

**CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

B E T W E E N:

**FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CARING SOCIETY OF CANADA and  
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS**

Complainants

-and-

**CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Commission

-and-

**ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA**  
(representing the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada)

Respondent

-and-

**CHIEFS OF ONTARIO, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA, NISHNAWBE ASKI  
NATION, TAYKWA TAGAMOU NATION and CHIPPEWAS OF GEORGINA ISLAND**

Interested Parties

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**BOOK OF AUTHORITIES OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES,  
TAYKWA TAGAMOU NATION AND CHIPPEWAS OF GEORGINA ISLAND**

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February 2, 2026

**STOCKWOODS LLP**  
Barristers  
Toronto-Dominion Centre  
TD North Tower, Box 140  
77 King Street West, Suite 4130  
Toronto ON M5K 1H1

Justin Safayeni (58427U)  
Tel: 416-593-3494  
[justins@stockwoods.ca](mailto:justins@stockwoods.ca)

Spencer Bass (75881S)  
Tel: 416-593-1657  
[spencerb@stockwoods.ca](mailto:spencerb@stockwoods.ca)

Counsel for the Interested Parties,  
Taykwa Tagamou Nation and Chippewas of  
Georgina Island

TO: **CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**  
240 Sparks Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor West  
Ottawa, ON K1A 1J4

c/o Judy Dubois, Registry Officer  
[Registry.Office@chrt-tcdp.gc.ca](mailto:Registry.Office@chrt-tcdp.gc.ca) / [judy.dubois@tribunal.gc.ca](mailto:judy.dubois@tribunal.gc.ca)

AND TO: **CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
344 Slater Street, 8th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 1E1

Anshumala Juyal  
Tel: 613-670-6972  
[anshumala.juyal@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca](mailto:anshumala.juyal@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca)

Khizer Pervez  
Tel: 613-993-3089  
[khizer.pervez@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca](mailto:khizer.pervez@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca)

Counsel for the Commission,  
Canadian Human Rights Commission

AND TO: **CONWAY BAXTER WILSON LLP/S.R.L**  
Suite 400 – 411 Roosevelt Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K2A 3X9

David P. Taylor  
Tel: 613-691-0368  
[dtaylor@conwaylitigation.ca](mailto:dtaylor@conwaylitigation.ca)

Kiana Saint-Macary  
Tel: 613-787-6125  
[ksaintmacary@conwaylitigation.ca](mailto:ksaintmacary@conwaylitigation.ca)

**CLARKE CHILD & FAMILY LAW**  
Suite 950 – 36 Toronto Street  
Toronto, ON M5C 2C5

Sarah Clarke  
[sarah@childandfamilylaw.ca](mailto:sarah@childandfamilylaw.ca)

Robin McLeod  
Tel: 416-260-3030  
[robin@childandfamilylaw.ca](mailto:robin@childandfamilylaw.ca)

Tel: 416-260-3030

Counsel for the Complainant,  
First Nations Child and Family Caring Society  
of Canada

AND TO: **ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS**  
55 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1600  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6L5

Peter Mantas  
[pmantas@fasken.com](mailto:pmantas@fasken.com)

Tel: 613-696-6886

Counsel for the Complainant, Assembly of First Nations

AND TO **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE CANADA**  
Prairie Regional Office  
601 -400 St. Mary Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 4K5

Dayna Anderson  
Tel: 204-294-5563  
[dayna.anderson@justice.gc.ca](mailto:dayna.anderson@justice.gc.ca)

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE CANADA**  
Civil Litigation Section  
50 O'Connor Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8

Paul Vickery  
Tel: 604-754-7013  
[Paul.vickery@justice.gc.ca](mailto:Paul.vickery@justice.gc.ca)

Sarah-Dawn Norris  
Tel: 343-999-6195  
[sarah-dawn.norris@justice.gc.ca](mailto:sarah-dawn.norris@justice.gc.ca)

Meg Jones  
Tel: 343-549-4233  
[meg.jones@justice.gc.ca](mailto:meg.jones@justice.gc.ca)

Aman Owais  
Tel: 343-576-6987  
[aman.owais@justice.gc.ca](mailto:aman.owais@justice.gc.ca)

Adam Lupinacci  
Tel: 343-553-8838  
[adam.lupinacci@justice.gc.ca](mailto:adam.lupinacci@justice.gc.ca)

