



April 17, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More Cuts to Come for Manitoba's Not-for-Profits

Re.: Leaked memo signals cuts from the provincial government to the not-for-profit sector rather than support during the pandemic

The non-profit and charitable sector in Manitoba is a key economic contributor, with more than 100,000 employees in our workforce. From Indigenous organizations, employment and education programs, long-term care homes, youth or environmental-serving organizations, shelters, food banks, to arts and cultural groups, Manitoba's non-profits, charitable organizations and the voluntary sector are on the frontlines supporting and serving our communities during the COVID-19 emergency.

"We acknowledge that government is facing increasing pressure for financial assistance and that its resources are not unlimited. However, the non-profit, charitable and voluntary sector provides critical and much needed services to the communities they serve and needs to be recognized as a valued partner in the response to the COVID-19 crisis." Sandra Oakley, board chair, MFNPO.

On behalf of non-profit organizations in Manitoba, and the communities they employ and serve, MFNPO sought to engage with the provincial government on the importance of the sector in meeting both the immediate concerns caused by COVID-19 and the uncertain future. Please see backgrounder.

While all members of the sector provide important services at much lower cost than the government could do directly, of most concern at this time are the organizations working to help those who were already in crisis before the pandemic. Manitoba was already facing pre-existing conditions such as our appalling rate of child poverty.

"Child poverty has been an issue for decades. We have recently seen it increase by 19%" Sid Frankel, Campaign 2000 Manitoba. "At our current rate investment, it will take 647.5 years to end child poverty in Manitoba. The sector needs more investment not less."

"We have long been used to doing more with less so we have built networks that allow us to make the most of the dollars we have. We share resources, work to not duplicate, adjust services to better meet emerging needs and so on. This makes us economical and effective but also interdependent. A cut to one of us can have a ripple effect throughout the entire sector." Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

"The vital services and supports that non-profit and charitable organizations provide the community not only helps to fill the glaring gaps of service in our health care system but ensures the overall health of Manitobans and our community. Whether it is the provision of harm reduction supplies in our community or food hampers, non-profits are the heart of our community and proposed cuts would be devastating to the overall health and well-being of Manitobans. – Brianne Goertzen, Provincial Director – Manitoba Health Coalition



“Funding cuts made to community organizations now will have devastating ripple effects. Vulnerable community members cut off from their supports will be impacted, and for some that impact will last far beyond the pandemic. There will be an increased burden on already strained emergency services if preventative and early intervention services are cut off. And when public health restrictions start to be lifted, the sector won’t be able to jump back into day-to-day operations if we’ve had to lay off staff, stop paying our bills, severed community relationships, and halted planning work in the meantime.” Emma Fineblit, Wolseley Family Place

“If they can forgo 75 million to give home and business owners a small break on their individual insurance, they should be able to support a sector that is the backbone of our collective response to the inequity in our society.” Gail Schellenberg, Initiatives for Just Communities

“People with Intellectual disabilities rely on critical services provided by nonprofit organizations on a daily basis. The role of services provided by community-based non profit organizations is critical for the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the broader community”. States Carlos Sosa disability advocate and direct support worker.

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Sandra Oakley, MFNPO, [milneoakley@gmail.com](mailto:milneoakley@gmail.com)

Sid Frankel, Campaign 2000, [Sid.Frankel@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sid.Frankel@umanitoba.ca)

Kate Kehler, SPCW, [kkebler@spcw.mb.ca](mailto:kkebler@spcw.mb.ca)

Bri Goertzen, MHC, [manitobahealthcoaliton@gmail.com](mailto:manitobahealthcoaliton@gmail.com)

Gail Schellenberg, [gschellenberg@initiativesjc.org](mailto:gschellenberg@initiativesjc.org)

Emma Fineblit, [executivedirector@wfpwpg.ca](mailto:executivedirector@wfpwpg.ca)



## BACKGROUND:

MFNPO has called on the government to:

1. Speak to the needs and responses of all three sectors: business, government and the non-profit to demonstrate a fulsome response to the pandemic and recovery.
2. Create a stabilization fund to provide financial supports for the non-profits that are on the frontlines, especially those organizations that cannot enforce social distancing or work-from-home for service or organizational reasons.
3. Create emergency funding provisions for organizations that suffer losses due to other funders shifting their priorities.
4. Provide and clearly communicate flexibility measures to assist non-profits that receive funding directly from government. This could potentially include allowing funds to be moved between budget categories, extending funding agreements concluding in 2019/20 through the 2020/21 fiscal year, postponement of implementation of administrative guidelines, and recognition that program outcomes may shift.
5. Include the non-profit, charitable and voluntary sector at leadership tables to ensure that their needs are explicitly addressed in planning and fund allocation.
6. Articulate a clear strategy to ensure that the non-profit, charitable, and voluntary sector and their organizations remain viable and able to deliver critical services during the COVID-19 situation and emerge from the crisis able to resume normal operations.