

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

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(Quttiktuq)
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Development and Transportation*

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(Amittuq)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Mila Kamingoak
(Kugluktuk)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

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Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Uqqummiut)

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)
*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the
Committee of the Whole*

Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Rankin Inlet South)
*Minister of Community and
Government Services; Minister of
Human Resources*

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Premier; Minister of Executive and
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of
Energy; Minister of Environment; Minister
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Minister responsible for the Utility Rates
Review Council*

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)
*Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for
Labour; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

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John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)
*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
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Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
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Immigration; Minister responsible for the
Status of Women*

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of Education; Minister of Languages*

Hon. Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

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the Nunavut Housing Corporation*

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 9:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Paul Quassa)(interpretation): Good morning. Let us pray.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning to the residents of my community and I say “good morning” to Nunavummiut. Let’s all have a good day. Welcome to everyone in the gallery.

Let’s proceed. Ministers’ Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers’ Statements

Minister’s Statement 402 – 5(2): Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Management

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say “good morning” to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the importance of polar bear management in Nunavut. Polar bears are a worldwide symbol of the Arctic and have significance to harvesters and non-harvesters alike.

The Department of Environment is proud of the robust management system we have for polar bears in Nunavut. Our system is built on consultation with communities and collaboration with our co-management partners. This is especially important for those bear populations which we share with our neighbouring jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, the southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is shared between three jurisdictions and four land claim agreements. The Government of Nunavut was part of the inter-jurisdictional technical working group tasked with completing the harvest risk assessment for the southern Hudson Bay subpopulation before new total allowable harvest recommendations and a coordinated consultation plan could be developed.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment has recommended to the Southern Hudson Bay Polar Bear Advisory Group that collaboration on the future management of the population happen through a user-to-user meeting. I am happy to announce that this meeting was held on February 25 and 26 in Montreal. In addition, the Department of Environment sent representatives to consult with the Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Organization on February 11, 2020. These consultations and meetings will inform the recommendations to all of the wildlife management boards for the region.

Mr. Speaker, through a coordinated and collaborative approach, we ensure that the southern Hudson Bay polar bear population is sustainably managed for current and future generations, in keeping with Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Before we proceed with the orders of the day, please make sure that you silence or turn off your cellphones so that members can focus on their work. Thank you.

Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Minister's Statement 403 – 5(2): Arctic Winter Games 2020

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, people of Rankin Inlet. I wish residents of my community a good day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it was 20 years ago, our first Team Nunavut, dressed in bright yellow jackets, walked into the opening ceremonies of the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse.

This year the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse, Yukon will run from March 15 to 21 and will mark their 50th anniversary of an event that combines athletic competition, cultural exchange, and social interaction across the Arctic.

To help celebrate this milestone, the Sports and Recreation Division of my department will be sending 279 participants to attend the Games. This will include athletes, coaches, managers, cultural performers, youth ambassadors, and our hard-working mission staff. Our athletes and coaches will be competing in 13 sports, and our cultural contingent will showcase Nunavut's richness and diversity as they learn about other northern cultures.

Mr. Speaker, the Games are more than just sports and culture experience for the outstanding youth athletes we have in Nunavut; the Arctic Winter Games will also allow our youth ambassadors to gain valuable experience and pride as they volunteer at venues the Games.

Opportunities like the Games give our youth a chance to build friendships, build confidence, and give them an opportunity to compete and perform at an international level. It allows them to also gain lifelong friendships and memories.

Personally I have some very fond memories of my times at the Games. I had the opportunity to participate as an athlete back in high school.

I would like to wish success to all Team Nunavut participants and I am sure I speak for all Members of this Assembly when I say that we are very proud of the young people who will be representing our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We will be cheering for our team. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Minister's Statement 404 – 5(2): 2020 Year of the Nurse and Midwife

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The World Health Organization has declared 2020 the "Year of the Nurse and Midwife." This international, year-long initiative serves to celebrate and recognize the contributions that nurses and midwives make, as well as highlight the opportunities within the professions.

Mr. Speaker, in our territory, the "Year of the Nurse and Midwife" is an opportunity to show our appreciation to these valued health staff and community members. It is a chance to highlight the various roles they play in our health care system and inform Nunavummiut on the education and career opportunities that exist.

Mr. Speaker and members, throughout the year the Department of Health will be following the World Health Organization's lead in highlighting the various roles nurses and midwives play across our territory, while recognizing their hard work and acknowledging their unique contributions to the health and well-being of communities.

Mr. Speaker and members, a vital component of this celebration will also be to inform and encourage our youth to consider a career in health care. It is also important to recognize that this year marks the 20th anniversary of the Nunavut Arctic College Nursing Program, having graduated 59 nurses over the past two decades.

Mr. Speaker, our nurses' and midwives' jobs are physically, emotionally and mentally challenging. They work tirelessly to meet the needs of the communities they serve, often sacrificing time with their own families to meet the health needs of ours.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying how proud I am of Nunavut's nurses and midwives. I hope my colleagues and all Nunavummiut will join me in expressing thanks to these dedicated and valued community members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister's Statement 405 – 5(2): Nunavut Apprenticeship Consultations

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to all the visitors in the gallery and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) Nunavut's economy is growing and the demand for skilled workers in the trades and occupations is also on the rise. It is critical that Nunavummiut benefit from this growth and the economic opportunities associated with it. One of the ways to do this is to strengthen the apprenticeship program.

The Government of Nunavut supports trades and occupations training and certification for Nunavummiut through the Nunavut apprenticeship system. The Department of Family Services recognizes the need to strengthen the current system to ensure the apprenticeship program better serves the needs of Nunavummiut. The goal is to create more opportunities for Nunavummiut to access training and employment. This includes reducing the strain placed on Nunavummiut who must travel to a different community or out of territory to apprentice for a trade.

The trades training and certification process in Nunavut has evolved over the past 20 years to meet the changing needs of industry and the evolution of national occupational standards. The Act has not kept pace with these changes. As a result, the department is seeking input from community members, current apprentices, employers, and those involved in the mining and construction industry on how to strengthen the program.

Consultations have already been held in Pangnirtung, Cambridge Bay, Baker Lake, and Rankin Inlet. To date the general public have expressed a need for more support for academic upgrading for potential apprentices, a desire for more training options in local communities, and better support for the families of apprentices. The next consultations are scheduled for Clyde River from March 2 to 6, Iqaluit from March 16 to 20, and Arviat from March 23 to 27.

Nunavummiut can also provide comments through the Department of Family Services' website. Under the Career Development tab, you will find a link to the *Apprenticeship Act* review. You can respond to a set of questions provided or provide any comments related to apprenticeship, trades and occupations certification in Nunavut. You can also leave voicemail comments at the *Apprenticeship Act* review toll-free line at 1-833-495-0317.

We look forward to hearing from Nunavummiut during our public consultations. This is an opportunity for you to share your input and contribute to positive change in the territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends)
Minister Acting on behalf of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Minister's Statement 406 – 5(2): Tenant Education Program

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I would like to share with my colleagues today information on the development of the housing corporation's Tenant Education Program for the territory.

Right now the majority of Nunavummiut rent their homes, but how do people learn to be good tenants? Sometimes we learn from our elders, sometimes we learn from friends, but all too often people learn through trial and error. The new Tenant Education Program aims to help individuals become more knowledgeable about all aspects of living in a home, from how to access housing to budgeting to how to properly maintain a home.

Mr. Speaker, the *Blueprint for Action on Housing* identifies the development of a user-friendly tenant education toolkit to encourage tenants to monitor, care, and maintain their housing units. NHC staff are working with staff from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporation, and Ilitaqsiniq, the Nunavut Literacy Council, to adapt a successful Canadian program called RentSmart to life in Nunavut.

Furthermore Mr. Speaker, this adaptation will build the program using *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* descriptions, values, principles and *Maligait*. This new program will work to train community educators to offer the program in their communities and will establish a master trainer in the territory so we have this expertise in Nunavut to ensure the program is sustainable in the long term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 407 – 5(2): Agnico Eagle Mines Engagement

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to update the House today on ongoing progress being made under the framework of the Government of Nunavut-Agnico Eagle Mines memorandum of understanding.

(interpretation ends) Both parties continue to meet quarterly to discuss priority areas and common interests, including training and employment opportunities for Nunavummiut, pre-employment medicals in communities, and clean energy initiatives. In addition, via relationships fostered under the memorandum of understanding framework, staff from the government and Agnico remain in regular informal contact to offer support on questions

and issues as they arise. Colleagues at Agnico continue to provide valuable advice to department staff on questions around mine training and social licence for mining projects, among many other topics.

Further, I acknowledge Agnico Eagle's recent announcement on mine training and mental health initiatives during the Northern Lights Trade Show. I look forward to continuing our partnership and seeing the development of these important initiatives that continue to support Nunavummiut.

My department looks forward to our upcoming memorandum of understanding meetings during the Nunavut Mining Symposium, as we continue to build lasting relationships with our colleagues at Agnico Eagle for the benefit of the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 625 – 5(2): Long-term Elder Care

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, as the Chair of the Regular Members' Caucus, today our theme will be on elders and many members will have questions, so I am forewarning our colleagues, as elders are a critical part of Nunavut as we all know.

Mr. Speaker, some of these stem from me personally... (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am extremely troubled and worried by this government's approach to long-term care in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, this government has no elders' care strategy and this government has no timeline on when they will develop one. Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>> *Applause*

Mr. Main: Mr. Speaker, I'll again draw attention to the most recent public document on long-term care in Nunavut, which is this report. It has been waived in this House quite often. I'll again draw attention to page 26 of this report, which states, "...the needs assessment is large based on comments from health system professionals and may be biased toward a medical model of continuing care services without adequately reflecting Inuit values and cultural preferences."

Mr. Speaker, that is an incredible blind spot in my opinion, that is an incredible gap for a government to have in their approach to long-term care. Unfortunately I have not seen any actions from this government taken to fill that gap.

The health minister recently made references to an informal strategy that exists within the government on long-term care. On this side of the House we have not seen it. I would challenge this government to table your plan, table your informal strategy, open it up for debate, and consult with the people of Nunavut on your plans for long-term care. This is such an important issue. I believe this government needs to commit to develop a formal elders' care strategy, end of story.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions on this issue.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

Member's Statement 626 – 5(2): Hiring of Inuit into the RCMP

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good morning” to Nunavummiut and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be talking about the hiring of Inuit into the RCMP.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about the important role that Inuit played as special constables for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when the Government of Nunavut was working very hard to establish sovereignty over the High Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police members sent to the north would never have survived without the help of those Inuit who took on the role of guide, interpreter, mediator, dog team driver, and boat captain during patrols.

Mr. Speaker, a number of these Inuit were employed as special constables with an official rank and a pay cheque. Even their families assisted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, over time the role of special constable changed. It is now possible for Inuit to become fully fledged Royal Canadian Mounted Police members with training and opportunities for promotion and greater responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that for our police force to be truly effective and fair and to work cooperatively with a population that it serves. Mr. Speaker, more Inuit need to become involved in the RCMP.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, the population in a community like Pond Inlet is almost 95 percent Inuit. For Inuit to trust the police, they need to feel that the police understand who they are. Who better to understand Inuit and how law affects them than Inuit themselves?

We need more Inuit Royal Canadian Mounted Police members working in our communities. At the appropriate time I will ask questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernek.

Member's Statement 627 – 5(2): Respecting Our Elders

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my fellow residents of Amittuq.

This morning I rise to speak to this theme as from the time I took my seat I have tried to advocate for our elders. I personally, as a younger person, and as I start using more traditional terminology, I think I can also state that I feel ashamed, Mr. Speaker.

For those of us who were raised by our elders and saw the fruition of our Nunavut land claim, we depended on our elders, and not our governments. It hurts because I've often tried to convey to our government that our elders should not be put on a pedestal just to be asked questions. They need to be much better respected. If you understand Elders, if you understand their feelings, you understand that elders' feelings are strong.

I am saying this to you because I have such strong feelings for our elders, especially my own parents. I'm sorry for coming across with such strong emotions, but because I feel strongly about this issue because they grew up enduring hard times on the land, and we are here today because of them. Where are we though? What are we trying to achieve? It is only because of our elders. You can thank them that we are here.

My apologies to say such strong words, Mr. Speaker but I will continue to say and speak on behalf of the elders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Member Sheutiapik.

Member's Statement 628 – 5(2): Clarification on Constituency Meeting

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I just wanted to clarify my member's statement yesterday. I was approached by a Regular MLA. For my constituency meeting tomorrow night, March 5th at the Inuksuk High School, from 6:30 to 8:00, presentations by Housing Corporation, RCMP and Finance.

I want to encourage everyone to come, including everyone in this House because there will be discussions on topics that we question and answer in this House. So I welcome everybody. We are in Nunavut and Iqaluit might have four MLAs, but I'm not going to turn people away if you come. So I encourage that. I know his Worship is out of town, but there will be city councillors there as well. I encourage again, everyone to come tomorrow night 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Inuksuk High School. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Carrying on. Item 4. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. (interpretation) Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Member Hickers.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. George Hickers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like today my voice will be quite a common theme across today, but I'm going to get it started right on my own initiative.

Members may have noticed the number of people that are in the gallery today. I just wanted to make some special mention of these policy people that are here to see us in action. When we speak of policy development across the territory, we are always striving to get that northern voice in our policy development and activity. I look forward to a time, as they go through the *Blues* down the road; I want to make sure they see their own name in the *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to start off with, if the people as I name them could stand let themselves be shown:

- Jennifer Wilman from the Department of Education,
- Nicole Dunn, Department of Education,
- Lucy Aqpiq, Department of Family Services,
- Tracy Doyle, Department of Justice,
- Carlin Twomey, Department of Health,
- Patrick Huggins, Department of Environment,
- Mathewsie Onalik, Department of Justice,
- Meeka Tiglik, Department of Health,

- Elizabeth Oguntuase, Department of Health,
- Neil Henderson, Department of Family Services,
- Frank Skoda, Department of Finance,
- Orell Tario, one of the trainers,
- Leesa Sowdluapik, Community Government Services,
- Rosemary Ipellie, Culture and Heritage,
- Vanessa Kalluk, Nunavut Housing Corporation,
- Lori Kanak, Department of Human Resources,
- Jordan Blake, Department of Environment,
- Myna Kiguktak, Department of Family Services, and
- Facilitator, Catherine Waters.

Members may have noted that I've excluded my neighbour, Michael Solomonie here.

>>*Laughter*

I have recognized him in this House before and I still continue to appreciate him as a neighbour, even though he's a Riders fan, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>>*Laughter*

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): I welcome you all to the gallery. You are welcome here anytime. I'm proud of you, that you will continue as Nunavut develops. Welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I just recognized a person who used to be a fellow resident who is visiting. He has a position with the Government of Nunavut and I would like to recognize Neil Henderson. I'm proud that he works as a director for the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, and welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for High Arctic, Member Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. We don't see people from the high arctic very often, but though person was already recognized, I grew up with her in Grise Fiord. She grew up in Grise Fiord and she works for the government now and works very, and I would like to recognize again, Myna Kiguktak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome. I welcome you all. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Member Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. In the House I am usually the only Kusugak. Today I am happy today that I am not the only Kusugak here.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize a person who was named by the grandmother after my father. I wish to welcome him here warmly and I am very proud of Michael Salomonie, especially since he is named after our father Kusugak. I would like you to welcome him, please. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome, Kusugak. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Arviat South, Member Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. People of Arviat barely come to the gallery. I like to make Vanessa Kalluk laugh. She has been daughter's friend since they were children and she was always visiting my home. Welcome, and please travel home safely. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names on my list. Let's proceed. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Member Angnakak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 862 – 5(2): Future Dementia Care in Nunavut

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good morning. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on the issue of dementia care for Nunavut residents. My colleague from Arviat addressed Nunavut's future long-term care earlier in the sitting, but I would like a better idea of how the government specifically plans to address the future need for level 5 care for individuals with dementia.

Can the minister provide an update on how many Nunavut residents currently require level 5 care and how many of them are receiving that care outside of the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the questions. That's why we're all sitting here is to move this file forward. This is the main reason why: to my knowledge, there are 35 Nunavummiut who have the care need of level 5 and as we're not able to provide level 5 services here in the territory, all of them are being treated out of territory, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister said, we recognize that we currently do not have the ability to provide comprehensive level 5 care in Nunavut for most individuals with dementia. However, information provided in the government's 2015 "Continuing Care in Nunavut" document indicates that in less than 20 years there could be as many as 120 Nunavummiut living with dementia.

