that Canada has signed an agreement with the Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation and is waiting for a decision from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal regarding that agreement.

**2. Would it be helpful for individual Chiefs to write to Minister Gull-Masty to request she respond to the NCCC's proposal to negotiate a letter of commitment?**

- The Commission welcomes the support of Chiefs in calling on Canada to come back to the table for negotiations and to work with the Commission. Minister Gull-Masty can be reached at [ministresa-ministeris@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:ministresa-ministeris@sac-isc.gc.ca)

**Establishing the Commission**

**3. Has the AFN Administration provided support as per the Chiefs Resolution?**

- The support outlined in resolutions 60/2024 and 61/2024 has not yet been realized by the AFN Secretariat or AFN Executive Committee.
- Despite the direction to do so, the AFN Executive Committee did not establish the Commission. Instead, the regions appointed Commissioners through their own processes and connected with each other.
- The Commission has been working to establish a relationship with the AFN Executive and Secretariat. This relationship has been complicated by the Executive's initial decision against establishing the Commission and by a subsequent letter to the CHRT that directly undermined the Commission's efforts to resume negotiations with Canada.

**4. Has ISC provided funding for the operations of the Commission?**

- No funding has been provided by ISC for the operations of the Commission.
- A workplan and budget of \$8.8 M for the Commission was submitted to Canada via the AFN in April 2025. No response received to date.
- *The AFN has confirmed to the NCCC that budget discussions with Canada regarding funding for the NCCC have occurred with Canada however the NCCC has not received details.*

**5. It appears that many of the Chiefs are elected. Is there any representation from hereditary chiefs on the Commission?**

- Regions appointed Commissioners and alternates through their own processes. There were no eligibility requirements, such as being an elected chief, prescribed to regions.
- In the current composition of the Commission, there are two Commissioners who are not elected Chiefs but were selected by their regions based on their knowledge, experience and strengths.

**6. Has there been an annual report submitted?**

- Over the last 8 months, the Commissioners have reported directly with Rights Holders in their regions.
- The Commission's progress report covering the last 8 months can be found linked on our website at the top of this page

- The Commission hosted an update webinar August 6<sup>th</sup> (also linked above) and will be reporting to the First Nations-in-Assembly at the September AFN assembly

**7. Which regional chiefs have shown support for the NCCC and the related work of the NCCC?**

- Regional Chiefs Adamek, Teegee, Cameron, Verreault-Paul, Mackenzie, Bernard and LaBobe have shown consistent support for the Commission and related work.
- Manitoba's Southern Chiefs' Organization, the Chiefs in what is now Alberta, and the Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations in what is now Saskatchewan have also expressed support for the Commission in formal resolutions.

**Engagement**

**8. What is the best way for First Nations to provide input/feedback to the Chiefs Commission, which will be a vital step in identifying regional variations?**

- The Commission is committed to meaningfully engaging with rights holders; and to ensuring regional needs are identified and met.
- There are a few ways you can share your input with the Commission currently:
  - Through submission on our website, on the Transparency page (see link to webinar feedback) and on the Areas of Concern page. Please note these are two different sets of questions:  
<https://www.nationalchildrenschiefscommission.org>
  - The website also has a "chat" function in the bottom right corner of each page, where you can leave comments or talk to a live person if one of the volunteers is working on the site when you visit. Any comment given through the chat are emailed directly to [nccc@OurChildrenOurWay.ca](mailto:nccc@OurChildrenOurWay.ca)
  - Email us at: [NCCC@OurChildrenOurWay.ca](mailto:NCCC@OurChildrenOurWay.ca)
  - Connect with a Commissioner in your region.
- As the work moves forward, and draft positions are developed, the Commission will also host engagements in each region.
- In addition to agreement-specific input, we also welcome ideas and feedback on engagement approaches and how best to get information to you and your communities.

**9. Is there a space for life-givers with expert lived experiences to provide solutions to the Commission?**

- Yes, the Commission sees the voices of life-givers and those with lived experience as integral to finding solutions and developing an agreement that will meet the needs of our children and families. Please send us an email or visit the Areas of Concern page on our website, where you can identify your role in your community.

## **Long-Term Reform & the Implications of the CHRT Orders**

**10. It feels like the discrimination and narrow qualifications for children's confirmed needs is repeating now Jordan's Principle— would moving it to community-based approvals relieve this backlog?**

- Community-based solutions are preferred, but Canada is showing increasing resistance to this approach.
- Without capacity building in community and an assurance that ISC will actually fund what the community approves and not leave the community to carry the cost, many communities are hesitant to take on this role.

**11. Currently, many First Nations are in process of putting our laws to paper, what are we hoping to accomplish in the settlement agreement that will benefit community family laws?**

- Canada has repeatedly demonstrated that a settlement agreement will set the ceiling for funding to First Nations providing services under their own laws.
- A strong settlement agreement will set a foundation for strong coordination agreements.
- Canada is currently using the general terms of the Draft Final Settlement Agreement to limit individual Nations' ability to negotiate the terms of their own laws. We also have a responsibility to all the Nations to ensure Canada's programs and services do not discriminate.

**12. What are the current stats of our kids in care in Canada? Has it decreased in the provinces?**

- Up to date statistics are not currently available. The most recent census data is from 2021.

## **Next Steps & Pathway Forward**

**13. Are the new resolutions on the website? On the website the resolutions are from July. Is it possible to review the proposed resolutions for the Sept AFN meeting?**

- The resolutions the Commission is proposing for the September AFN AGA are the same as the resolutions from July. They are available on our website here:  
<https://www.nationalchildrenschiefcommission.org/rights-holders-direction>

**14. Can or will the NCCC be addressing how and if the national negotiation process has changed from the previous negotiations process and how will the distinctive interests and priorities of the regions be considered and advanced in the negotiation process, along with ongoing accountability back to the respective regions.**

- The Commission is and will engage with rights holders throughout the negotiation process to seek input and feedback on negotiation positions and on any draft agreements.

- The Commission has a mandate to work openly and transparently and is committed to fulfilling that mandate.

**15. If this is not going to move in a positive direction, is there an opportunity to bring this forward to the Hague? under the UNDRIP file? and calls to action?**

- The Commission will consider all options to compel Canada to uphold its human rights obligations.

**16. With all of this fighting and not coming up to solutions for our kids, how are we actually serving the children and families?**

- This is an excellent question. The Commission is committed to advancing the interests of First Nations children and families, and is working with partners (e.g., the Caring Society) who share the same commitments.
- The Commission and the Caring Society are developing options that include, but do not depend upon, negotiations with willing partners. CHRT can order long-term remedies to address Canada's discrimination.

**17. Does this report also get approval from CIRNAC/MCF?**

- No. It was written by the Commission's (volunteer) team of technical advisors.
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