



Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

2025-2026 to 2027-2028

Coordination and content

Direction des politiques et de la lutte contre l'intimidation
Sous-ministériat des politiques et des Programms

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Ministère de la Famille

ISBN 978-2-555-00821-2 (French, PDF)

(English: ISBN 978-2-555-00822-9)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The living conditions of Indigenous families in communities and urban areas involve a number of challenges:

- 53% of Indigenous families are single-parent families;¹
- 30% of Indigenous families have at least three children;²
- 61% of Indigenous families with children aged 0 to 5 living in urban areas say they have been subjected to racism or discrimination in Québec's health and social services network;³
- 50% of children live in Indigenous households with an annual income below \$29,999;⁴
- 25% of Indigenous households with children aged 0 to 11 face moderate to serious food insecurity;⁵
- the rate at which children are reported to child and youth protection services is four times higher for Indigenous children than for non-Indigenous children;⁶
- the rate at which children are placed in alternative environments is eight times higher for Indigenous children than for non-Indigenous children.⁷

In addition, the reports filed by the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec (known by its French acronym CERP) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) highlighted the fact that the funding currently received by communities is not sufficient to support suitable local services for Indigenous children and their families.

The Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection, in turn, recommended that Indigenous children and families be offered "early, intensive, ongoing and stable" support.

Given this general context, the Ministère de la Famille (referred to in this document as the "Ministère") implemented the Financial Support Program for Indigenous Family Organizations (the "Program") in 2022.

¹ *Quelle Famille?* Volume 8, numéro 3, Ministère de la Famille, 2021.

² *Idem.*

³ *Portrait des politiques publiques 2021*, Observatoire des tout-petits.

⁴ *Idem.*

⁵ *Idem.*

⁶ Commission spéciale sur les droits des enfants et la protection de la jeunesse, p. 282.

⁷ *Idem.*

Its goal is to support the creation and ongoing operation of Indigenous family organizations in order to increase the delivery of local services that are culturally appropriate to the needs of Indigenous families.

Since its creation, the Program has provided financial support for organizations providing local services, including

- support for living environments for families, in other words places where parents and children are welcomed and can discuss their situation;
- the implementation of family-focused community activities, in other words activities designed to support children's development, enrich parental experiences, develop parenting skills, transmit culture and promote cultural identity.

In addition to contributing to Québec's vitality and development, the Program is intended to help Indigenous communities establish and improve culturally appropriate services.

The Program launched by the Ministère is consistent with the responsibilities of the Minister of Families, Seniors and the Status of Women who, under the *Act respecting the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine* (chapter M-17.2), must help families achieve their potential and help children develop.

1.2 Definitions

The following definitions apply under the Program:

Community actions targeting families

Community actions targeting families are collective actions based on the values of solidarity, democracy, equity and autonomy. They are ultimately consistent with the goal of sustainable development and are implemented in particular through Indigenous family organizations and multi-sector Indigenous organizations, with the goal of improving the social fabric and family living conditions and helping to develop the potential of each family member. The organizations respond to the needs expressed by families facing similar problems or sharing the same wellbeing objectives.

Indigenous family organization

An Indigenous family organization is a non-profit organization that devotes most of its actions to supporting families through a living environment for families and family-focused community activities that target assistance, mutual aid, emergency help, welcoming, listening, referral, support and help for families.

Multi-sector Indigenous organization

A multi-sector Indigenous organization is a non-profit organization that devotes some of its actions to supporting a living environment for families and family-focused community activities that target

assistance, mutual aid, emergency help, welcoming, listening, referral, support and help for families. Its other actions involve activities associated with other missions. A multi-sector Indigenous organization receives operational funding from at least one government department or body other than the Ministère.

Living environment

A living environment is a physical location (and not a virtual space) where informal activities are the main focus. It may be permanent or mobile, provided that it allows families to develop a sense of belonging. For this purpose, the organization must ensure a permanent presence to welcome and attend to families, and give them the possibility of coming to the living environment to further their interests, aspirations and needs.

The living environment

- gives families an opportunity to discuss their situation and share their experiences informally (spoken word);
- provides time and space for informal discussions with families (time and space);
- promotes an informal approach (welcoming, supporting, complementing).

Family-focused community activities

Family-focused community activities are open and free; they may be formal or informal, and are not part of a therapeutic or clinical approach. Family-focused community activities may be offered in the form of

- individual, coparental, family or group activities designed to support children's development;
- individual, coparental, family or group activities designed to enrich parental experience;
- activities to strengthen the parent-child relationship;
- group activities to support solidarity between families and reduce isolation;
- coparental, family or group activities designed to transmit culture or promote cultural identity for families.