Can the minister tell this House what initiatives are currently underway to identify training and certification needs, to work with Nunavut Arctic College to develop the necessary training courses, and to plan the development of an Inuit workforce with the appropriate skills to provide and deliver level 5 care in Nunavut for Nunavummiut with dementia? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In addition to the personal care worker program that we have through Arctic College, we have delivered training opportunities on caring for people with dementia that was delivered through Nunavut Arctic College for the home and continuing care certificate program as well as the gentle persuasion approach, which began in Arviat, delivered by the regional home and community care manager, a certified coach. Mr. Speaker, approximately 87 participants have completed that training territory-wide and there are now 10 gentle persuasion approach coaches across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. That's very good news. I think we have to really keep that up. It's just an important part of the work that we're going to really need here in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, 20 years seems a long time, but in government terms, it isn't long at all. A single project can take well over five years from start to finish and that's counting from the time that it appears on a capital plan or a business plan. It often takes months' and years' worth of review, consultation, and deliberation to get to that 'starting' point.

Can the minister describe what kinds of consultations have been undertaken with the families of Nunavut residents who are currently suffering from dementia to understand their expectations and experiences of the related care services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret that any communication with family members of people who are outside the territory receiving care want people home, so do I, all of us do. There's not one person in here who doesn't want to repatriate the elders that we have outside the territory. That's why we're continuing to develop these initiatives, such as the Rankin Inlet facility that we just approved a few months ago, which ground is going to be broken very soon.

Where the opportunities arise and with the support of this House, we can accelerate these programs. It's not going to take five years to build a facility in Rankin Inlet nor should it take five years to build a facility in the Kitikmeot or here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

Question 863 – 5(2): Hiring of Inuit into the RCMP

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, when the new chief superintendent of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's "V" division was appointed not too long ago, she indicated that recruiting more Inuit into Nunavut's Royal Canadian Mounted Police force was one of her goals and her top priority.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify whether current Royal Canadian Mounted Police recruitment efforts include employing more Inuit as special constables? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good morning, Nunavummiut and to those in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the recruitment of Inuit members is critical for long-term policing in Nunavut. All Nunavummiut who are interested in a career in policing are encouraged to take part in the RCMP's recruiting initiatives. The "V" division is pursuing both traditional and non-traditional avenues for RCMP recruitment with a view to attracting more Inuit to the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has made some progress in employing more Inuit in such roles as call dispatchers

and administrative support staff. However, people need to see more Inuit in the active role of law enforcement. Can the minister describe what plans are in place to recruit more Inuit into law enforcement positions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Let me identify her properly, the Minister of Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Department of Justice, along with the RCMP, is recruiting Inuit in two ways. The first one is the indigenous pre-cade experience program, which is a three-week training program for indigenous individuals between the ages of 19 and 29 years.

The RCMP is also working with the Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation along with the Department of Family Services to assist prospective Inuit applicants with the RCMP application process. This includes literacy, numeracy training, as well as mental health and coping skills. It also involves helping applicants obtain unrestricted driver's licence. Successful applicants will commence training at the RCMP Training Academy in or around May or June of 2020.

This program is currently underway. Initially they had 10 applicants but some withdrew for personal reasons, so now we have seven applicants. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify whether or not the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will hire special constables in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are always working and trying to find ways to hire Inuit as RCMP officers and I think that special constables would be the first way to go, then train them to become RCMP officers. And with the support of the Department of Justice, along with the RCMP, hopefully we can go through this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

Question 864 – 5(2): Retirees Living in Staff Housing

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the acting Minister of Nunavut Housing Corporation and I do understand that the minister was just recently

appointed and I would like to clarify that I do not expect the minister to be fully briefed and therefore I encourage the minister to respond through a return to oral question.

My questions are regarding our elders in the public services, and particularly those employees who are at or close to retirement age and who currently reside in staff housing.

Mr. Speaker, this is a topic that has been brought up a number of times over the last two years, as it creates undue hardship on our elders in the public service. Current practice at the Nunavut Housing Corporation dictates that employees are given two weeks to vacate their units once they cease to be employees.

My first question is: has this policy been amended to allow elders additional time to transition to alternative housing options? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Acting Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current policy of the Nunavut Housing Corporation in regards to long-term government employees that are in staff housing, is that the staff have to vacate the premises when they retire or their employment ends.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation is reviewing how they can improve the system. More than once we have heard here in the House that long-term government employees end up having nowhere to go after they retire. So, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has heard this concern and we are trying to see how we can work with this. Whenever staff are reaching the age of retirement, there is a planning process for them once they know the retirement day and how much they can make in their retirement. They receive orientation and are taught what to expect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that response. Last year the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation indicated that at that time there were 122 GN employees in staff housing who are at retirement age or will be within five years. I'm glad to see that the Nunavut Housing Corporation does in fact track this. I would like to ask: how many GN employees and staff housing tenants have retired to date in the current fiscal year and how many last fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Acting Minister, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that number in front of me right now. The member said that if the information is not in front of me, he can wait for an answer at a later date, so I'll have to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that commitment to provide that information at a later date.

For the benefit of the Assembly and the public that are listening today, I would like to ask the minister for clarification. What exactly does happen to elders who retire while in staff housing? Are their belongings packed and left on the street or are they actually provided alternative housing before they vacate? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think the Nunavut Housing Corporation can just kick people out of their homes. Before the retirement date comes, we help them look for alternative accommodations to see where they can rent another house and whenever possible, if we have to let them stay in the same unit before anything else is set up, we let them do that. We try to find the best circumstances for the staff that have to vacate staff housing. We don't just kick them out; we try to help them wherever possible to the best of our ability, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 865 – 5(2): Iviqtippalliajut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to direct my question to the Minister of Culture and Heritage.

Mr. Speaker, if I understand correctly, there is a plan in process called Iviqtippalliajut. I hope I pronounced it right. I believe it means where Inuit knowledge and ways be incorporated in the government, that it has to be in the government. If I understood this correctly, there is a big expectation from my constituency about this that our government would embrace Inuit culture and *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*. It's supposed to operate using the Inuit language and culture.

The first question I have is: what has been initiated under Iviqtippalliajut? Can you give us some examples? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank him for the question. The Iviqtippalliajut document was worked on for a long time and we tabled it in the House in October 2018. Mr. Speaker, just last fall in Iqaluit the Department of Culture and Heritage had a general meeting for the public and staff were able to attend

and met about Iviqtippalliajut. All government departments were represented and there was a direction to follow Iviqtippalliajut and all the government services and plans would be under Iviqtippalliajut, including making sure that we are using Inuit societal values. As to examples, I will have to look into that further to see what has been initiated under Iviqtippalliajut.

However, for curriculum material or teaching material for staff, we will want to produce more in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is good news to hear and that is why I am rising today, even though I am a *qallunaaq*. I can say that our government is using too many of the *qallunaat* ways in its system. That's my opinion.

It's traditional Inuit land and meanwhile our government is not, if the government utilizes Inuit societal values more in its operations, then it would run better. Even though I am a *qallunaaq*, I believe that.

The minister was talking about Iviqtippalliajut, so how is it used within the government? I would like more information on that. For example, if there are different departments, do the different departments ask the Department of Culture and Heritage for guidance? Do they make sure that they are following Inuit societal values and do they approach the Department of Culture and Heritage about that, to make sure that they are following it? Or does the Department of Culture and Heritage go to the different departments before they are asked to come to the departments? I would like more information on how that actually works within the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. The Department of Culture and Heritage has an *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* coordinator who works on that. With Iviqtippalliajut, we are working on implementation plans. We want to start working on implementation plans with the different departments. We work with the different departments to apply Iviqtippalliajut to make sure that they are following Iviqtippalliajut and to ensure that it is completely understood with Inuit societal values as well. *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* (interpretation ends) guiding principles (interpretation) are also used as a foundation. They are used to guide staff for specific services or programs in order to apply Iviqtippalliajut. The Department of Culture and Heritage is the lead department and we support the other departments and we will continue to do that in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have brought up before, and I feel it now, and I am concerned about having an elders' facility in Nunavut. I am concerned

that the Department of Health is independently making the decisions. They don't do enough consulting; they have never consulted with the Inuit public about this.

I would like to ask the Minister of Culture and Heritage: is the Department of Culture and Heritage available to help the Department of Health, because we need the elders' facility and it's not really happening.

Can the Department of Culture and Heritage help the Department of Health on this priority matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. We have various programs available through the operations of the government, but with respect to the timing or if Department of Culture and Heritage can provide leadership on our culture such as our Inuit identity.

As an example, my deputy minister along with the programs we deliver in the context of our Inuit identity in order to follow *Turaaqtavut* and study how it may assist us, and we try to implement decisions such as how Iviqtippalliajut applies to regional government departments because they have to be connected properly.

Nonetheless, I want to reiterate that the term Iviqtippalliajut, "in the process of falling into place," means many people must understand it properly, and to try to provide an explanation. Perhaps I can mention the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajiit, which is comprised of only elders, where they review government operations to determine if *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* rules are followed. They make recommendations to different departments.

Additionally I anticipate within this month that the planned conference will be held in Rankin Inlet, including the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajiit, and I can try to report on that matter upon completion. Particularly we need the participation of the Department of Health concerning Iviqtippalliajut and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* to ensure that they use it properly and adhere to it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Before we proceed further, I would like to inform the House that Member Mila Kamingoak will be absent from the House due to personal reasons.

Going to Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towtongie.

Question 866 – 5(2): Elder Abuse

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Seniors.

Mr. Speaker, elder abuse is an ongoing concern across Nunavut. Many of our elders are vulnerable and dependent on others for assistance, but sadly there are few unethical people who treat them badly.

Can the minister clarify what services are in place to help protect elders from being treated badly or abused? What types of services are available to protect our vulnerable elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for Seniors, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question, Mr. Speaker. We talk a lot in the House of how we respect our elders and it's extremely unfortunate that there are people out there who don't.

Mr. Speaker, across many different stakeholders, there are services that we want to make sure that elders know that they're available to reach out to. Family Services has programs through their social workers where families and elders can approach social workers to discuss any concerns. There are also mental health and different health care staff in the health centre itself if people want to bring forward any concerns. There are judicial, if they're feeling intimidated or threatened or money is being taken, they can approach the RCMP or any Department of Justice officials as well.

As well, in the seniors' handbook that was put out a few years ago, there's also an elders' support phone line during business hours or there is language availability for unilingual people, and I'm going to just read that number out for the record that if anyone is listening, if they want to talk just to see what some of their options are or what services are available, they can call 1-866-684-5056. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Financial abuse of elders is a pervasive problem that we should all be aware of, and I understand that the government has published a checklist to help people identify if an elder is being financially abused.

For example, if an individual goes through this financial concerns checklist and determines that their concerns are justified; can the minister explain what next steps they should take to help stop the financial abuse? What are the next steps? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a difficult topic. As I have mentioned, for a society that has so much respect for elders, the abuse, especially financial and physical abuse that elders are susceptible to, is shameful.

Any time somebody feels that they have been taken advantage of financially, I would strongly recommend approaching the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and initiating an investigation. There are also other options through the Department of Justice with non-contact orders and such that can be also utilized through JPs in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Arviat-Whale Cove stated that our government operates in English. I don't think I was imagining an elder approaching the RCMP, neither do I think that elders should stop receiving visitations from their grandchildren. This is contrary to Inuit culture, as relatives are always supposed to see one another constantly. We must apply *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit* more deeply and government must remember that.

Mr. Speaker, financial abuse of elders is becoming unfathomable, especially when elders reach pension day payment. Some of the younger children think the money is for their usage. I wonder if the minister can commit to a public awareness campaign that pension day is only for our elders, and the elders have to use that money. Some of their children, when pension day approaches, want to take advantage of their elder's pension and freely spend it which is financial abuse.

Can the minister commit to a public awareness campaign for elders so they know their rights? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that the RCMP do meet with elder groups to go over a number of different topics, such as elder abuse and financial abuse, and I am sure that will continue.

I can speak to my colleagues to see how some type of a communication strategy could be developed around that. There already are a number of different initiatives that we have put across territory-wide; posters and pamphlets and such, but I will look into see how we could further make sure that the information gets out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 867 – 5(2): Policing Services to Assist Elders

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my fellow residents of Netsilik and colleagues. I am very pleased to hear there are discussions going on, and Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on one subject and I will be speaking in English. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, when an emergency occurs in a community, it is essential that our residents be able to communicate clearly with first responders, including the police.

Many of our territory's elders are unilingual speakers of the Inuit language and emergency situations can be twice as difficult and stressful for them, given the lack of Inuktitut-speaking members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice's business plan indicates that one of its ongoing priorities has been to "...continue efforts to increase capacity to communicate in the Inuit language."

Can the minister describe what specific initiatives are being undertaken to make it easier for elders to communicate with the police during emergencies? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The Department of Justice is working very hard to have our frontline staff to be able to speak to our elders in the language that they prefer, and recently the frontline staff in our communities, which are the people who answer the phones, our goal is to have all of our frontline staff be able to speak in Inuktitut. Further, within the new year, if an individual calls the RCMP station after hours, the number usually goes directly to the number here in Iqaluit. I am happy to say that four of our members who are frontline workers will be unilingual. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am old enough to remember the days when we had special constables in the communities. These positions played vital roles in communicating across language and cultural barriers and building trust. CBC News has recently reported that consideration is being given to "reinvigorate the Special Constable program." Can the minister update the House today on this issue? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Regarding the special constables within our communities, at this time, the Department of Justice and the RCMP are working together to ensure that we have more special constables in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for her response. (interpretation ends) I fully recognize the important role that the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police play, and I fully appreciate the difficult and dangerous job that frontline officers have. I also believe that officers who come from other parts of Canada to serve our communities would benefit from cultural orientation that includes the participation of local elders. Can the minister indicate if this is currently happening? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Yes, the RCMP, when a new member comes from the south to come up to the communities within Nunavut, the first thing they do is they go through culturally relevant training so that they are taught our cultural and Inuit societal values before they are released into their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Member Akoak.

Question 868 – 5(2): Income Assistance Regulations

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues and Uqhuqtuurmiut.

First of all, I would like to remind the government that we do need to look after our elders. They have done their part in looking after us. Now it's our turn to look after them in their time of need, in their own home communities.

>> *Applause*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question...

An Hon. Member (interpretation): We can't hear you.

Mr. Akoak: Hello? I am I on? Thank you. Did my comment go through? It did? Okay.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in the sitting, my colleague from Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet raised the issue of income assistance clients losing some of their benefits if they win at bingo or in a lottery.

Mr. Speaker, in her responses to the member's questions, the minister was not clear on whether she agreed with the member's suggestion to amend the relevant section of the *Income Assistance Regulations*.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly state her position on amending section 20(4)(1.1) of the *Income Assistance Regulations* which currently provides that "winnings in excess of

\$40 a month, including bingo and lottery winnings” are considered as unearned income? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. I was going to discuss this matter tomorrow. (interpretation ends) To clarify, the direction I had given the department is to review that specific amount under the legislation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can attest to the fact that one does not always win, not every time, maybe once a year, at bingo or in the lottery. Nobody is that lucky. In fact it is a pretty rare occurrence. However, one of my constituents had the good luck to win at bingo. Mr. Speaker, they used the money to pay off all the outstanding bills that had been hanging over them. They felt very relieved until they went to apply for their income assistance, only to find that the recalculated benefits were not even enough to put food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister agree that when individuals make responsible decisions, like paying off outstanding bills with unexpected winnings, their good efforts should be taken into consideration when calculating their net monthly income for allocating income assistance benefits? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I played bingo for 20 years before I won once just a couple of months ago.

Thank you for your question. We will certainly be reviewing it. I also want to remind the House and people looking, the services we provide with Family Services hopefully are geared towards temporary, that through income support they will eventually be resilient. Safe shelters, all of these services we provide hopefully are temporary for everyone’s use. When it comes to income support, yes, I acknowledge this \$40. We will be reviewing it, but hopefully people will be coming off income support. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, there are hardly any jobs available in any small community, very limited jobs, so that’s why we go to income support for help to get food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, in her responses to my colleague on this issue, the minister indicated that she had given directions to her staff to look at amending the legislation. Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to reporting back to this House in the spring sitting on the final decision regarding amendments to section 20(4)(1.1) of the *Income Assistance Regulations*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I stated earlier that I was going to go back to this question tomorrow to confirm that I have given direction to staff to looking at the amount under the legislation, but I cannot say how long that will be because it's legislation. There are many in front of Justice when it comes to legislation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Question 869 – 5(2): Services at Embassy West

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues and I say “good day” to the people of Pangnirtung.

I'll be asking a question that I posed last year in May regarding the elders' care facility in Ottawa, Embassy West, and how the residents are provided support. We found out that they have two Inuit employees. They have interpreters and assistants. I would first like to ask if there has been staff turnover or if they have increased their staff. Thank you.

