

For immediate release  
May 4, 2010

## CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES ASK THE COURT TO REVIEW BUDGET PROCESS

TORONTO – In response to budget shortfalls, eleven Children's Aid Societies (CASs) have taken the unprecedented step of asking the court to review the process used by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) to review CASs budgets. The Judicial Review was filed in London, Ontario today at noon.

In the fall of 2009, thirty-seven CASs requested a formal ministerial review of their budgets, also known as a Section 14 Review. As well, during the past two years, CASs have sought budget reviews, presented numerous submissions, prepared business cases for cost reductions and met with MCYS staff as well as with the minister to seek solutions for the funding shortfalls. These efforts have not resulted in sufficient funding for child protection across the province.

Today, eleven CASs are asking the court to review the Section 14 process. This is a last step in the CASs' attempts to ensure vulnerable children and their families get the supports they need.

A judicial review is a legal procedure where the court reviews a decision that has been made by the government. The purpose of judicial review is to ensure that the government has complied with the law in reaching its decision. The affidavits filed allege the government review process was biased and the outcome predetermined.

In fiscal 2009-10, thirty-nine member agencies were underfunded resulting in a forecast cumulative shortfall of \$32.5M. This means that over \$32.5M of services provided to children and families on behalf of the government were not funded.

Under the *Child and Family Services Act*, Ontario's Children's Aid Societies have a unique mandate to protect children; investigate allegations of child abuse and neglect; provide guidance, care, prevention and adoption services. The legislation, regulations, directives and standards prescribe specific and detailed requirements regarding what CASs must do, how they must do it, and the timelines in which critical and mandatory protection and prevention services must be provided. Many CASs are now borrowing money to provide the province's mandated child protection services.

The 11 agencies seeking a Judicial Review are the Children's Aid Society Of Brant, Chatham-Kent Children's Services, Durham Children's Aid Society, Family and Children's Services of St Thomas and Elgin, City of Kingston & County of Frontenac Children's Aid Society, Haldimand & Norfolk Children's Aid Society, Huron Perth Children's Aid Society, Children's Aid Society of Oxford County, Nipissing & Parry Sound Children's Aid Society, Timiskaming Child and Family Services, and Child and Family Services of Timmins and District.

- 30 -

For more information:

Marcelo Gomez –Wiuckstern  
Director of Communications

(416) 987-9648 | [mgomez-wiuckstern@oacas.org](mailto:mgomez-wiuckstern@oacas.org)

Contact your local Children's Aid Society: [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org)