

Status Update Template
 March 2, 2022
 Social Services

Recommendation and Status at Time of Audit	Page	Current Status	Actions Taken to Implement Since PA Report	Planned Actions for Implementation	Timeline for Implementation
Chapter 16, 2019 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 15, 2020 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 12, 2021 Report Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services follow its established processes that ensure only eligible clients receive assistance and that they receive the correct amount of assistance. (2020 Report – Vol 3, p. 221, Recommendation 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 6, 2001)</p> <p>Status - Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 16; pg 108</p> <p>Ch 15; pg 97</p> <p>Ch 12, pg 70</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On July 15, 2019, the Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) program was launched for new clients. Clients in the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) and Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) programs had two years to switch to the new SIS program before those programs ended on August 31, 2021. The vision guiding the changes in income assistance are programs that are simpler, more transparent, client-friendly, and sustainable. Simpler programs with transparent policies and business processes will improve accountability, performance and reduce errors. A new information technology system has also been implemented and will help to reduce errors through automation and consistent application of business processes and procedures. In 2019-20, the ministry implemented a performance improvement plan to specifically address the areas cited by the auditor. The plan included annual improvement targets ranging from 95 to 100 per cent within three years. For SAP, SAID and TEA, the ministry met or exceeded its targets in six of the seven target areas in 2019-20. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented September 1, 2021. 	<p>NA</p>

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Chapter 16, 2019 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 15, 2020 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 12, 2021 Report Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services - continued					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services perform timely reviews on all the performance information submitted by the community-based organizations. (2007 Report – Vol 3, p. 75, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 8, 2008)</p> <p>Status - Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 16; pg 109</p> <p>Ch 15; pg 96</p> <p>Ch 12, pg 74</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry is currently piloting a framework to assess, monitor and manage risk inherent in third-party service contracts. Full implementation of the framework in 2022-23 will help the ministry to adopt a risk-based approach to the review of compliance and performance information provided by third-party organizations. This will allow targeted review of information provided by community-based organizations (CBOs) that receive the highest amount of funding from the ministry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the framework to assess, monitor and manage risk inherent in third-party service contracts. Utilize the framework to identify higher risk CBOs that require timely review and follow up to ensure accountability of third-party service providers for their contractual obligations. The ministry completed an analysis of over 90 per cent of the 2020-21 March 31st annual financial statements submitted by third-party service providers. New standards will be recommended upon risk management framework results. 	<p>Fall 2022</p>
<p>New (Ch 15); Outstanding (Ch 12) We recommend that Social Services verify client income information for its Saskatchewan Income Support Program. (2020 Report – volume 2, p. 94, Recommendation 1: Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation as of October 29, 2021)</p> <p>Status – Not Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 15; pg 94</p> <p>Ch 12; pg 75</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry is reviewing opportunities to include interfaces with critical organizations that could include matching income sources. The ministry has updated its Information Sharing Agreement with the federal government and will begin accessing and reviewing income tax information for SIS clients in 2022-23 on a case-by-case basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be determined 	<p>To be determined</p>

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Chapter 16, 2019 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 15, 2020 Report, Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services; Chapter 12, 2021 Report Volume 2 – Integrated Social Services - continued					
<p>New (Ch 15); Outstanding (Ch 12) We recommend that Social Services record and recover overpayments related to its Saskatchewan Income Support program in a timely manner. (2020 Report – Volume 2, p. 95, Recommendation 2; Public Accounts Committee has not yet considered this recommendation as of October 29, 2021)</p> <p>Status – Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 15; pg 95 Ch 12; pg 73</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry tracked all potential SIS overpayments to enable the overpayments to be addressed when functionality enhancements were implemented. This tracking included narrative and financial information that would allow for accurate posting and recovery of overpayments when the functionality was implemented in February 2020. In early March 2021, the ministry resumed its work to post these overpayments to client files; work was completed by April 15, 2021. 	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p>New (Ch 15); Implemented (Ch 12) We recommend that Social Services require staff to reconcile and review each of its key bank accounts monthly.</p>	<p>Ch 15; pg 96 Ch 12; pg 69</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	<p><i>The Auditor considers recommendation Implemented in Chapter 12, 2021 Report, Volume 2, page 69</i></p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>

