



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2022

Report on the Implementation of Jordan's Principle in Manitoba

Treaty 1 Territory – Today, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) announced the public release of *The Implementation of Jordan's Principle in Manitoba: Final Report* (the Final Report).

Starting in 2016, a series of Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) rulings expanded the interpretation of Jordan's Principle and ruled that the federal government has the obligation to fully implement Jordan's Principle. In response to the CHRT rulings, the federal government revised its approach to Jordan's Principle and expanded funding available to services for First Nations children.

The Final Report was completed as partial settlement of *Sumner Pruden v Canada*, a complaint filed at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) by a First Nation family in Manitoba whose child with disabilities is being discriminated against by Canada. The research conducted for the Final Report involved a comprehensive review of the implementation of Jordan's Principle in Manitoba. It contains four years of data collection completed in partnership with a team of researchers from the University of Colorado, McGill University, University of Victoria, and the University of Manitoba. It concludes that while Jordan's Principle has greatly increased available services and supports for First Nations children in Manitoba, there remain significant and ongoing gaps in service, denials, and delays that must be addressed.

AMC Acting Grand Chief Eric Redhead said, "Jordan's Principle was intended to address the inequities in the policies, practices, and power dynamics that have served to disempower and disadvantage First Nation People. It is a legal principle that requires governments to address gaps in services for First Nations children and ensure timely services that meet the needs of First Nations children without compounding their historical disadvantage. First Nations in Manitoba have long advocated for a self-determined approach to ensuring the needs of First Nations children are met. From the mid-1990s to 2016, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs passed countless resolutions advocating for a systemic approach to service provision for First Nations children."

The 237-page Final Report has 13 comprehensive recommendations aimed at Canada, ranging from extending the age of eligibility for Jordan's Principle, to committing funding and other resources to ensure adequate housing and clean water for every First Nations child, and to allocating long-term flexible Jordan's Principle funding enabling First Nations to develop services in accordance with their priorities and needs.

Acting Grand Chief Redhead concluded, "the Final Report reinforces that the implementation of Jordan's Principle must occur in accordance with other commitments and obligations around realizing First Nation rights to self-determination. It finds that some of the main gaps in implementation include the short-term, demand-driven funding; the discretionary nature of the funding; the federal government's approach to implementation; and the failure to support the formal development of needed First Nations-led regional coordination structures. The Final Report confirms what First Nations in Manitoba have known for a while: that while Canada has put measures in place to respond to the CHRT orders, First Nations children continued to fall through the cracks and experience denials, delays, and disruption of services. However, with our recently established good working relationship with Canada, the AMC is pleased that we will work together to implement all the Report's recommendations for the benefit of First Nations children in Manitoba."

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.