

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MANITOBA ADVOCATE RELEASES GOVERNMENT COMPLIANCE REPORT

*Advocate calls for an urgent child-specific mental health and addictions strategy to address systemic gaps in Manitoba*

**TREATY 1 TERRITORY, HOME OF THE RED RIVER MÉTIS, Winnipeg, Man., Jan. 17, 2023** — The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, Sherry Gott, has released her office’s yearly government compliance report, which acts as a report card, summarizing incremental progress made by the province toward the intent of the Advocate’s public recommendations made between 2018 and 2022.

“Recommendations issued by the Manitoba Advocate office are meant to ensure accountability and transparency of services provided by the government,” said Manitoba Advocate, Sherry Gott. “My office ensures that all recommendations are made utilizing researched-based analysis along with an extensive investigation process to help support the implementation of our public recommendations.”

This year’s compliance report, *Rights delayed are rights denied*, summarizes the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth’s (MACY) assessments of progress by public bodies to implement 67 recommendations from 10 special reports: [Circling Star](#), [Angel’s Story](#), [Nelson Mandela](#), [Tina Fontaine](#), [Matthew](#), [Safe Sleep](#), [Suicide Aggregate](#), [Maltreatment](#), [Disabilities](#), and the [Boys Report](#).

Recommendations issued in MACY’s 2022 report on intimate partner violence were not included given insufficient time has passed (a minimum of six months) to assess compliance.

Highlights from this year’s report:

- Only 18% (12/67) of public recommendations by the Manitoba Advocate have been implemented fully.
- 88% (58/67) of recommendations issued since 2018 have demonstrated actions towards implementation, up by 44% from last year.
- Once again, the Manitoba Education department achieved the highest compliance rate; with an overall compliance rate of 93%, up by 18% from last year.
- Manitoba Justice has an average compliance rate of 53%, up by 8% from last year, while Manitoba Families has a 42% compliance rate.
- Compliance with recommendations issued to the Government of Manitoba as a whole is now at 46%, up by 8% from last year.
- The newly created department of Mental Health and Community Wellness was assessed for the first time this year and achieved a compliance rate of 48%.
- Overall compliance for one department went down. Manitoba Families is now at 42% (down 1% from last year), largely related to lower compliance rates with disability recommendations.
- Compliance for two domains has stalled: Manitoba Health has remained at 25% for the past three years and the Government of Canada has remained at 38% for the past two years.
- Of the 51 recommendations that were assessed in previous compliance reports and assessed again this year, 20 (39%) showed improvements in their compliance assessment since our last report and 31 recommendations (61%) showed no change since our last compliance report.

“Despite the increase in action towards the implementation of recommendations, the overall compliance rate across departments remains low, but there is promising movement towards more fully compliant recommendations next year,” said Gott. “We do want to highlight the work of the Manitoba Education department, which has responded rapidly to identified service gaps and increased its overall compliance rate by 18 per cent in one year.”

“There is an urgent need for a child-specific mental health and addictions strategy in Manitoba,” noted Gott. “There are systemic gaps, barriers, and obstacles for children and youth to receive the mental health and addictions services they need, and to which they have inherent rights. This is the most pervasive systemic issue that we continue to see in our work with children in Manitoba.”

To read the Advocate’s compliance report, please visit: [ManitobaAdvocate.ca/adult/reports-publications/special-reports/](https://manitobaadvocate.ca/adult/reports-publications/special-reports/)

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**About Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth:**

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) is an independent, non-partisan office of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. It represents the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children, youth, and young adults throughout Manitoba who are receiving or entitled to public services, including child and family, adoption, disability, mental health, addictions, education, victim supports, or youth justice. The office does this by advocating directly with children and youth, or on their behalf with caregivers and other stakeholders. Advocacy also involves reviewing public services after the death of any young person when that young person or their family was involved with a reviewable service as defined in *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* (the ACYA). Additionally, the Manitoba Advocate is empowered under provincial law to make recommendations to government and other public bodies, conduct child-centred research, disseminate findings, and educate the public on children’s rights and any other matter under the ACYA.

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