Recommendation and Status at Time of Audit	Page	Current Status	Actions Taken to Implement Since PA Report	Planned Actions for Implementation	Timeline for Implementation
Chapter 12, 2020 Report, Volume 1 – Monitoring Foster Families					
<p>New: We recommend that Social Services complete all required background checks prior to approving foster families.</p>	160	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry continues to monitor compliance to the background checks required for approval. In the 2021 Program File Reviews, the provincial average for compliance to ministry checks was 98%; compliance to completing reference checks was 98%; and compliance to medical checks was 92%. The ministry will continue to measure this as part of Program File Reviews. The ministry recognizes the importance of the completion of background checks. The ministry sets compliance targets to policies; targets have been exceeded in all areas measured by the Auditor regarding this recommendation. The ministry shared the Provincial Auditor’s findings internally in 2020, highlighting the need to increase compliance to policies. In 2021, a further review to ensure completion and documentation of background checks prior to approving foster families was revisited. As a result of this recent review, the process for documenting completed background checks has been standardized to ensure consistency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented January 2022. 	NA
<p>New: We recommend that Social Services consistently follow its standard to conduct annual home safety checks at foster homes.</p>	163	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Auditor noted in the <i>Monitoring Foster Families Follow Up Audit Report</i>, dated December 17, 2021, that this recommendation is now considered Implemented. 	NA	NA

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Chapter 12, 2020 Report, Volume 1 – Monitoring Foster Families - continued					
<p>New: We recommend that Social Services obtain annual criminal record declarations for all adults residing in approved foster homes.</p>	164	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Auditor noted in the <i>Monitoring Foster Families Follow Up Audit Report</i>, dated December 17, 2021, that this recommendation is now considered Implemented. 	NA	NA
<p>New: We recommend that Social Services require periodic criminal record checks on all adults residing in approved foster homes.</p>	164	Partially Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry completed a policy analysis and jurisdictional scan to assess implementing periodic criminal record checks and establish the frequency to be outlined in policy. The jurisdictional scan found the frequency range in other provinces to be from three years to five years. The ministry determined that periodic record checks in Saskatchewan would be required every three years. Policy to meet the intent of this recommendation has been developed, the directive has been approved. This policy change will be included along with further changes to the Annual Review policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association are currently working on a communication and implementation plan. The Annual Review policy is also in progress. 	Summer 2022
<p>New: We recommend that Social Services consistently follow its standard to complete annual review reports of individual foster families.</p>	165	Partially Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations were presented to ministry managers and supervisors in 2020. The ministry communicated the expectation of compliance to this standard following the audit in 2020 and has reiterated the expectation for the 2022 Program File Reviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry will continue to monitor the completion of Annual Reviews. The creation of a Task generated in Linkin for Annual Reviews is being considered for a future Linkin release. Tasks serve as a reminder to the case worker of work needing completion and assists the supervisor with oversight. Increased supervisory oversight will occur to ensure this requirement is met. 	Compliance to this standard in 2022 Program File Reviews.

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Chapter 12, 2020 Report, Volume 1 – Monitoring Foster Families - continued

<p>New: We recommend that Social Services train staff responsible for monitoring foster families specifically on conducting annual reviews.</p>	166	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry developed a training package on the completion of Annual Reviews for staff. The foundation of the training is on Integrated Practice Strategies and Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) training and focuses on Appreciative Inquiry, Solution-focused Questions, Critical Thinking and Crucial Conversations. The training includes the completion and implementation of the Professional Development Agreement to ensure the tool is used in a helpful manner. • The ministry reviewed Annual Review/Family Development Plan policy with staff that conduct this work. • The ministry provided the new training package to staff in January 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation is considered implemented. 	NA
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Chapter 46, 2019 Report, Volume 2; Chapter 37, 2021 Report, Volume 2 – Supervising CBOs Delivering Programs to Intellectually Disabled People					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services work with CBOs to establish program objectives, and outcome performance measures and targets to be used to monitor and evaluate the services CBOs deliver to intellectually disabled people and their families. (2012 Report – Volume 1, p. 192, Recommendation 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 17, 2014)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 46; pg 330</p> <p>Ch 37; pg 266</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to monitoring outcomes pertaining to person-centered plans, the ministry has several initiatives underway to strengthen its performance measurement processes, including the development and implementation of an outcomes-based contract pilot project. The Person-centred Culture Committee, which has representation from the Ministry of Social Services and third-party service organizations, has developed a Person-centred Culture Framework to further the development of person-centred culture in the disability sector. The committee has also developed a website, personcentredsk.ca, to host the framework and other person-centred resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Outcomes-Based Contracting project will include the development of outcomes, a performance management framework, and tools, with the eventual goal to moving to outcomes-based contracts for all service providers. As the implementation of outcomes-based contracting will be a significant change for the sector, the ministry is planning a multi-year approach to engage service providers. Representatives from the Person-centred Culture Committee met with senior leaders from third-party service providers to review the person-centred framework and discuss how to enhance person-centred culture within the sector. 	<p>Implementation of outcomes-based contracts will be informed by the results of the outcomes-based pilot project.</p>
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services follow their established monitoring procedures as outlined in their agreements with CBOs that provide services to individuals with intellectual disabilities. (2012 Report – Volume 1, p. 196, Recommendation 6; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 17, 2014)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 46; pg 330</p> <p>Ch 37; pg 267</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry continues to prioritize Basic Standard Reviews (BSRs) for third-party service providers providing direct services to individuals with intellectual disabilities. All third-party service providers are required to submit a report indicating whether they have had any serious incidents involving clients. The ministry has also developed a monitoring procedure to ensure third-party service providers are meeting training requirements on policies such as the abuse policy. Additional positions were created to provide direct support including reviewing and analyzing outcome reports pertaining to person-centered plans, BSRs, attendance reports, and funding utilization for programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in the completion of BSRs. CLSD adapted the process to allow for virtual BSRs during the pandemic. Upon further review, the ministry recognizes that the limitations of the BSR and is exploring other processes, including the ministry-wide implementation of the CBO risk assessment referenced in <i>Recommendation 3.3. Policy and Procedures Update Ongoing</i>. 	<p>Targeted implementation in the Fall of 2022</p>

