



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Health and Social Services	Inter-Provincial/Territorial Specialist	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
49-10771	Yellowknife	Child and Family Services / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Inter-Provincial/Territorial Specialist, monitors, assesses, recommends the approval of, and facilitates the placement of all children and youth served through Child and Family Services, including children, youth and their families who may require specialized services outside of the Northwest Territories.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Inter-Provincial/Territorial Specialist (Specialist) reports to the Manager, Program Services, and statutorily reports to the Territorial Executive Director of Child and Family Services, also referred to as the “Statutory Director” (CFS/Adoptions).

The Statutory Director, Child and Family Services and Statutory Director, Adoptions (hereinafter “Statutory Director”), is responsible for the delivery of the Child and Family Services (CFS) Program, including foster care and placement resources and the Adoptions Program, under two separate pieces of Northwest Territories (NWT) legislation (the NWT *Child and Family Services Act*, and the NWT *Adoptions Act*). The Adoption program area also supports the administrative support, training and delivery of the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act* for adoptions in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Under the Child and Family Services Program, the Statutory Director under the *Child and Family Services Act* is accountable for the care and support of approximately 984 children and youth per year (ten year average, 2017- 18 Directors’ Report) and up to approximately 40 young adults between the age of 19-22 who qualify for extended support services through the Child and Family Services Act. The Statutory Director, Child and Family Services, is the permanent custodian guardian of approximately 150 children (2017-18 Directors’ Report).



Between October 2017 and March 31, 2018, CFS conducted 315 investigations on 728 children in the NWT. In 2017-18, 98% of children, youth and families served were indigenous. The 2014 and 2018 audits completed by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, as well as the Director's Audit (completed for the 2016 – 17 fiscal year), indicate a number of significant quality and risk issues in Child and Family Services, and point to the urgent need to implement significant and far-reaching improvements in the NWT CFS system, and at all levels within the system, including but not limited to the leadership, direction and support provided by the Statutory Director(s), the Department, and the leadership and frontline operations of the Health and Social Services Authorities (HSSAs).

The Specialist serves all CFS children and youth with complex needs, who require specialized placement services. These children/youth and/or their families may be referred from any one of the three HSSAs operating in the NWT. Ultimately, this position recommends approval of all specialized placement requests to the Statutory Director and/or designated Deputy Director at the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS).

Many of these children/youth and families are at high risk, due to their complex needs, therefore the position must ensure that they are receiving the level and intensity of clinical support and case management necessary in order to produce positive outcomes. High risk children and youth may be at risk of self-harm, at risk for harming others, and at risk for suicide, destructive behaviors. Frequently, these children have experienced one or more levels of trauma.

The Specialist is the lead for all inter-jurisdictional child, youth and family services for alerts, and requests for placement services inside and outside of the Territory. The incumbent is accountable for ensuring effective quality relationships between the NWT CFS system and all service providers (contracted and non-contracted) outside of the NWT, and for ensuring that the daily care needs of children and youth are being appropriately met by these resources.

A substantial portion of placements outside of the NWT are family treatment placements. Family treatment placements involve the placement of children in resources, with families located either nearby or in the facility itself, in order to facilitate daily support and treatment, with their children/youth. These types of placements are considered a best practice, but also carry significant risks if parents are unwilling and are unable to appropriately care for their children/youth.

The children, youth and families who are receiving services from an out of territory (OOT) specialized resource are at most times, extremely vulnerable, which places significant responsibility on the incumbent to ensure the placements are appropriate, that they stabilize children and youth, and that they are effective in remediating risks and increasing child, youth and family wellness.



At any given time, there may be 50–80 children, youth and/or family members receiving services from providers outside of the NWT. This approximates 10%-15% of the NWT CFS caseload.

The Specialist oversees the administration of a budget in excess of \$10M, including 9 – 12 contracts, and ensures that contractors are paid in a timely manner through the System for Accountability and Management (SAM) system, and that services are within the expected scope of services required under contracts.

