



February 26, 2026

Caring Society statement regarding Minister Gull-Masty announcement on Jordan's Principle funding

The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (the Caring Society) acknowledges today's announcement by the Minister of Indigenous Services committing additional funding to Jordan's Principle for fiscal year 2026/2027 and look forward to better understanding what it is intended to cover. While funding is necessary, it does not, on its own, remedy Canada's ongoing non-compliance with binding Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) orders or end discrimination against First Nations children.

In December 2025, the CHRT ordered Canada to immediately remedy the backlog of approximately 130,000 Jordan's Principle cases. That backlog remains. Thousands of children are still waiting for services they are legally entitled to receive without delay. Continued backlogs are not an administrative inconvenience—they are a violation of children's human rights and a direct failure to comply with Tribunal orders.

The Minister must also immediately withdraw the discriminatory February 2025 Jordan's Principle bulletin, which unlawfully narrowed access to services and undermined the child-first purpose of Jordan's Principle. That bulletin is inconsistent with CHRT decisions and continues to cause harm to children and families.

Canada must further publicly implement a clear, CHRT-compliant definition of substantive equality, developed in accordance with Tribunal rulings and First Nations children's rights. Substantive equality is the legal standard Canada is required to meet—it is not discretionary, negotiable, or subject to shifting interpretations.

Instead, Canada has removed all of its definitions of substantive equality from public view, failed to replace them with a lawful standard, and has continued to make decisions without transparency or accountability. As a result, every First Nations child is now subject to a moving target—with no public clarity on what substantive equality means, how it is assessed, or how decisions are made.

This legal uncertainty is compounded by hundreds of cases stalled in Canada's faulty internal appeal mechanism and has the effect of blocking enforcement of legally binding remedies. Delays created by this system undermine the Tribunal's orders and deny children timely access to justice and services.

Jordan's Principle is not a program of goodwill—it is a court- and Tribunal-affirmed legal obligation rooted in the best interests of the child. Reform that does not begin with full compliance with CHRT orders, immediate backlog elimination, withdrawal of discriminatory directives, and a transparent, enforceable substantive equality standard will continue to fail First Nations children.

Jordan River Anderson's legacy demands better. The Caring Society will continue to bear witness and pursue enforcement until Jordan's Principle is fully, faithfully, and sustainably implemented—so that no First Nations child is left waiting, denied, or harmed by government delay ever again.

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