

# **ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS SPECIAL CHIEFS' ASSEMBLY**



## **CERTIFIED COPIES OF ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS**

**RBC Convention Centre  
Ground Floor, North Building  
375 York Avenue, Winnipeg MB**

**December 18, 2024**

**ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS**

Special Chiefs' Assembly

*WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024*

*RBC Convention Centre*

*Ground Floor North Building*

*375 York Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

**CERTIFIED RESOLUTION**

DEC-24.01	First Nations in Manitoba Political, Legal and Communication Strategy for Jordan's Principle
DEC-24.02	Strengthening Equity Roundtable Governance and Addressing Systemic Challenges in Jordan's Principle Implementation

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**CERTIFIED RESOLUTION**

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**RE: FIRST NATIONS IN MANITOBA POLITICAL, LEGAL AND COMMUNICATION  
STRATEGY FOR JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE**

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**WHEREAS**, in January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) ordered Canada to reform the discriminatory First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program and to fully implement Jordan's Principle; and

**WHEREAS**, through Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Resolution SEPT-16.04, the Chiefs-in-Assembly fully supported the CHRT's decision, and directed the AMC to follow up with the Indian Northern Affairs Canada, now Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and Manitoba to ensure the immediate broad scope implementation of Jordan's Principle both on and off reserve; and

**WHEREAS**, in October 2021, the parties to the CHRT, including ISC, the Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) negotiated a "Back-to-Basics" framework to align ISC's actions with CHRT principles, centering children's needs, local circumstances, and substantive equality. The Back-to-Basics approach was implemented in early 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 12, 2023, the Caring Society filed a non-compliance motion with the CHRT, due to the ongoing failures in the delivery of Jordan's Principle, including extensive delays in the system; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 21, 2024, CHRT released its summary ruling (Summary Ruling) outlining the need for interim solutions to address backlogs and systemic issues in the delivery of Jordan's Principle services, it further underscored the importance of having all the parties at the table, including the Commission, and for the parties to be advised by experts; and

**WHEREAS**, as of the date of this resolution:

- ISC has failed to address the funding crisis or respond to First Nations proposals despite numerous CHRT directives for sustainable resources, including funding, for First Nations and First Nations organizations administering Jordan's Principle services;

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**RE: FIRST NATIONS IN MANITOBA POLITICAL, LEGAL AND COMMUNICATION  
STRATEGY FOR JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE (cont.)**

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- ISC continues to unilaterally define "urgent" and "non-urgent" requests without consulting the AMC or First Nations, violating the CHRT's directive for meaningful collaboration; and
- There have been recent and widespread denials of funding for essential services, including the discontinuance of medical transportation, directly in contradiction of Jordan's Principle's core legal basis of substantive equality; and

**WHEREAS**, as of December 6, 2024, Canada has reported that there are 140,000 backlogged requests – including 25,000 urgent requests, with efforts underway to triage, reclassify, and address the most urgent cases, however, ISC has not provided a timeline, strategy or even interim solutions for how it will address the backlogged requests.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly call on Canada to immediately commit to addressing the 140,000 backlogged requests, including 25,000 urgent requests, and to ensure that the outstanding proposals submitted by the First Nations and First Nations organizations in Manitoba are adequately addressed by ISC Manitoba region and ISC Headquarters.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly demand that the Government of Canada to immediately:

1. Ensure that First Nations are reimbursed promptly and fully for all costs incurred in delivering Jordan's Principle services, particularly those incurred as a result of ISC regional office directives.
2. Revise its funding policies and processes under Jordan's Principle to prevent future funding shortfalls and delays, ensuring that First Nations receive adequate resources to meet the growing needs of children, youth, and families.

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**RE: FIRST NATIONS IN MANITOBA POLITICAL, LEGAL AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE (cont.)**

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3. Communicate with First Nations on how Jordan's Principle will be implemented going forward and work in collaboration with First Nations to establish the proper infrastructure and support to ensure the full implementation of Jordan's Principle.
4. Establish transparent and timely communication mechanisms between ISC and First Nations, ensuring that critical information and decisions regarding Jordan's Principle are communicated directly, effectively, and without delay.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly call on Canada to immediately cease all discriminatory conduct and directs the AMC to work in partnership with Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), Anishininew Okimawin (AO), and Keewatin Tribal Council (KTC) to develop a political, legal and communication strategy to address the funding crisis faced by First Nations and First Nations organizations in delivering Jordan's Principle and to ensure the full implementation of Jordan's Principle.

**FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the AMC to further work with SCO, MKO, AO and KTC to escalate advocacy efforts to the highest levels of government, including the Crown and the Prime Minister, through direct political engagement and public campaigns to ensure that Jordan's Principle funding and decision-making authority are transferred directly to First Nations.

