

Manitoba Southern Chiefs' Organization Parents' Bill of Rights

1. To identify a safe person to care for your children.
2. To bring in your own supports when meeting with Child and Family Services.
3. To receive services focused on early intervention and prevention of apprehension.
4. To receive culturally appropriate services and resources.
5. To receive help and resources to support family preservations, as long as there are no immediate risks to the safety of your children.
6. To attend court proceedings regarding your child(ren) and to provide input to the judge.
7. To provide input into your case plan and receive notification prior to significant action.

Work Hours



AOCFS' regular work hours is from Monday to Friday (8:30 am to 4:30 pm).

For child protection emergencies outside of the agency's regular work hours, please contact the Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR) at (204) 944-4200.



What can I do if I am unhappy with the services my family is receiving?

- Talk to your CFS worker if you have any concerns or questions.
- If you and your CFS worker can't fix the issue, ask to speak to the CFS supervisor.
- If you, your CFS worker, and the supervisor can't resolve the problem, you may contact the agency's Director of Service.
- If you have used all avenues within the agency structure, you may then contact the Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC). You may contact the SFNNC by e-mail at intake@southernnetwork.org or by phone at (204) 783-9190.



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Animikii Ozoson
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

Information for Families

Animikii Ozoson Child & Family Services (AOCFS) was created in 2005 to meet the specific needs of children and families with ties to Ontario First Nations who are living in Winnipeg, Manitoba. We also serve families who choose our agency for CFS services but who are not members of an Ontario First Nation.

Our Name



In February 2005, elders held a traditional Ojibway naming ceremony for our agency at Shoal Lake First Nation in Ontario. On that beautiful, serene and lightly snowy winter evening, the agency received the name, Animikii Ozoson, which signifies, celebrates and honours the sacredness of the thunderbird in Ojibway culture. The thunderbird's role is to protect its babies in their home (the nest). The English translation of the name is Thunderbird nest.



Best Interests of Children

The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in the making of decisions or the taking of actions in the context of the provision of child and family services in relation to an Indigenous child and, in the case of decisions or actions related to child apprehension, the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration.

Primary consideration must be given to the child's physical, emotional and psychological safety, security and well-being, as well as to the importance, for that child, of having an ongoing relationship with his or her family and with the Indigenous group, community or people to which he or she belongs and of preserving the child's connections to his or her culture.

To determine the best interests of an Indigenous child, all factors related to the circumstances of the child must be considered, including:

- the child's cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual upbringing and heritage;
- the child's needs, given the child's age and stage of development, such as the child's need for stability;
- the nature and strength of the child's relationship with his or her parent, the care provider and any member of his or her family who plays an important role in his or her life;
- the importance to the child of preserving the child's cultural identity and connections to the language and territory of the Indigenous group, community or people to which the child belongs;
- the child's views and preferences, giving due weight to the child's age and maturity, unless they cannot be ascertained;

- any plans for the child's care, including care in accordance with the customs or traditions of the Indigenous group, community or people to which the child belongs;
- any family violence and its impact on the child, including whether the child is directly or indirectly exposed to the family violence as well as the physical, emotional and psychological harm or risk of harm to the child; and
- any civil or criminal proceeding, order, condition, or measure that is relevant to the safety, security and well-being of the child.

Notice of Significant Measure

In the context of providing child and family services in relation to an Indigenous child, to the extent that doing so is consistent with the best interests of the child, before taking any significant measure in relation to the child, the service provider must provide notice of the measure to the child's parent and the care provider, as well as to the Indigenous Governing Body that acts on behalf of the Indigenous group, community or people to which the child belongs and that has informed the service provider that they are acting on behalf of that Indigenous group, community or people.

What is Considered a Significant Measure*?

- Apprehension
- Case Transfer (Sent/Received)
- Critical Incident/Serious Injury
- Court Proceeding (Child Welfare)
- Media Report of Missing Child/Youth
- Removal From Foster Home/Place of Safety
- Return of Child(ren) to Family
- School Transfer
- Placement Agreement (Customary Care, Kinship, Private, Voluntary)

*First Nation communities might have their own definition of what a Significant Measure is for people affiliated with their community.

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of assessments will be done?

There are a variety of assessments CFS agencies complete, but the major assessments are: Safety Assessment, Probability of Future Harm Assessment, and Family Strengths and Needs Assessment. Please ask your case manager what each assessment is for.

What is a case plan?

A case plan addresses needs identified by the CFS agency and states what needs to be done to

- ensure the ongoing safety, security, and well-being of children,
- strengthen the ability of the family to care for the children, and
- preserve a stable permanent family environment

What is a safety plan?

A safety plan is created when there are concerns about the immediate safety of a child and a plan is required in order for the child to safely remain in the home. The safety plan is completed with the family and may involve children and non-household members.

What happens if my child(ren) are removed?

If your child(ren) are assessed to be unsafe and removed from your care, the agency will consult with you, your family, and/or your First Nation community in identifying a safe person to provide care to your child(ren). Your case manager will be in contact with you to determine how visits will look like with your child(ren) and how the case plan will change to work towards reunification.

When will CFS close my file or reunify my child(ren)?

There are a lot of factors that need to be assessed before a file is closed or a child is reunified, but if there are no immediate risks to children in the household and the family has made positive progress towards the case plan goals, it increases the chances of reunification or the file being closed.