



Home Sharing Support
Entity

**TASK FORCE
FINAL REPORT**

November 2021

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Home Sharing Support Entity Task Force Report

Executive Summary

Home sharing is the most accessed housing option offered by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC). It is a service type under CLBC's '[Shared Living](#)' umbrella. Home sharing helps eligible adults live, with support, in the community. An individual may live with just one other person, with a family, or in another arrangement depending on a range of factors. One example is semi-independent living in a separate suite with daily support. Rapid growth in service access, housing prices and availability, crisis placement pressures, and changing support needs over a person's life are among the challenges facing the model.

In March 2021, CLBC established a seven-member Task Force to review and carry out focused engagements to evaluate options and make recommendations to CLBC about the potential of establishing a new home sharing support entity to support the sustainability of the model. View the Task Force terms of reference [here](#).

In June of this year, the Office of the Auditor General of B.C released its [report on CLBC's oversight of home sharing](#), making recommendations for CLBC's home sharing program. Following this, CLBC launched an updated [three-year plan](#) that identified several areas for improvement that are broader than the OAG Audit, which include establishing a home sharing support entity.

Task Force consultations took place from the end of March 2021 through to the beginning of June 2021, with analysis and deliberations through to the end of September 2021. Organisations with experience delivering services in home sharing or similar housing options were consulted, individuals who live in home sharing settings their family members, Family Support Institute staff, home sharing agency staff and staff from CLBC's Indigenous Relations department.

The Task Force identified that the foundational focus is to have the individual at the center of everything we do. This means supporting self-determination, including through supported decision-making, and engaging in person-centred planning that is inclusive of families. The Task Force defined four guiding principles for the work of the entity:

- promote home sharing as a *sustainable* model,
- in a *culturally responsive* and,
- *collaborative* way, and
- follow an *evidence-based* approach.

Four key areas are recommended for the initial focus of the support entity:

Public Awareness: Recruitment & Communications

Goals Increase public awareness of home sharing as a positive community service for individuals seeking a housing option that values shared lives.
Increase the number of home share providers with particular attention to the underserved communities.

Networking, Support, and Guidance

Goals Develop and maintain networking opportunities that results in stakeholders being connected with one another, in improved practice and reduced isolation outcomes for individuals.

Provide support in communication and collaborative decision making that results in the issue being resolved.

Respite Services

Goal Increase availability of respite services.

Training & Education

Goal Increase the knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence of individuals, family members, home sharing providers, home sharing coordinating agencies.

It is recommended that a new Non-Profit Society be created as the Governance Structure for the new Home Sharing Support Entity. The new Board will include representation by self advocates; family members; home sharing providers; First Nations leaders; and home sharing coordinating agencies.

Home Sharing Support Entity Task Force Report

Introduction

Home sharing is the most accessed housing option offered by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC). More than 4,200 adults with developmental disabilities are accessing home sharing arrangements where an adult with a developmental disability shares a home with a person or family that is contracted to provide housing support. Home sharing is delivered through more than 3,800 dedicated home sharing providers and about 100 coordinating agencies.

Over the past few years, CLBC has conducted significant consultations with individuals, families, and home sharing providers to gain first-hand knowledge of how to improve the model to continue delivering supports effectively and sustainably. The model faces challenges related to rapid growth, housing prices and availability, crisis placement pressures, and meeting a person's life long changing support needs. These challenges are associated with:

- home sharing provider recruitment and retention
- access to respite
- access and participation in relevant training
- inconsistencies in practice and service, and
- increased crisis-based placements

There is a need for more home sharing options in small urban centres and in northern and rural areas of the province. The COVID-19 pandemic has added to these challenges for individuals, families, home sharing providers, and home sharing coordinating agencies.

In June 2021, the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia (OAG) released its [report](#) on CLBC's oversight of home sharing. The audit focused on CLBC's policies, procedures, and tools from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. Since the audit period three years ago, CLBC has made many improvements with many more underway.