2. Objectives and goals

2.1 General objective

The objective of the Program is to help families achieve their full potential and help children develop in Indigenous families by providing financial support for the operation of

- Indigenous family organizations;

- multi-sector Indigenous organizations that implement family-focused community activities, including support for a living environment.

In addition, the Program aims to provide a suitable response to the needs and realities of Indigenous families and communities, based on a culturally secure and culturally relevant approach.

2.2 Specific objectives

To improve local services, the Program targets the implementation of actions that promote

- increased activities for Indigenous families to support child development and parenting skills, promote the role of parents, and give parents an opportunity to talk about and enrich their parental experience;
- access to local services that are culturally adapted to Indigenous families;
- improved support services that complement and offer alternatives to the services available in the public system and are adapted to the needs of Indigenous families.

2.3 Program structure

Projects may be submitted for the Program under one of two components:

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

This component enables financial assistance to be granted to support the operation of an Indigenous family organization or multi-sector Indigenous organization in connection with a living environment and the implementation of family-focused community activities.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

This component enables temporary financial assistance to be granted to

- support the creation of a new Indigenous family organization south of the 49th parallel;
- support the development of innovative solutions to meet the needs of Indigenous families south of the 49th parallel.

Component 2 cannot be used to support activities covered by Component 1 of the Program or activities covered by another financial assistance program of the Québec government.

3. Program duration

The Program takes effect as soon as it is approved by the Conseil du trésor and ends on March 31, 2028. However, it does not apply before April 1, 2025.

4. Eligibility

4.1 Eligible applicants (Components 1 and 2)

The following applicants may file an application:

- communities that are part of one of the Indigenous nations recognized by the National Assembly of Québec;
- the Assembly of First Nations Québec - Labrador and its commissions;
- non-profit Indigenous organizations, both in and out of community, whose main mission is to work with families;
- Indigenous community action organizations, both in and out of community.

To be eligible, applicant must also be established, or pursue their activities, in Québec.

4.2 Excluded applicants (Components 1 and 2)

The following are excluded as applicants:

- non-profit organizations (NPOs) at least half of whose members are appointed or report directly to a private enterprise, or a legal person planning to launch a private enterprise in Québec;
- the following NPOs:
 - foundations whose mission mainly involves collecting and redistributing funding;
 - professional orders and union organizations;
 - religious organizations;
- NPOs whose objectives and activities primarily involve organizing congresses, conventions or seminars, or preparing and producing educational or promotional materials;
- NPOs that mainly pursue research activities;
- NPOs whose main objectives activities concern the acquisition, construction or renovation of buildings in whole or in part;

- organizations named in the register of enterprises ineligible for public contracts;
- organizations which, during the two fiscal years preceding the application for financial assistance, failed to meet their obligations after being put on notice to do so by a government department or body in connection with the granting of previous financial assistance.

5. Filing of an application for financial assistance

5.1 Application for financial assistance

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

The Ministère gives priority to maintaining financial assistance for organizations that are already receiving support under this Program component to ensure the stability of the activities they have implemented, provided that the activities still meet the objectives and criteria of the Program.

However, the Ministère may accept new applications for financial assistance while the Normative Framework is in effect. New applications for financial assistance may be filed only after the Ministère has launched a call for projects.

If a call for projects is made, a new application for financial assistance must be filed with the Ministère between January 1 and March 1 of the year concerned. However, for the first year of Program implementation, new applications must be filed with the Ministère between April 1 and June 30, 2025.

The application form must be sent to: psf.famille@mfa.gouv.qc.ca.

The date of receipt of the application is the date on which the signed application form and required documents are received in digital format.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Depending on budget availability, new applications for financial assistance under Component 2 may be made after the Ministère launches a call for projects.

If a call for projects is made, information about the filing of applications will be posted online at Quebec.ca.

If no call for projects is in effect, no applications will be considered by the Ministère.

5.2 Required documents

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Applicants planning to submit an application for financial assistance under Component 1 must send the **application form for financial assistance** prescribed by the Ministère, signed by the organization's Chair,⁸ to the Ministère, setting out

- the required information about the organization, the Indigenous community and the families concerned;
- the plan for supporting the living environment and making family-focused community activities available;
- the annual budget forecast;
- a list of the members of the board of directors and their background and the group they represent.