Oh, I'm sorry. My question is for the Minister of Health. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Let me remind you to indicate who your question is directed to first. Minister of Health, Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. I don't have the exact number of staffing requirements. It's a very large facility, of which the majority of our residents are on one or two floors. I do know that they have been working very diligently to enhance their language services that are available. I would have to get back to the member on the exact staffing requirements that they have, but I would encourage anyone living in the Ottawa area to look at their website. I'll have to again confirm that they have the job postings on there, but I do encourage people, especially if they are bilingual and want to work in the healthcare field, to be aware of any opportunities at that facility for employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 2017-18 budget report there was over \$20 million and there were 15 elders that were staying there according to

that report. When we visited there I noticed there were only two staffed during the day and they had nobody working at night. I am pleased to hear that you're encouraging anybody to apply.

However, what other changes are you aware of, or what support mechanisms are in place to allow elders assurance that there will be somebody at night to assist them? I would like to reiterate my question to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know for interpretive services they are available seven days a week from 9 am to 8 pm. They also do provide interpretive services by appointment and in emergencies as well.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that they're working on translating their signage so that visitors and the elders themselves can have signage in their own language.

Again, I don't have the level of detail on the current staffing compliment. I would have to look into the matter and get back to the member. I'm sorry I just don't have that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

Question 870 – 5(2): Compensation for Elders

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my fellow residents of Amittuq. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health. I want to first say, I was so emotional but I really wanted to be clear. My apologies.

However, we all want to be good stewards for our elders and they are often our supports. When the minister was talking about how mental illness can have an effect on an individual, as well as the elders, in our communities our people can be affected by this problem. When I do ask questions, I often try to ask the government to find out what is available for elders.

I asked a question to the Minister of Health, I asked the Minister of Culture and Heritage. This morning I would like to ask questions to the Minister of Health. We deal with the people, its population, how is the Department of Health thinking about treating elders equally as employees in your department rather than individuals who are consulted so that you can give them proper compensation for their time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With any of our jobs, as always, we follow Article 23 and if people apply for positions that are available in the community, I

encourage elders to apply and bring their knowledge to the table. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are you insinuating that our elders have no impacts? Let me perhaps supplement that with this, Mr. Speaker, our elders are the first resource whenever anyone experiences life's struggles.

Ever since I sat down in the Assembly, I have advocated for our elders and here I have only one year in my mandate. Now, what I really want heard by both this House and our government, our elders are already stressed as they are required to provide advice, and I too felt the impacts of our elders as I too have gone through hardships, leading to life advice and scolded amongst other things but in all cases the sage advice of the elders came through.

Can the minister provide an initiative that formalizes these acts by creating positions related to mental health, life wellness and such that usually starts with an elder? This would be best for the smaller decentralized communities. What does the Department of Health have planned towards such an initiative that formalizes the informal resources we already use related to healthy living, mental health?

Can we acknowledge the elders who provide this service by treating them more like full-time positions or as employees? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do rely heavily upon elders in our communities to provide guidance and support and I don't want to discount any of the value to that.

There are opportunities there, Mr. Speaker, through our Quality of Life Division, the hamlets and municipalities or societies in a community can put forward submissions to have more formalized counselling or availability. We work very closely with in all three regions in providing Inuit counsellors. They may not all be elders, but they are trained counsellors; it's quite an extensive program to achieve that certification and they work very closely with our clinical staff.

Mr. Speaker, the needs on community to community do vary. There may be opportunities in some community to formalize a relationship and I would encourage communities to bring forward proposals to see how elders could be more formally recognized and compensated for their work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Member Kaernek.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I have been stating in my member's statements and oral questions, how we can see our elders as GN employees when it comes to mental health and counselling issues?

I never get any straight answers from any minister when I ask about elders. This is my final question: will the Department of Health put [together] a plan when it comes to Inuit employment, to see them as employees under the GN Inuit employment plan? That has been my question on how we can compensate or make them employees under the Inuit employment plan.

Will the Department of Health consider: for elders who are counsellors, who are mental health helpers, will the department put a plan [together] under the Inuit employment plan to start having elders in any of the Nunavut communities under the Inuit employment plan? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure. I'm not trying to be confrontational with the member. I think it's a very valued opinion and it's a very great suggestion. Mr. Speaker, we do have those community positions. There are community wellness workers. There are mental health workers. There are a number of different positions through the health system where I strongly encourage any elder that has the qualifications to apply. We have the positions there. Bring that knowledge into the system. I fully support an initiative like that.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what the member is trying to bring forward on a territorial-wide basis. Every community has different and unique needs, and I strongly suggest the hamlet, society, a council to bring forward proposals if they feel that that is one component that is lacking in their community. We do have funding. There's Culture and Heritage. There's Quality of Life. There are a number of different programs that are available; economic development opportunities for privatization.

Mr. Speaker, we're not putting up barriers. Mr. Speaker, there are opportunities out there to fulfill exactly what the member is talking about. I encourage him to help his community put forward proposals. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Please note that I have no more names on my list and we will now proceed to Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. (interpretation ends) Petitions. (interpretation) Item 11. (interpretation ends) Responses to Petitions. (interpretation) Item 12. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Item 12: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters**Committee Report 023 – 5(2): Bill 41, An Act to Amend the Guardianship and Trusteeship Act**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 41, *An Act to Amend the Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bill is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Bill 41 will be placed on the order paper for Friday, March 6.

Let's proceed. Item 13. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents**Tabled Document 264 – 5(2): Report Respecting Benefits Paid to Ministers under the Ministerial Benefits Policies for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2019****Tabled Document 265 – 5(2): Report on the Community Transportation Initiatives Program 2018-2019****Tabled Document 266 – 5(2): Environmental Rights Act Annual Report January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016****Tabled Document 267 – 5(2): Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund Annual Report 2017-2018****Tabled Document 268 – 5(2): Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund Annual Report 2018-2019**

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table five documents today. I'll say it in three parts. The first document is what (interpretation ends) Premier Savikataaq (interpretation) wanted to table, which is the *Report Respecting Benefits Paid to Ministers under the Ministerial Benefits Policies for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2019*.

Also, as the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, I am very pleased to table the *Report on the Community Transportation Initiatives Program 2018-19*.

Also, these three documents are being tabled by Minister Savikataaq from the Department of Environment. (interpretation ends) For today, the Environmental Rights Annual Report, January to December 2016; Natural Resources Trust Fund, April 2017 to

2028; and finally, Natural Resources Trust Fund, April 8, 2018, March 2019. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents.

Tabled Document 269 – 5(2): Report of Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the Period July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

Tabled Document 270 – 5(2): Interim Directive on Members’ Travel and Childcare Entitlements

Thank you, members. I have two documents to table today. The first document is the *Report on Members’ Absences from Sitzings of the House and Meetings of Committees and Caucuses for the Period July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019*.

The second document is the *Interim Directive on Members’ Travel and Childcare Entitlements* issued by the Management and Services Board, pursuant to subsection 40(3)(f.2) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. (interpretation) Thank you.

Let’s proceed. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. (interpretation) There are none. Item 15. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Continuing on. Item 16. (interpretation ends) Motions. 17. First Reading of Bills. 18. Second Reading of Bills. 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 39, 40, and 42 with Ms. Angnakak in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 62 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

We will take a short break for 15 minutes.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 10:43 and Committee resumed at 11:05*

Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairperson (Ms. Angnakak): I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 39 and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We wish to continue with the review of Bill 39 and the 2020-21 main estimates, starting with the Department of Family Services and followed by the departments of Justice and Finance. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. (interpretation ends) Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 39?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 39 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2020-2021 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairperson: Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Sheutiapik: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: Yes, please, Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister and her officials to go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in. Thank you.

For the record, Minister Sheutiapik, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments. Thank you.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. To my right is Yvonne Niego, she is the Deputy Minister, and to my left, Assistant Deputy Minister Sol Vardy. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I will now continue on to my opening comments.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the standing committee. I am pleased to be here today to present and discuss the proposed '20-21 main estimates and business plan for the Department of Family Services.

Madam Chairperson, for 2020-21, the Department of Family Services is proposing an operating budget of \$155,833,000, which represents an increase of 5.8 percent, or \$8,488,000, over last year's main estimates. The department's staff complement increased from 220.9 PYs in 2019-2020 to 236.9 person years in the proposed 2020-21 main estimates. These increases include:

- Under Poverty Reduction, \$2,107,000 to facilitate the planning and opening of shelters in Kugluktuk and Rankin Inlet and the ongoing operations of a low-barrier shelter in Iqaluit. The funding will also enhance homelessness outreach services through the creation of four new person years.
- Under Family Wellness (formerly the Children and Family Services Division), \$2 million for forced growth residential care costs to cover the increase in costs for providing placements and supports for clients with complex needs through residential care facilities.

- \$1.1 million for five new regional director positions in the Family Wellness Branch. These new positions will increase capacity within the division in order to strengthen service delivery.
- \$1,040,000 for family violence services which will expand emergency supports by augmenting current funding for existing family service shelters and facilitate the planning and opening of shelters in Gjoa Haven, Baker Lake, Pangnirtung, and Pond Inlet.
- \$1.3 million to cover increases in foster care per diems, which has been unchanged since 2004. Providing foster families with appropriate support results in stable placements and better outcomes for children and youth.
- \$645,000 for five new positions to implement the Community Coordination for Women's Safety Initiative.
- \$300,000 to implement a contribution program for temporary overnight safe spaces for youth who find themselves in crisis.

This budget and person year increases reflect the structural changes my department has been undertaking to strengthen service delivery to children and families. Work has also been done to streamline the programs and services provided by the Department of Family Services to ensure our staff are focused solely on the Nunavummiut who need our services the most. Part of this work, and as part of the department's reorganization, includes transferring the responsibility of Immigration, the Office of the Public Guardian, and the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program to other departments.

Madam Chairperson, this proposed operating budget would allow the department to address commitments of *Turaaqtavut* while improving our ability to provide care and support Nunavummiut as they work towards personal well-being.

I would be happy to respond to questions from members of the standing committee on the proposed 2020-21 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening comments? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have reviewed the 2020-21 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services.

Madam Chairperson, the proposed operations and maintenance budget for the Department of Family Services is almost \$156 million for 2020-21. This takes into

account the proposed transfer of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program to the Department of Education and the transfer of Immigration and the Office of the Public Guardian to the Department of Justice.

During her appearance before the standing committee to discuss her draft 2020-21 budget and business plans, members welcomed receiving information from the minister regarding new initiatives being planned by the department in such areas as shelter services and the addition of positions to improve the coordination and delivery of services across Nunavut.

Madam Chairperson, the Department of Family Services continues to deliver Nunavut's income assistance programs which are directed towards assisting families, adult individuals, and seniors in meeting their basic needs. Members recognize that the recent ransomware attack on the Government of Nunavut had an impact on the operations of this and other programs delivered by the department, and applauds the efforts of frontline workers and staff to ensure that clients were not adversely affected. Members encourage the department to continue to monitor economic trends across the territory to ensure that income assistance benefits keep pace with the rising costs of living.

Madam Chairperson, the Department of Family Services also works with the Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College to ensure that programs, supports and resources related to adult and post-secondary learning are available to individuals seeking to further their education and gain employment. The standing committee supports the department's efforts to improve communication and coordination between income support workers and career development officers. The department continues to administer the Adult Learning and Training Supports Program to support adults in accessing education and training opportunities.

The department recently announced that consultations on Nunavut's apprenticeship legislation are underway and encourage Nunavummiut to contribute to this process. Members look forward to updates on the results of these consultations and what changes will be suggested to improve the system which supports Nunavummiut to become skilled trades workers.

Madam Chairperson, the issue of family violence continues to be a major concern across the territory. In the past members urged the Minister of Family Services to work with her staff to explore options to increase the number of safe houses and shelters in our communities. Members were therefore extremely pleased to learn of a number of initiatives that the Department of Family Services is proposing for 2020-21 to promote the establishment of more safe house and shelter services in a number of communities across Nunavut. Members were also pleased to note the reopening of the low-barrier shelter (formerly called the "damp shelter") in Iqaluit. Members are in full support of increased funding for such programs.

Madam Chairperson, the standing committee notes that the department is proposing to increase foster parent per diems in the upcoming fiscal year. Foster parents play an

important role in ensuring that children in vulnerable situations can be safely and comfortably cared for. Adequate support for foster parents is also important. Members look forward to updates on the status of foster care services across the territory. Members also look forward to receiving updates on other options being considered to provide safe spaces for youth who may need temporary overnight accommodation.

During the minister's appearance before the standing committee to discuss her departments proposed 2020-21 budget and business plan, members raised a number of concerns with respect to the current status of adoption services and the processes for formalizing adoption in Nunavut. The standing committee appreciates that work has been ongoing to review the *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*. Members look forward to receiving further information on this issue.

Madam Chairperson, that concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will also have questions and comments as we proceed. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Does anyone have any general comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good morning, minister and your officials, Ms. Niego and Ms. Vardy. It's always a pleasure to see three strong women at the front and representing our government.

First I would like to begin by thanking the minister and her department. Your commitment and emphasis placed on providing essential services to those who need it the most, our most vulnerable Nunavummiut, and the structural changes of the former child and family services branch, which has been rebranded as the Family Wellness Branch, is appreciated.

We as members have been calling for increased support to address domestic and family violence, namely, for women fleeing violence and children who have been subject to physical, mental and sexual abuse. I cannot express how reassuring it is that the Government of Nunavut is actually heeding our concerns and for that, I thank you and on behalf of the most vulnerable, I thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Seeing that there are no more names on my list for general comments... . Oh, I'm sorry, Cathy. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank the minister for saying that she will direct the review of income support. We all know that income support should be a short-term solution, but for all of Nunavut, there is a general lack of places to find work. We get concerned about personal bank accounts when they are looked into by the Department of Family Services. When parents give money to their children, it gets investigated.

I would like to thank the minister for having this policy reviewed. We know policies can be changed at any time, but when it's a regulation, as the minister knows, it's a little more difficult. I would like a comprehensive review of income support so that they can initiate something that is made in Nunavut for Nunavut. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Towntongie. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, minister and your officials.

Within the opening comments that were made (interpretation ends) under poverty reduction (interpretation) or poverty, I am happy that the Department of Family Services was able to review this matter and resulted in a position. Further, I want to strongly urge you to combat extreme poverty as Nunavut has the highest percentage within Canada, and I also encourage the Department of Family Services to focus more on the smaller decentralized communities as that is where poverty is more prevalent, primarily due to the lack of employment opportunities and the only choice they have is income support.

In your opening comments you stated the creation of a substantial amount of funds to create positions including shelters. I wish to remind you of this fact: poverty leads to difficulties amongst families and it can create tensions and disagreements, although they don't wish it. I want this matter clearly focused on within the Department of Family Services to publicize this fact that extreme poverty cases in Nunavut could be reduced.

It's also good to hear the amount of funding that will be allocated towards this in Nunavut, and that is quite commendable. I am glad to see it. I still want more focus placed on families that are facing extreme poverty, and they rarely know whom to turn to, even with local relatives. As the Department of Family Services, I urge you to work harder on behalf of the people suffering from poverty in Nunavut, in the areas they can receive more assistance and support, due to the extreme poverty they already face.

I encourage the Department of Family Services, in their plans, to try and reduce the number of people experiencing poverty. It's stated here that Nunavut has the highest number of people experiencing poverty. It is quite pitiful when children have to go to school hungry. When you're a child you don't know what to do.

I encourage you to work closely with the Department of Education to have a little more food in the schools. If you could strengthen that program, then hungry people might become happier. Whenever we are hungry, we can't think straight and that's true. I encourage the Department of Family Services to keep working on this and make it more apparent to people that this resource is out there.

Thank you for the opening comments where you announced that you'll be putting more money into Nunavut. Please concentrate more on the smaller communities. Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kaernerk. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to welcome the minister and her officials. Firstly, I'm very pleased, looking at the numbers, that there has been an increase in the amount for shelters for the homeless and that you're going to be increasing the PYs in your department so that they can provide better services. I fully support that and I'm very pleased about it.

I have three concerns, with the first one being income support. The minister indicated that they are looking at providing income support for a short time only, but we know that there is lack of employment in most of the communities along with other reasons where people have to access income support. People might be on income support for too many years, and we have to do something about it in order to improve the system and in order to increase the number that is employed in Nunavut.

My colleague also touched upon poverty reduction and hungry children. If I understood correctly, the Department of Education and Department of Family Services have to work together. The Department of Education should be the only department to provide breakfast programs and so on.

Lastly, for (interpretation ends) Nutrition North; I know it is not our government program; it falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government. I guess recently the Nutrition North Program was revised, but still there has been an increase in food insecurity in Nunavut. We have to provide healthy nutritious food to the communities. I'm not going to ask too many questions about Nutrition North, but the minister, without hesitation, should be bringing up this issue to the federal government, as well as informing her colleagues about the reality in Nunavut, where there has been an increase in food insecurity that is directly connected to poverty. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Mr. Qirngnuq has general comments. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am also very happy that there is going to be an increase in the budget amount, and I am sure it will help to provide better services within the department.