In June 2021, CLBC launched an updated [three-year plan](#) to improve home sharing monitoring and support. The plan includes action steps to address the recommendations of the OAG Audit as well as other initiatives to strengthen the delivery of home sharing. One of the actions CLBC is taking to improve and strengthen home sharing is developing an independent provincial entity to better support home sharing, home sharing providers and the people living in home share. Other actions CLBC is taking to improve home sharing are:

- Applying an Indigenous lens to service design, policy, practice, and delivery across home sharing and other CLBC services to assure the delivery of culturally safe and respectful services.
- Increase opportunities for Indigenous led home sharing services and ensuring service that is aligned with the BC [Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#).
- Finalizing a new set of Agency Coordination Standards and updating standards for home sharing providers that support quality of life outcomes for the people who live with them.

- Implement CLBC's updated monitoring framework.
- Improving IT systems to support responses to critical incidents.
- Support the development of new Indigenous service providers and home sharing providers and identify and support existing agencies that contract with Indigenous home sharing providers.
- Working with the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres to look at training support (cultural safety) for home sharing providers and support to agencies in recruiting & retaining Indigenous home sharing staff.

Prior to the release of the OAG report and recommendations, CLBC launched a Home Sharing Support Entity Task Force to consider the current challenges facing home sharing and make recommendations on whether a supporting entity could support the betterment of home sharing. The objective of the Task Force, as communicated in the [terms of reference](#) (March 2021), was to consider the merits and drawbacks of an independent support entity, and its potential value in supporting home sharing providers, while also improving home sharing for individuals, families, and coordinating agencies. If the Task Force determined that a home sharing support entity was merited, it was to provide recommendations about how the entity would be developed and implemented.

CLBC responded to the recommendations of the OAG report (released in June 2021) by accepting all the recommendations and deciding that the home sharing support entity was merited to support system improvements. As a result, the Task Force did not have discussions or make decisions on whether the entity was merited. The focus of the Task Force was changed to evaluating options and making recommendations to CLBC about how a provincial home sharing support entity can be developed and implemented. Development and implementation considering Task Force recommendations is anticipated from November 2021 to March 2022.

Background

CLBC is committed to a vision of “Lives filled with possibilities in welcoming communities” (CLBC & IBC, 2018, p. 7). This vision is enacted in part through dedication to inclusive housing. The Inclusive Housing Task Force (2018) identified five elements of inclusive housing: choice and control, accessibility, ratio of people with and without disabilities, diversity, and sustainability. These elements are reflected in the shift, internationally, towards more individualized living and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This shift recognizes the aspirations, preferences, and support needs of individuals and is in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD; Guerin et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2020). Article 19 of the UNCRPD states,

Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement.

As the provincial Crown agency responsible for supports and services for adults with IDD and their families in British Columbia, CLBC funds a range of [home support services](#): staffed housing supports (homes with 24-hr staffed supports), shared living (e.g., home sharing and live-in support), and supported living (support for individuals who own, lease, or rent their own homes and who live independently in the community). Home sharing can take a variety of forms. An individual may live with just one other person, with a family, or in another arrangement depending on a range of factors, for example semi-independent living in a separate suite with daily support. The needs of the individual are central to the provision of home sharing services while also taking into consideration the input of the individual's family and the match with the home sharing provider. In other words, home sharing is responsive, flexible, and individualized to ensure the achievement of positive outcomes for the individual, their family, and the home sharing provider(s).

Home sharing aims to prioritize personalization in which individuals can select a provider and home environment according to their goals, adapting supports and independence considering individuals' changing needs and preferences (CLBC, 2018). Home sharing aims to support choice about where to live and who to live with. The service also invites the individual and home sharing provider to collaborate on how to arrange their shared living space, how to spend time together, and how support will be provided for activities of daily living and connections in the community.

Some important changes to the home sharing model have taken place following program reviews and consultations with individuals, families, and community living sector stakeholders. CLBC invited an outside expert review of the model in 2013 which led to changes detailed in 2015 in the [Home Share Review Response 5-year plan](#), including shifting from a CLBC direct-funded home sharing contract to a CLBC qualified home sharing agency contracted model. Other areas addressed in the 5-year plan included monitoring and standards, training, communications, and managing growth.

In 2015, CLBC worked with members of a BC CEO Network designated Home Sharing Working Group to develop a, [Shared Living Resource Guide](#) and development of an online training and educational resource for home sharing is presently ongoing.

