

Deputy Representative, Investigations, Monitoring and Corporate Services Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

Questions and Answers

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Deputy Representative position on the Representative for Children and Youth's team. This document has been created to address questions that prospective candidates for the position of Deputy Representative, Investigations, Monitoring and Corporate Services may have after reviewing of the job profile. This includes questions and answers about terms used and requirements set out in the job profile, the application and selection process, salaries and benefits, and position location.

We are aiming to provide as much information as we can and make the application and selection process as transparent as possible for you as a prospective applicant. We hope that these Qs and As and the informational webinar will help you assess whether this position is a good fit with your background, experience and aspirations for meaningful work. If you decide that this is the job for you, then these Qs and As will be useful to consider as you prepare your application.

We have tried to think of the questions that you may have but expect that there are some we have not thought of. We are happy to respond to additional questions and post updates to this Qs and As document in the Careers section of our website. Please direct any questions to Linda Shout, Director of Human Resources for the RCY and BCOHRC, at linda.shout@rcybc.ca.

You are also welcome to participate in an informational webinar offered by the Representative, Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth. Questions are welcome at this time also. The webinar will provide participants with an opportunity to learn more about RCY's mandate, strategic priorities and projects, the role that the Deputy Representative position will play on the team, and the knowledge, skills and abilities that will be beneficial in this role. A webinar will be held on:

- **Thursday, May 27, 4:00-5:00 p.m. PDT**
- **Monday, June 7, 12:00-1:00 p.m. PDT**

To register for the webinar, please email Carissa Matheson, Manager, Executive Operations: Carissa.matheson@rcybc.ca.

Please note that a pre-recorded presentation and slides about RCY and the Deputy position will be made available on the RCY [careers page](#), by May 25.

Scope of Responsibility

Q. What are the primary responsibilities of the Reviews and Investigations team?

RCY conducts reviews and undertakes investigations of critical injuries and deaths of children and youth who have received reviewable services and identifies and makes recommendations for improvements to services to prevent similar injuries or deaths in the future.

This is a very busy team: they typically receive and screen 340+ reportable circumstances from MCFD every month, they conduct initial reviews of in-mandate reports (typically between 140-160/month) and conduct ongoing comprehensive case reviews. The number of reportable circumstances has been increasing significantly over the past few years. These increases are believed to be principally attributable to better reporting by MCFD services rather than an actual increase in critical injuries.

A further increase in reportables is expected in 2021 with the advent of health authorities reporting critical injuries and deaths in relation to mental health and addictions services for children and youth. This new reporting expectations began in April 2021 with child and youth mental health services in Vancouver/Richmond and will incrementally roll out from across the province thereafter.

The team also produces investigation, aggregate and special reports. Last fiscal year, the team produced four public reports:

- *Invisible Children: A Descriptive Analysis of Injury and Death Reports for Métis Children and Youth in British Columbia, 2015 to 2017*, in July 2020
- *A Way to Cope – Exploring non-suicidal self-injuries in B.C. youth*, in September 2020
- *Illuminating Service Experience: A Descriptive Analysis of Injury and Death Reports for First Nations Children and Youth in B.C., 2015 to 2017*, in December 2020
- *Detained: Rights of Children and youth under the Mental Health Act*, in January 2021.

Q. What are the primary responsibilities of the Monitoring team?

RCY's Monitoring team monitors, reviews, audits and conducts research on the provision of government-funded designated services or programs for children and youth and their families; and identifies and makes recommendations for change to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of those services. The team also hosts and supports RCY's Systemic Issues Working Group – with representatives from all teams coming together to identify systemic issues and opportunities to effect systems change. They provide advice to the executive team which is taken into consideration in strategic and operational planning.

In the past year, the Monitoring team has released two reports:

- *A Parent's Duty: Government's Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood*, which identified the need for, and cost benefits of, improving services and supports for vulnerable youth from care who are transitioning into adulthood.

- *Excluded: Increasing Understanding, Support and Inclusion for Children with FASD and their Families* which was a detailed examination of services and supports available to children and youth affected by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) and their families, and how those services and supports can be improved.