**CERTIFIED COPY**  
***of a resolution adopted***  
***on December 18, 2024***  
***Winnipeg, MB***

  
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**Acting Grand Chief Betsy Kennedy**

**Moved by: Chief Murray Clearsky**  
**Waywayseecappo First Nation**

**Seconded by: Chief Jason Daniels**  
**Swan Lake First Nation**

**CARRIED**

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**RE: STRENGTHENING EQUITY ROUNDTABLE GOVERNANCE AND ADDRESSING  
SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IN JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE IMPLEMENTATION**

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**WHEREAS**, Jordan's Principle was created to eliminate barriers and ensure First Nations children have equitable access to essential health, education, and social services without delays caused by jurisdictional disputes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Resolution JAN-11.03, the Chiefs-in-Assembly unanimously supported "Actions for the Implementation of Jordan's Principle"; and

**WHEREAS**, through AMC Resolution JUL-18.05, the Chiefs-in-Assembly established the "Jordan's Principle Equity Roundtable", that had 3 components:

1. The Jordan's Principle Technical Advisory Group (TAG),
2. The First Nations Advisory Table,
3. The Senior Tripartite Table; and

**WHEREAS**, the Equity Roundtable structure plays a critical role in ensuring accountability, transparency, and community-based solutions in the implementation of Jordan's Principle; and

**WHEREAS**, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) recently changed the structure of Jordan's Principle - without consultation or consent of First Nations - to a centralized, top-down model, which undermines First Nations' decision-making authority, increase bureaucratic delays, and disrupts funding to essential support to First Nations children and families; and

**WHEREAS**, a template letter was provided to First Nations on behalf of TAG members dated December 10, 2024, highlighted the results of ISC's unilateral decisions, which include:

1. Loss of First Nations decision-making authority,
2. Disrupted access to medical, education, and cultural services,
3. Escalating bureaucratic delays, resulting in over 25,000 urgent requests among 140,000 unresolved cases, and
4. Denial of community-based and culturally relevant supports critical to children's well-being and identity; and

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**RE: STRENGTHENING EQUITY ROUNDTABLE GOVERNANCE AND ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IN JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE IMPLEMENTATION  
(cont.)**

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**WHEREAS**, ongoing challenges with ISC Manitoba region's administration have failed to meet the needs of First Nations children and families by causing further unnecessary delays and caused culturally relevant programs to be denied; and

**WHEREAS**, the governance framework must be strengthened to address the system failure, restore decision-making authority and demand accountability from ISC and provincial partners.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly reaffirm their commitment to the principles and intent of Jordan's Principle to ensure that First Nations children are not denied support due to jurisdictional disputes or systemic inequities.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the establishment of the First Nations Advisory Table as a Chiefs Task Force under the Equity Roundtable to:

1. Represent and advocate for First Nations interests in Jordan's Principle implementation;
2. Provide oversight and support for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) negotiations with the Manitoba Region; and
3. Ensure accountability and transparency in governance, including TAG and the Senior Tripartite Table.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs Task Force will focus on the following priorities:

1. Address systemic challenges caused by ISC's centralized decision-making and Manitoba Region's administration;
2. Advocate for culturally relevant, community-based support for First Nation children and families; and
3. Monitor and report on the progress of MOU negotiations to ensure alignment with Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) directives.

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SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IN JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE IMPLEMENTATION  
(cont.)**

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**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chiefs-in-Assembly demand that the federal government and ISC immediately:

1. End the top-down approach by restoring decision-making authority to First Nations Leadership;
2. Reverse harmful directives that have delayed or denied services and disrupted funding flows;
3. Implement solutions to eliminate the backlog of 140,000 requests, prioritizing the 25,000 urgent cases; and
4. Meaningfully engage First Nations through the TAG and Chiefs Task Force to co-develop sustainable, long-term solutions.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, Chiefs-in-Assembly demands that ISC Manitoba Region commit to transparent and cooperative practices in their interactions with the Chiefs Task Force and Equity Roundtable and adhere to the principles of the MOU under negotiation and ensure alignment with the CHRT findings.

**FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED**, the AMC forward this resolution, accompanied with the letter sent on behalf of TAG member dated December 10, 2024, to Minister Hajdu, ISC officials, and provincial representatives, reaffirming First Nations' commitment to asserting decision-making authority, achieving equity for children and families, and advancing the principles of Jordan's Principle.



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(cont.)**

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**Moved by: Chief David Monias  
Pimicikamak Cree Nation**

**Seconded by: Chief Angela Levasseur  
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation**

  
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**Acting Grand Chief Betsy Kennedy**

**CARRIED**