In February of 2018, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, in his mandate letter, asked CLBC to engage home sharing providers to identify their support needs, gather input and make recommendations. As part of this mandate, CLBC conducted a targeted engagement process, connecting with our home sharing providers, shared living agencies, key CLBC staff and home share advocacy groups to ensure the Minister was provided with fulsome and thoughtful recommendations.

In June of 2018, CLBC published its report, ['What We Heard': A Summary of CLBC's engagement with Home Sharing Providers and home share providing Agencies](#). Contractual rates of pay, standards, training and support, communications, recognition and recourse, and inconsistencies in regional practice were some of the items identified in the report. To support

the betterment of home sharing, CLBC created a Provincial [Home Sharing Working Group](#) to review the findings and advise on potential non fee-related change initiatives. The Working Group developed a [three-year Work Plan](#) that identifies priorities for improvement and ways to improve the sustainability of home sharing.

Through reviews, consultations, and surveys, it is clear that home sharing continues to be a valued housing option. CLBC is committed to improving home sharing to better build a long-term and sustainable shared living service for the people CLBC supports. This feedback identified the importance of having a home sharing support entity that could focus on continuous quality improvement to address the challenges the home sharing model faces. In 2021, CLBC launched a, '*Home Sharing Support Entity Task Force*' to look at the viability of having a home sharing support entity.

Home Sharing Support Entity Task Force

CLBC established a seven-member Task Force in early 2021 to review information from previous stakeholder engagements and to carry out focused engagements with experienced reference groups to evaluate options and make recommendations to CLBC about a home sharing support entity. The scope of this engagement was laid out in the [Terms of Reference](#).

The terms of reference gave rise to certain assumptions guiding the process, namely:

- Consultations were targeted to key groups with relevant, significant experience and did not seek to gather information about all perspectives regarding the idea of a provincial entity.
 - Consultations explored dimensions of the contributors' experience with services similar to or relevant to a potential provincial entity.
- Bringing the insights of contributors together with the knowledge and collective experience of Task Force members can lead to potentially novel insights and contribute to fully informed discussions and deliberations.

Consultations

The Task Force believes the individual should be at the center of everything we do. Task Force consultations took place from the end of March through to the beginning of June 2021. The Task Force consulted with organizations whose experience delivering services in home sharing or similar housing options offer insights that can inform the evaluation of options and recommendations for a provincial home sharing support entity. These organizations included the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations (March 24, 2021), the former Central Okanagan Professional Caregivers Society (March 24, 2021), the BC Home Share Providers Association (April 15, 2021), and Shared Lives Plus (UK) (April 20, 2021).

Information was also gathered from invited individuals who live in home sharing settings as well as family members and the Family Support Institute (May 25, 2021), Executive Directors of