I visited a school and children were asking questions about the high prices of nutritional food and suicide. These were students in Grade 5 who were asking those types of questions because they see the reality in their community. I am very glad that you are going to be working with the Department of Education to look at what can be done at the school level and also work with the parents. I am very glad. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, I am also very pleased about these programs that are going to be provided under Poverty Reduction. There are a large number of students who quit school, or drop out of school. There are children having children.

Hopefully in the near future you can work with the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation or Nunavut Arctic College and provide training programs so that we can decrease the number of people that have to access income support.

Someone indicated that they would like to reduce the numbers of people accessing income support, but then again, the number of school dropouts that the minister indicated are the highest in the country. I would urge you to work with the other departments so that training programs are made available through Arctic College to get people ready to go into the labour market.

In your opening comments, you indicated that in Pond Inlet there has been discussion about shelters. I am thankful the government is giving that consideration. We have a mine near Pond Inlet where there has been an increase in employment and there are problems associated with this, especially with communities that are close to the mines. That is all I wanted to say, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. I have no more names on my list for general comments. We will then go to L-4.
(interpretation ends) I just want to remind members that I will recognize a member once per page. We are going to follow the same format that we've been using over the last few days. So you each have 10 minutes. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, minister and staff. The *Income Assistance Act* was amended in 2017 following the department's Report on the Review and Reform of Income Assistance and Economic Development. In July 2018 basic allowance benefits were increased and a sundries allowance benefit introduced for clients who are in a medical or treatment facility. Are any program or policy changes being considered for 2020-21? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. Can you say your question again, please. I didn't get all of it. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Akoak, please rephrase your question.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We do have some medical patients who go out for medical, out of the community to bigger centres. My question is, in July 2018 basic allowance benefits were increased and a sundries allowance benefit introduced for

clients. Are any program or policy changes being considered for 2020-21? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) I also thank you for that question. I mentioned that we are currently reviewing since 2015 and we're still reviewing. There were 15 that were reviewed and we have completed nine of those. I can say that the ones that are not done are still being reviewed.

(interpretation ends) Coordinate income assistance with other income support programs, (interpretation) I think that's relevant to your question; (interpretation ends) explore changing eligibility for income assistance to 19; improve access to other income supports and financial services; explore case management teams; and the final one still in progress is review internal roles and responsibilities for income assistances. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I'm out of line on this one, let me know.

Sometimes we do have people that go out of the community that end up in the bigger cities, who become homeless. Are they also allowed to have benefits when it comes to social assistance? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) When they don't go back to their communities and if they need to be provided income support, it's under the jurisdiction of that province that they are in, not the Nunavut government. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The department introduced a new child and family services case management system in 2019. The media has reported that the recent ransomware attack on the Government of Nunavut's computer systems has affected the operation of the income assistance system as well as the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students systems. What is the current operational status of the child and family services system? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for the question. (interpretation ends)

I think that every department was impacted by the ransomware, but I am happy to report that income support continued on with the old manual voucher system. I'm happy to report that that was continuing.

When it comes to our system, I do believe that is still ongoing and that they are still testing online. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): And thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just have one more question. The department's 2020-23 business plan indicates that the Nunavut Action Plan on Absolute Homelessness is underway. What kinds of community-based homelessness solutions are being developed under this plan and what kinds of services are being provided to clients? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Bear with me while I try to look it up.

(interpretation) Thank you, (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson, for your patience. (interpretation) Thank you for the question. (interpretation ends) The department, in collaboration with other government departments is developing an action plan on homelessness.

The plan will focus on four areas of action, being: prevention, increasing shelter and transition housing programs, strengthening and coordinating support services, and youth homelessness. The first draft of proposed action items is ready for review by the executive and for discussion with other departments. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm just curious, on the prevention of homelessness: can you explain to us what prevention of homelessness is? I'm curious to see what that means. Thank you. That is my final question.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson. That is a very good question and it could be answered in many ways, but one example I can give is: I've talked about our "one client, one plan" approach that can benefit that. (interpretation) Thank you, (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. I have no more names on my list. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Under the contributions page on L-8, which is an information item, it lists \$4.27 million for the Homelessness Initiative Contribution. I wonder if the department can give us a breakdown of where that money will be allocated. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson. Thanks for the question. Currently, the way it is broken down, for homelessness initiatives, it is \$4,271,000, and the breakdown is: in 2019-2020 the funding the recipients and contract amounts are as follows: Umingmak Centre, Cambridge Bay, \$715,000; Hamlet of Pangnirtung, \$25,000; Inukshuk Guardianship Society, \$176,000; Kitikmeot Inuit Association, \$60,000; Nunavut Literacy Council, \$20,000; Uqutaq Society, \$1,145,000; and YWCA Sivummut House, \$915,000, which totals \$3,056,000.

The new money that I mentioned in my opening comments are: \$665,000 for the Kugluktuk homeless shelter, \$100,000 for the Rankin Inlet homeless shelter, \$800,000 for the Iqaluit low-barrier shelter, and \$50,000 for travel relocation, and that is if a family or a woman needs to leave one community to another, we've actually put in travel dollars for that. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. I'm looking at the letter to the committee sent on February 26. On page 3 it lists the homeless shelter facilities and it is great to see some new money flowing for homelessness.

In this table, table 3 on page 3, there is a column and it says "owned by." I just want a clarification: does this refer to the actual physical facility itself in terms of the ownership? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. That's correct. We own the one facility that is the low-barrier shelter is run in. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It's interesting to look at the best way to run a homelessness shelter. I note that all the other shelters listed here are third-party owned. Is there a process by which communities can request a shelter to be set up in their community? If so, how does the department go around deciding "Okay this is going to be owned by a third-party and this one is going to

be owned by the Government of Nunavut, and we're going to put one of our buildings towards this operation and maintenance function"? How does that process work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. Each community that wishes to have a facility contacts our department and there is an application process. We, as a department, don't have an influx of empty spaces or buildings in our communities, but we certainly make an attempt in assisting them by providing operating dollars if they have a partner or use of a facility that they can rent. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I was going through the business plan and I see there are references to different action plans, different strategies; I wonder if we could get a summary or information on how many strategies and action plans exist currently under the department? How many of those are public information? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I don't have a list like that because some of the strategies that we refer to may actually be from the different organizations, as an example, the MMIWG report. Many departments use it, but we would refer to it... It's not our own strategy we created, but when there are strategies out there, we refer to it. There might be one that Pauktuutit might have done that we may use, but I don't have a list here with me, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Maybe the minister could list off some of the main strategies that the department works under. It doesn't have to be a list of every single strategy, but this is pretty high-level information. I'm a bit surprised that there wouldn't be some information available to the committee in this regard. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I know specifically that our department has done is the one we discussed at full COW, which is the Violence Prevention Framework Strategy. We have the Poverty Reduction Strategy, which is created out of the one being co-chaired by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. A side note to that is we're reviewing what kinds of documents have been created out of those and reviewing them for next steps, but those are two that really stand out to me. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thanks to the minister in terms of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Family Violence Strategy or Domestic Violence Reduction Strategy.

I think it's great to see that the department is taking a strategic approach to things because I don't think we would want the department just to jump to draft, let's say, an action plan within the department and without consulting with Nunavummiut. I think the fact that you have strategies in place is important. I would like to encourage the department to continue working on the action plan piece of those strategies.

When it comes to the Nunavut Homelessness Action Plan, it's referred to on page 165, is that a public document in terms of the action plan? Are there any plans to table it in the House? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. It's still in the development stage, but once it's complete, definitely it will be made available. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Just one more question on this homelessness action plan, to what extent has the Nunavut Housing Corporation get involved in this? I'm thinking of topics that come up with the housing corporation, such as tiny homes or homeownership, condition of public housing units. On the homelessness action plan, where is the housing corporation relation to this? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. The department has been in full engagement with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) What does the minister mean by "full engagement"? I'm looking for a bit more information than that. Is the housing corporation providing specific suggestions to the department? Are they incorporating the housing corporation's blueprint for action, action items? I think it's a shared responsibility and I'm interested to understand the interplay between the housing corporation and this department. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I'm surprised I didn't mention that blueprint earlier, the last question, because that is one of the tools we use. This is why our department meets almost every week with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Maybe I'll ask that question to the housing corporation once they're in front of us.

On page 166 it mentions a priority for this upcoming fiscal year is implementing the Food Security Strategy and Action Plan. Is this strategy and action a public document or when will it become a public document? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. I mentioned earlier, right now there are kind of two umbrellas, the poverty reduction and under that is a coalition. Right now when it comes to the food security plan, partners to respond to the renewal of the action plan has been limited. As such the department is working to re-engage partners and to build greater community awareness and involvement in the Nunavut Food Security Coalition. This will include radio call-in shows, community surveys, and social media campaigns to encourage and inspire ideas for inclusion in the action plan. A literature review of past research and recommendations is also being completed to identify actions. *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. It's almost lunchtime, so we will take a break. Mr. Main, you can continue when we come back at 1:30 p.m. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 11:57 and resumed at 13:30

Chairperson: Welcome back, everybody. I hope everybody had a good lunch. We are currently looking at Family Services. Corporate Management. L-4. I will go and recognize Mr. Main. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Looking at page 179 of the business plan, which is the Inuit Employment Plan, I note that there will be an increase of five senior management positions. I'm looking at the minister's opening comments where it mentions five new regional director positions in the Family Wellness Branch. I wonder if the minister can tell us: what are the five regional director positions and specifically what regions are they directors for? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I'm sorry, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When you started with Inuit employment, I went to Inuit employment, but your question is on regional. Through the Chair, it's regional. There are four regional representation. For example, in Qikiqtaaluk one director... . There's just too much, so we have split it up to north and south, so that makes it for two. It's Rankin Inlet, Pangnirtung, Iqaluit, and Cambridge Bay are the regional and of course one for the south in Iqaluit, so two Iqaluit, north and south. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The senior management positions are increasing at the same time the administrative positions within the department are decreasing. It shows a number, 27 administrative positions to 22 administrative positions. Specifically for those five administrative positions, where are those jobs or which positions are being eliminated? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: I'm sorry. Which page are you looking at? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I'm looking at page 179, Inuit Employment Plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. Through you, our deputy minister is going to respond. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That reduction under the administrative positions doesn't reflect that we're reducing or eliminating positions from previous years to this year. It could be just a movement of positions within different categories in this table of employment targets. Those new five senior manager positions will be reflected under senior management positions once we fill more of those five new positions. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Vardy. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I will have to leave that with the department to maybe clarify at a later date because it says “Total administrative positions, September 30, 2019; 27, and then as of March 31, 2021, total administrative positions; 22. So I will just leave that there. If the department can clarify at a later date, that would be appreciated.

My final question; page 180 mentions “...a pilot project for mass hiring of Community Social Services Workers...” and on the status update it says that the mass hiring project was completed. I wonder if we could have an explanation as to what is meant by mass hiring. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Is that good? My apologies, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) There was a development of a pilot project for a mass hiring of community social service worker positions through the use of generic positions and eligibility lists. Right now our status has been completed and we will continue to support Nunavut Arctic College through practicums to increase Nunavut Inuit applicant pool for department for hiring community social service workers.

Understandably, sometimes there are burnouts and such, so rather than having an ad all of the time, this is how that approach was taken on this pilot project. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The mass hiring approach; how will that address the issue of burnout of the social services workers that the minister mentioned? Thank you Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Sometimes when there is burnout they leave, or go to a different community, which then triggers having to recruit. The approach we took was with this open kind of competition is to speed up the replacement recruiting process. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It is good to see that you’re improving your hiring process or attempting to, but I think the root issue of burnout, if it’s not being addressed then, it might be like being on a treadmill. I think that needs to be looked at in terms of the social services workers and making sure that they are not getting burnt out, so that you have better retention of these workers.

My final question is: on page 179, it mentions capacity. It says some of the challenges that the department faces, and it says “These issues include a labour market where demand greatly exceeds supply, limited access to office and operations spaces...”.

In which specific communities is the department lacking access to office and operations space? I am concerned that if this is impacting the department’s capacity, I would like to know which communities in which it’s an issue. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I’m out of time, so that’s it. *Ma’na*.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I’m sorry. (interpretation ends) I know it’s kind of a fine line to capital, but we know which communities we have vacancies because of it. In Baffin we have five: two in Igloolik, Cape Dorset, Arctic Bay, and Qikiqtarjuaq. In the Kivalliq we have seven: one in Baker Lake, two in Rankin Inlet, one in Whale Cove, one in Chester, and two in Arviat. In the Kitikmeot there are three: Kugluktuk has two, Cambridge Bay one; and two positions in Iqaluit. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Welcome.

(interpretation ends) First I want to commend the plan that you guys have been doing to improve the programs and services within Family Services. I know it’s not an easy department by all means. The long-term plans put forward, I’m quite impressed with, and trying to meet the needs in our communities.

First I wanted to ask a question in regard to...I know family resource workers is one that was mentioned in the beginning in your opening statements. In the letter that you had provided, there are six in Nunavut. I’m curious to find out if there are any plans to get family resource workers in all the communities or what are the next plans to get more resource workers. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Unfortunately right now it is the regional, but hopefully as we continue to work on our reorganization, that would go. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. I would also like to ask how many communities are short of social workers or if all the communities have them. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Currently on social worker, (interpretation ends) to date we have 48 funded workers, 31 of which are filled. We have nine funded family resource workers, three of which are filled. We have 34.76 funded income assistant workers where 33.23 are filled and 12 funded career development officers, 11 of which are filled. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. It's obvious that the social workers do a lot of work in the communities and some work tirelessly and there's a shortage. Do you have plans? There's a social work course in Cambridge Bay and here. I think there's a second year program, if I'm not mistaken. How are they informed? Are they prepared for jobs in the communities or how do you work with them at Arctic College? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for that question. It's very important. Social work has a big impact. I can say that as of today, six will be graduating second year on June 20; Iqaluit, one; Clyde River, one; Baker Lake, one; but a Rankin Inlet resident isn't graduating until June 26. Those six students will be graduating in June 2020. (interpretation ends) Our first year that's being held in Cambridge Bay, we have 14 students: five from Cambridge Bay, five from Taloyoak, two from Rankin Inlet, and two from Baker Lake. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is good news that you are quite aware of them.

Moving on, I have a different question. I'll ask the rest of the questions with the other divisions. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Following my list of names, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In the minister's opening remarks, the document we have, on page 2, the last bullet, in English it states, (interpretation ends) "\$1.040 million for family violence services which will expand emergency support." (interpretation) That's how it's written. On the next page it states, (interpretation ends) "Shelters and facilities, the planning and opening of shelters in Gjoa Haven, Baker Lake, Pangnirtung, and Pond Inlet." I believe it's in the planning stages at

the moment and my question is: when will it take for the planning stage to be completed and when can these communities expect to get a facility after the planning stage has been completed? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for that question. Yes, we have stated that this is going to be a plan that we're going to do this year and the year after that hopefully we will have the plan done so that we can take off. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq, do you have another question? Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In the business plan of the Department of Family Services at the bottom on page 162 it states in English, (interpretation ends) "Continue to implement the departmental strategic plan ensuring that it means the priorities of Turaaqtavut." It goes on to say that the status of this is "Increased support for community-based healing programs to address violence and sexual abuse – the department approved funding for Men and Boys and Women and Girls programs. Continuous advocacy for increased funding for shelter initiatives across the territory."

My question is: will the communities have to submit an application for funding to hire elders or will the department set aside for this program? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When we work with communities and the facilities, the consultations, we sign a contribution agreement based on a proposal by the community needs and wants, and start that negotiation and agree on a contribution. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Will the municipality have to submit an application for funding or will the department of social services in our home communities submit applications for funding? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) If you're referring to programs like men's and boys' initiatives, yes, it's usually the hamlet. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under the same page, 163, “Support staff in acquiring the training and education needed,” it says in the status, the department is working in collaboration with Nunavut Arctic College on development of credit-based program and curriculum for family resource workers, foster parent coordinators, income support workers, and community social workers. Is this program already available or it will be available only after this has been approved by the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Work is underway with the college to build up entry-level program training as well. The intent will be to have employees at the family resource worker level to be able to take occasional modules, ten in total, while working. Eventually the aim would be to have them progress through to degrees through working with Arctic College and the Memorial University of Newfoundland. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My last question on the same page, “Continue to provide oversight and support,” the status, “The department continues to ensure the development and implementation of legislation incorporates Inuit Societal Values and *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*.” (interpretation) When work is being done for that, you will be using elders and knowledgeable... I’m asking if you’re going to be working with knowledgeable, expert elders for this purpose. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, we use ours in different ways and sometimes we, of course, rely on expertise that’s provided through CLEY. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Has this already begun, or will it only start once the budget is approved? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and I apologize. (interpretation ends) You know you have been around the government long when you’re referring to a division of department by the old form. To answer the last

question, right now it's still under the development stage. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) The next person on my list: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. First, I would like to return to a topic that was discussed at great length last year, and it is the safe homes that are available for those that are fleeing violence. Last year it was indicated that at that time there were only four established safe homes in Nunavut.

