

Operators welcome Alberta government's changes to child-care system ^[1]

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Excerpts

The Alberta government is making changes to the province's child-care system that it says will "meet the needs of families and operators."

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In a news release Friday afternoon, the province announced it is "actively working on a new system that will streamline payment processes and ensure child-care operators receive affordability grant payments faster."

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"I am pleased to be working with the Ministry of Children and Family Services and the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Trade to ensure child-care operators are receiving their grant payments quickly, easily and efficiently," Minister of Technology and Innovation Nate Glubish said in a statement.

...

Another change being made is the ministry in charge of the province's work on child care. Up until now, Minister of Children and Family Services Searle Turton had taken the lead on child care. Now, the responsibility will fall to Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade Matt Jones.

The province said Jones has "extensive experience" from his time as minister of children's services. He has been tasked with working with the federal government to address the concerns of Alberta child-care operators "to ensure child care remains sustainable for Alberta families."

"I look forward to supporting our entrepreneurial and innovative child-care operators as they continue to provide world-class care to Albertans and their children," Jones said in a statement.

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"Child-care operators have been carrying the consequences of the UCP's failures in effectively rolling out an affordable, accessible, quality child care program. The \$10/day child-care program was designed to be a cost-share agreement between the federal government and the provinces, and the UCP has not stepped up," Diana Batten said in a statement.

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The federal government's 2021 budget included a \$30-billion, five-year offer that would eventually cut costs to families to \$10 a day by 2025-26.

Every province and territory has signed on to the deal. In exchange for the federal money, provinces had to implement the federal vision, which, while cutting fees, also sought to increase wages for child-care workers.

Some operators have said the federal-provincial agreements limit the fees they can charge while not providing enough support to cover all their costs.

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