Q. In the job profile, you note that the Deputy is responsible for Corporate and Shared Services. What does this entail?

A. Corporate Services at RCY includes **finance, human resources, technology and information and privacy**. In addition, through a shared services agreement with BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (BCOHRC), the RCY team provides the BCOHRC with these same services. The Deputy supervises and supports the Director of HR, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer - who support both organizations – and they in turn have staff that either specifically support the RCY, the BCOHRC or both. The Deputy works with the Deputy, BCOHRC to manage the shared services agreement.

In practice, the Deputy works with their team to: build the annual operating budget; prepare presentations to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government; ensure sound fiscal planning and management; develop, modify and implement sound fiscal, human resource, information and privacy policies; ensure the RCY has strong information and case management systems; and work with the HR Director and members of executive as needed to address significant human resource concerns. In addition, this Deputy is RCY's "designated officer under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA)*.

Q. You note that the Deputy would be involved in identifying systemic issues including through critical injury and death reviews – what does this entail?

A. Through the day-to-day work of RCY advocates on the Advocacy team and the investigative analysts in the Reviews and Investigations team we see patterns and themes that point to systemic issues. These are recurring concerns that may pertain to: practice (e.g., absence of cultural or transitional planning that contributes to increased vulnerabilities for children and youth); policy (e.g., differences or inconsistencies in interpretation); funding (e.g. lack of funding or funding inequities); services (e.g., lack of timely access to specific services that children and youth are eligible for and inconsistencies in services between regions). The Deputy works with the Executive Director of Monitoring who supports RCY's cross-team Systemic Issues Working Group and the Executive Director of Reviews and Investigations to identify and bring forward systemic issues for the consideration of the Representative and Executive team. In addition, the Deputy may also identify systemic issues through their engagement work with public bodies and Provincial organizations.

Q. Will the Deputy be directly involved in individual case advocacy?

A. Typically the Deputy, Investigations, Monitoring and Corporate Services will not be involved in individual case advocacy unless there are extenuating circumstances that require engagement from a member of the senior leadership team and the Deputy responsible for Advocacy, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Relations is not available or has to recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest. These would be situations in which multiple advocacy efforts had already been made and it was determined that it was necessary to escalate the advocacy efforts to the ADM or Deputy levels in Ministries or CLBC.

Role within the broader RCY

Q. How does this position interact with other teams that are not under direct authority of the Deputy Representative, Investigations, Monitoring and Corporate Services?

A. There are formal lines of accountability within the organization for the purposes of managing the work and providing clarity and support to staff. However, both Deputies work with the Representative to support all RCY staff and to guide the work being undertaken in all teams. There are a number of ways in which the Deputy will interact with other teams including on the executive team and in project/report work, monthly review meetings (with RI), all-staff gatherings, and in training and education. One of RCY's strategic priorities is to foster greater collaboration between teams and to tap into the diversity of knowledge, skills, experiences and ideas that staff have. We believe that this will add to the depth and quality of our project work. The Deputy will contribute significantly to this.

Q. You mention the importance of being culturally attuned and a cultural safer organization in the job profile. Becoming a more culturally attuned and safer organization is not just one person's responsibility. What has RCYBC done so far and where is the organization at developmentally? How committed is the leadership and staff to this agenda?

A. The Representative and executive team are strongly committed to leading and investing in staff and the organization so that we become a more culturally attuned and safer workplace for both the people working at RCY and for the people that we serve. This is one of the primary strategic directions for RCY in the coming years and the Representative has set out an approach for RCY that recognizes this is an ongoing journey of building individual and collective cultural awareness, understanding, humility and agility as the foundation for greater cultural safety. Actions taken include:

- Retaining an advisor on cultural safety (Harley Eagle) who has assisted us to both identify work that we need to do to become more culturally attuned and safer and take concrete action.
- At the annual two-day all staff face-to-face gathering in May 2019, cultural safety was the primary learning focus and it has remained a primary staff development focus for 2020 and 2021.

