



2020 Report–Volume 1: Provincial Auditor Reports Social Services Must Consistently Follow Policies to Review Ongoing Suitability of Foster Families

REGINA, SK., June 23, 2020: In her *2020 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 12, Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson reports the need for the Ministry of Social Services to consistently follow established policies to confirm the quality of care for children in approved foster homes.

Our audit assessed the effectiveness of the Ministry’s processes to monitor whether foster families provide a safe and secure environment for children in care.

“The Ministry of Social Services needs to consistently conduct annual home safety checks, obtain annual criminal record declarations, and complete annual reviews of approved foster families,” Ferguson said

“We are also recommending the Ministry require periodic criminal record checks on all adults residing in approved foster homes, similar to other provinces, like British Columbia, where this is required every three years.”

The Ministry of Social Services established and used the following effective processes to approve and oversee foster families:

- Well-defined policies and procedures
- Training for foster families
- Qualified staff
- Regular visits to foster families
- Reasonable financial support for foster families
- Follow up on quality of care concerns
- Policy compliance monitoring

Key Facts

- 856 children in 486 foster homes (March 2019)
- Each foster home had 2.3 children on average
- 65 resource workers monitor about 20 foster families each on average
- \$25.9 million spent on supporting foster families in 2018-2019

Ferguson notes, “Effectively monitoring the children’s safety and providing needed support to foster families is crucial in contributing to the health and well-being of the children who are placed in foster care.”

The full Provincial Auditor’s *2020 Report – Volume 1* is available online at www.auditor.sk.ca.

The Provincial Auditor is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Office promotes accountability and better management by providing Legislators and the public with an independent assessment of the government’s use of public resources.

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Additional issues highlighted in the Provincial Auditor's *2020 Report—Volume 1* include:

- Chapter 6: eHealth—Securing Portable Computing Devices
- Chapter 8: Horizon School Division No. 205—Maintaining Facilities
- Others from 29 additional chapters

See accompanying news releases and backgrounders for further details about key topics.