

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
COVID Inspectors Site Visits
Committee of the Whole—2021-2022 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Health and Social Services—February 25, 2021

MR. O'REILLY: I do want to move on to another area here, and it's with regard to enforcement. There were some issues raised in the public about this. I just would like to know what kind of training do each of the public health officers receive when they're designated under the Public Health Act? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I get clarification in the question again?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Member, can you clarify that?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is there standardized training provided to the public health officers when they're designated under the Public Health Act with regard to COVID?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I believe there is, but I'd like for Mr. Neudorf to be able to expand on that, on the training aspect. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, in terms of training, it's important that we hired people with experience so that they were already brought up to speed on kind of the general principles around enforcement and appropriate conduct. When we bring them in, we do designate them as public health officers, and there's training around confidential information that comes with that. We have, as well, organized kind of a three-day training session for all of our officers, as well, around orders and the public health requirements. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. When a public health officer conducts a visit or an inspection, do they do this on their own, or are they always accompanied by another officer or another, say, somebody with a liquor or cannabis commission or Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated earlier, the enforcement is probably, of all the duties of the COVID secretariat, is one of the most at-risk because they are actually giving out verbal warnings, written warnings, or tickets, and people don't always take that very, very well. Yes, Mr. Chair, no enforcement officer is going to either knocking on doors or in businesses or anywhere, other than that two

phone calls, on their own. We always send two members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Premier. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That's exactly what I'd hoped to hear and would expect from our public service and our leaders, so thank you very much for that. In general, is there a written inspection report provided to a business owner after an inspection is conducted? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will turn it over to Mr. Neudorf, but before I do that, I want to state that it's very important that Protect NWT and 811 have the autonomy to be able to do their jobs. At no time, as the Minister of the COVID secretariat, do I actually give any direction to Protect NWT or 811 on their enforcement practices, who they ticket, what they're ticketing, although, Mr. Chair, I have said that I will stand behind each member in their decisions. On that, I'd like to turn it over to the deputy minister for more information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Neudorf?

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. When our inspectors go out and we do an inspection of a business, they will always provide a written inspection. There are times, depending on the nature of the business and the inspection, that someone from WSCC or a liquor inspector might accompany our enforcement officers, as well, just depending on the particular issue at hand. Thank you.