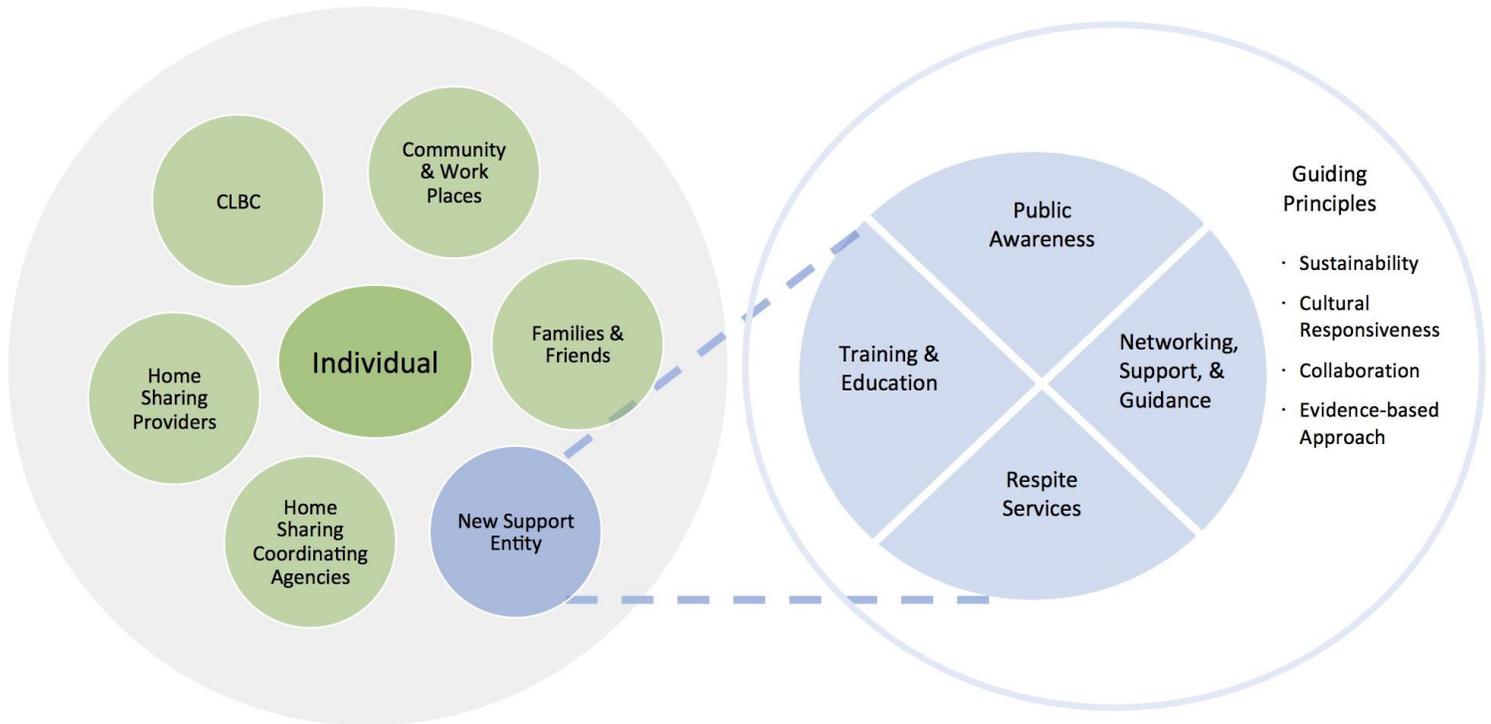
home sharing coordinating agencies (June 4, 2021), and CLBC's Executive Director of Indigenous Relations and their Indigenous Practice Advisor (May 13, 2021).

The Task Force analyzed learnings from these conversations and identified several common areas raised across all the interviews. Many of these areas are interconnected. The Task Force identified four key areas for the initial focus of the support entity:

1. Public Awareness: Recruitment & Communications
2. Networking, Support and Guidance
3. Respite Services
4. Training & Education

Recommended Direction

A foundational focus is to have the individual at the center, which means supporting self-determination through supported decision-making and engagement in person-centred planning that is inclusive of families (where applicable).



Proposed Guiding Principles

The Task Force defined four guiding principles for the work the support entity:

1. Sustainability: The sustainability of the home sharing model means having the leadership, talent, insights, and change strategies necessary to address the opportunities and challenges facing the model now and in the future.

2. Cultural responsiveness: The Entity will promote cultural safety for Indigenous people across all home sharing programming by building on a foundation of trust, respect, and humility, grounded in the effective implementation of the *BC Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, and ongoing consultation with Indigenous communities and partners. Cultural safety is a key focus. Alignment with the *BC Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* will include the increase of Indigenous home sharing, with standards and processes that prioritize Indigenous knowledge and leadership, in which

Indigenous home sharing providers are available to support Indigenous individuals, and in which Indigenous agencies are coordinating home sharing.¹

3. Collaboration: The Entity will actively support collaboration that enables stakeholders to enhance trust and work together openly to advance the quality-of-life outcomes for individuals accessing home sharing and their families. This collaborative approach will strengthen sustainability of the home sharing model through commitments to open communication, long-term thinking, sharing of resources, and relational accountability.