The Inter-Provincial/Territorial Specialist implements standardized processes in order to ensure that the needs of children/youth and families are being met outside of the NWT, and acts as the representative on behalf of the Statutory Director, with all external service providers and all P/T child welfare services counterparts (i.e. interprovincial desks).

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Manages inter-jurisdictional relations through the Inter-Provincial/Territorial desk.

- Lead communication with all provincial and territorial jurisdictions with respect to pending planned placements in external provincial/territorial (P/T) facilities, and for any children/youth/families moving to the NWT from other jurisdictions with a CFS legal status.
- Lead the development of and implement all interprovincial placement agreements (IPPAs) for each child/youth/family moving from the NWT to another P/T jurisdiction on behalf of the Statutory Director.
- Ensure that each child/youth/family receives assigned courtesy supervision through P/T jurisdictions. This includes children, youth and families subject of specialized placements/services, and also foster children moving to other jurisdictions with their foster families.
- Monitor the status of (IPPAs) to ensure that both the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and P/T jurisdictions are meeting their obligations as agreed upon; take action to address any deficiencies in IPPAs or in addressing non-compliance issues.
- Regularly communicate with provincial inter-provincial/inter-territorial desks to discuss placement processes, issues, inter-provincial alerts (situations in which a child/youth/family has gone missing and there is a formal notification either by the GNWT or another jurisdiction).
- Serve as the lead for receiving and distributing all inter-provincial alerts for the NWT, and between other jurisdictions and the NWT.
- Mediate conflicts which may arise between P/T jurisdictions and NWT HSSAs.
- Assist and support HSSAs in addressing deficiencies identified with case management and/or case planning.



- Provide information and training to all staff in the Department and the HSSAs on the role of the Inter-Provincial/Territorial Desk, and related procedural requirements and/or standards.
- Address issues that may impair relationships between the GNWT and other P/T counterparts.
- Educate other jurisdictions on GNWT processes, standards and protocols.
- Consult with the Manager and the Statutory Director and appropriate HSSA representatives on matters in which there is significant risk to the child, youth, family and, the GNWT and on systemic or other issues affecting the potential success of the OOT placement.
- Develop a work plan, and provide regular reporting on all activities to their Manager and the Statutory Director, and other senior managers as required. This includes statistical information demonstrating both quality outputs and quality outcomes.

2. Provide a lead role on behalf of the Manager, Program Services, and Statutory Director, to ensure that children/youth and families in out-of-territory (OOT) care, are effectively and appropriately supported, and that the issues precipitating their need for out-of- territory care are met in a timely manner.

- In consultation with the Manager and on behalf of the Statutory Director, set out the criteria that must be met in order to justify placement of children, youth, families OOT.
- Ensure that placement requests are responsive to the child/youth/family's culture and beliefs.
- Educate all CFS staff, at all levels within the Department and HSSAs, with respect to the criteria that must be met in order to trigger the need for an out-of-territory (OOT) placement.
- Provide written processes/protocols for review and sign-off by the Manager and on behalf of the Statutory Director, with respect to an OOT placement.
- Review, assess and approve all OOT applications. As part of the review process, ensure that HSSAs meet OOT placement criteria, and that case plans and documentation is of a sufficient quality to clarify exactly what needs to be addressed in order to address the concerns that trigger the OOT request.
- For OOT applications and placement reviews, ensure that the child/youth and family's viewpoint/opinion is considered.
- In conjunction with each HSSA and specific to each placement, establish a review process to ensure that the OOT placement is meeting the needs of each child/youth/family, that there is an appropriate permanency plan in place that is actively being addressed by the Care Planning Committee (i.e. family, treatment team members), that there is evidence that the child/youth/family's cultural needs and beliefs are being taking into account, that appropriate connections with family and extended family are established and maintained, and that the condition triggering placement is being alleviated. Based on these and other related criteria, determine



whether or not placement should continue, and if so, for what period of time. This is done in consultation with the CFS worker/supervisor, and other key staff.

