

Job Description

POSITION:	Child Welfare Worker
ACCOUNTABILITY:	Team Supervisor
CLASSIFICATION:	Full-time
DATE APPROVED:	May 23, 2024

JOB PURPOSE

The Child Welfare Worker role encompasses primary case management duties including the development of comprehensive service plans and the overall management and decision-making processes concerning child welfare cases. This position entails managing a diverse caseload, which involves conducting investigations and assessment related to children requiring protective intervention. The Child Welfare Worker provides essential support services to children and their families, Alternative Care Providers and Kinship Caregivers. The Child Welfare Worker ensures support of children in out of home placements. All duties are performed in alignment with the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, Ministry Standards, established child protection protocols and risk assessment tools. Operating within the framework of legislative mandates, regulations, organizational policies and procedures, the Child Welfare Worker adheres to the Mission, Vision and Beliefs of Nogdawindamin Family & Community Services and contributes to achieving the strategic priorities of the Agency.

KEY JOB FUNCTIONS

Investigation and Ongoing Support:

As the primary Case Manager, the worker will conduct child protection investigations and assess ongoing risk to children and youth as well as support families in planning for reunification with their children.

- Conduct case investigations and home visits including interventions in crisis situations.
- Assess risk to children utilizing risk and assessment tools, standards and guidelines, and Agency policies and procedures.
- Conduct joint investigations with police, as appropriate, to ensure the safety of children.
- Interview and assess all parties involved in investigations including referral source, children and extended family.
- Complete assessments for the purpose of formulating service and safety plans.
- Consult with community partners in developing appropriate extended family and Alternative Care placements where admitting children into the care and custody of the Agency is necessary.
- Coordinate and manage access and referrals to internal and external services.
- Coordinate, manage and plan all communications related to case reviews with individual First Nations, Band Representatives, and other community-based services for families involved with child welfare.
- Prepare children for admission into care of Agency.
- Advocate the use of traditional concepts of kinship and Alternative Care.
- Incorporate strategies to engage family members in collaborative casework that empowers change;
- Provide oversight of holistic case assessment, planning and service provision;
- Continue to assess the strengths and needs of families,
- Coordinate, facilitate, and participate in Family Circles and Family Case Conferencing.
- Support and encourage families to create an ongoing safe and nurturing environment.
- Determine the child’s ongoing safety and risk and develop a service plan that alleviates and mitigates ongoing concerns.
- Ensure that ongoing services embrace and incorporate both contemporary and traditional mental health/support services.
- Document and complete all legal requirements for court hearings in conjunction with Legal Counsel.
- Attend child welfare and criminal court.
- Assist families to identify the most appropriate services, family members and activities to achieve case plan objectives.

- Complete routine and timely case reviews with families, making the appropriate plan modifications including terminating involvement.
- Complete court documentation for protection proceedings including all pertinent data for case records and reports, including case management notes, case assessments and reviews, case histories, legal reports and correspondence.
- Assist families in developing permanent plans for their children where reunification is not possible.
- Participate in afterhours/on-call schedule.

Supporting Children:

Provide day-to-day case management services for children and youth placed in the care and custody of the Agency and in Alternative Care settings, including, but not limited to:

- Conduct assessments of physical, mental, emotional, cultural and social needs of children in Alternative Care settings.
- Develop a thorough knowledge of the stages, process and milestones of child development between birth to adolescence.
- Demonstrate effective, age-appropriate interview skills for children who range from school-aged to adolescence.
- Coordinate services and supports to meet the child's physical, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual and recreational needs.
- Identify a strength-based approach to prepare a child and the child's immediate family for the child's placement in an out of home placement setting either short-term or permanently.
- Identify and assess the effects of separation on children and their parents or caregivers and strategize effective responses.
- Identify and differentiate healthy attachment and behavior-related problems and outline appropriate services to address the specified needs.
- Identify and strengthen connections between a child and those who are identified as meaningful and beneficial caregivers while the child is in an out of home placement setting.
- Encourage and guide caregivers how to establish realistic expectations of children and how to adjust their parenting skills accordingly.
- Coordinate the travel or transportation of a child in care for medical treatment when an alternative care giver is not able or willing to attend.
- Support Alternative Care Providers to work with biological families in support of reunification.
- Assess the child's readiness and preparedness for reunification.
- Utilize visitation and access visits for reassurance, ongoing assessment, planning and modeling of interventions.
- Identify and ensure timely, concurrent and permanent placement options are available for children.
- Complete all pertinent data for case records and reports including: case management notes, plans of care, Ontario Looking After Children (ONLAC) Assessment Action Record (AAR), case assessments and reviews, case histories, legal reports and correspondence.
- Ensure Agency compliance with Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Serious Occurrence directive and reporting requirements.
- Ensure children in care are aware of the duties and services of the Office of the Ombudsman, Child and Youth Unit.

Support Alternative Care Homes and Children in Out of Home Placements:

Recruit and explore family, extended family and community members to support the ongoing efforts of Alternative Care homes.

- Identify policies and procedures for recruitment, assessment, training, approval, and ongoing support to Alternative Care providers.
- Ensure Alternative Care Providers are active participants of the team servicing the needs of children in care.
- Encourage Alternative Care Providers to develop supportive relationships with Natural Caregivers to support communication, enhance visitation and sustain children's attachments to natural caregivers.

Relationship, Team Building and Case Management Decision-Making:

Work collaboratively and cooperatively at all levels in order to support the use of a family-centered, strengths-based, child-focused practices while assisting families in building their capacity to provide safe and nurturing environments for children.