4. Evidence-based Approach: The Entity will advance evidence-based practice which means practice that takes a conscientious, consultative, solutions-oriented approach and incorporates the best evidence from well-designed studies and program data management. A sound evidence base respects foundational values of equity, inclusion, and human rights, and considers the dynamic contextual factors to make informed decisions. An evidence-based approach aspires to creativity and excellence based on solid information, competence, and experience.

¹ The CLBC (2021) Home Sharing Plan 2021-2024 reflects this commitment.

Proposed Strategic Direction

Key Areas of Focus

Public Awareness: Recruitment & Communications

Why this priority?

There is a need to promote the value of home sharing as a housing option with individuals and families and to increase public awareness to attract the interest of potential home sharing providers. A particular focus will be on recruiting home sharing providers from rural and remote geographic locations and culturally and linguistically under-represented groups. There is a need for more home sharing providers to meet the demand, and in particular for Indigenous home sharing providers.

Goals

Increase public awareness of home sharing as a positive community service for individuals seeking a housing option that values shared lives. Increase the number of home sharing providers with particular attention to the underserved communities.

Possible Strategies

- Develop an effective communication plan that increases the public awareness in understanding the benefits and opportunities of involvement in home sharing services.
- Conduct program research to better understand the ways that agencies delivering home sharing and home sharing providers can be representative of people served including bringing a focus on better understanding recruitment needs and identifying recruitment barriers and challenges.
- Create standardized materials and tools that coordinating agencies can use in recruitment and home sharing program promotion which include information about the rights of individuals and families, and relationships among individuals, families, home sharing providers, coordinating agencies, and CLBC within the model.
- Manage a repository of information and support the use of program data and research evidence to inform communications about home sharing. These functions would support the distribution of consistent, evidence-based information to all stakeholders. A central website managed by the entity could house recruitment campaign and related public awareness materials.

Networking, Support, and Guidance

Why this priority?

Individuals accessing home sharing, their families, home sharing coordinating agencies, and home sharing providers have identified needs for support. This includes formal and peer-led support, as well as guidance in decision-making processes and in navigating the contractual imbalances that can occur in relationships between these various roles. Support to

strengthen peer-support connections through networking can play an especially important role in preventing isolation and home sharing provider burnout.

Goals

Develop and maintain networking opportunities to improve practice and reduce isolation for individuals, families, home sharing providers, and coordinating agency staff. Provide support in communication and collaborative decision-making with a focus on issue resolution.

Possible Strategies

- Provide support and guidance to individuals and their families, and other stakeholders, to know their rights and responsibilities; ensure rights are upheld and that person-centred planning for home sharing arrangements is inclusive of families according to the preferences of individuals.
- Bolster networking between potential and current home sharing providers and families and individuals accessing or thinking about accessing home sharing as a way of sharing information and developing supportive connections.
- Collect information about peer-support systems such as mentoring or buddy systems that could be facilitated, and potentially play a role as a convener of conversation when there is a need for support to address a problem.
- Provide support to understand and participate in CLBC planning for program and policy changes and the home sharing model.

Respite Services

Why this priority?

There is a need to make respite more accessible, responsive, and formalized. When used effectively, respite promotes stability, reduces stress, and promotes resilience. A better understanding of access to respite resources includes understanding both funding needs for respite and actual availability of respite provider options with the needed skills and knowledge to deliver respite according to diverse care needs, assistive device use, and access needs.

Goal

Increase availability of respite services.

Possible Strategies

- Map the respite landscape as a way of generating a centralized list of dedicated respite spaces and determining whether more dedicated spaces for respite are needed.²
- Collaborate with CLBC and others on research about respite programming and data collection to understand respite needs and current levels of access across the province. Sector-wide stakeholder engagement about common needs

² Dedicated spaces can include physical spaces that can be reserved in advance and are equipped with physical accessibility considerations and resourced to meet support needs.

associated with respite could inform the development of a practical plan. The engagement could explore issues of equitable access to respite. This may lead to development of an added benefit for families managing direct-funded respite.

- Support peer-exchanged respite options home sharing providers. A respite matching model may be a possibility whereby home sharing providers articulate respite care needs, either directly or through coordinating agencies, and the Entity advertises the needed roles in the context of increasing public awareness.

Training & Education

Why this priority?

