



# WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIGENOUS SERVICES ACT 2019

## How could this impact your Nation?

Canada has passed the *Department of Indigenous Services Act 2019* (Services Act) which implements the transfer of departmental responsibilities to First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations. However, little details have been shared on the support and funding that will be provided for this what that is included in the process.

This Services Act delegates responsibilities back to First Nations but without providing adequate funding or addressing the current ~\$340 Billion infrastructure gap; shifting the burden of service delivery without honouring the Crown's treaty obligations to sustain these services.

This Services Act, which was legislated without free prior and informed consent, will have generational impacts, and needs further communication, engagement and involvement with and from First Nations leaders and those doing the work in community.





### What does the current transfer of services include?


- Water and Wastewater Facilities & Infrastructure
- Education Facilities
- Housing
- Solid Waste Management
- Road & Bridge Construction
- Energy System Development
- Connectivity
- Cultural & Recreational Facility Development
- Fire Protection
- Planning & Skills Development Associated with Infrastructure Management




### Concerns and Issues with the Services Act

**Lack of Capacity.** Many Nations don't have the resources for this transfer of services (finances, people, training, technology, infrastructure), leading to systemic challenges. 

**Lack of True Control.** The Act positions Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) as the federal overseer, with no clear exit path of ISC's administration and overall control. 

**No Recognition of Treaty and inherent Rights.** The Act does not align with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) - failing to recognize First Nations' inherent rights to self-determination. 

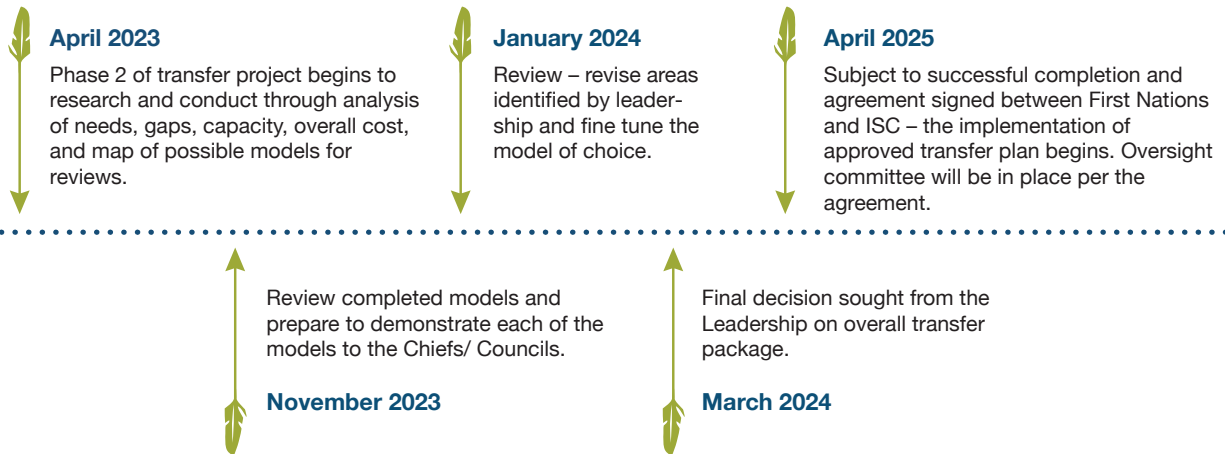
**Funding and Financial Commitments Gaps.** There is an estimated ~\$340 billion infrastructure gap across all First Nations in Canada - which has not been addressed and no clear figures from Canada of funding going forward with this legislation. 

**No Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).** This Act was put into law without Indigenous consultation, and was buried in an ~800 page budget implementation (Bill C-97). 



## What are the Indigenous Services Act timelines?

The current timelines from Canada are to begin Phase II of the transfer in Spring 2023, and to have the engagement process and new service delivery models identified by Spring 2025. The actual completion / sign-off of the Services Act has not yet been confirmed.



## The role of the Chiefs Steering Committee

The Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services (CSC) provides oversight for the First Nation Technical Services Advisory Group (TSAG), a not-for-profit organization started 24 years ago by First Nations Chiefs for First Nations of Treaty 6, 7 and 8. The CSC works with Chiefs and technicians to address issues about water, housing, health, education and infrastructure.

Starting in October 2022, the CSC has taken the lead in exploring the organizational, community, legal and political impacts of the Indigenous Services Act 2019 and Bill C-61 First Nations Clean Water Act for Treaty 6, 7 and 8 in the Alberta region.


## Indigenous Services Act 2019 informations sessions

The CSC began sharing information directly with First Nations in the Alberta Region in 2022 and hosting Information sessions regarding the Indigenous Services Act in early 2023, specifically on the Infrastructure programs and about services. One-day information sessions were held in Calgary, Edmonton and Slave Lake. The main objective for the sessions were to inform First Nations from Treaty 6, 7 and 8 (Alberta region) about the Services Act, as well as provide a space to discuss what those proposed changes could mean to the delivery of services, as well as for infrastructure and operations to First Nations, and the impact on communities health and wellbeing.

First Nations Concerns and recommendations from these sessions have been used to develop a comprehensive report available on the Chiefs Steering Committee website; you can also find other important information about the Indigenous Services Act 2019 on the site. The CSC plans to host more sessions in 2025.

## Learn More and Stay Informed

 Chiefs Steering Committee website: [www.chiefssteeringcommittee.net](http://www.chiefssteeringcommittee.net)

 Email your questions, and sign up for ongoing communications at: [info@chiefssteeringcommittee.net](mailto:info@chiefssteeringcommittee.net)

 Call CSC's information line toll free at: **1.877.236.7772**