I put forward a recommendation to the minister to put out a call to our communities requesting individuals to privately come forward to the department to try and boost or increase these numbers. The minister had made a commitment to do so. In looking at the newest letter that we received from the minister, dated February 26 on page 4, I was a bit disappointed when I saw that the list remains constant at four safe homes across the territory.

I was happy to see that right below, it states that the department is working to increase the number of safe homes in Nunavut through distribution of brochures and applications packages to communities.

Can you tell us a little bit more about this effort or initiative to increase the number of safe homes? For example, was this the only initiative that was taken and were these brochures and applications only placed in Family Services offices? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When it comes to safe homes, this coming fiscal year all social services offices will be hosting town halls for open discussions on safe homes as part of our recruitment campaign. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the minister for that response. I think it's a great initiative to spread the word about the need for safe homes and the process of becoming a safe home.

Can the minister indicate when these town halls will begin and what sort of advance communications will the department take place in before holding these meetings? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We don't have a schedule *per se* on when these are going to happen. When you keep in mind the work that is going on in the communities, sometimes there are crises. So it is really hard to plan something like this throughout the whole year for the whole department, but we will certainly give advance notice when they do plan to have the town hall in their own communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm glad to see that the department has some sort of plan in place to spread awareness of the need for safe homes. I just want to express a bit of disappointment that this is something that I brought forward last year and that no formal movement has taken place.

I'll move on to my next topic and it's regarding transitional housing. This is an established need across the country. I'm glad to see that Nunavut will soon get its first transitional housing program in due time, but my question is on the GN's strategy when it comes to transitional housing. Does the government intend to construct, own, and operate any transitional or second stage housing units across the territory? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I know it wasn't a question, but I would like to kind of respond to the last statement when it comes to safe homes. We know each department has many asks and if this budget is passed, I think, as a department there are a lot of new initiatives, hopefully, next year.

Also, if you noticed in the media recently, the federal government has announced a \$1 million pilot project for the Northwest Territories for safe homes. Also, the minister met with the Pauktuutit representative and certainly waived concerns on shelters. I'm certainly keeping my ears to the ground on these statements and hope to have a discussion and build upon that discussion for hopefully next budget year. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Please wait a moment. The mic has been switched to me. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) For your question on the homelessness initiative, we have coordinators, as you stated, we've got new employees hired and that would be part of that fact-finding which would be best and it may vary from community to community, whether we would own it or not. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. I want to remind you that when you say “Thank you, Madam Chairperson,” the mic goes back to me. That’s for your information. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Moving on, on page 6 of the letter, the minister provided information about child abuse disclosure. Sorry, I’ll correct myself. The minister had not provided the requested information on child sexual abuse disclosures. Now, I understand the minister’s response that due to the current manual processes, the manual system to collect information pertaining to these investigations, it makes it extremely difficult to provide statistical information, but the purpose of that request was to find out how widespread the issue is. I understand why the minister is not able to provide concrete numbers, but I’m still curious to find out how often children are making disclosures of child sexual abuse. Is this a daily occurrence, a weekly occurrence, or several times a month, just an idea for the Assembly of how bad the issue really is? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As a department we have an idea on how often a child might come to Iqaluit from Nunavut for abuse, but for specific child sexual abuse, the Department of Health handles those. We deal with physical abuse, not sexual abuse. Health might have a better number on sexual abuse. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It’s my understanding that whenever a child does come forward with a disclosure of abuse that two individuals are called; the RCMP and the social worker, and if it is necessary, then Health will get involved.

As social workers are always informed whenever child sexual abuse is disclosed, I believe that Family Services, as well as the Department of Justice, are the two departments that really know how significant this really is.

I would like to reframe my question: would the minister be able to give us some sort of an idea of how often the department’s social workers are involved with disclosure and investigations of child sexual abuse? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I’m sorry to have misstated when I mentioned Health, but there are several departments that do handle it. Although we don’t have full stats as stated, we can comfortably say though, pretty much guaranteed, maybe twice a week. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister for that response. I'll move on to my next topic. I will be moving on to the Poverty Reduction aspect of corporate management now.

In the minister's response, the minister gave us a breakdown of community-based food security projects, and I am grateful to see all these different food initiatives are being utilized through the department, but I did notice that there were no food banks listed under this program.

So my next question is: why is that no food banks are receiving funds under community-based food security projects? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm not sure if I understand that question properly or not, but if it's to compensate for running a food bank, I think it's because it's all volunteer-based, if I am understanding your question correctly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Part of Poverty Reduction includes the Nunavut Food Security Coalition. I understand that is a number of departments and organizations working together to try and combat food insecurity, which is, of course, is a pressing issue across the territory.

The communities that do have food banks, they are very heavily used. The service that they provide is in high demand across the territory. I would like to ask the minister if she would be willing to expand upon this budget to allow funding to supplement food banks. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That's a really good question. Actually, just this morning I was having a discussion of potentially next asks, even though we don't have this year's budget approved yet, but for the following year. If not, you're restricted to food banks, but here's an example of something that's working great in the community and that is the country food program in Kugluktuk, where the hunters and trappers, working with Economic Development, received \$30,000 and fed from 100 to 150 families with that \$30,000. When I see that, it makes me think, of course, maybe if we grow our money available, that's potentially another community being fed more. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) Mr. Lightstone. Oh, that was your last question? Okay. I have no more names on my list. Corporate Management. I'll put my glasses on and make sure I read the correct numbers. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$11,000,532. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Okay. We will be going... . Oh, sorry. Let me correct myself. \$532,000. Family Wellness. Agreed? Sorry.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: I thought we... . Okay. Family Wellness. L-5. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$71,110,000. Name on the list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Chairperson.

>>*Laughter*

I was praying because I was so nervous.

>>*Laughter*

Oh, my gosh.

>>*Laughter*

Forgive me, people.

>>*Laughter*

I mean, jeez. Okay.

>>*Laughter*

I pass. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

Chairperson: Wow! I have never been referred to as Jesus.

>>*Laughter*

Okay. Ms. Towtongie passed for now. Mr. Lightstone, we will go to you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you to Ms. Towtongie for uplifting our spirits there. Sorry.

>>*Laughter*

I think I'll pass as well.

>>*Laughter*

Chairperson: Well, that gave us all a great laugh, even the minister is laughing away. I only had two names on the list and everybody is laughing, so we will go to Mr. Akoak and then Mr. Main, you will be after that. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. One of the department's priorities for 2020-21 is to implement departmental initiatives to address family violence. What are some of these initiatives and who will be delivering them? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As we progress to increasing our shelters, it comes with employees and of course an opportunity for discussion. It takes more than one person or one organization. We're going to obviously use the priorities under the Family Violence Prevention Program to help increasing awareness of what constitutes family violence, improving collaboration and coordination efforts on family violence, including sexual violence, expanding services and programs that address the underlying factors which contribute to family violence, and the use of policy and legislation to effectively intervene and protect those at risk. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I can't read anymore, Madam Chairperson.

>>*Laughter*

Chairperson (interpretation): Look at us all continuing to laugh so hard. Who was next?

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Do you have emergency plans, when there is violence within a family, to take away a child or children? Are there emergency initiatives or that sort of thing? Is there anything that someone can do to protect a child or infant? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, unfortunately that happens a fair bit. A child will be put in placement for potentially no more than 72 hours to allow the family and the department to figure out what the next steps may be. Unfortunately, if they need to be in care more than 72 hours, it allows the department to then think about the next steps, which would be finding potentially a temporary foster home, and going through the process. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Department of Family Services provides grant funding for women's initiatives and men's and boy's initiatives. What kinds of projects are being undertaken with the funding provided and how do you measure their effectiveness? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Going from my memory here, proposals come in, and it can be anything from women coming together to sew; it can be a men's group asking for funding to go hunting. All of this, as you know, when you come together and have discussions, is part of a healing journey.

So not only are you creating garments, but potentially out of what was harvested through the projects if men and boys went hunting. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Are you done, Mr. Akoak? (interpretation ends) Okay. Next person on my list is Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I apologize that I missed the comedy hour here at the Legislative Assembly. Next time, invite me, Cathy.

My first question is about these residential care contracts. I'm just looking at the budget, and it is my understanding that the residential care contracts are administered out of this division, so I'm going to ask questions about it.

The spreadsheet that the department provided to the committee breaks down the numbers for out-of-territory placement and Nunavut. I'm just looking at the Kivalliq region and when you look at the number of contracts or number of placements and then the contract award value, it appears that the Kivalliq region leads the three regions in terms of out-of-territory placement. I'm just wondering what the reason for this is. Is it the fact that there are a lack of in-territory spots or places in that region? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I do believe it's because there are more adults and/or elders in care. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) From the minister's response, it's not a long-term trend. Is this a long-term trend where you see the Kivalliq region leading Nunavut in terms of the amount of people that are being sent out of territory for placement? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It's really hard to predict. It's not just elder care but even adults, if they need care. It's really hard to predict when that service is required. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I guess I'll repeat my question. Is this a long-term trend where the Kivalliq region has the highest out-of-territory placement out of the three regions in Nunavut or does this change from year to year because things are hard to predict? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I don't think we, to my knowledge since I have been a minister, looked at comparisons from year to year when it comes to residential care placements because we're busy trying to deal with the needs of today. I'm sorry I can't tell you if this is a trend or not by region. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I guess leave that as a suggestion for the department to look into in terms of region-by-region trends in out-of-territory placements. It would be interesting to see what you can find out.

On the next page on that spreadsheet there's a list of placements and it's all the placements in-territory and out, some of them appear to be at individual homes, some appear to be with businesses. My question is: for the out-of-territory placements, how many times does the department visit the places where the children or adults are being housed and conduct inspections and/or visits? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) They are definitely visited annually or if there's a court order for more, then they're visited more than once. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) For those that are visited annually, is it the department's position that visiting these locations once a year is sufficient to deal with any issues within the placement in terms of cleanliness of the residence, cleanliness of the child, care for the child, the child is being well looked after? I'm referring to children, but I realize it's also about adults. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When I say once a year, it might be from headquarters or regional because we have coordinators now that do regular, but for the more detailed visits, it's only once a year 'cause we see the list of how many in care there are. It would add up a lot if someone from headquarters went more than once, but we do have the coordinators that visit regularly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) It's good to know. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) What does the minister mean by "regularly" coordinators visiting? My next question after that is: is the department required to give advance notice of these visits before they take place? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) When it comes to the client liaison officers, it depends on what's on their table. If there are new clients, obviously they're going to visit those first to make sure they're comfortably adjusting to a new placement, but when it comes to visits, no, they don't need to be notified. I personally, coming back from an FPT meeting, decided to do some visits in Ottawa and it was only during the meeting that they realized that I was minister because that was not shared. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It is possible that the department can have people visit these locations unannounced and do spot inspections. Is there a minimum frequency that must be met for each of these facilities that have Nunavummiut in a placement? Is the bare minimum once a year or is it once every two months? What is the minimum frequency for a visit from the department or representative? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I do believe it is standard that it's an annual, once-a-year visit. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I would suggest that maybe the department should look at increasing that because once a year is not very much oversight. I'll just leave that there.

The Residential Care Strategy, which is a priority on page 169, what's the timeline for developing this Residential Care Strategy and why did the department feel that a strategy was necessary? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The Residential Care Strategy has been undergoing consideration and our strategy is based on a focus of outcomes for the services being provided to the clients, families, and communities. The care service is about enabling human capacity of clients to be the best contributors to society that they possibly can be. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The second part of my question was: what's the timeline to complete the strategy? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We're looking at most likely a year for a timeline. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I would just like to confirm that this work on a strategy will involve consulting with people outside of the Nunavut government. Inuit organizations, for example, communities, will be given a chance to provide input to this strategy. I just wanted to confirm that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That's a guarantee. Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I look forward to that work. I think it's important. We do have a large number of Nunavummiut living outside of the territory and I hope that strategy helps us to bring them home.

On page 168 it mentions sexual abuse. This is a priority in this year's business plan. It mentions working with different partners and under the status update on page 168 it mentions "The Child Abuse Response Protocol has been updated..." What are the changes to this Child Abuse Response Protocol specifically? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) To answer your question, obviously *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* would be incorporated into that as well as the MMIWG final report and the calls for justice, specifically 12.1, 12.12, calls for social workers and those implicated in child welfare, representatives for children and youth, *Our Minds Matter, a Youth Informed View of Mental Health Services for Young Nunavummiut*, the Nunavut coroner's inquest, and the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights on Indigenous Peoples.

Of course we are hoping to finalize the protocol by spring and to be tabled in the fall of 2020. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It says here that the Child Abuse Response Protocol has been updated, so what changes did the update bring to the Child Abuse Response Protocol? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: Through you, Madam Chairperson, my deputy minister is going to respond to that one. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) There was an old version of a Child Abuse Response Protocol being used by a number of departments. This current protocol has been reviewed by several departments, and the goal was to make it much more user friendly by the individual frontline and administrative entities within each department so that everyone can understand what is involved when a child reports abuse. Everyone in their roles will understand their own responsibilities with regard to how to handle the matter. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I'll jump down to the next bullet on the same page, which is the work around revising the *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*.

I note that that is a priority for this year too. Specifically on the issue of child abuse, is this one of the areas that is being looked at in terms of revisions to the *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, and for your information, we have 100 registered adoptions for Nunavut. We have hired extra staff, and there will be two staff members reviewing training for commissioners for custom adoption. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I think that it has been mentioned before and I will just reiterate what has been said before, that there should be protocols in place to guard against the potential for sexual abuse or child abuse when we are looking at adoptions in Nunavut. I think that the minister has heard this before, so I will trust that the department is going to include that in their work.

On page 168, lower, it mentions the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council, and under status update it says "...funding to the council has been increased." I was looking at the contributions and I could only find \$370,000 in the previous '18-2019; \$370,000 in '19-2020; and then again this year listed as \$370,000 for Qullit Nunavut Status of Women

Council. What's the amount of the increase to Qulliiit Nunavut Status of Women Council? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That increase was last year for an additional PY for \$120,000. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) So it went from \$250,000 in previous years to \$370,000? I just want to clarify that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That is correct. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and thank you for recognizing me again. My parents trained me to pray all the time, just not in this setting.

>>*Laughter*

Going back to the serious matter, the 2020-23 business plan indicates that the regional foster care coordinators will be working to strengthen supports for foster parents.

Will there be any major changes, such as children in the south that are being fostered by southern families? Will there be a strategy within this business plan on how to bring them back to Nunavut and how to reintegrate them to our communities? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and thank you for the question.

(interpretation ends) I always have to reiterate that foremost, that the child stays with family, friends in the community before ever going out of the territory. If that has to happen, wherever possible, we certainly work with the family and community to try and bring them back. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Madam Chairperson and I thank the minister for that comment. There has to be a strategy in place in the business plan so that these Inuit children can be reintegrated back to their families. There is something missing when a child is taken away from the family and there are no plans in place for future as to how that child can be returned. That's something I was looking for.

One of my concerns is the *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*. It's because of child sexual abuse. We have an *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act* with no regulations for criminal record checks for child predators. We do have a high volume of sexual predators in Nunavut, at least about 3,000 when we were meeting with the RCMP.

I would like to see this being a priority. On page 168, I'm reading; it continues, begin the review, they're starting to discuss it, but we need actual results. We can't just discuss, while we are discussing it as a government, maybe a child is being sexually molested, sexually abused. We need to act fast on this and I brought this up two years ago, but having mentioned that, I would like to know: what are the challenges in administrating these two pieces of legislation and also, what kinds of changes to policies are being considered? That's my final question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Towtongie. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, the deputy minister is going to respond first and I may add to it. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Firstly on the adoption process and the child sexual abuse aspect, for one, the department, through this reorg, has moved from pre-placement planning type of process to more of a permanency planning. Through that, it would include the social worker in the community, in some cases there could be family involved, management, different entities, and then of course the focus would be the best interest of the child, a clear process when it comes to permanency planning.

With regard to fostering out of territory, the list that was provided in response to the standing committee included family home providers. The permanency planning would entail involvement of those contracts with those homes. However, any child placed out of territory tends to be very high needs. The level of care is often level 4 or level 5, which means, for example, in one family home the child could be on a trachea pipe, in another they could be so medically fragile that they have to stay close to a hospital and managed by a family that has special, almost like nursing skills. They're stable, but they still have high needs. Returning some of those children would not be recommended, especially by medical professions.

We have 77, I believe, currently children out of territory and that number hasn't been increasing in the last two years. It fluctuates a little bit, but the last large increase was a few years ago and now it has levelled out. We have been managing to keep children as close to home as possible. That is the department's philosophy.

