



April 2, 2025

AFN Executive Committee
50 O'Connor Street, Suite 200
Ottawa, ON K1P 6L2

Dear colleagues,

I write in relation to correspondence that has been submitted to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal relating to the child welfare complaint on March 31, 2025. As you are aware, a letter was issued by Regional Chief Bernard on behalf of the AFN Executive Committee. I note that the direction outlined in the letter was not subject to discussion by the Executive Committee, and, as a result, may not truly reflect the views of all members of the Executive Committee.

Colleagues, the AFN Executive Committee has established rules on decision-making that we need to follow moving forward. These rules are outlined in the corporate by-laws and AFN Rules of Procedure. These rules ensure that decisions of the Executive Committee are properly recorded, including any abstentions and opposition. The minutes of our meetings serve as permanent record of our collective decisions.

Moving forward in a collaborative manner, decisions made outside of our internal processes, including by email, will be considered invalid. Under the corporate by-laws, decisions of the Executive Committee are to be made at a duly convened meeting of the directors, which may be called by the National Chief or any two members of the Executive Committee. For a valid decision of the Executive Committee, every question shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast on the question during the duly called meeting.

Under the Rules of Procedure of the AFN Executive Committee as amended on March 1, 2022, notice of a formal meeting is to be provided to each Regional Chief, Chair of the Women's Council, Chair of the Knowledge Keeper's Council and Chair of the National Youth Council, seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The Notice is to include a draft agenda, and all relevant materials required for the members to make informed decisions. Decisions are to be made by consensus where possible. Where no consensus can be reached, a majority of votes shall decide the matter.

It is regrettable that our processes were not followed in relation to the correspondence that was issued to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Decisions relating to matters under litigation are supported by advice from our experts. Where expert advice is not being followed, a good reason for not doing so should be presented to and discussed by the Executive Committee. Otherwise, members of the Executive Committee may open themselves to possible legal liability where the board insurance could be declined by the insurer because members failed to follow proper corporate decision-making processes.

In conclusion, future direction relating to reforms of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program and Jordan's Principle will need to be fully discussed by the Executive Committee. I trust that by working collaboratively together, we will attain the best outcomes for our children.

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Cindy Woodhouse

Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak
National Chief