



BRITISH COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

Ref. 659009

August 23, 2024

Marie-Terese Little
Chair
Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee
3300 Wishart Road
Colwood BC V9C 1R1
Email: vfamcourt@gmail.com

Dear Madam Chairwoman Little:

Thank you for your letter of November 20, 2023, expressing your support of the Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST) and Crime Reduction and Exploitation Diversion Program (CRED) run by the Pacific Centre Family Services Association (PCFSA). I apologize for the delay in my reply.

Addressing vulnerable youth experiencing, homelessness, sexual exploitation, drug addiction, gang and gun violence is an issue that the Province takes very seriously. Improving the safety and security of British Columbian's is of the utmost importance and a matter for which all levels of Government share responsibility. Local governments and agencies play an active and important role in this shared responsibility through the provision of local prevention and intervention services.

The Province recognizes the intricate and interconnected landscape of crime, particularly as it pertains to gun and gang violence, and remains committed to addressing these issues through a multi-pronged approach that recognizes the interdependence of prevention/intervention, intelligence, enforcement, and legislation.

In 2023/24, the Province invested over \$100M into specialized enforcement and intelligence initiatives related to guns, gangs, and illicit drug trafficking across BC. This funding includes an increase to CFSEU-BC's total budget to reconcile RCMP salary updates, funding for priority initiatives within the Organized Crime Agency of BC, and support for municipal police department capacity through the federal Guns and Gangs Violence Action Fund (GGVAF).

In addition, the BC government is also funding complementary justice sector initiatives to address gang-related violence and crime. This includes support to prosecution services to ensure expertise, reduce delays associated with gang-related trials, increase prosecutorial capacity, and

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bring about more specialized and tailored legal responses to gun and gang-related cases. It also includes specialized, court-based victim service workers to assist witnesses and victims of serious crimes (thereby contributing to increased justice/sentencing), and support for corrections staff to collect gang-related intelligence within provincial correctional institutions and provide anti-gang education to inmates.

Over the last six years the PCFSA has received a total of \$777,000 of funding from the Province for their CRED and MYST Programs. The funding provided was a combination of one-time grant funding from the GGVAF as well as one-time funding from my Ministry's contingency fund. Grant funding, including GGVAF, is not intended to be a permanent funding source for programs and projects as one-time grants allow the province to optimize investments in serious and organized crime prevention disruption and enforcement efforts across the province. The Policing and Security Branch will be liaising directly with PCFSA should they require any additional information regarding current or future GGVAF applications.

Additional funding opportunities that PCFSA may want to consider outside of GGVAF are:

Canada's Youth Gang Action Fund:

<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/fndng-prgrms/yth-gng-prvntn-fnd-en.aspx>

Canada's Crime Prevention Action Fund:

<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/fndng-prgrms/crm-prvntn-ctn-fnd-en.aspx>

BC's Civil Forfeiture Grant:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/crime-prevention/community-crime-prevention/grants>

Local governments and agencies play a critical role in maintaining community programs. I appreciate your continued involvement and support of the MYST and CRED Programs.

Sincerely,



Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
and Deputy Premier

pc: The Honourable David Eby, KC
The Honourable Mitzi Dean, Minister of State for Child Care
The Honourable Grace Lore, Minister of Children and Family Development
The Honourable Niki Sharma, KC, Attorney General
The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
His Worship, Kevin Murdoch, Mayor & Co-Chair, RGU-IPU
Paula Kully, Executive Assistant, Oak Bay Police Department
Liz Nelson, Executive Director, Pacific Centre Family Services Association
Colin Plant, Councillor & CRD Chair
Her Worship, Maja Tait, Mayor & CRD Vice Chair
Sharon Orr, Senior Committee Clerk, Legislative Services, CRD
Tim Dunford, Board Chair, School District No. 63 (Saanich)
Nicole Duncan, Board Chair, School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Amanda Dowhy, Interim Board Chair, School District No. 62 (Sooke)
Marie-Pierre Lavoie, Chairperson, School District No. 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone)