

## **YOUTH SECRETARIAT / YOUTH ADVISORY PANEL**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **BACKGROUND**

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In the spring of 1999, the Premier announced the formation of a Youth Secretariat to be housed in the Ministry of Children's Services. In June 2000, a Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) was established to provide an ongoing youth perspective on all work done by the Secretariat. With the creation of this panel, Alberta provides youth with the unique opportunity and privilege to be involved in government advisement. The Terms of Reference identify the role of the Youth Secretariat as follows:

“... to identify key themes for the government focus and to build on existing initiatives and partnerships to provide a mechanism through which issues impacting youth at risk (13 years of age to 22 years of age) can be identified and addressed. Working through the Minister and the Deputy Minister, the Secretariat will collaborate with other departments and community stakeholders; the Secretariat will identify and work to address the needs of adolescents”.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

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The Youth Advisory Panel will play a critical role in providing the Youth Secretariat with a youth perspective and helping identify important issues for youth in Alberta. The Youth Advisory Panel of the Youth Secretariat will provide the Chair and staff of the Secretariat with feedback and advice on proposed strategies, recommendations, and findings. The youth will comment on current initiatives and may propose improvements or new ideas to improve the quality of services to youth. The Youth Advisory Panel may be invited to provide advice on other youth-related initiatives within the Ministry of Children's Services or other ministries.

#### **PANEL**

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The Youth Advisory Panel will be comprised of 16 to 18 youth from around Alberta, ranging in age from 15 to 22. Each panel member will serve a one-year term. Panel members will represent a variety of backgrounds and experiences including members who are Aboriginal, as well as members who have received services. The group will also represent both rural and urban perspectives. Youth Secretariat staff will facilitate the panel.

#### **SELECTION**

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Youth will be selected from around the province based on the determined criteria for an appropriately balanced and relevant panel formation. Selections will be made by a Recruitment Committee. Following the review of all applications, those individuals selected will be notified and may be requested to participate in a telephone interview.

#### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

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Panel members will be selected for a one-year term. The Youth Advisory Panel will meet four to six times annually. This is a volunteer position; however, members' expenses for travel, meals and accommodation will be covered. As well, members will be provided with a small honorarium for each panel meeting.