- Staff are supported to participate in education and training to enhance their cultural awareness and understanding.
- Knowledge keepers have been engaged to offer healing practices to staff.
- An Indigenous Staff Circle meets regularly with the support of the Deputy, Advocacy, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Relations and Cultural Safety Advisor.
- A Knowledge Keeper is currently being recruited who will help RCY build strong Elders and Matriarchs circles for advice and counsel.
- The FNMIR team has created resources that are accessible to all staff to help prepare them for any community-based work (e.g., information about the lands and the people of the lands, protocols, key contacts etc.)
- Project leads are actively encouraged to review their methods and approaches and to weave Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing and doing into the project design, methods, analysis and drafting of reports.

Staff will be at different places in their journey and our aim is to encourage openness, curiosity, and ongoing learning. As an organization we recognize that there are areas in which we are doing quite well and others in which we have significant work to do. While the Deputy, Advocacy, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Relations has a key leadership role, it is a collective responsibility and both Deputies are expected to demonstrate commitment to their own learning and leadership.

General questions

Q. I note that the Representative does not report to a Ministry but does have relationships with various public bodies. Could you describe how these relationships work? Who are the closest points of contact for the office? How do these bodies assist in investigations, reports or inquiries? Are there limitations or challenges in these relationships?

A. While we are an independent office and have to be mindful of how we work with the bodies over which we have an oversight role, we cannot be isolated. Strong working relationships with the key ministries and other public bodies are important for RCY to:

- be effective advocates (e.g., have influence with/be valued for the advocacy role by government staff)
- ensure we understand the depth and breadth of programs, policies and practices so that reviews and critiques are appropriately focused and contextualized
- ensure we are getting accurate information
- have access to decision makers so that we can address individual and systemic issues as they arise where possible
- keep the focus on the well-being of children, youth and young adults and their families – even when there are disagreements and tensions.

In practice, these relationships are built and sustained through regular contact and respectful communication in person, over the phone and by email, that is cognizant of our respective roles

and responsibilities. The Representative, Deputy Representatives and EDs participate in regular meetings with senior MCFD staff and briefings on key program areas. Other meetings are held as needed with MCFD and other public bodies to address issues of concern as they arise.

The Ministries and Authorities we work most closely with are MCFD, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Education and Community Living BC. We also work with the Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Ministry of Advanced Education, BC Housing and the Health Authorities (including PHSA, FNHA and the regional authorities).

The Representative tends to be the main point of contact for the Ministers, MLAs and Select Standing Committee members, the Deputy Ministers and some Assistant Deputy Ministers (depending on issues) and the CEO and Board President for CLBC and Health Authorities, other Legislative Officers, the Public Guardian and Trustee, Chief Coroner and the Provincial Health Officer. The Deputy Representatives' main points of contact for public bodies are the ADM's, Director of Child Welfare, and VPs in the various authorities and Deputies of the other independent and provincial offices.

These public bodies don't 'assist' in investigations as partners or collaborators (given the importance of our independence) however, we do depend upon these bodies to provide information, respond to requests (made under the *RCY Act*) to produce documents or participate in interviews, review our findings to ensure accuracy, discuss the impact of recommendations and of course, to develop action plans in response to our findings and recommendations. RCY and the public bodies that we work with are all bound by the legislative provisions set out in the *RCY Act* and in other acts such as the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)* and the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* that address confidentiality.

Q. Will the Deputy Representative be involved in the development of reports that are released by the Representative?

A. The Deputy will be engaged in the design, development and drafting of reports – including investigative, aggregate and special reports - in a number of ways. First, any report that is contemplated by the Representative will be discussed at Executive and scoped out by a team, including the Deputies. As the project progresses there will be regular briefings and opportunities to provide input and ensure that Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing are reflected in the work. Drafts of reports prepared by the project teams and Communications will be reviewed by the Deputy and they will be involved in discussions on recommendations and administrative fairness reviews. The Deputy will also participate in and support the consultations respecting reports with First Nations, Métis, DAA and Urban Indigenous groups with whom we have agreements and MOUs. Although the final decision on the content, release and presentation of any report is the responsibility of the Representative, the Deputy plays an important role at all stages of the process.

