



Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

2022-2023 to 2024-2025

Coordination and writing

Direction de la planification et des stratégies – Familles et enfance
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1 Introduction

The Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations (the Program) is in line with the responsibilities of the Minister of Families, who, under the Act respecting the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine (chapter M-17.2), must provide families and children with the means to achieve their potential.

The reports filed by the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec (CERP in French) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls brought to light the lack of existing funding to ensure adequate local services for Indigenous children and their families.

As pointed out by the CERP, many communities do not have access to preventive social services, which leads to high rates of reporting to youth protection authorities, of taking in charge, and of placing Indigenous children¹. According to the testimony of Tonino Esposito, Canadian Research Chair in Social Services for Vulnerable Children, at the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection (Laurent Commission), out of a total of 1,000 children, First Nations children have a four times higher rate of reporting to youth protection services than non-Indigenous children. This rate is six times higher during the situation-assessment phase if safety or development is considered to be endangered, and also six times higher when making the decision to send cases to the justice system and when deciding to maintain youth protection services. In addition, the rate of placing children in alternative living environments is eight times higher for Indigenous children than it is for non-Indigenous children and nine times higher for recurring placements in alternative living environments. This discrepancy also exists for Indigenous children living out of community².

This over-representation is in part due to the greater vulnerability of Indigenous communities as a result of not only socio-economic factors but also structural and institutional factors, such as insufficient or inaccessible social services for families³. To mitigate this situation, the CERP recommends:

- Funding the development of culturally safe, family-centred respite services in communities covered by an agreement and in urban areas.⁴
- Increasing availability of and funding for local services intended for Indigenous children and their families, including crisis management services, in communities covered by an agreement and in urban environments.⁵

¹ Summary Report of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress, 2019, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, p. 93.

² Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection, p. 282 (report in French only).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁴ Summary Report of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress, 2019, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, p. 75.

⁵ Summary Report of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress, 2019, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, p. 75, p. 94.

The Laurent Commission report recommends [TRANSLATION] “early, intense, continuous and stable” support to Indigenous children and families.

In light of the above, the Ministère de la Famille (the Ministère) wants to implement the Program so that it can support the roll-out and maintenance of Family Centres (maisons de la famille). These community organizations work with families, offering activities, resources and services that support parents in their role and strengthen their relationships with their children⁶. By creating these family centres to ensure that the people of these communities have a place to meet and share their experiences, to value the role of parent, to receive recognition for this role, and to enrich the parenting experience, the Program will play a preventive role with Indigenous families. And in so doing, it will also contribute to the vitality and development of Québec by supporting communities in implementing and improving services for Indigenous families.

2 Overall Objective

The objective of the Program is to improve the supply of local services for Indigenous children and their families by financially supporting the roll-out and operation of Family Centres. It also aims to provide a solution tailored to the needs and realities of Indigenous families and communities, all while safeguarding the Indigenous culture and respecting the cultural relevance of the Indigenous Peoples.

3 Specific Objectives

More specifically, it aims to “provide families and children with the means to achieve their potential” by implementing initiatives fostering :

- More activities for Indigenous families that value the role of the parent, recognition, and the sharing and enrichment of the parenting experience.
- More local services to families as well as access to them.
- Additional support and assistance services on top of those already provided by the public system and that are tailored to the needs of Indigenous families.

4 Length of Program

The Program comes into effect on the date it is approved by the Conseil du trésor, and expires on March 31, 2025.

⁶ <https://www.thesaurus.gouv.qc.ca/tag/terme.do?id=7596#:~:text=D%C3%A9finition,des%20parents%20avec%20leurs%20enfants.>

5 Eligibility of Applications

5.1 Eligible applicants

The following communities and organizations are eligible to submit an application:

- Communities of Indigenous Peoples recognized by the Assemblée nationale du Québec
- The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador and the commissions thereof
- Indigenous non-profit organizations, both in and out of community, whose primary mission is to work with families
- Indigenous community action organizations, both in and out of community

To be eligible, applicants must also be located or operating in Québec.