In addition to the application form, the applicant must send to the Ministère:

- **For financial assistance for an Indigenous family organization or multi-sector Indigenous organization that is not a previous Program beneficiary:**
 - a copy of the organization's general by-laws and letters patent;
 - a recent letter of support from an Indigenous community (Indigenous authority, community action organization, Indigenous non-profit organization or the equivalent, band council, public organization, parapublic organization, etc.);
 - the annual report from the last fiscal year, adopted by the organization's formal authority, if applicable;
 - the financial statements from the last fiscal year, adopted by the organization's formal authority, if applicable.
- **For the renewal of financial assistance to an Indigenous family organization or multi-sector Indigenous organization:**
 - a copy of the organization's general by-laws and letters patent, if they have been amended.

The Ministère may require any other information or documents it considers relevant.

In addition, before being analyzed, an application must be complete, understandable and based on accurate data.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

⁸ For an organization with no legal existence that reports to the Band Council, a resolution of the Band Council is required.

If a call for projects is made, an applicant planning to submit an application for financial assistance under Component 2 must send the **application form for financial assistance** prescribed by the Ministère, to the Ministère, signed by the organization's Chair,⁹ setting out

- a description of the project;
- its objectives;
- the target client base;
- the implementation phases;
- the expected outcomes;
- a balanced budget.

The Ministère may require any other information or documents it considers relevant.

In addition, before being analyzed, an application must be complete, understandable and based on accurate data.

5.3 Project selection criteria (Components 1 and 2)

The projects submitted are first examined to ensure compliance with the eligibility criteria in section 4.

Projects found to be eligible are then assessed by a selection committee under the responsibility of the Ministère using two sets of criteria:

Quality, relevance and feasibility criteria

- the quality and relevance of the project having regard to the Program objectives and needs of families in the Indigenous community;
- the quality, relevance and feasibility of the plan to support the living environment and implement family-focused community activities;
- support for a living environment for families;
- a realistic budget forecast.

Sustainable development criteria

- a contribution from resources in the Indigenous community;
- an improvement in quality of life for families in the Indigenous community;

⁹ For an organization with no legal existence that reports to the Band Council, a resolution of the Band Council is required.

- consideration for the needs of vulnerable families;
- the promotion of local know-how and culture;
- the involvement of families and the Indigenous community in the implementation of the project.

Where applicable, an application may be filed with the government departments and bodies concerned for a sectoral opinion on the project's relevance, feasibility and funding.

The analysis of applications takes sectoral governmental responsibilities into account with regard to the organization's mission.

6. Type of financial assistance, amount and payment

6.1 Type of financial assistance

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Under Component 1, financial assistance is granted in the form of a maximum annual amount on the basis of a multi-year financial assistance agreement covering no more than three years.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Under Component 2, the Ministère provides temporary, non-recurrent financial support. Financial assistance is granted in the form of a maximum annual amount on the basis of an annual financial assistance agreement.

For both Components

The signing of a financial assistance agreement by the Ministère and the applicant seals the agreement between the two parties.

The financial assistance agreement sets out the elements binding the two parties, including

- the maximum amount of the financial assistance;
- the conditions for the payment of the financial assistance;
- the undertakings of the applicant and of the Minister of Families, Seniors and the Status of Women;
- the term of the agreement;
- the verification and accountability mechanisms;
- the conditions for the cancellation of the agreement.

The granting of financial assistance is subject to the availability of funds and the appropriation of credits by the National Assembly of Québec.

6.2 Amount of financial assistance

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Under Component 1, the applicant may receive a maximum amount of \$300,000 per year, subject to the availability of funds and the appropriation of credits by the National Assembly for the Ministère.

The financial assistance granted is determined on the basis of

- the base amount needed for the organization's operations, as determined by the Ministère;
- the accounts submitted for the last completed fiscal year, in the case of an existing organization, showing support for a living environment and the implementation of admissible family-focused community activities, as well as the associated amount of financial assistance.

Financial assistance is granted subject to the availability of funds and the appropriation of credits by the National Assembly for the Ministère.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Under Component 2, financial assistance is granted on the basis of

- the availability of funds and the appropriation of credits by the National Assembly for the Ministère;
- a demonstration of financial need supported by the presentation of eligible expenditure in the application form following a call for projects.

The maximum amount that may be granted is \$100,000 annually.

Financial assistance may be granted up to a maximum of 90% of the eligible expenditure for a project.

6.3 Rules on cumulative funding

For the purposes of the rules on cumulative funding from public sources, "municipal entity" means a municipal organization within the meaning of section 5 of the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information* (CQLR, chapter A-2.1).

