POST-ELECTION 2026 TOOL KIT

A post-election engagement guide for Federation members

November 2026

THE FEDERATION
of COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES *of* BC

Community social services matter

Much of the value of community social services is seen in what does not happen.

- A family receives support before reaching a crisis.
- A young person stays connected to school and community.
- A person gets the help they need before their circumstances become more complex.

These outcomes matter. They strengthen individuals, families and communities and contribute to a stronger, healthier B.C. But they are not always visible in government budgets, public discussions or policy priorities.

Every day, community social services organizations help build strong communities across B.C.

They support children, youth and families; assist people with disabilities; support seniors; provide mental health and substance-use services; help people experiencing homelessness; and respond to many other needs in their communities.



This work is essential to the well-being of people and communities, but much of it happens outside the public spotlight.

Building awareness of this work and its value is an important part of strengthening the community social services sector. It also helps elected representatives understand the local realities, opportunities and pressures that shape the communities they represent.

Why connect with your MLA?

The election may be over, but building relationships with elected representatives is just beginning.

Whether your MLA is newly elected or returning to office, now is a good time to introduce your organization, share what you are seeing in your community and establish a relationship that can continue throughout their term.

Connecting with your MLA provides an opportunity to:

- introduce your organization and the people you serve
- share local perspectives and experiences
- highlight the contribution of community social services
- discuss emerging opportunities and challenges
- build an ongoing relationship with an elected representative in your community.

You can find your MLA through **leg.bc.ca/members/mla-by-community**

Community social services organizations are an important part of B.C.'s social infrastructure. They help people access support; strengthen families and communities; prevent challenges from becoming crises; and contribute to healthier, more resilient communities.

Our collective voice is strongest when elected representatives understand both the impact of this work and the conditions organizations need to deliver effective, sustainable services.

Five simple ways to engage your MLA

1

Reach out and introduce yourself

Send a congratulatory message to your elected or re-elected MLA. Briefly introduce your organization, the communities you serve and the work you do. Offer to connect.

2

Invite them to see your work

A short facility tour, meeting with staff or visit to a program can help an MLA understand the role community social services play in their community.

3

Share a local story

Describe something your organization has achieved, a challenge you are seeing or an example of how timely support made a difference. Protect the privacy and dignity of people accessing services.

4

Connect local experiences to provincial priorities

Use the Federation's priorities to help frame your discussion. You do not need to cover everything in one meeting. Focus on the issues most relevant to your organization and community.

5

Keep the relationship going.

Offer to provide updates, invite your MLA to community events and position your organization as a trusted local resource and source of community knowledge.

Sample email to your MLA

SUBJECT **Congratulations and an invitation to connect**

Dear **[MLA Name]**,

Congratulations on your election/re-election to the B.C. legislature. **[If applicable: It was good to connect with you previously, and I look forward to continuing the conversation.]**

I'm reaching out on behalf of **[Organization Name]**, which provides **[brief description of services]** in **[community]**.

Our organization works with individuals and families across our community, and we see firsthand both the pressures people are experiencing and the difference that timely, community-based support can make.

We would welcome an opportunity to introduce our organization, share some of the work happening in your community and discuss the opportunities and challenges facing community social services.

We would be pleased to arrange a short meeting or invite you to visit one of our programs.

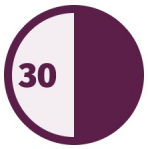
We look forward to connecting and working together to strengthen the well-being of people and communities in our region.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

Make the most of your meeting

Take some time to learn a little about your newly elected MLA, including their background, interests, and priorities, and consider where there may be opportunities for common ground.



There's no need for a formal presentation or extensive briefing materials. A simple 30-minute conversation can be a great starting point for building a relationship.

Focus on:

- ☐ who you serve
- ☐ the difference your services make
- ☐ the pressures affecting your organization and community
- ☐ how provincial policies, funding and other decisions influence your work
- ☐ opportunities to strengthen outcomes for people and communities.

Ask your MLA what they are hearing from constituents and what community issues they hope to prioritize.

Most importantly, focus on building a relationship rather than trying to solve everything in one meeting.

Four questions to guide the conversation

1

Who are we?

Explain your organization's mission, the communities you serve and your connection to the local community.

2

Whom do we serve?

Describe the people and families who rely on your programs and the range of needs your organization helps address.

3

What difference do we make?

Share examples of how your services improve outcomes, strengthen families and communities, support inclusion or help prevent challenges from becoming crises.

4

What challenges and opportunities do we see?

Explain the pressures and opportunities affecting your organization, including funding, staffing, facilities, service demand, changing community needs and government requirements.

Three priorities for conversations with MLAs

The Federation's member engagement has identified three priorities that members can use to help guide conversations with elected representatives.

1

Sustainable funding and modern contracts

Government funding needs to reflect the actual cost of delivering quality services, including wages, administration, technology, insurance, facilities and inflation.

Predictable, sustainable funding and modernized contracts help organizations plan effectively, support their workforces and maintain essential services in their communities.

2

A strong community social services workforce

Recruitment, retention, competitive compensation, training and workforce development are critical to delivering high-quality services.

A stable and supported workforce helps build strong relationships, maintain continuity of care and provide consistent support to people, families and communities.

3

Prevention and community-based care

Investing in prevention, early intervention and community-based services helps people access support before challenges become crises.

Strong community-based services are an essential part of B.C.'s broader social infrastructure. Supporting people earlier can improve outcomes, strengthen communities and help reduce pressure on more intensive and costly services.

These priorities provide a common foundation for our collective work. Members are encouraged to connect them to the experiences, needs and opportunities in their own communities.

Help strengthen our collective voice

This post-election outreach is part of the Federation's broader work to build strong relationships with government and increase understanding of the contribution community social services make across B.C.

Local conversations provide valuable insight into what is happening in communities across the province. Sharing what you hear with the Federation can help inform our provincial work and ensure our collective voice reflects local experiences.

Following a meeting with your MLA, consider sharing with the Federation:

- whom you met with and what was discussed
- what you heard about their priorities and areas of interest
- opportunities for further engagement
- a local success story, emerging challenge or community trend that could inform our work.

Together, these conversations can help build a stronger understanding of what people and communities need across B.C. and where collective action can make a difference.

Strong relationships start with connection, listening and shared understanding. By engaging with elected representatives in your community, you can help bring the experiences of people and organizations across B.C. into conversations about building a stronger, more sustainable province.

NOTES

We're here to help

If you have questions about engaging with your MLA, would like help preparing for a meeting or are unsure how to approach a particular issue, please reach out to the Federation.

We're happy to help members think through their approach, connect local experiences to our broader provincial priorities and identify opportunities to strengthen our collective voice.

Have a question or need support? Get in touch with the Federation team.

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