Q. Are all the reports, statements and work of RCY contained on the website? How often does the Representative report to the Legislative Assembly and are those dialogues available publicly?

A. All of our reports and public statements are available on our website. With respect to reporting to the Legislative Assembly, Section 19 of the RCY Act states:

Annual reports

19 (1) Beginning in 2009, the representative must report annually, before September 30 of each year, to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on

(a) the representative's work with aboriginal children and their families,

(a.1) the other work of the representative, and

(b) the attainment of the goals and the specific objectives and performance measures of the representative as set out in the service plan referred to in section 17 (1),

and this report must include financial statements for the representative prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

(2) In relation to subsection (1) (b), the report must compare actual results for the preceding fiscal year with the expected results identified in the service plan for the representative for that fiscal year.

(3) The Speaker must lay each annual report before the Legislative Assembly and the standing committee as soon as possible.

Beyond this set annual requirement, the Representative does not have fixed dates to report to the Select Standing Committee. In practice, meetings are set whenever reports are released. The Representative is aiming for 4-6 meetings with the Committee in the year. The current Select Standing Committee is very engaged and active both with RCY and on their own special projects. The presentations that RCY makes to the Committee are all recorded and Hansards are available here: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/committees/42ndparliament-2ndsession-cay>

Q. What qualifications do you expect the Deputy to have?

A. This is addressed in the job profile. If additional clarification is required you are welcome to submit questions to Linda Shout, Director, Human Resources (linda.shout@rcybc.ca) who will respond or refer your question as needed.

Q. What do you envision a typical week will look like? What are the rhythms and routines that could be expected?

It is expected that one third to one half of the Deputy's time will be devoted to external facing activities and developing relationships. This will include connecting and meeting with diverse groups and leaders, listening and facilitation time within communities, attending forums, attending Select Standing Committee meetings, and offering talks and presentations on the RCY's work. Some of this will be done out in communities and some of this will be done using technology while based in Victoria. The balance of time will be devoted to internal leadership activities and priorities associated with the Advocacy and FNMI teams and corporate responsibilities.

Given the diversity of responsibilities and the need to be responsive to community and leadership invitations, there is no 'typical week' in the life of a Deputy Representative. However, one can expect that each week will include: a 1-1 meeting with the Representative for supervision and collaborative review of issues and projects, a meeting between the Representative and the two Deputies for collaborative review of major initiatives and issues, meetings with the ED and discussions with staff on project work, drafting contributions to the RCY update for staff, as well as review and drafting of documents, emails and ongoing communications with stakeholders. On a weekly basis the Deputy would participate in All Staff gatherings, Executive meetings are held every two weeks, and each month there is an initial review meeting in which all the previous month's critical injuries and deaths reportables are reviewed. Each quarter, the executive team spends a full day working together on strategic issues, reflecting on progress made in the preceding quarter and planning for the upcoming quarter. Also, on a quarterly basis, the RI team presents a quarterly data analysis and comprehensive reviews for discussion and decision making. The RCY has an ambitious professional development initiative called the Four Principles and Deputies are expected to participate in all training – typically on a monthly basis. When not in COVID times, the RCY hosts a 2-day face-to-face gathering for all staff. This is co-designed with staff and the Representative and offers opportunities for professional development as well as networking amongst staff from the different offices.

Although at times situations require an urgent response, the Representative's Office does not provide emergency services or deliver programs to children, youth and young adults. Although the work is expected to be demanding, with travel across the province required, modelling and supporting work life balance is important for all positions at RCY.

The work of the Office can be challenging and at times heartbreaking given what we are privy to and are committed to acting upon. Supports are available for all staff, including specialized counselling services, and it is the role of RCY's leaders to ensure that they are supporting staff as they navigate these challenges and that they are also managing their own self-care effectively.

