



April 26, 2021

KATRINA NOKLEBY
MLA, GREAT SLAVE**Oral Question 699-19(2) Northern Students Recruitment**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised on March 31, 2021 in regards to how Human Resources (HR) and Cabinet are ensuring that backfills from transfer assignments are being done to minimize disruption to client service. During our exchange, I committed to providing information on how backfills have worked and on the number of current backfills in the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

In my response at the time, I advised that 708 GNWT staff were engaged in transfer assignments as of February 2021. I can now further advise that 472 home positions of employees on transfer assignment have been backfilled. This means that someone has taken on the full scope of that position's duties, either on a short or long-term basis. Additionally, 236 positions that have been vacated by employees engaging in transfer assignments are not currently backfilled. However, that does not mean that the duties of those positions are not being performed or that client service is suffering. Departments have a number of available options to ensure that client service levels are maintained. This includes that casuals may have been hired to perform some or all of the duties; another employee in the department may be performing the core duties under an acting assignment, as a growth mechanism, or as part of a duty to accommodate situation; a staffing process may be underway; or, management may be considering their staffing options, budget, or core business needs, to name some of the options.

I wish to reiterate that HR staff are monitoring and providing advice that is consistent with GNWT policies and procedures to ensure that positions are backfilled where the hiring department makes the decision to do so. When a position becomes vacant, a discussion between the hiring department and HR representatives occurs. Staffing options are presented and departmental hiring managers are asked to consider their short-, medium-, and long-term operational needs when making their decision to either backfill or allow the position to remain vacant while the employee is on transfer assignment.

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