Counsel for the Respondent, Attorney General of Canada

AND TO: **OLTHUIS KLEER TOWNSHEND LLP**  
250 University Avenue, 8th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5H 3E5

Maggie E. Wente  
Tel: 416-981-9340  
[mwente@oktlaw.com](mailto:mwente@oktlaw.com)

Sinéad Dearman  
Tel: 416-981-9356  
[sdearman@oktlaw.com](mailto:sdearman@oktlaw.com)

Jessie Stirling-Voss  
Tel: 416-981-9409  
[jstirling@oktlaw.com](mailto:jstirling@oktlaw.com)

Benjamin Brookwell  
Tel: 416-981-9405  
[bbrookwell@oktlaw.com](mailto:bbrookwell@oktlaw.com)

Ashley Ash  
Tel: 416-204-4767  
[aash@oktlaw.com](mailto:aash@oktlaw.com)

Katelyn Johnstone  
Tel: 416-872-1624  
[kjohnstone@oktlaw.com](mailto:kjohnstone@oktlaw.com)

Jenna Rogers  
Tel: 416-981-9448  
[jrogers@oktlaw.com](mailto:jrogers@oktlaw.com)

Counsel for the Interested Party, Chiefs of Ontario

AND TO: **FALCONERS LLP**  
10 Alcorn Avenue, Suite 204  
Toronto, ON M4V 3A9

Julian N. Falconer  
[julianf@falconers.ca](mailto:julianf@falconers.ca)

Asha James  
[ashaj@falconers.ca](mailto:ashaj@falconers.ca)

Meaghan Daniel  
[meaghand@falconers.ca](mailto:meaghand@falconers.ca)

Shelby Percival  
[shelbyp@falconers.ca](mailto:shelbyp@falconers.ca)

Tel: 416-964-0495

Counsel for the Interested party, Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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## [2] “Opting Out” of a Settlement

Defending Class Actions in Canada, A Guide for Defendants, 6th Ed.

Alexandra Cocks, Samuel Lepage, McCarthy Tétrault LLP

**Defending Class Actions in Canada: A Guide for Defendants, 6th Ed (McCarthy Tétrault, Cocks, Lepage) > Chapter 7 SETTLEMENT ISSUES > §7.06 Issues That Can Reduce The Effectiveness Of The Settlement**

### Chapter 7 SETTLEMENT ISSUES

#### §7.06 Issues That Can Reduce The Effectiveness Of The Settlement

##### [2] “Opting Out” of a Settlement

The second option available to class members who do not want to be bound by a settlement is to “opt-out” of the settlement. The availability of this second option can depend, in part, on the stage of the proceedings at which settlement is reached.

If settlement is reached at the pre-certification stage, certification of the proceeding as a class proceeding is normally a prerequisite of the settlement and the approval of the settlement. Generally, the certification order will provide a time period in which the putative class member can “opt-out” of the class proceeding such that the option to “opt-out” still exists. Those persons who “opt-out” may pursue relief from the defendant in individual actions.

If settlement is reached at the post-certification stage, then a person may “opt-out” of the settlement class if the period for “opting out” provided for in the certification order has not yet expired. If the period for “opting out” that is provided for in the certification order has expired, then persons who remained in the class will be bound by the settlement. These persons will have no further opportunity to “opt-out”, unless the settlement approved by the court provides for further “opt-out” rights beyond those included in the certification order.<sup>1</sup>

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Footnote(s)

<sup>1</sup> Canadian class action statutes are silent with respect to affording class members a second right to “opt-out” of an action following settlement. In *Nunes* at paras. 9, 30, the court approved a settlement, even though class members who did not approve the settlement could no longer “opt-out” because of the expiry of the time period to do so and the settlement agreement’s silence on this point. The court’s decision seems to have been influenced by the determination that reasonable and adequate notice of the terms of the settlement and approval hearing had been given and that there were only two objectors to the settlement. However, in some cases, judicial approval of a settlement has been made conditional upon class members being given a further right to “opt-out”. In the United States, effective December 1, 2003, U.S. Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, r. 23(e)(4) specifically authorizes the court to withhold the approval of a settlement, unless individual class members who have not previously “opted out” of the action are given a new opportunity to request exclusion from the class.