

Manitoba government introduces bill to expand child care, freeze parent fees ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

The Manitoba government has introduced legislation that it says would make child-care and early-learning programs more flexible while freezing parent fees for three years.

Families Minister Rochelle Squires says the proposed legislation would allow for more equitable child care by better meeting the needs of families. She says it is especially important now as women have been disproportionately affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

"We want these women to get back into the workforce, and we know that when they do, they need a strong, stable child-care sector available there to support them," she said Thursday.

The bill proposes changing language in existing legislation so that more providers could receive grants. Currently, grants are limited to non-profit centres and for-profit, home-based centres.

The legislation would also allow programs to offer services outside of typical business hours, streamline certification and strengthen qualifications for workers.

Squires said the legislation would update provisions that were introduced more than 30 years ago to meet the needs of families now.

She said Manitoba has more than 5,000 vacancies in the child-care sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that is expected to decrease.

Region: Manitoba ^[3]

Tags: child care fees ^[4]

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