
Matters to be Considered

Regulation

2 When making a decision under the *Act*, the director and an appeal committee must consider the following:

- (a) the responsibilities a guardian normally has in raising a child;
- (b) the impact the child's disability has on the family;
- (c) the strengths and abilities of family members to care for the child;
- (d) the physical and emotional well-being of the guardians and others living in the same home as the child;
- (e) the severity of the child's disability;
- (f) the child's developmental stage, relevant to age-appropriate functioning;
- (g) the family's composition;
- (h) the needs of the child's siblings;
- (i) the cultural values and beliefs of the guardians;
- (j) the needs of the family in caring for the child during scheduled school breaks and school holidays;
- (k) the child and family's involvement in community programs and activities;
- (l) the availability of persons, other than the child's guardians, to provide support and assistance in caring for the child;
- (m) the availability and accessibility of appropriate programs, services and other resources within the community where the child lives;
- (n) the geographic location of the child's home community;
- (o) any other relevant matter.

INTENT

- ◆ The “Matters to be Considered” emphasize the need to view the child within the context of their family and their family's strengths, abilities and needs.
- ◆ The Matters to be Considered highlight the need to consider the uniqueness of each child and family situation.
- ◆ Each of the considerations is of equal importance, no one consideration is of greater significance than another.

POLICY

- ◆ FSCD supports and services build on the family's natural sources of support, including extended family and friends, as well as the programs and/or resources that the child and family already have access to.
- ◆ Supports and services should be flexible, individualized, and designed to meet the needs of the child.
- ◆ The “Matters to be Considered” are intended to provide a holistic view of the child and:
 - (1) Recognize the strengths and abilities of families;
 - (2) Acknowledge the family's natural supports and existing resources;
 - (3) Recognize the various supports and services that play a role in addressing child and family needs;
 - (4) Acknowledge normal parental responsibilities including the typical costs and care demands associated with raising a child;
 - (5) Recognize the unique needs and circumstances of children with disabilities and their families;
 - (6) Acknowledge the impact that a child’s disability can have on a family; and
 - (7) Promote family centered practice and individualized assessment of needs and support planning.

PROCEDURE

- (1) Explore the “Matters to be Considered” with the guardian in relationship to their circumstances and needs.

Cost-Effective and Appropriate Services

Regulation

Services delivery

- 6** (1) Agreements under sections 3 and 4 of the Act may provide for services in the manner that the director considers to be the most cost-effective and appropriate.

INTENT

- ◆ To build on the family's strengths, abilities and natural support networks to promote positive outcomes for the child.
- ◆ To allocate FSCD resources in a responsible and accountable manner.

POLICY

- ◆ The FSCD worker and the guardian will consider the most cost-effective and appropriate service available to address any identified service need.
- ◆ The most cost-effective service option will be provided if it is appropriate to meet the child's and family's needs.

PROCEDURE

- (1) In determining the most cost-effective and appropriate service or manner of service delivery, the FSCD worker will consider:
 - The identified need;
 - The services or service provider options available to address the identified need;
 - The matters to be considered;
 - How the service will address the identified need; and
 - Community standards, regional rates and local resources.
- (2) If required, and with a guardian's consent, other relevant professionals may be consulted regarding the most appropriate service.

Accessing Other Available Supports and Services

Regulation

Services delivery

- 6** (2) Before receiving services pursuant to an agreement under section 3 or 4 of the Act, a parent must use services on behalf of the child readily available from dental insurance, health services insurance and benefit plans and apply for assistance under other dental insurance, health services insurance and benefit plans and Government and community programs, if in the opinion of the director those programs would be equivalent to the services provided under an agreement under section 3 or 4 of the Act and the child is eligible under those programs.

INTENT

- ◆ To recognize the child's and family's strengths and abilities and build upon supports, services and resources already available to them.
 - FSCD supports and services are not intended to replace or supersede the guardian's typical responsibilities or costs associated with raising a child.
- ◆ To coordinate FSCD supports and services with other available services or resources.
- ◆ To prevent duplication of services or resource utilization.

POLICY

- ◆ Where another government program or service is available to the family, the FSCD worker will work together with that program or service to coordinate and plan for the provision of services between programs.

- ◆ Where another government or community program or service, health insurance or benefit plan may provide a support, service, benefit or funding relevant to the child's identified need, confirmation is required to verify that:
 - the support, service, benefit or funding that is available to the guardian has been fully utilized; or
 - that the support, service, benefit or funding is not available to the guardian and has been formally denied; and
 - that available appeal or review mechanisms relevant to the program, service, insurance or benefit plan have been utilized;

before a similar FSCD service can be provided.