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Chapter 46, 2019 Report, Volume 2; Chapter 37, 2021 Report, Volume 2 – Supervising CBOs Delivering Programs to Intellectually Disabled People - <i>continued</i>					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services develop and implement complete policies and procedures for addressing risks identified in CBOs that provide services to individuals with intellectual disabilities. (2012 Report – Volume 1, p. 194, Recommendation 3; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 17, 2014)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	<p>Ch 46; pg 331</p> <p>Ch 37; pg 267</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry continues the review of the process used to manage the risk inherent in third-party service contracts. The ministry-wide implementation of the results of the review are scheduled for 2022-23. • The review includes the development and implementation of a framework for assessing, monitoring, preventing, and mitigating operational risks in the context of contracts with third-party service providers, including any tools and documentation required to support the implementation. • The risk management framework, which consists of policy, processes, and tools to assess and manage risk is being piloted. • The ministry has an Outcomes-Based Contracting project that includes the development of outcomes, a performance management framework, and tools with the ultimate goal to implement outcomes-based contracts for all service providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and implement the framework. 	<p>Fall 2022</p>

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Chapter 42, 2020 Report, Volume – Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services promptly monitor the appropriateness of changed screening decisions related to child abuse and neglect allegations. (2018 Report – Volume 2, p. 199, Recommendation 2: Public Accounts Committee agreement September 26, 2019)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	297	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry relies on supervisors to review and approve caseworkers screening recommendations and continues to have confidence in their review and decision-making. A policy analysis found that in the timeframe used by the Auditor (15 months), there were approximately 23,368 intakes; 14,730 screen outs of which 1,188 were screen outs by overrides. That is 8.06% which is on par with what Evident Change (CRC) states is appropriate application of overrides when using the screening tool. In the last few years, with the implementation of screening review teams in each of the service areas, the ministry has added an additional layer of oversight and accountability to screening decisions. The screening review teams were implemented as part of the initiative to develop and enhance collaborative decision making in Child and Family Programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation is considered implemented 	NA
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services attempt to make face-to-face contact with the child and family involved in a reported child abuse and neglect allegation within required timeframes to assess the child’s safety. (2018 Report – Volume 2, p. 201, Recommendation 3; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 26, 2019)</p>	298	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry measures, through the program file reviews, whether allegations were responded to within the response priority time and if ministry analysts agreed with the response priority time. The ministry also undertook a project, from April 2019 to March 2020, documenting compliance to the response priority and reasons for non-compliance. The investigation response compliance 4th quarter report results (January-March 2020) found 91% compliance provincially for the ministry’s service areas. The ministry is monitoring this closely and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation is considered implemented 	NA

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Chapter 42, 2020 Report, Volume – Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect - *continued*

