



SEP 16 2020

HONOURABLE JULIE GREEN
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR SENIORS
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories

I am writing to confirm your mandate as Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Responsible for Seniors, and Minister Responsible for People with Disabilities. In addition to your formal portfolios, you will also Chair the Energy and Climate Change Committee-of-Cabinet.

Consensus government in the Northwest Territories depends on a collective commitment by all Members of the Legislative Assembly to work together, within their respective roles, openly and cooperatively. As Premier, I have committed to improving and enhancing the relationship among Cabinet and Regular Members. I expect all Ministers to make effective and regular dialogue with Members an ongoing priority and to work closely and respectfully with Standing Committees at every appropriate opportunity.

Cabinet must work as a cohesive team given the collective nature of Cabinet decision making, recognizing that many of the issues we will be tackling do not exist in silos. Ministers should use the appropriate Committee-of-Cabinet to advance commitments and develop coordinated proposals for Cabinet's consideration. We must conduct ourselves with professionalism and integrity, and maintain confidentiality on all matters related to Cabinet and Cabinet related meetings, discussions and proceedings.

In your capacity as Chair of the Energy and Climate Change Committee-of-Cabinet, you will ensure cooperation between Ministers and departments on key initiatives relating to energy policy, renewable and alternative energy solutions, and addressing climate change.

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As Cabinet Ministers, we have the collective responsibility to advance the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly by implementing the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, tabled on February 7, 2020. In addition to carrying out all of the duties associated with the portfolios you hold and meeting the provisions of your Department's Establishment Policy, you are accountable for fulfilling the specific Mandate commitments listed in the attachment to this letter and for tracking and reporting on your progress.

As a Cabinet, we have agreed that our decisions will reflect the Guiding Principles we tabled on December 10, 2019. These principles should guide us and our departments in both our assessment of issues and our decision-making. We must lead with courage and compassion in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

A productive partnership between Indigenous governments and the Government of the Northwest Territories is fundamental to the success of our Mandate and the future prosperity of our territory. The decisions we make as Cabinet should always reflect our commitment to reconciliation and the affirmation and advancement of Indigenous rights and self-determination. I expect every Minister to foster constructive and respectful government-to-government relationships with our Indigenous partners and to seek ways to advance reconciliation, recognize and affirm Indigenous rights, and support expanded program and service delivery by Indigenous governments.

Successfully achieving our Mandate commitments will also require a close working partnership with community and municipal governments across the territory. Ministers must also build effective working relationships with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts to foster the strategic government-to-government relationships required to fulfill our shared goals and to leverage support for Northern priorities.

The people of the Northwest Territories want accountable government that is open, transparent and reflective of their interests, in keeping with the principles of our Open Government Policy. I expect the fulfillment of every Minister's mandate to be carried out in meaningful dialogue with all residents and stakeholders, including GNWT staff, the broad business community, and investors. You must also uphold the principles of open, transparent, and evidence-based decisions, solution-oriented service delivery and effective public awareness of government operations and decision-making.

Economic uncertainty, increasing impacts and awareness of climate change and complex social needs create significant challenges for the Government of the Northwest Territories. While decisive action is required, our fiscal situation calls for prudent, publicly accountable financial management. Difficult decisions will be required on the part of all elected leaders to meet the best interests of residents, while ensuring fiscal balance and maintaining future resources. This requires careful financial decision making to support meaningful and effective investments in jobs, in people, and in communities across the Northwest Territories.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed not only the NWT, but the entire world. Cabinet and departments reacted quickly to put essential supports in place. Work will need to continue to support NWT residents and businesses, as the NWT faces potential future waves of the pandemic, but also moves towards social and economic recovery. Ministers will need to work collaboratively with MLAs and each other to determine how best to provide supports, while being mindful of the need to fulfill the GNWT's mandate.


We also must acknowledge the reality that the Northwest Territories is not immune to systemic racism and systemic discrimination. Unconscious bias and discrimination hinder our ability to fully embrace the vibrant diversity of the Northwest Territories, advance our collective priorities, and achieve inclusion and cooperation. It is critical to address the ongoing legacies of colonialism and the devastating impacts it has had on Indigenous people's culture, language, education and health. As Minister, I expect you to support the GNWT in its efforts to build a territory where all persons, including Indigenous people and people of all racial backgrounds, have an equal opportunity to succeed, as well as advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice.