Q. The location of the position is noted as being Victoria. Are you willing to consider the Deputy being located in other communities?

A. Because of the very close working relationship between the Representative and the two Deputies, and the value of being close to government ministry staff, the location for this position is necessarily Victoria.

Q. What benefits are available with this position?

This position is created pursuant to the *Public Service Act* as an excluded management position. This position offers a flexible benefits program covering extended medical, dental, and life insurance; vacation and other special leaves; short- and long-term sick leave benefits; and participation in the BC Public Service Pension Plan. For more information on the available benefits, please visit the [Benefits for Excluded Employees](#) web page. If you have any questions, please direct them to Linda Shout, Director, Human Resources: linda.shout@rcybc.ca

Q. What will the recruitment process look like?

The recruitment process will be multi-staged. Our goal is not only for RCY to learn about the candidates, but also for candidates to learn about RCY and to feel confident that this is a good place for them.

The first step is to screen candidates based on the education and experience qualifications listed in the job profile. For this reason, it is very important that you tailor your resume and cover letter to show clearly how your education and experience match those qualifications. The team will then review the application packages of those candidates who are screened in.

We are committed to working with key community partners in this selection process. Representatives from the community sector that we work closely with, and with whom the Deputy will be actively engaged, will be participating in the interview process. This will enable us to identify between 1 and 3 candidates who will then have the opportunity to meet individually with the senior leaders of the RCY. Finally, the Representative will meet with each candidate to confirm a final decision. Thereafter, references will be checked and an offer presented.

More specific information will be provided to candidates at each stage of the recruitment process.

Q. When are you expecting the new Deputy to begin work?

A. We will negotiate a mutually acceptable start date however we hope that the successful candidate will begin their work in August 2021.

Q. How much travel is required?

A. The Deputy must be willing to travel extensively to meet the operational needs of the Office. This will include overnight stays and travel to rural and remote areas. In keeping with RCY's support to balancing work, family and other commitments, travel will be planned in advance whenever possible. As this is a new position and relationship building is vital, the Deputy should expect to be travelling 3-4 days every few weeks within the first year. Some of these will be day trips while others will require overnight and multi-day stays

Q. What are the requirements under the merit-based process for government?

A. As with all public service organizations, RCY's appointments are open to audit by the Office of the Merit Commissioner. The Merit Commissioner is an independent Officer of the Legislature with responsibility to monitor the application of the merit principle to ensure merit continues to be the strong underpinning of an excellent, non-partisan workforce in the BC Public Service.

Permanent appointments to the BC public service must be based on the principle of merit which means that appointments are made on the basis of an assessment of competence and ability to do the job, and are non-partisan. The process must be transparent and fair, and designed to select the best candidate based on their qualification for the job.

There are a number of factors to be considered in determining merit, including education, skills, knowledge, experience and past work performance.

A competitive process is used for permanent appointments such as for the Deputy Representative. This ensures that potential applicants have the opportunity to hear and learn about the job, and the process must allow candidates to be ranked relative to each other, in order to demonstrate that the candidate who is appointed is the most qualified candidate for the job.

For further information, please see: <https://www.meritcomm.bc.ca/index.php/about/merit-principle>

Q. What needs to be demonstrated?

A. The recruitment and selection processes that result in merit-based appointments include these essential elements: a structured process that is transparent and fair; assessments that are objective and relevant to the job; and decisions that are reasonable.

After the competition closes, the initial screening phase, also known as shortlisting, will occur. The hiring panel will review all applications based on the same criteria in order to determine which applicants are qualified to move to the next stage in the hiring process. This involves reviewing each application for alignment with the education and experience requirements listed in the job profile. It is very important that applicants very clearly state how they meet the criteria. The hiring panel member must not make assumptions based on their knowledge of a candidate or sector – that could result in some candidates being favoured over others. That is why it is so important that applicants consider the education and experience requirements and speak directly to them in their resume. That way, the hiring panel can screen with confidence.