FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM
INFORMATION BULLETIN
FNCFS 2025-010-E

FNCFS funding for purchase, operation and maintenance of vehicles

September 18, 2025

This bulletin provides guidance on requesting funding for vehicles through the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program. This bulletin applies in all provinces and the Yukon. Should the Final Agreement on the Long-Term Reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program in Ontario (the "Ontario Final Agreement") come into effect, policy outlined in the Ontario Final Agreement will supersede this guidance in Ontario.

The FNCFS Program funds the purchase, operation, and maintenance of vehicles for recipients to carry out their daily operations and service delivery of FNCFS funded services and activities to First Nations children, youth and families ordinarily resident on reserve or in the Yukon.

All vehicle purchases, operations and maintenance funded by the FNCFS Program **must demonstrate a direct link to the delivery** of child protection services, prevention services, First Nation Representative services or post-majority support services. Funding for vehicles is provided at actual costs through claims processes in alignment with the 2021 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) 41 order and as detailed in the First Nations Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle Capital Delivery Guide (Capital Delivery Guide).

Eligibility of vehicle requests

To support Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) in the efficient review of vehicle purchase claims, a **checklist outlining the required documentation is attached to this bulletin and should be submitted with each vehicle purchase request (see Annex A)**.

Incomplete claims will not be assessed and will be returned to recipients outlining any missing information.

The vehicle purchase request review process is based on:

Service delivery requirements

- Requestors must provide plans for how the vehicle(s) will be used and how the request supports the delivery of FNCFS-funded services and activities. The plans must describe:
    - the FNCFS-funded services or activities that require the purchase of a vehicle(s);
    - the rationale for the specific type of vehicle(s) requested;
    - which staff positions will use the vehicle(s).
- Where multiple vehicles are funded or requested, the plans should indicate the shared use of vehicles by the requestor’s staff or where shared use is not possible, provide justification (e.g. serving two geographically distinct communities).

Reasonableness and value-for-money

- The number and type of vehicles requested must be reasonable relative to the services delivered and population served, and the requestor’s annual FNCFS Program funding allocations.
- Purchase claims must include quotes from a minimum of 2 dealerships or vendors to demonstrate that an economical choice has been made.
- Vehicle purchase and maintenance may not always represent a cost-effective model of service delivery. When vehicles are not required on a regular basis, recipients should

consider alternatives such as rental vehicles, particularly when daily use of a vehicle is not required for a position.

Sustainability of vehicles

- To ensure life-cycle management of vehicles as assets, the requesting First Nation or FNCFS agency must have or put in place a **vehicle replacement policy** detailing the criteria and timeline for vehicle replacement, as well as procedures for disposing of vehicles.
  - Where the First Nation or FNCFS agency has a vehicle replacement policy, it must submit the policy to ISC as part of its funding request.
  - Where the First Nation or FNCFS agency does not have such a policy, its funding request will be considered and ISC will flow funding for the request (if the request is approved) in advance of ISC receiving a vehicle replacement policy. In the absence of a replacement policy at the time of request, an inventory of vehicles used in FNCFS program provision must be included in as part of the plan submitted to ISC to support the request's assessment. The First Nation or FNCFS agency must also put a replacement policy in place within six months of approval of its funding request. ISC will provide a template to assist in the First Nation's or FNCFS agency's development of a policy.
- Funding for eligible expenditures for operations and maintenance costs for vehicles can be claimed through the 2021 CHRT 41 capital claims process (see section 3.6 of the Capital Delivery Guide).
- Adequate ongoing funding to support vehicle operations is considered when adjudicating requests. Fuel costs to operate vehicles are covered under the FNCFS-funded service area that the vehicle purchase directly supports and are not eligible capital funding requests (e.g., fuel costs for vehicles linked to First Nation Representative services are funded from the requestor's First Nation Representative services funding allocation).

Exceptional vehicle purchases

The following types of vehicles are **typically not eligible** for funding through the FNCFS Program but may be considered on an exceptional basis if justified by complex or unique needs. Please note that all exceptional costs must be **pre-approved** by ISC. These include:

- Airplanes
- All-terrain vehicles (ATVs)
- Boats and other watercraft (e.g., canoes, kayaks and paddleboards, etc.)Food trucks and mobile kitchens
- Luxury vehicles and premium accessories
- Maintenance equipment (e.g., snow removal vehicles, farm equipment, water and sewage trucks, etc.)
- Snowmobiles

The FNCFS Program will not fund vehicles that are not required for providing FNCFS Program services or that are for personal use or as incentives, such as vehicles for use by managers, directors, board members, human resources workers, financial assistants, Chiefs and council members.