- Lead decision-making within the circle of care
- Demonstrate behaviors, actions and attitudes that are consistent with Agency vision, mission and values.
- Provide opportunities for the enhancement and development of positive cultural identities of the children, families and communities served.
- Ensure appropriate communication and consultation with Supervisor at appropriate times.
- Ensure effective and professional communications with all internal and external service providers.
- Share information according to privacy and/or confidentiality guidelines.
- Work respectfully, positively, professionally, and collaboratively with team members.

Cultural Competency

Participate in cultural activities within the agency.

- Follow the Seven Grandfather teachings as it relates to the position in line with the vision and mission of the Agency;
- Actively attend and participate in regular Anishinaabe Aadziwin cultural training and/or activities provided by the Agency;
- Ensure appropriate cultural opening when coordinating meetings both within the agency, for clients, families, communities and other collaterals;
- Actively seek guidance from cultural staff how to incorporate culture into the position or how to work from a cultural perspective;
- Engage in learning and incorporating Anishinaabemowin language within the position.

Administration and Reporting:

Complete administrative functions and reports, and adhere to Agency policies, procedures, and relevant practices.

- Ensure submissions of reports are completed and reviewed;
- Prepare reports, statistics, briefing notes and correspondence as required;
- Develop and maintain an individual detailed work plan of activities;
- Ensure confidentiality and safekeeping of all Agency documents and records;
- Develop and maintain accurate, up-to-date and concise work files;
- Work in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and any other relevant legislation;
- Prepare and submit monthly reports and travel expense claims and maintain attendance records;
- Follow Agency human resources, finance and other policies and procedures in the performance of duties.

Other Duties

- Act in accordance with agency Code of Ethics and maintain confidentiality at all times to protect the privacy of Agency staff, families and communities;
- Participate in internal or external committees as required or assigned;
- Perform additional related duties in accordance with job responsibilities and department objectives;
- Participate in training, cultural events and other mandatory training as required;
- Other duties as required or assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum Education

- Bachelor of Social Work degree or relevant Human Services Degree preferred
- Community College Diploma in Social Services or Indigenous Child Welfare Worker may be considered

Minimum Experience

- Two (2) years' direct experience in a social services agency

- Equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered

Knowledge Requirements

- Knowledge of Nogdawindamin programs and services
- Knowledge of the Child Youth and Family Services Act, Eligibility Spectrum, Ontario Safety Assessment, Family Risk Assessment and Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Knowledge of First Nation service delivery, customs and traditions in relation to child welfare
- Knowledge of external services and service agencies
- Knowledge of the stages, process and milestones of child development from birth to adolescence

Special Skills

- Excellent telephone and interpersonal skills
- Excellent computer skills and MS Software and computer knowledge
- Excellent crisis intervention, conflict resolution, mediation and problem solving skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational and administrative skills
- Ability to work with First Nation communities and people
- Ability to work with and meet tight timelines
- Ability to take initiative and work independently
- Ability to work within a team environment
- Ability to meet deadlines and work flexible hours
- Ability to work with confidential and sensitive information

Other Requirements

- Respect for, sensitivity towards as well as knowledge and understanding of Anishnawbek culture, traditions and the Seven Grandfather Teachings;
- Ability to understand and speak Anishinaabemowin is a definite asset;
- Must provide a Police Records Check deemed satisfactory by the employer;
- Must have a Class 'G' Ontario Driver's License, access to a vehicle and the ability to travel;
- Must have \$1M automobile insurance coverage.

WORK SITE LOCATION

Location to be determined.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

While performing the duties of this job, the Child Welfare Worker will typically be in a home or office setting with regular meetings with children, families and other professionals. The Child Welfare Worker is frequently required to operate a computer, file and retrieve written documents, and work overtime when required or during emergency situations.

The physical demands include, but are not limited to, standing, sitting, walking, lifting, carrying, reaching, handling, kneeling, crouching, and bending. The Child Welfare Worker will be required to travel to meetings and home visits within the district.

The Child Welfare Worker must be able to multi-task within a fast-paced, high-volume and demanding environment. The Child Welfare Worker absorbs and interprets information from multiple parties on a regular basis and is required to listen and reconcile multiple points of view, which can be mentally challenging. As a result, this position is more emotionally challenging than physically challenging. There will be extended periods of sitting required when performing administrative tasks and while attending meetings.

Non-physical demands include a work environment where the noise level is usually moderate to high. The nature of the position may expose the Child Welfare Worker to high levels of tension when dealing with issues. The level of tension is usually moderate, with high levels of tension occurring occasionally.

The Child Welfare Worker may be exposed to potentially hazardous environments including driving conditions and volatile situations during home visits.

Given the traditional practices of Indigenous people, from time-to-time exposure to smoke from the burning of sacred medicines; tobacco, sweet grass, sage or cedar, may occur.

TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT

Computer, photocopier, telephone, fax machine and cell phone.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

This position is not required to supervise any staff.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

The position requires interaction with the Team Supervisor, Manager of Legal Services, other Child Welfare Workers, Children Support Workers, Client Records Clerks, Cultural Services Department, Administrative Assistant and other staff.

External

The position requires interaction with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, other Children's Aid Societies, other First Nation communities, and all service-related agencies within the First Nation that respond to child welfare service delivery needs.

DISCLAIMER

This document describes the position currently available and is only a summary of the typical functions of the job. It is not an employment contract. The above job description is not an exhaustive list of the duties, responsibilities, working conditions or skills required for this position. Additional duties may be assigned. Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services reserves the right to modify job duties or the job description at any time.

SIGNATURE

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of this job description and understand its contents.

Signature of Employee

Date