



Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Report on the Review of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate 2022-2023 Annual Report

January 2024



COMMITTEES
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices
3rd Floor – Queen Elizabeth II Building
9820 107 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 1E7
780.644.8621
LOCommittee. Admin@assembly.ab.ca



STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

January 2024

To the Honourable Nathan M. Cooper
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of the Province of Alberta

The Standing Committee on Legislative Offices has the honour to submit its report
relating to the review of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate 2022-23
Annual Report for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

Shane Getson, MLA
Chair, Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Table of Contents

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES.....	ii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	3
3.0 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES.....	3
4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES ..	4

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES
31st Legislature, First Session

Shane C. Getson, MLA
Chair
Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)

Glenn van Dijken, MLA
Deputy Chair
Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UC)

Amanda Chapman, MLA
Calgary-Beddington (NDP)

Nolan B. Dyck, MLA
Grande Prairie (UC)

Janet Eremenko, MLA
Calgary-Currie (NDP)

Hon. Grant R Hunter, MLA
Taber-Warner (UC)

Martin M. Long, MLA^{*}
West Yellowhead (UC)

Marie F. Renaud, MLA
St. Albert (NDP)

David Shepherd, MLA
Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)

Scott Sinclair, MLA
Lesser Slave Lake (UC)

Substitutions Pursuant to Standing Order 56(2.1-2.4):

Heather Sweet, MLA^{**}
Edmonton-Manning (NDP)

Brandon G. Lundy, MLA[†]
Leduc-Beaumont (UC)

Garth Rowsell, MLA[†]
Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)

Other Members in Attendance

Jennifer Johnson, MLA[§]
Lacombe-Ponoka (IND)

^{*} Pursuant to Standing Order 56(2.1-2.4) Mr. Long was a substitute as Acting Chair for Mr. van Dijken on December 15, 2023

^{**} Substitution for Amanda Chapman on December 14, 2023

[†] Substitution for Glenn van Dijken on December 15, 2023

[‡] Substitution for Scott Sinclair on December 15, 2023

[§] Attended meeting on December 14, 2023

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Child and Youth Advocate (the “Advocate”) is appointed under the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, S.A. 2011, c. C-11.5, (the “Act”) as an Officer of the Legislature. Pursuant to section 9(1) of the Act the Child and Youth Advocate’s role is “to represent the rights, interests and viewpoints of children.”

Section 21 of the Act provides that the Advocate must report annually to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly with respect to the work of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate. The reporting requirement includes the Office’s annual report and reports on any mandatory death reviews and systemic reviews following a serious injury or death of a child who was receiving a designated service under section 1(e) of the Act. Pursuant to section 21(1.1) the annual report must include information on the progress of the implementation of the Advocate’s recommendations.

In accordance with section 21(3) of the Act, once tabled, an annual report stands referred to the committee of the Legislative Assembly charged with review of the report. Pursuant to section 21(4) of the Act a committee undertaking the review “must report back to the Assembly within 90 days of the report being referred to it if it is then sitting or, if it is not sitting, within 15 days after the commencement of the next sitting.” On December 5, 2023, the Legislative Assembly passed Government Motion 18, referring the 2022-2023 Annual Report of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate to the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices for review.

This report is not a comprehensive record of the Committee’s proceedings. For a complete record of the Committee’s review, consult transcripts 31-1-3 (pp. LO-57 to LO-67) and 31-1-4 (pp. LO-78 to LO-83) available at assembly.ab.ca.

2.0 SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

On December 15, 2023, the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices made one recommendation “that the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate continue to work together with relevant ministries to improve outcomes for children and youth in care in Alberta based on the recommendations made in the 2022-23 Annual Report of [the office of] the Child and Youth Advocate.”

3.0 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee met on December 14 and 15, 2023, to review the Child and Youth Advocate’s Annual Report 2022-2023.

At the December 14, 2023, meeting Terri Pelton, the Child and Youth Advocate, made a presentation to the Committee on the Advocate’s Annual Report. The report lists three new recommendations for the 2022-2023 year in addition to providing an update of the Office’s evaluation of a further 31 outstanding recommendations. Of the outstanding recommendations the Annual Report indicated that four were met, two were closed, and 25 are ongoing.

Following the presentation by the Advocate, the Committee resolved to better understand how Ministries are responding to recommendations put forward by the Advocate. Accordingly, the Committee requested, by way of the following resolution that officials from the Ministry of Children and Family Services appear before the Committee to provide an oral briefing on the Ministry’s response to the recommendations of the Advocate:

That the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices invite officials from the Ministry of Children and Family Services to provide a briefing at the next committee meeting on the ministry’s response to the recommendations in the *2022-23 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate*.

The Committee also invited, by way of the following resolution, officials from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate to provide technical assistance to the committee if required during the briefing by the officials from the Ministry of Children and Family Services regarding the recommendations in the 2022-23 Annual Report:

That the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices invite officials from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate to provide technical assistance to the committee if requested when officials from the Ministry of Children and Family Services meet with the committee regarding the recommendations in the *2022-23 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate*.

On December 15, 2023, the Committee heard an oral presentation from Leann Wagner, Assistant Deputy Minister, Child Intervention, Ministry of Children and Family Services. The Committee, after hearing the oral presentation, deliberated on the 2022-2023 Annual Report of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, and made one recommendation with respect to the Annual Report.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

At its meeting on December 15, 2023, the Committee made the following recommendation with respect to the 2022-2023 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate:

That the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices recommend that the office of the Child and Youth Advocate continue to work together with the relevant ministries to improve outcomes for children and youth in care in Alberta based on the recommendations made in the *2022-23 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate*.

The Committee expressed its desire that Ministries work collaboratively with the Advocate to ensure the well-being of children and youth in Alberta.