As Minister you must exercise utmost compliance with the *Conflict of Interest Act*, the *Financial Administration Act*, the Respectful Workplace Policy and all other policies and procedures of the Financial Management Board and of Executive Council (Cabinet). The role of Minister demands the highest ethical standards and bears the closest scrutiny. Your actions will be the basis on which this Government is measured for its ethical and respectful conduct, professionalism and impartiality.

Your Deputy Minister is responsible for assisting you to fulfill the responsibilities of your portfolios and the specific Mandate objectives for which you are accountable. You can rely on your Deputy Minister and other skilled public servants as key sources of advice on process and policy and to bring forward comprehensive options for your consideration. You are, however, responsible for providing clear direction to your Deputy, including your expectations for interdepartmental and intergovernmental collaboration.

Our Cabinet brings together diverse backgrounds, fresh perspectives, and a shared dedication to the people of the Northwest Territories. I am certain that, working together with our colleagues in the Legislative Assembly and our Indigenous and other government partners, we will develop innovative solutions to the complex and long-standing issues Northerners face, ensuring a bright future for the Northwest Territories well beyond our own four year term.

I am honoured and excited to be working with you to achieve this.


Caroline Cochrane
Premier

Attachment

Minister of Health and Social Services

As Minister of Health and Social Services you are responsible for promoting, protecting and providing for the health and well-being of the people of the Northwest Territories. To achieve these goals your Department engages in a broad range of activities that you continue to be accountable for.

In addition to the Departmental goals, you will undertake the following to support the achievement of the Government's Mandate:

- Co-lead, with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, efforts to improve early childhood development indicators for all children by:
 - Ensuring better coordination of services for children and their families;
 - Ensuring our programs and services respect the cultural needs of children and youth; and
 - Providing greater supports for parents.

- Lead, with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and the Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, efforts to enable seniors to age in place with dignity by:
 - Increasing supports for seniors to stay in their homes and communities;
 - Funding actions that enhance inclusion, safety and removal of community level barriers to aging in place; and
 - Helping protect seniors from abuse or neglect.

- Lead efforts to increase the number and variety of culturally respectful, community-based mental health and addictions programs, including aftercare by:
 - Increasing the availability of e-health, on the land, and other proven approaches to mental wellness and addictions recovery;
 - Improving services for individuals with addictions to reduce number of returns to treatment and increase length of time between treatments; and
 - Strengthening community counselling services.

- Lead efforts to increase the number of resident health care professionals by at least 20 percent by:
 - Reducing the number of vacancies and reliance on locums.

- Along with the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and the Minister of Lands, support the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment to lead the efforts of our government to increase food security through locally produced, harvested and affordable food by:
 - Supporting the development of the food industry.
- Support the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead our government's efforts to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by:
 - Identifying, prioritizing and strengthening key actions to further implement UNDRIP.
- Support the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead efforts to strengthen our government's leadership and authority on climate change.
- Support the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to lead our government's efforts to increase regional decision-making authority by:
 - Ensuring that GNWT decision-making reflects the full understanding of communities and regions.

In addition to the Mandate objectives listed above, you are also accountable for:

- Improving the delivery of children and family services in the Northwest Territories by advancing the following goals:
 - Responding to the action items contained in 2014 and 2018 Reports of the Office of Auditor General on the state of the Child and Family Services in the Northwest Territories, and continuing to advance the three-year Quality Improvement Plan and making changes to this plan where necessary and prudent to achieve results;
 - Improving communications with stakeholders like the Foster Family Coalition of the Northwest Territories and our Indigenous government partners;
 - Ensuring that the health and social services system is adequately resourced with sufficient staff, training and supports for Child and Family Service Workers; and
 - Engaging, when requested, with Indigenous governments in the exercise of their right to child and family Services and foster care as provided for under federal legislation.

- Reducing the impact of substance use on the residents of the Northwest Territories by leading a whole of government, interdepartmental approach to developing evidence-based policies and programs, and the development of a robust addictions treatment aftercare regime, including a Territorial Alcohol Strategy

Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities

As Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities, you are responsible for acting as an advocate for persons with disabilities within the NWT and working with stakeholder organizations to advance policy and program changes that enhance inclusion and equitable access. This will include a focus on reviewing options for Supportive and Assisted Living and identifying options for repatriation of some services from southern providers, enabling our residents to access services closer to home.

Minister Responsible for Seniors

As Minister Responsible for Seniors, you are responsible for providing a cross governmental perspective on issues related to seniors; and acting as an advocate within the GNWT for seniors. This will include assisting seniors to age in place by accelerating the full implementation of the home care review.