

# Birth (Maternity) Alerts

January 2021 Update



## Saskatchewan is discontinuing the practice of birth (maternity) alerts as of February 1, 2021.

- The Ministry of Social Services is working with staff, the Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority and other partners to ensure supports and services are available to expectant mothers.
- Our decision to discontinue birth alerts aligns with recommendations from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Inquiry, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the federal Indigenous child welfare legislation. It also recognizes concerns raised by various Indigenous partners and community stakeholders across Saskatchewan.
- The removal of a child at birth is an absolute last resort and only occurs when safety of a child cannot be ensured.

**Supporting mothers to care for their children is a priority.**

### Engagement

- Over the past year, the Ministry of Social Services has been conducting engagement sessions with our human service and community partners on the coordination of services for at-risk expectant mothers, as well as to hear stories from the families we serve.
- The Ministry of Social Services is taking what we learned at these engagement sessions to inform our policies and practices specific to this vulnerable group of people.

### Community Supports

- We recognize that the needs of high-risk expectant mothers may include health-related supports such as prenatal care, mental health and addictions supports and interventions, in addition to housing and income supports. It is a priority to connect at-risk expectant mothers with supports offered by community-based organizations, who are best positioned to offer these specialized services.
- Extended family members and communities can act as a source of strength and support for families who are struggling, and help to prevent the need for child protection intervention.