For policy changes and what the challenges are in regard to the adoption legislation, the *Criminal Code of Canada* is very thick and there are many different charges in it. We rely on the Inuit orgs to be able to work with us so that we can agree on which ones are in line with *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* and which ones aren't. Other considerations could be how lengthy the charge is or how long ago the charges were, how minor, how major those charges are. There has to be agreement with the community, with the Inuit orgs. Our biggest barrier is getting the feed-in from other partners. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On page 167 under the Child Protection Services, it goes on to say that "This includes foster care, investigations and interventions..." Is the RCMP involved when this particular investigation is taking place? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That is correct. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under the same page, 167, Adult Support Services; it goes on to say that "Adult Support Services provides a range of support services to eligible adults with disabilities."

If I can ask: what kind of disabilities are they talking about? Does that include people with epilepsy? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, anything that allows a person to have disability, yes, that is correct. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My last question: under page 169, Priorities 2020-2021, the last bullet says "Continue to work with the Department of

Culture and Heritage, and local resources (Regional Inuit Associations and Elders Committees...)."

Are you going to be working with these people and regional Inuit associations, and elders committees? Are you going to be visiting communities once a year, or how many times a year are you going to be visiting these communities to talk to the elders committees? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It is our frontline staff who, in their communities, approach and know of the elders, so that they get that service and assistance from elders directly with the frontline workers. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When they visit the elders committees, do they get an honorarium for helping the department with their initiatives? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) If a frontline worker or our department is doing a project and we ask an elder to come in, they are certainly provided honoraria following directive 810 for honoraria in the *Human Resource Manual*. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Do you have more questions? Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: This will be my last question, Madam Chairperson. Because these elders are like professors and they have a very huge knowledge about social services and stuff like that, do your frontline workers make sure that they are paid with top dollars? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I mentioned a policy, our Directive 810 for honoraria, so top dollar; I don't... . It's the wrong minister. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

>> *Laughter*

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Are you done? Okay. Ms. Nakashuk, it's your turn.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I apologize already if I ask a question that has already been asked.

The first question I have is, (interpretation ends) sometime during the sitting I had asked about foster parents in Nunavut. The minister had stated there were 135 foster parents in Nunavut. I'm curious to know if the initiatives might have been planned to date now in terms of increasing or providing more supports for foster parents. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) My strategy has been that once this budget is passed and the per diems are increased because MLAs have stood in the House to say we don't pay our foster parents enough, so my strategy was to wait for this budget announcement. Once the increase happens, I certainly plan to go on *Igalaaq* and tie in with the safe home reaching out to communities. That has been my strategy. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. You mentioned safe homes. (interpretation ends) Are you referring to also planning to increase the supports for safe homes in the small communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Our approach is we're going to reach out to the communities to talk about requirements of a safe home and requirement of a foster parent in hopes that when they walk away, they seriously consider becoming either or. That's our hope when we're reaching out to each community. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) In the letter, (interpretation) well, it also states here that (interpretation ends) the territory's child and youth residential care facilities, (interpretation) there is one safe home based in Iqaluit that can accommodate eight people and there are three people staying there. Some of them have been sent out of Nunavut, whether they are handicapped or they don't have a proper place to go to. What sort of planning do you do for them or are you going to continue this program? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I'm sorry, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I just want to get clarification if she's referring to safe homes or shelters. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Ms. Nakashuk, can you clarify that? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) In the letter, in-territory child and youth residential care facility, it states in there that there are Iqaluit group homes that could accommodate eight, but three are youth. I'm guessing those are youth that are in that facility. I'm curious to know and I know there are some youth that are placed outside of the territory. I'm curious to know if they have any plans to send back some of the youth from the south that don't have medical or mental health issues to put them back in the territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The facility she is referring to is for girls. They have, I guess, high needs and that's why they're placed there.

If there are youth being sent out, sometimes, depending on the circumstance, if they were in a situation that's brought them to a state and over time if they are stable, definitely; our goal always is to bring back to our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I am curious to know what practice the department has in terms of youth aging out if they are in foster care down south? What is the process that the department uses? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, the deputy minister is going to respond to that one. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Currently, one means to support aging-out youth is to have the extended service agreements, which allows the department to support a youth up to their 26 birthday.

If they are youth within that age range up to the age of 26, out of territory in residential care, usually one of the requirements of the vendor or the contractor that we've hired to host them is to ensure that they have programming to enable them to sustain themselves outside of care.

Then, if at all possible, of course the transition would be preferably back to home, but often when they spend that time in the south, their preference is to stay south. Not all of them wish to return to Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I'm curious to know. I know there are a few that have asked about caps, but I guess I don't want to get into the details of it as well.

I'll go on to the next one. In your opening statements, I know it's in the plans; if this goes through, what initiatives or plans is the department leaning toward in terms of developing shelters in Pangnirtung?

(interpretation) How would it work under the plans? Would they make a new plan? I would like to know the planning process. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Whenever there is an agreement to assist with operating the shelters in Nunavut, normally it in the community, the service delivery provider or whoever is going to maintain and operate the service, will put forward a proposal for a contribution agreement.

Now we are in the initial stage this year and obviously in hopes that we operate next year. We will have discussions with the community and those who may have a role to play on what the need will be to ensure that it operates properly when it is opened. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): We are very supportive of people who do not have a place to stay, to provide shelter. I think we have all thought of this as MLAs, and having facilities is good, but then there has to be a counselling part added to it; something that we always expect.

For (interpretation ends) family resource workers, (interpretation) the whole intention was to have them be able to speak Inuktitut and help Inuit that need help from Family Services, and also in the schools.

So if they won't; if they are just going to be put up a shelter, what kind of planning are you doing to make sure that there are Inuktitut-speaking counsellors working with them? Has this been considered in your planning process? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for asking that question. I am glad those questions are brought up. We are trying to increase our annual budget by asking you.

(interpretation ends) Obviously enhanced budgets for existing shelters for Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk and Kugaaruk are in order for adequate staffing levels and strengthening capacity to deliver programs, counselling, and support services.

These are entrenched in our planning when we are looking for increased and new facilities, or to increase budgets for those facilities, keeping in mind the strength of programs and counselling and support services, and the staff. Training is a big component as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you too. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This will be my final question. In your business plan, on page 169, Priorities 2020-2021, in the last bullet, it states (interpretation ends) "Continue to work with the Department of Culture and Heritage and local resources, regional Inuit associations, and elders committees to identify elders within communities who can work in collaboration with the community social services workers and family resource workers to support families."

If that were to be the case, is that what the minister was just responding to, or is there something different that they are leaning towards? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

(interpretation ends) It happens in some communities, but it is there because I believe we are trying to strengthen that use. It identifies it as a benefit.

We are reminding our social workers and resource workers to be aware of, and maybe even reaching out to the other organizations who would be the best elder to come and be a part of a project we might be doing. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nakashuk

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This I said, would be my last one. (interpretation ends) So how is the department working with the Department

of Culture and Heritage to get this going? My last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I think in the last two weeks or so, I remember fielding a question, and my response was we are in the process of hiring one elder, but those kinds of discussion and hoping to grow that, the culture, elder and youth division obviously has expertise that we can benefit from. I know that there have been initial discussions with that department. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Are you done? Okay. We will be taking a break for (interpretation ends) 30 minutes and during this break, members are invited to join Minister Kusugak in the foyer for a presentation of the Team Nunavut clothing and pins for the upcoming Arctic Winter Games. Thank you. See you in 30 minutes.

>>Committee recessed at 15:05 and resumed at 15:32

Chairperson: Welcome back, everybody. The next person on my list is Mr. Lightstone. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to continue on several of my colleagues' themes on the revision of the Custom Adoption Act. In '19-2020 it notes under the status that the terms of reference are completed and the department continues to work on the legislative proposal, and this priority continues into '20-21 as well as '21-22. My question is: when will the proposed legislation be completed and when can we expect it to be presented in the Assembly? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That's a very good question. Because I'm just as passionate about this as everyone, my hope would have been that it would be complete during our term, but there are many legislations in front of Justice. Each department has different legislations, but even on our front in meeting with NTI, as an example, we're just trying to get up and have a regular meeting. It has been a real challenge to have the really good, roll-up-the-sleeve discussions. Unfortunately I don't foresee the new legislation during our term. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister, for the explanation. I would just like to seek further confirmation that the proposed amendments

would address our concerns over vulnerable sector checks. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That is correct. That will be included. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The last question on this topic is: will that come into effect retroactively? For example, if a custom adoption were to occur today, by the time that this legislation is passed would that custom adoption that went through today, would that parent have to submit to a vulnerable sector check? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: *Qujannamiik*. Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That's a very good question. I'll been talking about that at our next meeting going forward, to be included as a factor. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: *Qujannamiittauq*. That wasn't your last question? Okay. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Moving on to my next topic; in the minister's opening comments, on page 3 the minister identifies that \$300,000 to implement a contribution program for temporary overnight safe spaces for youth who find themselves in crisis.

The importance of this initiative could not be overstated. This is a shining example of one of the great initiatives that you are putting forward in this budget, but I would like to ask if you would be able to provide a little bit more details on this. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, my deputy minister is going to respond that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: *Qujannamiik*. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The funding was geared to assist the department. The Poverty Reduction Roundtable had expressed strong support for this funding toward this need as it is an urgent necessity.

Within the department, we'll be working with any communities or agencies or organizations at that level that come forward. We'll be working with the roundtable partners as well to try to determine a way forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Running a shelter is expensive, even looking at the contributions to the different organizations that run similar types of shelters. Will this \$300,000 be enough to open up a child overnight safe space? Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

Chairperson: *Qujannamiittauq*, Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On the initial ask, it is a \$300,000 but moving forward it is \$900,000. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends)

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for that information, minister. Moving on to my next question, last year there was discussion on two surveys that were conducted, one being the hidden homelessness and the other being a point-in-time count. The minister had indicated that the information was still being compiled. My question is: has that been completed? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I'm sorry, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, yes, the deputy minister is going to expand on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The homelessness research has been completed. We expect to table it in the next session. There are some highlights from it. I don't have those with me, but there are things highlighted such as how many children are housing insecure. I think you will find it very interesting. Thank you, *Iksivautaaq*.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for that information. I definitely do look forward to seeing that in the spring sitting.

I would like to move back to the letter that was provided and page 6 under child sexual abuse disclosures, it mentions that the department continues to utilize a manual system and that once the electronic client information system is implemented, the department will have the capability of collecting data related to the number of disclosures and investigations of child abuse.

My first question on that topic is: when does the department expect to bring this electronic client information system online? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We don't have that information in front of us. That's a capital question, I do believe. That's why we don't have it in front of us. It's a system. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The department had requested funding through a capital request a number of years ago for this system, but my question was more along the O&M side of things. When will this system come online and assist the department in monitoring this type of information? I would just like to ask if the minister would be able to provide us with a follow-up at a later date as to when the system will come online. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, we will provide something before the end of this sitting. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. Moving on, my next question is going to be regarding the annual report of the Child and Family Services Division.

I believe it was last spring when we had the Child and Youth Representative before us. I expressed my disappointment to both the child and youth rep annual report as well as the Department of Family Services' annual report due to the fact that neither of them contained information on the number of disclosures or investigations of child abuse in the territory.

I was happy to see that the report that the minister tabled in the fall sitting did have a page dedicated to child abuse, but yet again, it did not have any information describing

the extent to which it occurs. My next question is: why does this annual report not contain that information? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question. I think we can have a lot of discussion on this particular question because your view and wanting to have that detailed kind of information in the community, some communities may not want it in a smaller community because they could easily be singled out. I know that is an issue when providing that too detailed. That's a really good question, but I think that's part of the reason why in the past it has not been provided. I certainly look at where's the fine line without crossing it in providing that kind of detail. I can only promise that without revealing too much information because that is a fear of providing that kind of detail. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I did not ask for information at the community level. I think it's essential that territory-wide information should be provided, but I would like to ask if the minister would be able to commit that going forward, the annual report will include that information. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I commit and give that direction to administration to provide a territory-wide number and not by community. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you very much for making that commitment.

I would like to move on to the topic of safe homes. Last Tuesday the minister had indicated that there is a \$200 retainer as well as per diems provided to individuals that do run those safe homes. I believe it was a \$200 retainer. I'm not sure if that was provided monthly or just per use as well as per diems of \$50 a day per adult and \$45 a day per child. I believe we had asked the minister if she would commit to reviewing those amounts to further entice volunteers to come forward or assist those who actually are providing safe homes. I would like to ask if the minister had done so. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Safe homes are paid, yes, a retainer of \$200, which is per month, to ensure the home is available when needed. If women and children are placed into a home, a safe home provider will receive a per diem of \$50 per day for each woman and \$45 for each child and \$75 per day for additional expenses. In light of the increases of cost of living and such, obviously in the future this would be reviewed. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Lightstone is done. I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Oh, I didn't see Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to supplement some questions that were already asked. We heard that some communities are being planned for safe shelters. For the communities that were named, are the safe shelters only going to be geared toward the residents of those communities? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Mr. Keyootak. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, with respect to his question, the safe shelters will be in the communities that I mentioned, but I would like to remind you that currently in Nunavut there are four safe homes: two in Pond Inlet, one in Igloolik, and one in Arviat. Hopefully, if our proposed budget is approved, social services in the smaller communities will be able to open shelters. With the total number of temporary safe homes, I hope that more people in the smaller communities will agree to provide a safe home. We would like to that to proceed. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't think I came across clearly. I was trying to ask about the communities that were named, including Pangnirtung, where they are planning to put in shelters. Are they only going to be geared towards those communities' residents? Will the residents from other communities not be able to stay in those shelters? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak, for that clarification. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I apologize. Sometimes there's misunderstanding with our dialects being different and I was listening to the English audio. Currently we have to put in annual requests. Even though it's good that we're allocating new money, it's not enough. Yes, it's only three at this time. As we progress annually, we would like to introduce other shelters. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) I think he's making a different kind of point, but I'll let Mr. Keyootak clarify again what he's meaning. Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Let me clarify it further. Now, the communities that were named, including Pangnirtung, is the shelter that is going to be created in Pangnirtung only for Pangnirtung residents or can it be for residents of other communities? There are going to be many communities without shelters. Perhaps there will be plans for shelters in those communities. Before there are shelters in those other communities, is the shelter earmarked for Pangnirtung only going to be for Pangnirtung residents? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. Minister Sheutiapik, do you understand it now? Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If you're asking about homelessness, (interpretation ends) shelter...oh, no, not homeless.

Chairperson: Ms. Sheutiapik, what he's trying to ask is: if the safe home built in a community, like you said, one of them is Pangnirtung, can people from another community go to that safe home or is it only for the community that it is going to be put in? Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. No wonder we got confused because there are different types of categories: homelessness, violence shelters, and (interpretation ends) safe homes. (interpretation) Safe homes are different from what is planned for Pangnirtung, as it's a shelter. That's why we got confused with the question. The shelter is for Pangnirtung, but I can say that we are currently reviewing how we can come up with more shelters. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. (interpretation ends) I think that's what he meant was a shelter. Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, please say it in English if I'm not clear enough. I can understand English as well.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, she understood correctly. I fully understand that the shelters will only be for the communities that they will be established. That's what I wanted to understand and I did.

I'll move on to something else. Some children are apprehended when they're very young, although some of children who are no longer too young or infants are apprehended from their homes. Is there a limit to how long the child has to be in foster care? For example, if the child was apprehended when they were just born, how long do they have to be in foster care? Is there a limit on that or can children be fostered care until they become adults? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, Pauloosie, for that question. (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson, it's always the intent of returning apprehended children. As soon as an assessment confirms that it's safe to return, that child is returned. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well. Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Is there no limit as to what age the child has to be returned or is it not set as to how long the child will be in foster care? Have they not put a limit on how long the child will be in foster care placement? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Sometimes those are set and other times they continue to be in foster care, keeping in mind that sometimes their own parents want their children to be kept in care when the parents have alcohol problems. Sometimes they say, "I want my children to be kept in care for a while." Those are arranged and there are extensions in some cases. There are different circumstances and even though they have agreed on a plan, it sometimes doesn't proceed smoothly because some things don't go as planned. Keeping that in mind, yes, there can be improvements made, but sometimes the plan is moved back. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq, it's now your turn.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Welcome, minister and your officials.

With respect to the business plan on page 167, I would like to ask a question regarding the Family Wellness Division. They are responsible for interpreting legislation and policy. What is used as the foundation for making legislative changes? I hope that was clear, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As many factors are listed that we have to follow for the question raised, legislation exists for standards when homes are identified as foster care homes. They have to get a permit to enable their ability to be a temporary foster home. They follow a lengthy process led by our employees. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. These relate to the legislation and (interpretation ends) policy and legislation, interpreting (interpretation) the legal document.

In using that central legal review mandate, what is the basis for using that division to develop legislation and policies? That is my first question, if I was clear. Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I apologize. I don't understand his question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Can you clarify your question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In your plan you say that there is legislation and policy and you draft policy and legislative changes through consultation with other government departments, and you have services and programs developed at the national level, and you provide training and communication materials for staff and the general public. I would like to know how you go about it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I understand the question better. I am going to have my deputy minister respond, if that is okay. Thank you.