The asset referred to in subparagraph 1 of the first paragraph of section 89 of the *Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government* (CQLR, chapter G-1.04) is not considered under the rules on cumulative funding of this Normative Framework.

For the purposes of the rules on cumulative funding, all forms of financial assistance granted by a public organization must be calculated at 100% of their value, whether refundable or not.

In addition, financial assistance from the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ) is considered to be a private contribution if it offers no advantage, in other words if it is awarded at market rates.

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Cumulative direct or indirect financial assistance from government departments and bodies and the state-owned corporations of the governments of Québec and Canada, including tax credits, and from municipal entities that are not direct beneficiaries under the Program, must not exceed 100% of eligible expenditure.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Cumulative direct or indirect financial assistance from government departments and bodies and the state-owned corporations of the governments of Québec and Canada, and from municipal entities, must not exceed 100% of eligible expenditure. Cumulative assistance is calculated net of the contribution by project beneficiaries.

6.4 Payment

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

- For the first year of the financial assistance agreement,
 - the first instalment, corresponding to 50% of the annual financial assistance, is paid not later than thirty (30) days after the financial assistance agreement is signed by both parties;
 - the second instalment, corresponding to 50% of the admissible financial assistance, is paid before November 30 of the first year.
- For subsequent years,
 - the first instalment, corresponding to 50% of the admissible financial assistance, is paid not later than thirty (30) days after the Minister approves all the documents required for accountability purposes;
 - the second instalment, corresponding to 50% of the admissible financial assistance, is paid before November 30 of each year, provided the conditions in the Normative Framework and highlighted in the financial assistance agreement are complied with.

The Ministère reserves the right not to pay all of the second instalment if one of the conditions in the Normative Framework highlighted in the financial assistance agreement is not complied with or if the applicant fails to forward the documents requested.

If the examination of the organization's annual accounts shows that the activities provided for in the plan to support a living environment and implement family-focused community activities that was submitted have not been implemented and failed to meet the Program objectives, the organization must repay to the Ministère any amount exceeding the annual financial assistance to which it was entitled.

In such a case, the Ministère sends the organization a written notice specifying the excess amount paid. This excess payment must be repaid within sixty (60) days of the date of the notice. Where applicable, the Ministère may also adjust the annual instalment accordingly.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Under Component 2, the financial assistance granted is paid to the organization as follows:

- the first instalment, corresponding to 70% of the annual financial assistance, is paid not later than thirty (30) days after the financial assistance agreement is signed by both parties;
- the second instalment, corresponding to a maximum of 30% of the annual financial assistance, is paid not later than thirty (30) days after the Ministère approves all the documents required for accountability purposes.

The Ministère reserves the right not to pay all of the second instalment if one of the conditions in the Normative Framework highlighted in the financial assistance agreement is not complied with or if the applicant fails to forward the documents requested.

6.5 Accumulated surplus

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Under Component 1, to improve organizations' financial stability and encourage them to self-fund, the Ministère allows them to accumulate a surplus corresponding to six months of activities, in other words a percentage of unallocated net assets of up to 50% of the organization's total annual expenditure. These amounts will not have to be repaid by the organization on the expiry of the agreement if the two parties agree to renew the agreement or sign an agreement of the same nature.

The Ministère reserves the right to reduce or cancel one or more payments of the grant if the organization fails to respect the 50% threshold.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Under Component 2, an organization cannot run a financial surplus. The Ministère may cancel or reduce an instalment scheduled for payment to the organization or demand a repayment if the expenditure incurred to complete a project is less than the financial assistance granted.

7. Expenditure

7.1 Eligible expenditure

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Under Component 1, the Ministère grants financial assistance to support operations and implement family-focused community activities, including support for a living environment.

The following expenditure is eligible expenditure:

- the organization's general costs: office materials and supplies, information technology infrastructure, communications, etc.;
- office rental costs;
- wages and social benefits connected with the organization's basic operations;
- skills upgrading costs for staff members;
- travel and representation costs (transportation, meal and accommodation costs within Québec, not exceeding the rates in effect for the Québec public service).

However, for multi-sector Indigenous organizations, eligible expenditure must be connected with the implementation of family-focused community activities and support for a living environment, as defined in this document.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Under Component 2, the following expenditure is eligible expenditure:

- wages:
 - for staff members assigned to the project, including payroll taxes;
 - for staff members assigned to project management, which must not exceed 10% of the wages of all staff members assigned to the project;
- the purchase cost of materials and supplies exclusively allocated to the project implementation;
- the costs relating to project promotion and publicity.