There is a need for training and education that addresses learning areas for agency coordinators and home sharing providers to ensure consistency in services delivered and promotion of quality-of-life outcomes for individuals accessing home sharing services. Mandatory core training needs as well as specialized training and education needs have emerged as home sharing arrangements have become more diverse and complex.

Goal

To increase the knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence of individuals, family members, home sharing providers, home sharing coordinating agencies.

Possible Strategies

- Work collaboratively with the BC CEO Network on the development of training curriculum and the provision of additional resources. Research the training requirements that coordinating agencies are already using and complement them.
- Work collaboratively with other partners to identify training needs and existing training opportunities through networking and research. Based on this review, recommend training opportunities, and provide input on training requirements to CLBC and others. Develop training where gaps are identified.

Proposed Governance Structure

It is recommended that a new Non-Profit Society be created with a collaborative policy governance Board as the organizational structure for the new Entity. The new Board members will include representation by self-advocates; family members; home sharing providers; First Nations leaders, and home sharing coordinating agencies. CLBC will be asked to have a liaison person to support the new Entity.

The Task Force is recommending that a Nominating Committee be established by CLBC with experienced people to nominate the first Board of Directors. It is recommended that CLBC ask Task Force members who are not interested in sitting on the Board to act as a Nominating Committee.

It is recommended that the Nominating Committee use a transparent process by asking groups or individuals from the various sectors (self-advocates; family members; home sharing providers; First Nations; home sharing coordinating agencies) to submit their desire and experience to be on the Board of Directors.

It is recommended that the new Board membership include individuals who:

- fully support the goals of the new Entity.
- have some governance experience.
- have direct experience as stakeholders in the homing share model; and
- will work collaboratively with an inter sectoral approach.

In addition, the diversity of the new Board membership will be a priority; this will be reflected by Board member recruitment that is intentional in the inclusion of Indigenous community members, urban and rural community members, and representation that is diverse in gender, ethnocultural identity, and self-advocate experience.

The initial tasks of the new Board will be:

1. Registering the new Society with a name and constitution and bylaws.
2. Developing the Vision and main Goals of the Society.
3. Negotiating Entity funding and deliverables with CLBC.
4. Recruiting an Executive Director who operates in a collaborative relationship with the Board.
5. Listening and communicating with all Stakeholders about the Society's new role and relationship(s).
6. Beginning to implement key area priorities.

Task Force Members

Anita Sihota”, home sharing coordinating agency
Arlene Zuckernick, family member
Carla Thiesen, home sharing coordinating agency
Debra Vining, home sharing provider
Margaret Milsom, home sharing provider
Sherwin Strong, Self advocate and Indigenous advisor
Tracy Charlton, CLBC

Project Support Team

Alana Gee, Executive Assistant, Administrative Services CLBC
Jack Styan, VP Strategic Initiatives, CLBC
John Talbot, Consultant
Robin Metcalfe and Kate Irving, research & writing

References

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Home Sharing Task Force Consultations

The BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations Solutions Manager (Victoria) Executive Director (Kamloops) Board President (Kelowna)	March 24, 2021
The Central Okanagan Professional Caregivers Society Former Board Member and paid Admin staff Former Board President/Member Former Executive Director and Board Member	March 24, 2021
The BC Home Share Providers Association Leader of BCHSPA and HSCBC (Victoria) Caregivers Association of Salmon Arm (Salmon Arm)	April 15, 2021
Shared Lives Plus (UK) Chief Executive Strategic Advice and Support Delivery Manager	April 20, 2021
CLBC Indigenous Relations Team Executive Director of Indigenous Relations Indigenous Practice Advisor and Research and Innovation Lead on Strategic Initiatives Team	May 13, 2021
Individual and Families Self-Advocate (Surrey) Self-Advocate (New Westminster) Family member (Kimberly) Family member, former home sharing provider, Family Support Institute (FSI) regional network coordinator (Fruitvale) Family member, FSI Regional Network Coordinator (Victoria)	May 25, 2021
Home sharing coordinating agencies Executive Director of Dawson Creek Society for Community Living Chief Executive Officer of Mission Association for Community Living Chief Executive Officer of WJS Canada	June 4, 2021