

# Jordan's Principle: Still not Filling the Gaps

January 16, 2024 | Webinar Q&A

## 1. What is the Final Settlement Agreement (FSA)?

- It is a negotiated settlement between the parties to resolve the discrimination and prevent it from happening again. The Final Settlement Agreement requires approval by the tribunal and the Chiefs of Assembly.

## 2. In urban areas, organizations are experiencing high numbers of applicants with only a handful of workers—is there a plan to increase the amount of workers?

- First, it is concerning that the government didn't flag backlogs before a crisis point – there needs to be learning from this, backlogs need to be monitored and addressed as they build.
- Secondly, we want to deal with the front-end number requests— this is where the presumptive approval below \$500 with a supporting letter comes in, the Caring Society would like to get them to take that approach.
- Third, we want them to open the requests to find out what kids needs are and respond to them so it is likely that they will need to apply more personnel.

## 3. There are a lot of requests coming in for basics (i.e., food, rent, clothing), previously there was discussion about the Federal government looking at changes between themselves and the provincial government— are they still looking at making changes as inflation is going up? Will there be any changes in what is being distributed to families?

- One of the key things the Caring Society is finding is that Jordan's Principle is plugging holes in other underfunded programs, and one of them is income support for families – especially families who are in deep poverty. We would like to see that the government makes sure people have a basic liveable income— it is something we are advocating for and something we encourage others to advocate for with both federal and provincial governments. We see from research that when families have a basic liveable income that kids do better across a wide array of areas.

## 4. A cap of three months has been placed on approvals for food – inflation isn't changing, it is getting worse. It is known that Jordan's Principle isn't an income supplement – but who is going to supplement it?

- Canada can deny requests, we don't dispute that, but in order to deny a request Canada would have to say that at month three the child is no longer in need of that food and that it is not in the child's best interest to receive it. There are certain criteria— they can't say after three months that they are cutting people off, that is an example of the non-compliance that we are trying to challenge.

## 4.B. How do people use the information above to advocate for themselves or their clients?

- Ensure the letter of recommendation from the professional itemizes the needs of the child(ren).
- Refer Canada to the compliant rationales for determining requests in the Tribunal orders. 2017 CHRT 35 orders Canada to determine if “the requested service should be provided to ensure substantive equality in the provision of services to the child, to ensure culturally appropriate services to the child and/or to safeguard the best interests of the child.”

**5. Do you see the government raising income assistance for families as inflation goes up?**

- There is no fixed costs on Jordan's Principle, it is based on the needs of the child(ren) and the letter of recommendation from a professional or Elder making a recommendation based on their area of expertise. For group requests, the inflation adjustment should be built into the request and adjusted per the Consumer Price Index.

**6. For a parent who needs therapeutic medical treatment to get support for an addiction, is this type of family service included under Jordan's Principle?**

- With Jordan's Principle, it is possible to get some things funded at a family level, but it must be linked back to the child – it is one of the limitations of Jordan's Principle.
- For support, you can reach out to the Jordan's Principle HUB BC: <https://jordansprinciplehubbc.ca/>.
- Families and their circle of care could also consider placing requests like respite and support services (i.e. mental health supports) for the child(ren) whose parent is seeking therapeutic treatment.

**7. Does ISC Jordan's Principle require a new funding proposal to be submitted from a First Nation Service Provider at the end of every fiscal year for Jordan's Principle Funding?**

- Services for children are tied to their need and what the professional has recommended. For example, if a child is recommended to receive services for 6 months (if the professional has recommended a duration, this is not required to determine a request), and this goes over the fiscal year, the family should not have to re-apply at the end of the fiscal year.

**8. What is the breakdown of ISC cost of \$538 to make a decision?**

- The \$536 estimate comes from comparing publicly available data, including departmental administration costs for a specific program (i.e. time and materials, staff) and the number of applications associated to the program. Additional programs were assessed in this way as well, including refugee claims, family class visas (which had the highest unit cost) and passports (which had the lowest unit cost).

**9. Can families on income support be told they need to pay back any Jordan's Principle Funds?**

- No, there are no stacking measures in Jordan's Principle.
- We hope there are no stacking measures on the provincial/territorial side but the Tribunal case only has jurisdiction over the federal government, not provincial and territorial governments.