Eligible expenditure also includes, up to the regulatory rates in effect for the Québec government,

- fees for specialists;
- travel;
- accommodation.

7.2 Non-eligible expenditure (Components 1 and 2)

The financial assistance granted by the Ministère may in no case be used for expenditure relating to

- an accumulated deficit;
- acquiring transportation vehicles;
- travel expenses or personal use of the organization's vehicle;
- the cost of extending or renovating offices;
- activities already funded under another governmental or other program;
- activities that take place before they are accepted, except if agreed otherwise by the parties;
- a loan or gift;
- the costs of civil litigation, including legal fees;
- costs for administrative faults or penalties, or penal or criminal offences, including legal fees and fines or penalties;
- alcoholic drinks, tobacco and cannabis products, a liquor permit or event permit;
- any cost not directly related to the organization's operations;
- remuneration paid to people taking part in the organization's activities;
- remuneration paid to members of the organization;
- amortization.

8. Accounts

The rendition of accounts enables the Ministère to ensure that the financial assistance granted has been used in compliance with the Program objectives.

Component 1: Supporting the work of community action organizations with Indigenous families

Organizations receiving financial assistance under Component 1 must render an account annually, not later than June 30, and include the following items:

▪ **Reporting form:**

- the reporting form prescribed by the Ministère setting out
 - a detailed overview of the activities implemented and outcomes obtained with regard to the support plan for the living environment and the implementation of family-focused community activities covered by the application for financial assistance;
 - a financial report showing the percentage that the implementation of family-focused community activities, including support for a living environment for families, is of the expenditure and revenue for a multi-sector Indigenous organization.

▪ **Financial statement:**

- the financial statement for the last full fiscal year must include
 - a report from an independent auditor, signed by the auditor, when the cumulative financial assistance from a municipality and the Québec government (government departments or bodies and parapublic bodies) is \$500,000 or more;
 - a review engagement report, signed by a practising professional, when the cumulative financial assistance from a municipality and the Québec government (government departments or bodies and parapublic bodies) is below \$500,000 but \$50,000 or more;
 - a compilation engagement report, signed by a practising professional, when the cumulative financial assistance from a municipality and the Québec government (government departments or bodies and parapublic bodies) is less than \$50,000 or when, despite the absence of government grants, the organization has received income that requires it to render account to a financial backer.

▪ **Annual report:**

- the annual report for the last full fiscal year, as submitted by the organization to its members or the Indigenous community.

Component 2: Supporting the development of community actions for Indigenous families

Organizations receiving financial assistance under Component 2 must, 90 days after the end of the project and not later than February 15, render an account annually and include the following items:

- the final report (description of outcomes) on the implementation of the project;
- a detailed financial statement, setting out in particular the use made of the financial assistance allocated to the project and all sources of funding that contributed to the same project;
- a copy of any documentation produced;
- any other information considered relevant by the Ministère;
- all supporting documents requested by the Ministère;
- all the information needed to monitor and assess the Program.

The organization must keep supporting documents for all the expenditure incurred for the project for a period of five years; the supporting documents may be required for verification purposes.

9. Termination of the financial assistance agreement (Components 1 and 2)

The Ministère may, at any time, terminate a financial assistance agreement if

- the applicant has presented false or misleading information or made false representations;
- the Ministère considers that a situation has occurred that, on grounds of public interest, calls into question the purpose for which the financial assistance was granted;
- the applicant has failed to meet any term, condition or obligation that applies to it under this agreement;
- the applicant has ceased operations in any way, including because of bankruptcy or the liquidation or transfer of its property.

The Ministère will inform the applicant in writing of the termination.

The Ministère may also terminate a financial assistance agreement without ground by sending a written notice of termination to the applicant. Termination takes effect by right on the date on which the organization receives the notice.

The applicant is entitled to receive the amount of financial assistance payable for expenditure that has been incurred and paid for.

If the financial assistance agreement is terminated, the applicant undertakes to repay to the Ministère any balance remaining on the amount of financial assistance paid but not spent. The balance must be repaid within sixty (60) days of the date of the notice of termination.

10. Rendition of accounts by the Ministère

The rendition of accounts by the Ministère to the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT) is effected by means of a summary based on the prescribed template. The summary must be filed with the SCT not later than November 30, 2027.

The main indicators for the outcomes obtained are, for the purposes of the summary,

- the number and type of family-focused community activities made available;
- the number of people who took part in the family-focused community activities;
- the number of hours of informal activities provided to support a living environment for families.