5.2 Excluded applicants

The following organizations are excluded:

- Non-profit organizations (NPOs) in which at least half of the members are appointed by or report directly to a private company or to a legal entity wanting to start up a private company, in all regions of Québec.
- The following NPOs:
 - foundations whose mission is essentially to gather and redistribute funds
 - professional orders, trade unions
 - religious organizations
- NPOs whose objectives and activities revolve primarily around holding conventions, symposiums and seminars, or preparing and producing educational or promotional material
- NPOs involved primarily in research activities
- NPOs whose primary objectives and activities consist of the acquisition, construction or renovation of real estate, in whole or in part
- Organizations registered in the register of enterprises ineligible for public contracts (Registre des entreprises non admissibles aux contrats publics)
- Organizations that, during the two fiscal years prior to the financial assistance application, failed to meet their obligations after being duly served a formal notice by the Ministère regarding prior financial assistance.

6 Submitting an Application for Financial Support

6.1 Applying for financial support

All new applications for financial support must be submitted to the Ministère between April 1 and June 30 of each year.

6.2 Documents required

Applicants applying for financial support must submit the following documents to the Ministère:

- The Financial Assistance Application Form prescribed by the Ministère in which they justify their needs and present their budget estimates for the next fiscal year
- A detailed action plan, and the activities to be carried out in the coming year, demonstrating that it:
 - Provides services and activities to families.
 - Contributes to the growth of families and promotes the development of positive parenting skills.
 - Supports families and meets their needs, accompanying them through all the stages of life.
 - Is concerned about the development of all family members and the quality of relationships between children and their parents.
 - Values and recognizes the role of parent.
 - Promotes self-care for families.
 - Allows for the sharing and enrichment of the parenting experience.
- A copy of the organization's general by-laws or, in the case of a community, a copy of the Family Centre's general by-laws
- A recent supporting letter from the community (Indigenous bodies, community action organizations, Indigenous non-profit organizations or their equivalent, band councils, public organizations, parapublic organizations, etc.)
- For existing organizations, the activity report for the most recently ended fiscal year, adopted by the organization's formal bodies, including:
 - A balance sheet
 - The prior fiscal year's reporting

- or, in the case of a community, the Family Centre's activity report, highlighting its achievements during the past year

The Ministère may request any additional information and documents it deems relevant.

Moreover, in order to be submitted for analysis, the files must be complete and contain accurate data.

An in-house committee shall be in charge of choosing the organizations that will receive funding, based on its analysis of the relevance, feasibility and quality of the projects submitted.

7 Type of Financial Assistance, Amounts and Payments

7.1 Type of financial assistance

Depending on budget availabilities, and while the Program is in effect, the applicant may receive financial assistance paid annually, under a multi-annual agreement.

The agreement between the two parties is sealed when the Ministère and the applicant sign a financial assistance agreement.

The financial assistance agreement specifies the agreements of both parties as to:

- The maximum amount of financial support
- The disbursement terms and conditions for financial assistance
- The applicant's and the Minister of Families' commitments
- The term of the agreement
- The verifying and reporting mechanisms
- The conditions for terminating the agreement

The Ministère's financial commitment is at all times conditional upon the appropriations available.

7.2 Amounts

Under the Program, the applicant could receive up to \$300,000 per year, subject to availability of the budgetary appropriations voted at the Assemblée nationale and allocated to the Ministère. The financial assistance granted is based on:

- The base amount needed for the organization to operate, such as determined by the Ministère.
- For an existing organization, the reporting for the most recently ended fiscal year, showing the completion of the eligible activities and the associated amounts.

7.3 Stacking rules

For the purposes of the stacking rate calculation rules for public financial assistance, the term “municipal entities” refers to the municipal bodies included in section 5 of the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (CQLR c A-2.1).

The assets referred to in subparagraph 1 of the first paragraph of section 89 of the *Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government* (CQLR c G-1.04) are not taken into account in this standard’s stacking rule.

For the purposes of the stacking rate calculation rules, all forms of financial assistance granted by a public body must be calculated at 100% of their value, whether they are reimbursable or not.

The stacking calculation for direct or indirect financial assistance received from departments, organizations and crown corporations of the governments of Québec and Canada, including tax credits and municipal entities that do not directly benefit from the Program, must not exceed 100% of eligible expenses.