PROCEDURE

- (1) The FSCD worker and the guardian will identify the current and existing supports, services or health benefit/insurance plans that the family may be accessing in order to meet the child's identified needs.
- (2) The FSCD worker and the guardian discuss the availability of all other supports and services that the family and child may have access to.
- (3) The FSCD worker advises the guardian of their need to:
 - Apply to all other available supports and services prior to requesting funding for a similar service from the FSCD Program;
 - Provide documentation to the FSCD worker to demonstrate that relevant support and services have been utilized or where applicable, verification that a particular support or service has been denied, including whether the service or benefit would be covered under other circumstances, or in the case of a health benefit or health insurance plan that coverage has been denied; and
 - Apply to any "special consideration" or "appeal" process that may exist for a relevant program, service or benefit plan if it may result in access to a service or coverage.
- (4) The FSCD worker will assist the guardian to apply for other programs and services as needed, and with the guardian's written consent, may contact the other programs or benefit providers to help determine if a support, service or benefit may be available to them.

- (5) The FSCD worker, supervisor or manager, as appropriate, will work together with other government programs and services to co-ordinate service provision for common families/clients.

Co-ordinating and Collaborating with other Programs and Services

INTENT

- ◆ To provide a co-ordinated, integrated and flexible approach to supporting children and families that may be accessing a range of supports and services from government and community programs, as well as in school.
- ◆ To promote joint planning across programs and services and to enable coordinated and integrated services that empower families to identify and achieve goals and outcomes that are meaningful to their child with the least amount of duplication, intrusion or administrative burden.
- ◆ To provide information and referral to other relevant programs and resources and help families to co-ordinate and access resources available in their communities (see Section 6, Information, Referral and Advocacy Services).

NOTE: For information about Alberta's Information Sharing Strategy please refer to the website at humanservices.alberta.ca/infosharing.

- ◆ To ensure planning and accessing services across multiple programs is as seamless as possible for the child, with relevant programs and services working together to create a single service experience for families wherever possible.
- ◆ To promote, develop and maintain positive working relationships with other supports, services and programs.

POLICY

- ◆ FSCD will establish and maintain effective relationships with community and other government partners to support families in accessing and co-ordinating services for their children.
- ◆ Where co-ordination and integration of supports and services is required, FSCD will work together with families and relevant professionals or other persons who are knowledgeable about the child and family's needs to share information and jointly plan for and co-ordinate the provision of services between programs (see Section 8, Assessment of Needs and Support Planning; Section 8, Planning for Change; Section 11: Integrated Transition Planning, and Appendix O: Program Coordination between CIS and FSCD).

PROCEDURE

- (1) The FSCD worker will work with the guardian, their service providers and other professionals involved with the child to jointly plan for and co-ordinate supports and services that are outside of the guardian's FSCD Agreement, as well as those provided in the FSCD Agreement.
- (2) The FSCD worker will work with the family, and other programs and services they are involved with, to provide a single service plan wherever possible (for example, the Transition to Adulthood Plan or the PUF/FSCD Specialized Services Common Approach Individualized Service and Program Plan).

REFERENCES

- ◆ Information, Referral and Advocacy (Section 6)
- ◆ Assessment of Needs and Support Planning (Section 8)
- ◆ Planning for Change (Section 8)
- ◆ Integrated Transition Planning (Section 11)
- ◆ Program Coordination Protocol between CIS, including SFP and FSCD (Appendix O)

Guardian's Responsibilities

- ◆ The FSCD Program is a voluntary program accessed by guardians. Guardians choose whether or not to access the services offered by the FSCD Program. Guardians are responsible:
 - For costs, care demands and decision making typically associated with raising a child;
 - To provide necessary information and documentation as required by the FSCD Program in order to inform decision making about FSCD Program eligibility and service provision;
 - To advise the FSCD Program if there is a change in child or family circumstance that may affect the FSCD services needed or provided;
 - To spend funds provided by FSCD, in accordance with the terms of the FSCD Agreement;
 - To comply with relevant employment standards, as per Canada Revenue Agency and Alberta Labour Standards requirements when hiring private individuals to provide services; and
 - To submit receipts, invoices or other documentation regarding the services used and costs incurred when requested.
 - With respect to specialized services, guardians are not required to participate when specialized services is being provided directly to the child.