

National Children's Chiefs Commission
Workplan and Budget for Long-Term Reform of the FNCFS Program

Workplan: January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

The First Nations-in-Assembly established the National Children's Chiefs Commission via AFN Resolution 60/2024, and directed the Commission to work openly and transparently to provide strategic direction and oversight of negotiations to reform the FNCFS program and Jordan's Principle. The current workplan and budget anticipate a 4-stage approach to reach an agreement on long-term reform of the FNCFS program¹:

1. Establish the Commission
2. Establish the Commission's negotiating positions
3. Negotiate a long-term reform agreement
4. Ratify a long-term reform agreement

The steps required to establish the Commission are delineated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Establish the National Children's Chiefs Commission

<i>The NCCC is established and resourced to fulfill its mandate as articulated in AFN Resolutions 60/2024, 61/2024, 88-90/2024.</i>		
Activity	Outcome	Milestones
Regional appointments	NCCC is prepared to provide oversight and strategic guidance of negotiations toward LTR agreements.	January 2025
Convene weekly Commission meetings (virtual)		January 2025 - ongoing
Convene weekly technical meetings (virtual)		January 2025 - ongoing
Convene quarterly in-person meetings		January 2025 - ongoing
Develop & approve NCCC Terms of Reference		January 2025
Appoint Chair & Co-Chair		January 2025
Appoint legal counsel		January 2025
Appoint secretariat support		January 2025
Develop & approve negotiation Terms of Reference		January 2025
Appoint negotiation team		March 2025
Secure funding		April 2025
Establish MOU with AFN		May 2025

¹ The Commission will develop a workplan and budget for long-term reform of Jordan's Principle at a later date.

The Commission will consult with the NAC, the EAC, and regional leadership and experts to develop draft negotiation positions that are aligned with the direction provided by First Nations-in-Assembly and AFN Resolution 61/2024 in particular. The Commission will bring draft positions to regional consultation sessions (held virtually) and will subsequently refine the positions based on input from the regions. The Commission will bring the refined positions to regional validation sessions (held virtually) to ensure that any amendments reflect regional input, and will make further refinements based on further input from the regions. These steps are delineated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Establish Negotiation Positions

<i>The NCCC establishes negotiation positions in consultation with NAC, the EAC and regions.</i>		
Activity	Outcome	Milestones
Develop draft positions	NCCC negotiating team is fully prepared to negotiate an agreement on FNCFS	April – May 2025
Regional consultations		May – June 2025
Refine positions		June – July 2025
Regional validation sessions		September 2025
Further refine positions		September 2025

The Commission’s negotiation team will negotiate with Canada and the other Parties to reach an agreement on long-term reform of the FNCFS program. The negotiating team’s positions will be guided by the work produced and validated in Stage #2. The negotiating will consult with the Commission if and when amendments to those positions become necessary. Once the parties reach a tentative agreement, the Commission will convene in-person consultation sessions within each region to review the agreement and seek input on the details. Most regions will convene multiple sub-regional sessions to accommodate geographic and cultural diversity. It is anticipated that further negotiations may be required to allow for amendments based on input from the sub-regional consultation sessions. This work is described in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Negotiate a LTR Agreement for FNCFS

<i>The NCCC negotiation team will negotiate with the parties to produce a draft agreement on FNCFS reform</i>		
Activity	Outcome	Milestones
Active negotiations	Draft agreement	Sep – Oct 2025
Sub-regional consultation sessions		Oct – Nov 2025
Active negotiation		Nov – Dec 2025

Once the negotiations are complete, the Commission will distribute the draft agreement to First Nations and host a series of national information sessions (held virtually) to answer

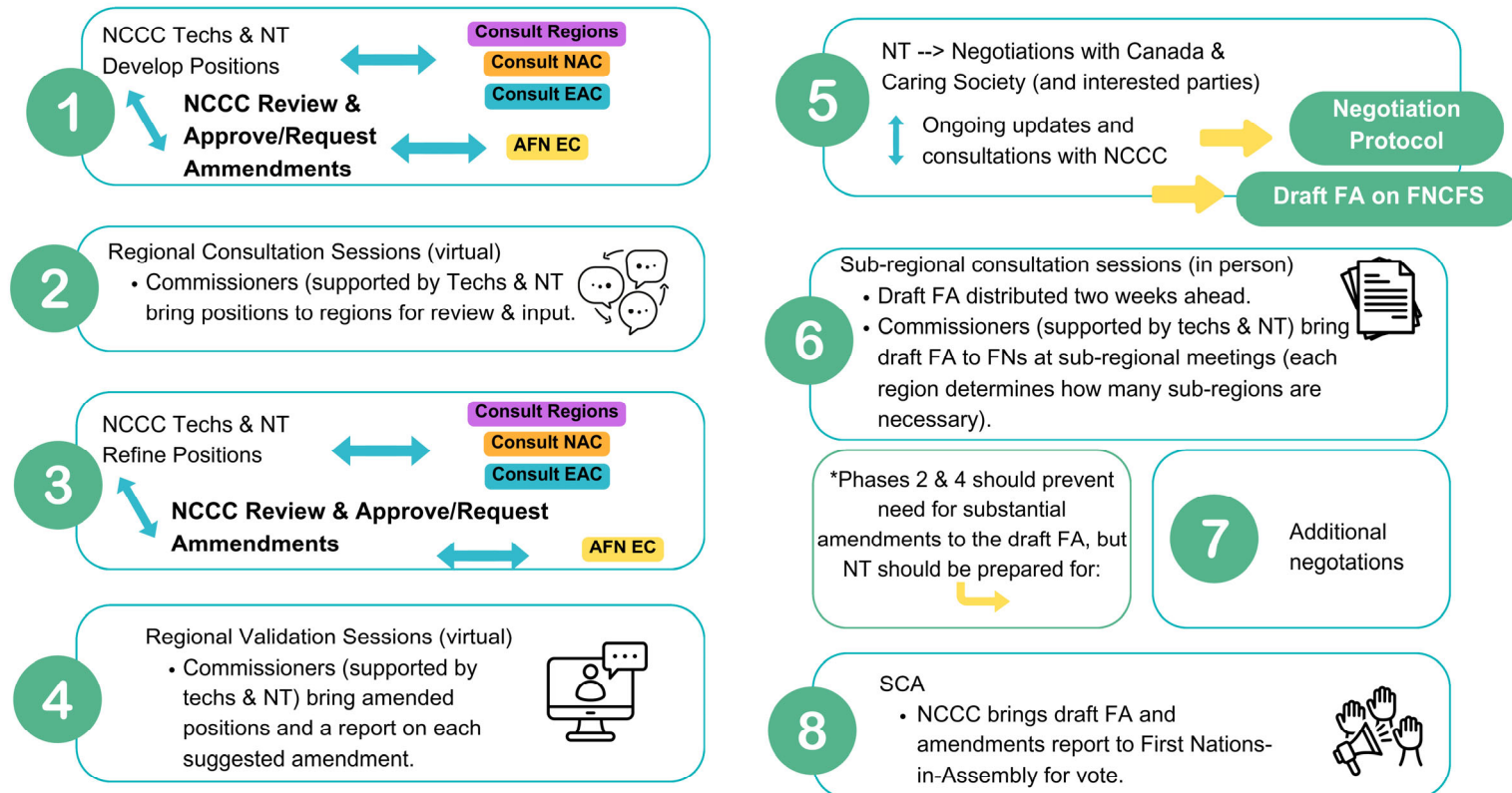
questions about the agreement. After a period of review, First Nations-in-Assembly will vote to ratify or reject the draft agreement. This work is described in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Ratify an Agreement on FNCFS