Status: Not Implemented			<p>receiving quarterly roll-ups of investigation response times of both one-day and five-day responses and the percentage of compliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At times of greater than normal volume, the ministry has reallocated staff to conduct investigations. For example, effective April 1, 2019, the south service area allocated four more child protection positions to investigations to address higher than normal volume. This addition of staff allowed for the creation of an additional investigation unit. In 2020, one additional child protection position was added to investigations. 		
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services complete family risk assessments for child abuse and neglect investigations within required timeframes. (2018 Report – Volume 2, p. 202, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 26, 2019)</p> <p>Status: Not Implemented</p>	299	Not Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry measures, through the program file review process, whether a risk assessment was completed during the investigation and whether it was completed within the required timeframe. The ministry continues to provide service areas a risk assessment target (if applicable) through the program file review process. A risk assessment target is given if compliance was below 85%. In 2019, four new positions were added to conduct investigations. In 2020, one new position was added to conduct investigations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results of this audit were shared internally, emphasizing documentation of any delays and ensuring documentation occurred within the required timeframes and reasons for delays were fully documented. <p>Service areas are utilizing regular administration days and occasional overtime to complete the tasks within policy timelines. Additionally, the ministry will review a specific policy to ensure understanding and the need to prioritize with an action plan identified for completion.</p> <p>The ministry will continue to work to review/address targeted standards through the creation and implementation of Program File Review action plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the 2021 Program File Review, completion of Family Risk Assessments has been targeted for each of the ministry service areas as requiring attention and improvement. Targets 	Fiscal Year end 2022-23

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Chapter 42, 2020 Report, Volume – Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect - continued					
				for improvement have been identified and target re-evaluation will be completed following the 2022 Program File Reviews.	
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services finalize investigations of reported suspected child abuse and neglect within required timeframes, to allow timely supervisor review. (2018 Report – Volume 2, p. 203, Recommendation 5; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 26, 2019)</p> <p>Status: Not Implemented</p>	300	Partially Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An investigation due date reminder was added in the electronic case management system, Linkin. • On a monthly basis, a report of all outstanding investigations including the number of days and case owner is shared. This report supports the timely identification of outstanding cases for follow up to address the outstanding investigations. • In 2019-20, the ministry added three child welfare positions. In 2020-21, the ministry added 10 child welfare positions. In 2021-22, the ministry added six additional child welfare staff. These new positions included staff in protection (10), out-of-home care/family connections (7) and supervisory staff (2), all of whom collaboratively provide child welfare services and positively impact all services provided including the timeliness of conducting and finalizing investigations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service areas are utilizing regular administration days and occasional overtime to complete the tasks within policy timelines. Additionally, units will review a specific policy to ensure understanding and the need to prioritize with an action plan identified for completion. • The ministry reviewed with the service areas, the importance of timely completion and approval of investigations, and the need to document reasons for delays in completing investigations within policy timeframes. Follow up will be ongoing. • Continued emphasis will focus on compliance to finalization of investigations within timeframe or documentation of reasons for non-compliance. The ministry will monitor and report compliance to this standard to track compliance to this standard. 	Fiscal Year end 2022-23

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Chapter 43, 2020 Report, Volume 2 – Minimizing Absenteeism					
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services actively encourage supervisors to take available attendance management training and monitor participation. (2015 Report – Volume 2, p. 273, Recommendation 1; Public Committee agreement March 14, 2017)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	304	Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular quarterly updates to executive management, including direct reminders to complete the required attendance policy and accommodations policy training, continues to ensure supervisors have taken the recommended training. Training completion rates have increased significantly. As of June 2021, 89% of supervisors had completed the attendance policy training compared to 86% in December 2020 and 64% in April 2020. A training report was provided to senior leadership in May 2021 detailing the participation rates within each division/branch. It identified all staff that had taken the required attendance policy training and those who had not completed it. Data for the next report will be collected in April 2022. 	NA	NA
<p>Outstanding: We recommend that Social Services give senior management periodic reports on the effectiveness of its attendance management strategies, including detailed analysis of the results. (2015 Report – Volume 2, p. 276, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement March 14, 2017)</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p>	306	Partially Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has reviewed sick leave data and has targeted program areas with high levels of sick leave usage. Planning, awareness, and case management supports are being provided. Supports are also being provided with respect to medical accommodations and disability management as needed. <p>There is continued focus on specific reporting tools to determine the effectiveness of reporting methods. The current sick leave rate is showing a decline since 2017 which at that time was 9.98 days per FTE/year compared to our current 2020-21 fourth quarter results, 7.68 days per FTE/year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the capabilities of existing data platforms are required to support reporting and targeted strategies to address consistent, above average utilization. Provide reporting specific to the outcomes and effectiveness of the targeted strategies. 	March 31, 2022

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Chapter 43, 2020 Report, Volume 2 – Minimizing Absenteeism - *continued*

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data gathering and analysis of the ministry's sick leave utilization continues through collaboration with the Integrated Health, Safety and Wellness Branch of the Public Service Commission and the ministry. The aim is to determine if further data analysis is possible beyond the existing capabilities of the Public Service Commission's reporting program. 		
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