7.4 Disbursements

First year of the financial assistance agreement:

- An initial disbursement of 50% of the annual financial assistance is made no later than thirty (30) days after the financial assistance agreement has been signed by both parties.
- A second disbursement of 50% of the eligible financial assistance is made before November 30 of the first year.

Subsequent years:

- An initial disbursement of 50% of the eligible financial assistance is made no later than thirty (30) days after the Minister’s approval of all the required reporting documents.
- A second payment of 50% of the eligible financial assistance is made before November 30 of each year if the conditions in the normative framework and reiterated in the financial assistance agreement have been met.

The Ministère reserves the right to not make the second disbursement in full if any one of the conditions in the normative framework and those reiterated in the financial assistance agreement has not been met or if the applicant fails to submit the requested documents.

If an examination of the organization’s annual reporting documents shows that the activities in the action plan submitted by the organization have not been carried out or that they did not meet the objectives of the Program, the organization must reimburse the Ministère for any amount exceeding the annual financial assistance to which it was entitled.

The Ministère sends the organization written notice specifying the amount overpaid. This overpayment must be reimbursed within 60 days of the date of the notice. The Ministère could also adjust the annual disbursement accordingly, if applicable.

7.5 Surplus

To promote the financial stability of organizations and encourage them in their self-funding efforts, the Ministère allows them to accumulate a surplus equal to six months of operations, representing up to 50% of the organization's (or, in the case of a community, the Family Centre's) total annual expenses in unrestricted net assets. These amounts will not have to be reimbursed by the organization when the agreement expires if both parties agree to renew the agreement or if they sign a similar agreement.

8 Expenses

8.1 Eligible expenses

Under this Program, the Ministère grants financial assistance to support the organization's or, in the case of a community, the Family Centre's operating expenses, thereby ensuring that services are maintained. The following are considered eligible expenses:

- The general overhead costs of the organization or Family Centre: office supplies and equipment, technology infrastructure, communications, etc.
- Building rental costs, as well as premises expansion and renovation costs to adapt them to the specific needs of the clientele, as long as these expenses do not negatively affect the organization's day-to-day operations.
- Cost of the salaries and benefits required for the basic operations of the organization or the Family Centre.
- Personnel development costs.
- Travel and entertainment expenses (the cost of transportation, meals and accommodations within Québec must not exceed the rates in effect within the Québec public service).
- Additional expenses related to special needs (functional limitations) of clientele, members or staff, such as setting up interpretation services or making special arrangements to adapt activities or using premises that meet special needs.

8.2 Ineligible expenses

The financial assistance granted by the Ministère may not under any circumstances be used for:

- An accumulated deficit
- Acquiring transportation vehicles
- Travel expenses or using the organization's vehicle for personal reasons
- A cash donation to a foundation
- Civil litigation expenses, including legal fees
- Expenses pertaining to charges, administrative sanctions or criminal or penal offences, including legal fees and the fine or penalty amount
- Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and cannabis, a liquor licence or a reunion permit
- A personal loan to an employee or board member
- Any expenses not directly related to the organization's operations
- Compensation paid to individuals participating in the organization's activities
- Compensation paid to members of the organization
- Depreciation and amortization

9 Reporting

Reporting allows the Ministère to confirm that its financial assistance was used for the objectives of the Program. Applicants who received financial support must submit a full report to the Ministère for the most recently completed fiscal year by no later than June 30 of each year.

The documents required are indicated in Schedule 1.

10 Terminating a Financial Assistance Agreement

The Ministère may terminate a financial assistance agreement at any time:

- If the applicant has submitted false or misleading information or made misrepresentations.
- If it is of the opinion that there is a situation that, for reasons of public interest, calls into question the purpose for which the financial assistance was granted.
- If the applicant does not fulfill any one of its terms, conditions and obligations under the agreement.
- If the applicant ceases to operate in any manner whatsoever, including for reason of bankruptcy, winding-up or assignment of its property.

The Ministère shall inform the applicant in writing, if applicable.

The Ministère may also terminate a financial assistance agreement without cause by sending the applicant a notice of termination in writing. The termination shall automatically come into effect on the date the notice is received by the organization.