<i>The NCCC brings a draft Final Agreement on FNCFS to First Nations-in-Assembly for vote</i>		
Activity	Outcome	Milestones
Draft agreement distributed	Ratified agreement	Dec 2025
National information sessions		Jan – March 2026
Special Chiefs Assembly		March 2026

For further clarity, the workplan for stages 2-4 is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: NCCC Negotiation & Consultation Process



Budget: January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

For the period beginning January 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2026, the Commission's total budget to implement the workplan described above is **\$8,880,625.00**. This budget consists of four components: regional costs, secretariat support, negotiation team and legal costs.

1. Regional Costs: \$5,575,625.00

The regional costs include: one technical advisor per region; travel to quarterly in-person Commission meetings; and sub-regional in-person consultation sessions. The details for regional costs are provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Regional Costs

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2. Secretariat Support: \$455,000.00

Secretariat support includes a manager, finance manager and policy analyst who: schedule and send invitations to all virtual meetings; coordinate in-person meetings; plan agendas and take minutes; track and follow up on all action items; manage correspondence and communications; manage and disseminate documents (including translation); coordinate the work of the technical advisors, negotiating team and legal counsel; and manage budgets and payables. The details for secretariat costs are provided in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Secretariat Costs

	\$/month	# months	Total
Manager 1.25 FTE x 15 month	\$12,500	15	\$187,500
Analyst .5 FTE x 15 month	\$3,500	15	\$52,500
Website, Zoom etc.	\$1,000	15	\$15,000
Translation			\$150,000
In-person meetings	Cost/meeting	# meetings	
Meeting space & meals	\$6,000	5	\$30,000
Travel (2 people)	\$4,000	5	\$20,000
		Total	\$455,000

3. Negotiation Team: \$1,954,000.00

The negotiation team will consist of five members appointed by the Commission, plus the Chair of the Commission. For budgeting purposes, it is anticipated that the negotiators will travel on a weekly basis to meet in-person during active negotiations. The details for secretariat costs are provided in Table 7 **Error! Reference source not found.** below.

Table 7: Negotiation Team Costs

	Hrs/week	# weeks	\$/hour	# negotiators	Total
Planning	12	35	\$250.00	6	\$630,000.00
Active Negotiations	32	17	\$250.00	6	\$816,000.00
	Travel		\$/trip	# person trips	
	Quarterly mtgs		\$4,000	25	\$100,000
	In-person negotiation		\$4,000	102	\$408,000
				Total	\$1,954,000.00

Legal Costs: \$896,000.00

The Commission has appointed Scott Smith from Aird Berlis and Liam Smith from Smith Law Droit as legal counsel. Anticipated costs are based on billable hours to date, which are estimated to double during active negotiations. The details for legal costs are provided in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Legal Costs

	\$/month	# months	Total
General	\$40,000.00	15	\$600,000.00
Negotiations	\$40,000.00	3	\$120,000.00
Travel	\$/trip	# person trips	
Quarterly mtgs	\$4,000	10	\$40,000.00
In-person negotiation	\$4,000	34	\$136,000.00
Total			\$896,000.00

The Commission anticipates that the regions will administer their own budgets and that the regional portion of the Commission's budget will flow directly to the regions. The remaining budget will be administered by the Our Children Our Way Society, which has been appointed to provide secretariat support to the Commission. Total costs and budget allocations are provided in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Total NCCC Budget

Item	Amount	Allocation
Regional Costs	\$ 5,575,625.00	Regions
Legal	\$896,000.00	OCOW
Negotiation Team	\$ 1,954,000.00	OCOW
Secretariat Support	\$455,000.00	OCOW
Total	\$ 8,880,625.00	