- Ensure that repatriation plans are facilitated and supported by the HSSA's.
- Ensure that transition planning to independent living, adult specialized care services or public or private guardianship permanency planning, provides for a continuum of service delivery based on the client's needs.
- Receive all incidents in which there is risk of harm, or actual harm to a child, youth, or family, from external service providers, courtesy supervisors and case managers, ensuring that all key stakeholders are updated on incidents.
- Ensure that appropriate planning and exists and is being actioned to address incidents and mitigate future incidents.
- Identify case management issues/deficiencies that may be affecting the safety and wellbeing of children, youth and families, with HSSAs and the appropriate staff, providing support and direction in order to mitigate concerns. Monitor and follow-up to ensure issues are remediated.

3. Provide direction and guidance to external service providers in order to improve or sustain high quality placements and services for children, youth and families.

- Serve as the lead contact for all external services providers and maintain regular contact with them on general issues, contractual requirements, as well as any challenges that exist in meeting the individual care needs of children/youth/families placed in their resource.
- Educate external service providers on NWT requirements, policies, protocols that need to be in place in order to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.
- Negotiate and complete terms of reference for each child/youth/family entering a care arrangement with the service provider.
- Liaise between external service providers and case managers as required, in order to mitigate care issues for children, youth, families.
- Assist external service providers in addressing issues with other systems/departments as required. (i.e. education system, interprovincial jurisdiction).
- Conduct routine visits to the facilities of external service providers to monitor the quality of care provided.
- Survey CFS case managers, children, youth, families, courtesy supervisors, on the level of support provided by external care providers.
- Provide feedback to external care providers on client experience. Use this information to inform contracting requirements as applicable.
- Ensure that all external providers are appropriately compensated, in a timely manner.
- Ensure accountability of external providers (contractors) as well as case managers, to minimize the time required for children and youth to be placed outside of the territory in order to alleviate the conditions that resulted in referral to OOT services.



4. Assist the Manager, Program Services and Statutory Director in developing overarching strategic direction for placement services in CFS for the NWT.

- Monitor contractual requirements of existing service providers to ensure that they are relevant and that they are being followed by all parties.
- Research best practices in specialized CFS placements and provide recommendations to the CFS team, the Manager, Program Services and the Statutory Director to assist in improving quality and results.
- Determine specialized placement needs in consultation with HSSAs and Departmental CFS team.
- Support the Request for Proposal (RFP) Process, and participate as a member of the RFP search committee for new resources.
- Recommend external providers for consideration as contractors to the Manager.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

This position supports children/youth with extremely challenging behaviors, and who have experienced significant emotional trauma related to abuse and/or neglect, and may have a variety of complex medical conditions, including significant disabilities or mental health diagnoses.

The incumbent will be exposed to incidents occurring with these children, youth and families, and will be required to manage conflicts at a number of different levels, and with the multiple complex cases that they must coordinate specialized services and a placement for.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of the child and family services program.
- Knowledge of mental health disorders including addictions, behavioral disorders, and disabilities.
- Knowledge and awareness of trauma and trauma related behavioral disorders.



- Knowledge of trauma informed practice.
- Knowledge and application of clinical approaches used to address mental health, addictions, and other related clinical conditions that are related to child protection issues.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of NWT-wide child and family services, resources and communities, including referral requirements and liaison /referral experience.
- Ability to acquire and apply knowledge and awareness of cultural and geographical considerations to assist in identifying concerns, assessing and discharging children / youth / families from treatment facilities.
- Communication, documentation and interpersonal skills with the ability to work well with system leaders, senior/middle management for service providers, and all levels of staff.
- Ability to work independently and navigate/manage stressful situations.
- Ability to acquire knowledge and skills to oversee contract negotiations.
- Conflict management/resolution skills.
- Ability to learn and apply financial management and budgeting skills.
- Assessment skills with respect to clinical presentation.
- Ability to apply clinical decision making.
- Advocacy and service delivery negotiation skills.
- Organizational skills, including ability to prioritize complex issues.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Bachelor of Social Work Degree and three (3) years of related experience in the child and family services environment.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☒ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
☐ Preferred