

Guiding you in the right direction...



COMMUNITY

Financial Counselling Services



ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2025

We acknowledge that our work takes place on Treaty 1 Territory, the traditional homeland of Indigenous peoples.

We respect the treaties as intended by Indigenous peoples – acknowledging the harms and mistakes of the past and the responsibility to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

CFCS VISION, MISSION & VALUES



VISION

All Manitobans will have the capacity to make informed financial decisions, to successfully navigate financial challenges and have access to affordable and appropriate services for their financial and personal wellbeing.

MISSION

Community Financial Counselling Services Inc. (CFCS) is a community based, non-profit organization that offers services to a diverse population of Manitobans experiencing a variety of financial challenges. We provide free, accessible, respectful, responsive, and effective services to meet the unique and complex needs of individuals, couples, families, and communities in order to achieve financial wellbeing. We build capacity through collaborative partnerships with other organizations, and by advocating for accessible, affordable, and appropriate financial services for all Manitobans.

VALUES

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| ✓ Capacity Building | ✓ Advocacy |
| ✓ Accessibility | ✓ Collaboration |
| ✓ Financial Wellbeing | ✓ Reconciliation |
| ✓ Financial Empowerment | ✓ Inclusion |

PRESIDENTS' & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

A Year of Unwavering Support and Remarkable Growth

At Community Financial Counselling Services (CFCS), we believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to achieve financial stability and peace of mind. As you read through this annual report, we hope you'll gain a deeper understanding of the profound impact our dedicated staff and volunteers have had on individuals and families across Manitoba. This past year, we witnessed unprecedented demand for our services, and we are incredibly proud of how our team rose to the challenge, demonstrating resilience, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to our communities.

Our financial counsellors support a growing number of clients experiencing challenging and complicated financial situations, including loss or reduced income, growing cost of living, various scams, and/or dealing with health or mental health issues. Clients also required more assistance in reaching out to creditors to obtain further information, writing letters on the client's behalf, and making referrals to other agencies. Sometimes, it is simply being present for clients to be heard. Financial Counsellors reach across the province. They are regularly seeing clients in-person in Steinbach, Winkler, Morden, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and even into northern communities such as The Pas. And, CFCS continues to offer virtual appointments to all clients.

Financial Counsellors are working with a growing number of partners and agencies to reach more people in need. They provide regular in-person presentations at Family Resource Centers, Wellness/Resources Fairs and Expos around Manitoba, United Way 'Huddle' locations, treatment centers in Winnipeg and Brandon, and more. We are also pleased to be working with agencies/service providers under some of the RHAs. We are thankful for the strong collaboration among so many community organizations throughout Manitoba.

The Tax & Benefits Program at CFCS continued to support thousands of individuals to file their taxes and access all the benefits they were eligible for through the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. In 2024, it was confirmed that we were the largest CVITP clinic in Canada! This incredible impact would not have been possible without the over 110 volunteers who contributed more than 16,000 hours of service this past year in a range of tax filing and admin support roles.

Demand for these services increased yet again this year, as our community members continued to experience challenges on many fronts. In response, we increased our staff and volunteer complements, revamped processes, created new volunteer roles, and partnered with new organizations to try to meet the growing need. The "off season" was busy in different ways as we encountered more complex circumstances, ventured further afield to deliver service, and engaged with communities and organizations to shore up connections, train and build capacity, and prepare for the next tax season. As we look ahead, we remain committed to evolving our approach, deepening partnerships, and ensuring that everyone in our community can access the vital tax and benefit supports they deserve.

We are very grateful for all the support we receive from our many funders including United Way Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba, Government of Canada, Prosper Canada, The Winnipeg Foundation, Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries, Youth Employment Services, SEED, and others.

PRESIDENTS' & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Our team of financial counsellors, tax & benefit staff, and volunteers are second to none when it comes to serving our community. We are so proud of them for the work they do and the phenomenal results they achieve.