The applicant will then be entitled to the financial assistance amounts due for all expenses already incurred and paid.

In the event of a termination, the applicant will undertake to reimburse the Ministère for any balance remaining on the amounts disbursed to him but not yet spent. This balance will have to be reimbursed within 60 days of the date of the termination notice.

11 Terms and Conditions of Reporting by the Ministère

Reporting by the Ministère to the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT) will be in the form of a balance sheet consistent with the prescribed template. This balance sheet is to be filed with the SCT no later than November 30, 2024.

12 Schedule 1: Reporting by Organizations

Applicants receiving financial assistance under the Program must provide the Ministère with an annual report no later than June 30, which must include the following:

Reporting form

The reporting form for the Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations must be filled out in the manner prescribed by the Ministère.

Financial report

The financial report for the most recently completed fiscal year must comply with the following rules:

- If the total of the amounts received from the Québec government is \$150,000 or more, the organization must provide an Audit Report signed by a chartered accountant.
- If the total of the amounts received from the Québec government is less than \$150,000, the organization must provide a Review Engagement Report signed by a member of a recognized professional accounting body.

Applicants must break down and clearly indicate the following data in the financial report:

- All the funders, financial assistance programs, and associated amounts (e.g. other departments or bodies, NPOs).
- Details of any other sources of revenue (e.g. donation, fundraising, registration fees), avoiding vague categories such as “Other.”

In the case of communities:

- The portion of the financial statements concerning Family Centres (preliminary pages where the accountant confirms and signs the audit, and then the specific pages concerning the Family Centre).

Activity report

An activity report is the Ministère’s preferred tool for obtaining a true picture of the applicant and the applicant’s involvement in the community.

It should be noted that an activity report is primarily intended for the members of the organization or community. As a result, each applicant is free to produce an activity report in the form that suits it.

However, to meet the Ministère’s reporting requirements, applicants must ensure that they provide the necessary information on the use of public funds. They may include such information in the activity report or as a schedule to the report.

The items to be included in the activity report are as follows:

- Demonstration of the fact that the activities carried out by the organization are in compliance with the objects of its charter or, in the case of a community, of the general by-laws of the Family Centre, and consistent with the Ministère's policies. The organization must provide a description of the activities carried out in the past year:
 - type of activities
 - number of activities
- Demonstration of the contribution of the community in carrying out the activities:
 - In terms of human resources (sharing of professional resources, secretarial services, reception services, etc.).
 - In terms of physical resources (lending of premises, of computer equipment, of miscellaneous equipment, etc.).
 - In terms of financial resources (donations, fundraising campaign revenues, diversified grants or subsidies, etc.).
 - Through a network of volunteers and committed supporters (number of volunteers, etc.).
 - In the form of free advertising on another network (including the organization in directories, mentioning it in other organizations, etc.).
 - Through a pamphlets distribution network of other organizations.
 - Through referrals from other organizations.
- Demonstration of drive and commitment to the community as well as working together with community resources:
 - Participating in issue tables.
 - Position held by community members (task forces or working committees).
 - Working together with various stakeholders from Indigenous, governmental and other bodies (health centres, integrated health and social services centres, Indigenous organizations, municipalities, education sector, etc.).
 - Working together with community bodies.
 - Being available to the community when it is affected by specific events, where the organization's activities lend themselves to it (flood, ice storm, natural disaster, etc.).
 - Producing and purchasing materials or participating in common activities with other organizations and bodies.

- Demonstration of the response to community needs:
 - Availability: opening hours, number of days and evenings, number of weeks and months.
 - Information and consultation tools and activities: pamphlets, information and awareness-raising meetings, newsletters, etc.
 - Seminars, websites, training sessions, etc.
 - Link between community needs, as defined by the organization, as well as the activities carried out and the services provided.
 - Territory covered.
 - Number of people reached by the organization's public activities (awareness-raising, media events, forums, conferences, publications, promotion of services, etc.).
 - Number of people reached by the organization's individual and group activities (counselling, hotline, individual follow-up, self-help groups, coffee meetings, training sessions, etc.).
 - Attendance rates.