Note: An existing or previously approved claim does not guarantee that a new funding request for the same or similar expense will be approved.

Using unexpended FNCFS funds for vehicles

Unexpended funds can be used to purchase vehicles only if the purchase(s) are outlined within a recipient's unexpended funding plan submitted to and approved by ISC. The planned use must align with the criteria outlined in this bulletin, the FNCFS Information Bulletin 2025-001-E on the management of unexpended funds (see Table 1: Reallocation and restrictions) and its addendum.

As part of ISC's funding request review, ISC will verify whether the recipient has unexpended funds that could be applied to the purchase. If this is the case, ISC officials will evaluate the request and work with the recipient to fund the purchase as part of a revised unexpended funding plan. As per FNCFS Information Bulletin 2025-001-E, **a 2021 CHRT 41 request is required when unexpended FNCFS funds are reallocated to support vehicle purchases** in addition to the ISC-approved unexpended funding plan.

If you have questions about this bulletin or its implementation, please contact your ISC regional office or chrt41-tcdp41@sac-isc.gc.ca.

First Nations Child and Family Services Program 2021 CHRT 41 Capital Request Checklist: Vehicle Purchase		
ISC FNCFS Required Documents/Information	☑	**Comment(s)** (please provide details if not applicable)
Plans • Fleet vehicles must be planned, acquired, operated, maintained, and divested to support FNCFS Program delivery to children and families ordinarily resident on reserve or in the Yukon. • Clear identification of the program/service/activity or staff that will utilize the vehicle(s) for funded CFS program delivery. ***Vehicles should be considered fleet vehicles for shared use, not assigned to individual staff members.*** • Clear explanation of why the vehicle is required and how it supports the delivery of funded FNCFS programming. This should include a rationalization of the fleet size, an explanation of why the specific type of vehicle being requested is the most efficient type, and assurance that vehicles will be exclusively for service delivery, not personal use. • If the request is for the replacement of a vehicle, a clear justification for replacement.	☐	
Notification requirement • For **First Nations** requesting funding: A letter of support signed by Chief(s) supporting vehicle acquisition • For **FNCFS agencies** requesting funding: Email from FNCFS agency to community(ies) served notifying them of request, **applicable only where the vehicle(s) will be stored on reserve**	☐	

Vehicle quotes
• At least 2 quotes for vehicles (including make/model, seating capacity, and warranty)
• Demonstrate value for money by obtaining quotes from multiple dealerships/vendors to ensure the most economical choice
• Additional fees, such as:
  ○ Vehicle registration/plates fees
  ○ Delivery costs
  ○ Other dealer fees
	☐	

Insurance quote	☐	
Winter tires Purchase cost paid on actuals if applicable.	☐	
Estimated operations and maintenance (O&M) per year	☐	
Vehicle replacement policies Vehicle replacement policies must include the following details: • Clear process for replacement based on assessment of physical condition of vehicle(s) being replaced,	☐	

First Nations Child and Family Services Program 2021 CHRT 41 Capital Request Checklist: Vehicle Purchase		
ISC FNCFS Required Documents/Information	☑	**Comment(s)** (please provide details if not applicable)
evaluation of financial and operational criteria (including whether current and future operational needs can be met by the existing fleet), and environmental and accessibility considerations • Clear processes for replacement, including criteria such as kilometers, years of use, or a combination of both • Disposal procedures for vehicles (e.g., sale, donation, repurposing), including capturing vehicle value and using revenue from sales to support O&M for other fleet vehicles *Note that requestors must submit their vehicle replacement policy to ISC as part of their funding request. Where the requestor does not have such a policy, their funding request will be considered and ISC will flow funding (if approved) in advance of ISC receiving a replacement policy. In the absence of a replacement policy, an inventory of vehicles used in FNCFS program provision must be included in as part of the plan submitted to ISC and the requestor must also put a replacement policy in place within six months of approval of its funding request.*		
Notes:		