Lastly, we express our sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors for their continued strong leadership and extra diligence during a year of change and growth.

Looking Ahead: Building a Financially Resilient Future

Thanks to the incredible dedication of our staff and volunteers, the invaluable support from our funders, the strong leadership of our Board of Directors, and the collaborative spirit of our community partners, CFCS is exceptionally well-positioned for the future. We are invigorated by the progress we've made and are committed to continuing our mission of empowering Manitobans with the financial tools and guidance they need to thrive. We invite you to join us on this journey as we work together to build a more financially resilient community for everyone.

Sincerely,
Executive Director and Board Co-Chairs,
Dana Erickson, Matt Johnston, Candy Wong



2024.2025 PROGRAM IMPACTS



**MONEY
TALK\$!**

DOES YOURS SAY
'GOOD BYE' OR 'GOOD
BUY'?

DOES YOURS SAY
'GOOD BYE' OR 'GOOD
BUY'?

"MONEY IS A TERRIBLE
MASTER BUT AN
EXCELLENT SERVANT"

Earn and Learn!

Are you 15-29?
Currently or formerly in CFS care in Manitoba?

Got questions about your finances?
Need help reducing expenses?
Want to understand credit?

\$25 per session

Meet with a Financial Counsellor to:

- Create a budget
- Reduce debt & set savings goals
- Prepare & file your taxes (up to 10 years)

***Earn \$25 per session (up to \$100)**

Meet with us at 516-294 Portage Ave.
or book a virtual appointment.

Contact us today!
futures_forward@cfcs.mb.ca or 204-989-1902

Futures Forward
Support to Current and Former Youth in Care in Manitoba

COMMUNITY
Financial Counselling Services

COMMUNITY
Financial Counselling Services

Need solutions to money and debt problems?

Transform
financial chaos into financial confidence.

Contact us for free, confidential counselling.

2024.2025 COUNSELLING PROGRAM STATISTICS

CFCS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS: COACHING/COUNSELLING & FINANCIAL LITERACY:

Counselling Program Details/Activities:



Client Engagement

- **756** counselling sessions (**701** distinct clients & partners)
- **234** new clients
- Appointments: **57%** in-person, **7%** video, **36%** phone
- nearly **90%** of clients felt 'less stressed' after session



Client Goals

- **22** Clients set NEW savings goals in the year
- Cumulative **\$13,290.28** saved
- **35** Clients set NEW debt reduction goals in the year
- Cumulative **\$43,707.84** applied against balances owed



Financial Literacy & Capacity Building

- **53** Financial Literacy sessions (not including tax training) were presented to **845 community members**
- Participated in **16** Outreach events/Resource Fairs
- **18** Professional development training sessions for **267** front line service providers on coaching/counselling, financial empowerment supports & the Benefits Wayfinder tool

New Client Demographics:



Relationship Status

78% of clients are not partnered, and **2** is the average number of dependants (many single parents)

Age/Gender & Diversity

16% of clients are < 30 years, **47%** are 30-55, **37%** are 55+, **55%** female, **28%** identify as BIPOC, **14%** live with a disability

Housing & Location

75% of new clients pay rent, **13%** of client appointments are with clients from rural areas

Income Sources

32% wages, **19%** pension, **31%** EI/EIA or disability, **3%** no income, **15%** CFS/WCB/other

Income & Expenses

Average net: income/mo = **\$2,794**, monthly living costs (before debt) = **\$2,693** & unsecured debt = **\$46,951.51**

2024.2025 TAX & BENEFIT PROGRAM STATISTICS

CFCS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS: TAXES, ACCESS TO BENEFITS, CVITP TAX CLINICS & TRAINING:

2024.2025 activities where the highest ever thanks in large part to the incredible volunteer team who give so generously of their time and efforts to our program.