Chairperson: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. I believe the best way I can answer is: the Department of Family Services is only so many years in existence; since 2013, and I believe at the time social services, career development, income assistance, was put into one department to give these areas better attention. I think that is why the department was created the way it was.

There is still a lot of work that our staff need to do to ensure that we have all of the appropriate legislation, policies, and regulations. It is a lot of work, and taking time to ensure that all of these gaps are addressed. We have a very high workload. Without the protection of policies for our frontline staff, they are very much at risk, and so it is very important that we take the proper time that we need to have that proper legislation in place and to best serve the community. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is directly below that area as we can't see anything written. This request is quite old now, for many years that *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* has to be applied within government operations.

I don't see anything written towards that especially since it is within social services, I believe we can make far more effective usage of that capacity once it is included. I was thinking of that which is why I am asking about this, Madame Chair.

I am wondering if I could get a response on that, if it was understandable. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for asking that question. Pretty well daily activities or work stems from our workplace especially when drafting legislation and others within the context of *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, that is used on a daily basis.

(interpretation ends) I can say that I have a briefing to make sure that inclusion of Inuit societal values and *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* are utilized in our department.

(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Is that all? That was the last name.

(interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Family Wellness. L-5, \$71,110,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Okay. Now go over to Family Services. Income Assistance. L-6, \$62,082,000. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The department most recently revised the income assistance benefits in July of 2018. The business plan notes that the department has taken steps to link income assistance to changes in costs of living.

How often was the cost of living measures been taken into account to revise and increase income assistance benefits? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you too. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

(interpretation ends) I am not aware of next review, but honestly I think we should be reviewing several years after if we are looking at costs, because costs of living varies from year to year. I would hope that lessons learned are that we do not wait so long for that, a next increase, that we review it regularly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I think we all know that what you give to the clients is never enough because of the high costs of living in the different communities, and the most... . The highest cost of living would be in my area, far away from the shipping companies.

My next question is: A new electronic income assistance delivery system is being implemented across Nunavut communities. The recent ransomware attack on the Government of Nunavut's computer systems has had significant impact on many services. What specific challenges has this incident created for the income assistance program?

I can give you an example, on page 172 with the seniors' fuel subsidy. I do have a constituent that has been waiting for a while now to get some help on fuel, and he was told that because of the computer problems he was not getting any help, as just an example. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for asking on that issue.

(interpretation ends) I did earlier mention a little bit that I was pleased to report that as of January 3, 2020 all communities have a least one income assistance worker who can issue assistance through the normal cheque issuing process.

I think it is important to highlight that even though where ransomware is already done, we can identify that there is always someone there who has the ability to issue through the normal cheque issuing process. Might I add that there was over 10,000 food vouchers distributed over past two months because of the ransomware. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. So every community should have someone who knows how to draw up cheques for something like the fuel subsidy. Every community should have one of those? That is my last question. Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That is correct. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main, your next.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Maybe I will just get a clarification. After the ransomware attack, what functions are still being affected within the department at this time? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) There are still several income assistance computers that could not be updated to Windows 10 because the other thing with the ransomware is it was old technology, so we still have a few income assistance computers that are currently being replaced. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Which specific communities are being affected by this and what is the timeline to have everything back and in working order? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The two communities were Cambridge Bay and Baker Lake. I do believe that Cambridge Bay is ready to be up and running, as well as Baker Lake. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On page 172 one of the priorities for the upcoming fiscal year is “Complete the final phase of reform...” of I’m assuming, this... . It say “income assistance program.” It doesn’t actually in the priority. I’m assuming means income assistance. So what is the final phase of reform going to involve? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) In 2017 the department made changes which included strengthening incentives to earn income, treating all earned income equitably, increased flight asset exemptions to allow clients to increase savings, strengthening financial support for low income Nunavummiut living with disabilities. The remaining are: coordinate income assistance with income support programs, explore changing eligibility for income assistance to 19, improve access to other income supports and financial services, explore case management teams and the final one being review internal roles and responsibilities for income assistance. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. Those will be completed in this upcoming fiscal year. When you mentioned increasing access to financial services, do you have communities that have been targeted or identified as having a lack of financial services and that will be targeted under this priority in the upcoming fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We do have that kind of information, but, unfortunately we don't have it with us. Maybe we can commit to sharing that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Was that a commitment to share that information? I'll just get a clarification. Ok the minister is nodding. So, I will look forward to getting that information. Thank you.

I'm looking at the number of income assistant recipients across Nunavut. It's around 14,000 close to 15,000 depending on the year.

Does the department have a benchmark or a standard as to how many income assistance workers are based in each community? Is there a standard number that one worker can be responsible for? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, Sol's got information, she'll respond to that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When we're looking at the staff resourcing for income assistance we were looking at 40 to 50 cases for each worker and that is why we ask for additional funding a few years ago to increase income support workers in the communities.

We are realizing now that we need to review this number of staff compliment in every community because one person or one and a half positions is not good enough. If there is sick leave, someone is away somebody should be able to cover our office and be able to assess and accommodate our clients every day. So, I will have to look at it again.

It's not that we have before while having 40 to 50 cases that is not likely working at this time and this is why we're at this time we have to review as part of our reorganization and the second phase of the reorg and structural review. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. That is interesting to hear. The regions seem to have recognized that the income support workers get over tired and they get stressed out.

(interpretation ends) What I have heard anecdotally from people that there is an issue with burnout of income assistance workers and so as was mentioned, they're going to be examining the staffing on the income assistance side. I guess, are there any increases to the number of income assistance workers in this budget or would that be further in future fiscal years? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It's not included in this fiscal year. Hopefully in future years as Sol mentioned; we are continuing to look at our reorganization. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Did the department have a request for additional income support workers? It sounds like the problem is quite clear and the solution might be more people to do the work or is this government-wide hiring freeze initiative to not increase amount of civil servants, is that affecting the department's ability to hire more or create more positions for income assistance workers? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I really those questions because that's our end goal. When the department was created, it was already recognized it was understaffed, but to build business cases, that is why we started with regional directors. They will have a really good understanding in their region of the real needs to help justify and build business cases. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It is good to hear that and I look forward to seeing more positions created because it think those workers are getting burned out and it is concerning.

I had some detailed questions on income assistance. What is the dollar figure liquid asset exemption currently, and what is the threshold for amount of earned income that income assistance clients are allowed to be exempted on? On those two ones, does the minister have those numbers available? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) There are not in front of me but my deputy minister, through you, would like to respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) First let me speak jurisdictionally; it varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Some have a liquid asset exemption. Nunavut is different as are some other provinces and territories. There are certain exemptions in certain areas in Nunavut-specific legislation or regulations. I believe they are all outlined within the regulations. I don't have them all with me. For example, the \$40 bingo exemption, and there are other ones such as for, I believe household furnishings, etcetera.

I don't have them with me. Thank you, *Iksivautaaq*.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you. It would be interesting to see what the actual rules are. I'll ask the question this way: if I'm on income assistance and I'm a single person with no dependents, and the income assistance worker asks to see my bank account to see how much money I have in my bank account online banking. What is the maximum amount I'm allowed to have before my income assistance starts to get affected? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We don't have that have that detailed information but it varies from community to community, but that is another bit of information we will pass along. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I apologize if that is too detailed but I thought that it would... . We have 14,000, 15,000 clients working under these rules. I thought it would be available.

Can the minister commit to providing a summary or a cheat-sheet type of short summary of the rules and exemptions and related amounts that are being for income assistance in Nunavut to the committee? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson .

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Such a very good question and we are even open to have a presentation or both, as a cheat-sheet, but we are more than willing to do a presentation as well so that we will have a good understanding on income assistance. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. Would the minister be able to commit to providing something in writing in terms of a summary of the different exemptions and thresholds that are being applied? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, and for the exemption, it is \$500 for a single, \$1,000 for a family, and \$5,000 for over 60. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On page 172, it mentions doing an evaluation on the effectiveness of the income assistance reforms. What are the results of that evaluation so far? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you. I apologize, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Part of the reform was the increase of the allowances, and I have heard there was a real big gap single income, and I know that they really appreciated it.

I was told during briefings that at least two people in Iqaluit actually got emotional and cried to show their appreciation on the increase. That is a big one that really stands out for me because at the end of the day we are talking about income support, so to me, that is a huge one.

The other one of course, is the structure of using the food basket and re-profiling communities. I think that also benefited most communities. Those one really stood out for me. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On the status update for this one, it mentions the department collected data in efforts to monitor the effectiveness of income assistance reform. What data is available for members of the public or MLAs to evaluate whether things are heading in the right direction on income assistance? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Actually that is one area where we have fallen behind because of ransomware, is data collecting. Unfortunately we are behind but we certainly will provide information one that becomes available. Unfortunately I don't have an actual date on that, but I do believe they started that process of compiling again. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 171 there is a line item for Community Delivery. It outlines that one community delivers "...the income assistance program on behalf of the Government of Nunavut." That is interesting and I wonder if the minister can detail which community it is and whether this is something that has been looked at in other locations. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) For that question, it is the community of Resolute Bay. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) So the amount under that line item has gone down to \$60,000, so \$60,000 is what it costs to deliver income assistance in the community. I'm just asking the question to make sure that the hamlet is not being shortchanged as opposed to what it would cost to employ a Government of Nunavut employee. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) The \$60,000 was to pay. It is the hamlet that was providing that service in Resolute Bay, so we now have a regional office doing that now. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) On the minister's letter to the committee, on page 7 of 8, it mentions that the department has 14 clients that collect their benefits twice a month to help them assist them with budgeting.

Just to clarify, is this 14 clients out of 14,000? Just wanted to clarify that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I do believe so because a lot of times once they have learned after the two payments system a lot of them will start to realize that they have the ability to manage their funds and revert back to monthly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Is that communicated to the clients when they come in for their appointments that they have an option to have a bi-weekly payment schedule? Or is it something that workers would suggest? Yes, that is my question. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I would imagine that yes. There is a lot of discussion that takes place with the client in preparation of, so that option would be made available.

I would imagine that from the beginning they choose monthly and then realise that they need to do bi-weekly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I am almost done here. I want to suggest that the department look at coordinating with the education department on the issue of childcare.

I know that it was identified as an issue in that the income assistance reform report, on page 22 of the 2016 report, and it is highlighted as a big barrier to getting off of income assistance.

So the minister could maybe have that conversation or start coordinating on this issue with the Department of Education. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson.
(interpretation ends) Yes, there has been some discussion with the department already.
(interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) For the record also, I think that is another opportunity potentially small business in communities. I certainly have been advocating through my people that before when you were in social housing, you are not allowed to have small business, but that has changed and a lot people do not know that.

Here is an opportunity small communities where you might be a stay at home mom one child and add on three more so that others can take employment opportunities.
(interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Thank you minister.

My final suggestion or request would be to re-examine the idea of basic income and moving toward... . I would hope to see a pilot project at some point in the future within Nunavut.

I think we are unique and we have so much of our population on income assistance and if this is something that could help Nunavummiut, I do not know for sure if it would or not, there's people who would say maybe it would help, maybe it wouldn't, but I just wanted to request that this idea not be left behind because there are other jurisdictions that have run pilot projects with mixed results.

I think Ontario was the most recent one, but it got cancelled after an election so we do not really know the results of that one.

(interpretation) I would like the department to think of that and appraise sometime in the future. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I had not been aware of that report previously. Not having been involved, you're not paying attention all the time.

But I certainly am trying to better understand the pros and cons between that report and obviously a decision was made not to go because they have got reform, after that report.

I'm trying to get a better understanding of what the pros and cons were between the two and will continue to educate myself and hopefully have discussions with like minds like yourself and maybe there might ideas you come up with that we weren't thinking of. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This was brought up by my colleague earlier regarding income support. I'm not sure how long it has been used. Whether the Act has been in effect for quite some time or is it just being implemented? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I do believe that act or regulation is from 1990. That is part of the reform is to review it. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not really a question but I would like to make a comment and say that there are a lot of people out there who are hungry because, of course, food is scarce when there is overcrowding and there are a lot of people living in one house. Maybe that is why we see food insecurity in our communities. Do you have any plans to look at the income support amount, or can we increase the amount in order to reduce food insecurity? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We just increased income support last year, but I did mention that we have a program where projects can be had, and I used Kugluktuk as an example where hunters and trappers tapped into \$30,000 from Economic Development and Transportation and fed 100 people. I used that as an example as another avenue to combat poverty. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question and it is a question that I asked two years ago about the senior citizen supplementary benefit. On page 171 of the business plan it tells me (interpretation) that is for the elders supplementary benefit is administered by law and it's provided to low income elders. That comes from the federal government and then from Nunavut government. I had asked the minister, I had once told the minister that the supplementary benefit is way too small because usually their children and grandchildren come to their house for lunch and the minister agreed at that time that it was too small.

Could the minister give us an update on what's happening with the senior citizens' supplementary benefit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question because our elders are very important. With the senior citizens' supplementary fund on April 2015, they got \$175 per month on May 2015 it was \$200. Since we have an ongoing review that would probably be one of the reviewed items. But, there was a slight increase not long ago. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson: Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you Madam Chairperson. I would like to know to date 2020, how much is the monthly benefit for senior citizens and whether it will be reviewed with the view of increasing it. My final question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you Madam Chairperson. They receive \$200 per month. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. So, my first questions are going to be regarding or following up on the job of income assistance. I was just looking at the environmental scan in the business plan on page I-7. It highlights income assistance as well as the total number of recipients. Are you looking at this page minister? It's towards the front under tab 3.

Anyway, I just noticed that the figures provided have not been updated in a number of years. Looking at last year's business plan and the business plan that has been provided to us two years ago. This table has remained unchanged. To date, the assembly has not been kept up to date on the actual income assistants' usage, number of recipients by community and region. So, my first question is would the minister be able to provide the committee with updated figures, specifically for 2018 and 2019. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, up to 2018 was provided but Sol would like to expand on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The information that was provided in that environmental scan for the government's business plan. That was the information for December 2018, as the minister said. We are in the process of preparing the updated one for the December 2019. This was just delayed because of the system issue and the ransomware that we have encountered. We will have one that is more updated too, for December 2019. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Would the minister be able to provide us with that detail once she is able to? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. That would be very much appreciated.

I would like to return to a question that was posed last year. I had asked if the department tracks the number of income recipients that do not have bank accounts and rely on NorthMart's We Visa and the Co-ops to receive their income assistance payments. Has the minister been able to do so? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That is ongoing. There are some plans that are moving to a banking system but that is going to take a while because some don't have bank accounts for different reasons. Maybe they have debts, such as collectors, so some are leery, but we actually had discussions about how this is going to take a while. Not everyone is going to buy into opening a bank account right away, but we are certainly trying to encourage, especially after the ransomware, because if everyone had their banks accounts it would have gone into the bank before the ransomware incident. That is a real benefit and another selling point. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The reason why I brought up the issue last year was that income support recipients that don't have bank accounts are reliant on Northern We Financial Cards and these have exorbitant fees and hidden costs associated, so although the Department of Family Services is providing much needed income support, we have to keep in mind that they are not receiving 100 percent of it. Some of it

is being lost due to Northern and Co-op. So I just want to re-emphasize why it is so important that the Department of Family Services tracks income recipients that have actual bank accounts and encourage those that do not have actual bank accounts to do so to try and keep as much of their limited funds as possible.

Will the minister look into that issue and ensure that income support recipients are being encouraged to open bank accounts? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We are committed, and that is why I said we have actually started with clients. Some have, but there are still some who are still verily not open to getting a bank account. It is a choice; we can't force them. It is a personal choice, but we certainly are working on... . Maybe that will be the selling point in reminding them that by using the system they are losing out each month. It might be a selling point, so thank you for mentioning that because we certainly will use that as a disadvantage for not using a bank account. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I asked this question last year and again this year, and I just want to inform the minister that I will ask again next year, and hopefully the minister will be able to track how income recipients do not have bank accounts and direct deposits set up.

I'll move on to my next question and it's in relation to the seniors' fuel subsidy. Last year it was brought to the committee's attention that a certain amount of the budget goes unspent throughout the fiscal year and is lapsed.

Looking at the minister's response in the letter, a number of elders have been denied this seniors' fuel subsidy due to "Does not meet the income requirements for the benefits." Last year, I believe that we had encouraged the minister to address this income eligibility threshold and ask the minister to reconsider that and I would like to ask if that has been done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chair. Sorry. (interpretation ends) If you can give me a second please.

My memory is that the litre was increased but I do not ever remember the actual income threshold being increased, but I will have a discussion with the division to see if we can look at it as we have been looking at other increases across our department. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, minister, for that response. I hope that you will be able to have this issue addressed. Our elders have countless extended family that are reliant on their income and I think elders deserve all of the support that can be provided and I look forward that no elder will be denied this elder fuel subsidy.

