



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 19, 2019

Government not effectively overseeing contracted residential services

VICTORIA – The Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia has released a new report: *Oversight of Contracted Residential Services for Children and Youth in Care*.

Overall, the Ministry of Children and Family Development was not providing effective oversight of contracted residential services.

“Children and youth in care may not be receiving services that meet their needs because the ministry hasn’t set sufficient quality standards for contracted residential services and doesn’t adequately monitor the quality of care that contractors provide,” said Carol Bellringer, auditor general.

The ministry is also struggling to match the specific needs of individual children and youth to appropriate contracted service providers. For example, Indigenous children and youth can be in placements without an Indigenous cultural component. This is happening in part because the ministry had not assessed the need for placements in contracted residential services or created a plan to provide the right amount and type of these services.

Bellringer also stated that “the office found that contracted residential services have evolved on an ad hoc basis to respond to individual and emergency situations as opposed to the ministry defining what they should look like or when to use the services.”

Finally, the ministry does not have an effective contract management framework in place. As a result, ministry staff responsible for managing contracts do not have the right training or support. This has led to contracts between the service providers and the ministry that are not focused on outcomes for children or youth; also, the contracts are not appropriately monitored.

The report includes four recommendations to improve the ministry’s oversight of contracted residential services so it can better meet its obligations to children and youth in care. The ministry has accepted all of the recommendations and has begun to take action to improve its oversight.

Contracted residential services provide housing, food, and other supports for some of the most vulnerable children and youth in care, including those with highly complex needs. These services are typically the most intensive and expensive of all care options. In 2018, approximately 1,150 children and youth in care spent time in contracted residential services.



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The full report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website at www.bcauditor.com.

Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a news conference.

News conference date: Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Time: 11:30 a.m. (Pacific time)

Dial-in Information:

From Greater Vancouver: 604 681-0260

From elsewhere in Canada and the U.S., toll-free: 1 877 353-9184

Participant Pass Code: 44848#

During question and answer period, to ask a question: press 01

During question and answer period, to exit the question queue: press #

About the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia

The auditor general is a non-partisan, independent officer of the legislature who reports directly to the legislative assembly. The *Auditor General Act* empowers the auditor general and staff to conduct audits, report findings and make recommendations.

Contact us:

To speak with the auditor general, call Emily Griffiths: 250-419-6132

For general questions, call Colleen Rose, Manager, Communications: 250-419-6207

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