- **Free Tax Filing & Access to Benefits**
 - **16,662** returns filed for **11,696** unique individuals in fiscal year
 - **3,315** benefits applications submitted for **2,412** clients
 - CFCS Staff & **113 volunteers** provided free tax preparation services



- **Verified Partner Program**
 - **127 new Verified Partners** added - currently **429** active or in process VP's in **117** different organizations
 - **9** training sessions were delivered to **75** distinct Verified Partners



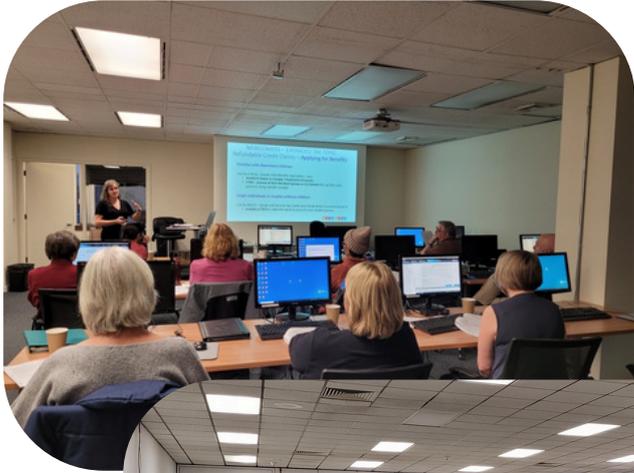
- **Tax Training & Capacity Building**
 - **214** unique individuals were sent from **31** community organizations to participate in CFCS training courses
 - **630** total session registrations were received across **14** different course types and **25** different training options



Taxes & Benefits Outcomes - All Programs & Projects

GRAND Outcomes (refunds - balances) plus: GIS GST, CCB & CCR	\$62,952,065.81
PLUS: Access to Benefits/Credits - All Programs	\$1,687,277.07
GRAND Refunds/Credits & Benefits - All Programs	\$64,639,342.88

CFCS VOLUNTEERS - INCREDIBLE IMPACT!



2024.2025 FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

CFCS would like to thank the following for their financial support:



2024.2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chris Nowell (Chair)	Capital Services Officer, Government of Canada
Mohammad Khan (Vice Chair)	PhD, MSW, MBA Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Work, U of M
Tae Kim (Treasurer)	Director of Financial Planning & Analysis, GWL Realty Advisors
Candy Wong	Portfolio Manager, MB Civil Service Superannuation Board
Dr. David Stangeland	CPA, CMA, Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba
Matt Johnston	VP Strategic Initiatives, Johnston Group
Mike Kukelko	CPA, CA
Dr. Evelyn Forget	OC, Professor, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba
Kevin Parsons	Sr. Program Officer - Endow, The Winnipeg Foundation
Erica Esselmont	Director, Risk (Monitoring), Deposit Guarantee Corporation of MB

2024.2025 STAFF

Bob Allinson	Resource Staff (Tax Clinics)
Sarah Al-Saadi	Benefits & Outreach Facilitator
Inge Arnott	Benefits & Outreach Facilitator
Amy Black	Program Coordinator
Jane Chilton	Program Associate
Marian Elsokkary	Intake Administrator
Dana Erickson	Interim Executive Director
Michelle Eskandari	Financial Counsellor
Olha Herasii	Benefits & Outreach Facilitator
Marvin Kocay	Benefits & Outreach Facilitator
Gopinath Kundukattil	Senior Financial Counsellor/Gambling Specialist
Mary Ma	Accountant/Bookkeeper
Adetayo Makinde	Financial Counsellor
Morgan Marshall	Tax & Benefits Program Manager
Sally Massey Wiebe	Financial Empowerment Lead
Judith Nkrumah	Financial Counsellor
Yvonne Neu	Financial Counselling Program Manager
Sanmisayo Oloyede	Financial Counsellor
Robert Shaw	Resource staff (Tax Clinics)
Gordon Stenberg	Office/Intake Coordinator



COMMUNITY

Financial Counselling Services

Guiding you in the right direction...

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Virtual Tax Service
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W: cfcstaxes.com