I'll move on to the next topic and it is the daycare user subsidy. In the minister's written response, a number of applicants were denied, once again because they did not meet the income requirements for this benefit.

My first question is: for this day care user subsidy, what is the income threshold for this benefit? Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chair. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question.

In looking at my briefing note, in 2019-2020 we had 477 allocated the daycare subsidy program. We have different types of daycares listed: licensed daycare, family daycare, unlicensed care homes. There's a list... . Part-time care for licensed daycare for example is \$350 per child. For full time care it is \$700 per child. Then for licensed family day home it is \$300 per month per child, \$600 a month per child. For unlicensed care home, it is \$250 a month per child and then \$500 a month per child. These amounts listed above reflect maximum amounts allowable. As noted, the amounts of the subsidy available depends on the age of the child and the type of care and the type of facility.

For after school care, the maximum allowable daycare amount is \$145 a month per child. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This daycare user subsidy is designed to assist low income families and the program is means tested to verify that these individuals are in fact low income and do require this subsidy. Would the minister commit to following up with the committee and providing information on what income requirements are required for this benefit and what means are being tested? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, we will provide that. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. I look forward to seeing that. Further to that, it has been identified through Nunavut-specific research that children who are not in preschool are negatively affected and are not at the same level once they enter the education system in kindergarten.

I believe our government needs to help address that situation by ensuring as many children are taking part in daycare and preschool to ensure that they are at the same level when they enter kindergarten. My next request is: will the minister review that the eligibility criteria for this daycare user subsidy to ensure that more children are taking advantage of preschool? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) That is a very good question, but I will be very candid to say that after this budget, I am tickled pink to be able to say that we are concentrating on the most vulnerable people in our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Lightstone is done. (interpretation ends) The next one on my list is Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 170, with regard to maintaining the computer system, the minister had indicated that only a couple of communities; one in the Kitikmeot and one in the Kivalliq, one in Cambridge Bay and one in Baker Lake, have computer systems for income support up and running. It has been five months since the ransomware thing crashed all of the computers in Nunavut communities. Will it take another five months for the Baffin communities and other communities that have not been fixed? It will probably take another five months to fix all of the smaller communities, or less than five months.

I know that you wouldn't be able to answer this question, but I'm trying to ask if you have any idea as to how long it would take for other communities' computers for income support will be up and running. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I can respond to that. I responded to it earlier. (interpretation ends) They were the last communities that were up and running, so [since] them they are all up and running now. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My last question, on page 170, right at the top, the bullet on the top there... I'm sorry; I got the wrong page. On 171, I'm sorry, Madam Chairperson, it goes on to say that "The division develops materials to aid in the statutory training of Income Assistance Workers and for the Nunavut Income Assistance Appeal Committee and Board." My fellow MLAs may already know this, but who sits on the appeal committee and where is the board located? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, David. Perhaps because you're new, (interpretation ends) I'll explain the whole process.

What is an income assistance appeal process? It is if an individual is unsatisfied with an income assistance worker's decision concerning their eligibility for assistance or the amount of assistance paid to him or her, they can appeal to the first level appeal body first and that the first level by the income assistance appeal... (interpretation) I'm sorry. There are acronyms. (interpretation ends) The Income Assistance Appeal Committee is the first level of appeals process. All the members of this committee are Department of Family Services staff who are not directly involved in the Income Assistance Program.

If an individual is unsatisfied with the Income Assistance Appeal Committee decision concerning their eligibility for assistance or the amount of assistance paid to them, they can appeal to the second level appeal body, which is the Income Assistance Board, which is the second level appeal process. These members are appointed by the minister for a term of two years.

What are the main reasons for a client to appeal an income assistance worker decision? The main reasons for appeal usually include budget surpluses as a result of tax returns, gifts, and wage and reviews of disability benefits.

How many appeals were there in 2019-2020? As of January 9, 2020, there were 63 appeals submitted and out of the 63 appeals, 9 appeals ceased or were withdrawn, 49 income assistance worker decisions were upheld, and 5 income assistance worker decisions were overturned. These happen after some fact-finding. Maybe there was information missing.

When does the Income Assistance Appeal Committee meet? They are required to meet 30 days after an appeal is filed. In order to ensure that appeals are dealt with in a timely manner, the committee schedules a meeting every other Thursday afternoon.

Why are there delays in processing appeals? Delays can be caused by several reasons, including the client not attending the appeal meeting, the client not providing adequate information to inform appeal, and the income assistance committee not having quorum.

Hopefully that helps you. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It was okay if I didn't hear the whole thing. Is the committee and what's called the board at the headquarters in Iqaluit? Is the committee located in Iqaluit? That's my last question. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Through you, the deputy minister is going to respond to that one.

Chairperson: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I don't have a list with me, but there are a half dozen to eight or ten, I can't remember now, on the board. The board itself hasn't met in a face-to-face situation for two years. The committee at the internal level has handled appeals and none have had to elevate to the board. I know one board member is located in Arviat; one is up island. I can't recall any other ones, but they are in various communities, appointed by the minister, and they will be meeting in this coming fiscal. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Family Services. Oh, sorry. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk: Thank you, *Issivautaaq*. (interpretation) First of all, I would like to ask about what Mr. Lightstone spoke to regarding the Senior Fuel Subsidy. There is \$478,000 set aside annually for that program. Does the minister know what the uptake of the program was for the past fiscal year, 2019-2020? Is it close to the full budget that was allocated? That's my first question. Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) In 2018-19, \$303,689 (interpretation) was used; in 2019-2020 what has been used to date is \$478,000. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Is that what has been allocated or has it been completely used up? The amount set aside is the same, \$478,000, (interpretation ends) allocated for the fiscal year. Does that mean that amount is being used up for this fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) That's budgeted. (interpretation) At this time the amount is not written. I can say that (interpretation ends) 98 seniors (interpretation) have been assisted, but the current total is not written down and I apologize for that. Oh, no, I have it here. (interpretation ends) Actuals for 2019 up to February 12, 2019, actuals is \$218,411 this year. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It's kind of confusing. It seemed like there was more in 2018-19 at over \$300,000 that was used within the year. The minister stated that it says here that (interpretation ends) 98 applicants were approved and the breakdown of how much is approved in terms of the annual salary for an elder, I'll give you an example. (interpretation) The annual income of the senior is determined.

(interpretation ends) Does the department have a breakdown as to how many elders who are eligible have received following their income threshold, (interpretation) such as those who have received 100 percent of the subsidy or 50 percent of the subsidy? Do you have a breakdown of the seniors who receive the fuel subsidy? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Unfortunately we don't. I can tell you that for 2019-2020, 98 seniors have benefited: 53 from Qikiqtani, 28 from the Kivalliq, and 17 from the Kitikmeot. That's the information I have in front of me. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have the information on how many seniors have received the subsidy in the Baffin. Looking at the breakdown, keeping in mind that the funds allocated don't get used up entirely within the year, maybe all the seniors can start receiving the subsidy without considering their income. That's why I was trying to ask how many seniors receive the subsidy at the different subsidy levels. Is that going to be reviewed in the near future? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I mentioned earlier anything that relates to dollars and subsidies should be all reviewed. We recently did the income support. This year we're increasing, hopefully through this budget approval, our foster parents. Hopefully all these other

subsidies will be reviewed by department. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Does it mean that this program, the Senior Fuel Subsidy, will also be reviewed or is that something that might be? Is there any solid answer in terms of it will be reviewed? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, it will be reviewed. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank the minister. I would also like to ask this question. You briefly mentioned that when requests for income support are denied if they made too much money and they appeal the decision and have their request reviewed, it has been said that sometimes they wait over a week (interpretation ends) to hear back about the appeal. Is there a deadline that the department has to ensure that the clients have a timely response from the appeal process? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) This is why they have scheduled meetings every Thursday so that if there are any appeals to be heard, they are heard weekly. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. It's probably insufficient, but when some people require assistance urgently, I have been told that sometimes they wait for a whole week and some of them wait a very long time, particularly after the ransomware attack. That is still the case. Has it been brought up as a concern by others or has it been discussed? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm sorry. I was asking about it. I haven't been told personally, so I asked and she also hasn't heard if the weekly meeting is too infrequent. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'll move to something else. The minister also mentioned the benefits provided for those with physical disabilities. Alternatively, they get a (interpretation ends) disability allowance (interpretation) of \$175 from the Department of Family Services when they apply for assistance. How did they set the (interpretation ends) \$175 amount? How did the department come up with that amount and how does it differ from the disability allowance that they receive from the federal? I just want to have a better understanding about that. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We're trying to find the information.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm sorry. The amount she is asking about, the increase was done... (interpretation ends) On the income assistance reform, it was Item 4, explore an increase to allowance for persons with disabilities, and that was completed, accomplished by the spring of 2017. The breakdown is as follows: \$250 a month for people with a long-term disability, that's one plus years; \$125 a month for people with a short-term disability, which is 6 to 11 months; and of course clients must have a valid disability certificate. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Nakashuk, do you have another question? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Is the \$175 amount that she referred to not applicable anymore? She touched on it when there was a question asked about it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I'm sorry. Madam Chairperson, (interpretation ends) the department increased the monthly disability allowance for recipients living with long-term disability from \$175 to \$250, and introduced a \$125 monthly short-term disability allowance for recipients with disabilities of 6 to 11 months, and that was part of the reform. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We're looking at Family Services. Income Assistance. L-6. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$62,082,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: We will go on to L-7. Career Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$11,109,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Okay. Back to page L-3. Family Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$155,000,833. Agreed? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Madam Chairperson, I understand that we are under pressure to speed up our work, but I would request, using your discretion, an opportunity to ask a few questions on this \$11 million funding request. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main, it was agreed to, but I will allow you to ask a couple of questions. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Minister, it says on page 175 of the business plan that the department is in the process of collecting Inuit training plans from contractors. This is with the goal of maximizing local employment opportunities under capital projects. How many Inuit training plans are currently being worked on or implemented under this? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Main. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Our department is, may I say, fairly new in truly being a part of the training component, so unfortunately I don't have data yet. I think this was the first year, maybe, of being involved in creating training, so we don't have data yet. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Mr. Main, your last question. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I wanted to give the department credit for working towards seeing more young people entering apprenticeship. I note that on page 176 one of your priorities for the upcoming fiscal year is to "reinstate the Nunavut Early Apprenticeship Training (NEAT) program" along with the Department of Education. That is awesome. It's really encouraging to see. This is something that used to exist within the school system. I know for my two communities, this can't happen fast enough.

My final question is: what are the timelines associated with this priority and have you identified any communities that would be the first to roll it out across Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We have this ongoing relationship with Education and Arctic College, so there are discussions on what would be the best curriculum moving forward and those discussion are happening currently. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Family Services. L-3. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$155,833,000. That was agreed to. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Do members agree that we have concluded the Department of Family Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Thank you. Does the minister have any closing comments? Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson (interpretation ends) and the members, for the questions. I really do appreciate this process because it only helps our department. I know there's a lot of lead, but hopefully after this budget, with the regional directors, it will help us better support the frontline workers and build cases for the needs of our vulnerable. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) And thanks to my officials.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Sheutiapik. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. I think we would like to get on with the Department of Justice for opening comments, so if the minister can get ready, please.

Bill 39 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2020-2021 – Justice – Consideration in Committee

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. Could you please proceed with your opening comments? Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I am pleased to appear before the Committee of the Whole to present to you the 2020-21 Main Estimates for the Department of Justice.

A total of \$127,000,660 is being requested for the operations and maintenance of the department for the 2020-21 fiscal year. This is a \$649,000, or 1 percent, increase from the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The total expenditure will include the following:

- Funding of \$2,141,000 under Law Enforcement to strengthen the policing services within the RCMP. This funding will cover:

- Six regular members: four members in Iqaluit headquarters, one member in Pangnirtung, and one member in Cape Dorset;
 - One public service employee as an administrative service manager in Iqaluit headquarters; and
 - Four call-takers in the Iqaluit headquarters operational communication centre
- Funding of \$750,000 to improve court services in Nunavut. This funding will cover:
 - \$650,000 for service contracts regarding court reporters and interpreter/translator services. This funding is required to ensure court services can meet its legislated requirement to maintain a “Court of Record.”
 - \$125,000 of funding to cover six positions, including four juridical officers and two transcribers, which will be an ongoing total amount of \$500,000.
 - Funding of \$234,000 to support the repatriation of five community justice outreach workers from the hamlets back to the Government of Nunavut. The total funds required to cover these positions is being offset by the decrease in contribution agreements by \$366,000 that were previously held with hamlets to support these positions. Therefore only \$234,000 is being requested to a total of \$600,000.
 - Finally, funding of \$500,000 to support the transfer of the seven positions of the Office of the Public Guardian from the Department of Family Services to the Department of Justice. \$1,499,000 will be transferred to the Department of Justice from the Department of Family Services. However, an additional \$500,000 is required to support the office’s budget of \$1,999,000.

Madam Chairperson, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to answer any questions from the members.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Ehaloak. Does the co-chair of the standing committee have any opening comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you, minister. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness on its review of the proposed ‘20-21 main estimates and ‘20-23 business plan of the Department of Justice.

The department’s proposed ‘20-21 operations and maintenance budget of \$127.6 million represents a very small increase from its 2019-2020 main estimates. The documentation indicates a proposed increase of 12 departmental positions, although members note that the department continues to have a high number of vacant positions.

The standing committee recognizes that the Office of the Public Guardian, with a number of existing staff positions, will be transferred from the Department of Family Services to the Department of Justice in 2020-21. Members anticipate that as this office has a similar mandate and structure as the Office of the Public Trustee, the sharing of administrative services and other functions will improve efficiency in service delivery.

Policing services across Nunavut are provided under a 20-year contract with the RCMP, the Territorial Policing Services Agreement, which was signed in 2012. Members greatly appreciate receiving regular updates on the operations of the RCMP's "V" division. The department's business plan indicates that there will be no changes to the total number of 162 RCMP positions in Nunavut for the coming year, including regular RCMP officers, civilians, and public servants. However, during the minister's appearance before the standing committee to discuss her proposed '20-21 budget and business plan, the minister indicated that specific funding of over \$2 million would be allocated for law enforcement in '20-21 and would cover 11 positions to strengthen policing services in Nunavut. It is not clear from reviewing the documentation whether or not this is new funding being requested for this initiative as the business plan indicates an overall reduction in the budget proposed for law enforcement in '20-21 compared to 2019-2020. Recent correspondence from the minister somewhat clarified the funding allocations in this area.

Members encourage the minister to improve the level and clarity of detail provided to members when describing new or restructured funding allocations within departmental branches.

Madam Chairperson, the standing committee supports initiatives to provide orientation and language training for such positions as new RCMP members, legal counsel, and support staff. Members were pleased to note that a number of RCMP detachments currently have Inuktitut-speaking staff members and that the four call-takers at the Iqaluit communication centres also speak Inuktitut. A number of legal counsel staff in the legislation branch have also undertaken Inuktitut language training. Members encourage the minister and her officials in their efforts to provide opportunities for Nunavut's law school graduates to pursue their careers within the department.

Members further support the minister in her efforts to recruit and train more Inuit in such areas as community justice and in the field of corrections. The standing committee noted with interest that with the ongoing transfer of community justice outreach worker positions from hamlet-based positions to the Government of Nunavut, funding for these positions will increase. While the committee appreciates that additional funds for these positions are necessary to provide the range of benefits to which all Government of Nunavut employees are entitled, members also note that one of the primary reasons that hamlets struggled with maintaining community justice outreach worker positions within their administration was the lack of adequate funding for these employees.

Madam Chairperson, the Department of Justice's proposed '20-21 main estimates include funding for the civil forfeiture office. As staffing and training get underway for this office, members look forward to updates on the implementation of the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act*, which was passed in 2017 with a view to combatting bootlegging and illegal drug trafficking in Nunavut's communities.

Madam Chairperson, the Department of Justice's business plan notes that the Therapeutic Justice Pilot Program, a three-year program in Cambridge Bay funded by the federal government, is still underway. It is further noted that the RCMP has been referring clients

to this program to receive support to address the underlying causes of criminal behaviour, such as mental health, addictions, and trauma. Members look forward to the final report on the successes achieved and challenges faced by this program and will be interested to learn what consideration will be given to expanding its delivery to other communities.

Madam Chairperson, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed '20-21 main estimates and '20-23 business plan for the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This was one of the good ideas from Mr. Rumbolt about two weeks ago. Madam Chairperson, I would like to move a motion to report progress. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Opposed. The motion is carried. I'll now stand to report progress. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) Report of the Committee of the Whole. Ms. Angnakak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 39 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Member Rumbolt. The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Let's proceed. Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. 22. *Orders of the Day*. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 5:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions

7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 73 – 5(2)
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 39
 - Bill 40
 - Bill 42
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Before we proceed, welcome back, Minister Patterk.

(interpretation ends) In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 62 – 5(2), this House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 6, at 9:00 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:42*

