



MDS
Canada

Opportunity Profile

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Who we are

Mission

We respond to disasters, rebuild homes, and restore hope by organizing and empowering volunteers in the U.S. and Canada.

Vision

We strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those affected by disasters.

Canadian context

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) traces its Canadian roots back to World War II, when the Conference of Historic Peace Churches was formed. The Conference was a collective effort of Anabaptist church groups that advocated for alternative ways for conscientious objectors to serve their country. It produced a document for the Federal government that formed the basis of the Canadian Alternative Service program.

After the war ended, Mennonites in Canada felt a need to continue serving their neighbours. Responding to disasters was one of the voluntary service movements that emerged, with the earliest volunteer efforts focused on the 1948 and 1950 Red River floods in Manitoba, and the 1953 tornadoes in Sarnia and Port Huron, Ontario. In 1956, representatives from Canada attended a Disaster and Non-Resistance meeting in Chicago, where they learned about Mennonite Disaster Service in the U.S. Canadian organizers determined that they would join MDS, and the Canadian complement became Region 5.

In 2001, the Winnipeg office was established as an extension office of MDS in the U.S. And in 2011, the Canadian board determined that all Canadian staff would be responsible to a newly created position, Director of Region 5 Operations. In 2018, Region 5 was officially renamed Mennonite Disaster Service Canada Inc. From 2020-2024, a clear working relationship was negotiated with MDS in the U.S. through staff and board Partner in Mission agreements. In 2023, the Director of Canadian Operations job title was changed to Executive Director.

Values

Faith in action: We believe in and practice a life of service and proclamation founded on the Bible and modeled after the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Caring relationships: We engage all disaster survivors, volunteers, and partners with mutual respect, humility, and accountability.

Working together: We intentionally seek to work together with all Mennonite conferences and other denominations, and with other partner organizations, to help disaster survivors get back home.





A season of growth

Over the past 10 years, MDS Canada has experienced significant growth and change. It has been driven by an increase in the scope and frequency of disasters in Canada. The increase has been met by:

- An uptick in Canadian volunteers serving close to home
- Growth in the size and number of projects undertaken; and
- Growth in the resources available to support our work (finances, equipment, procedures and staff)

In 2022, the Canadian and U.S. boards met together to renew collective vision, mission, and value statements. The process was a rich experience with the two partner organizations working together and coming to unanimous agreement on MDS' guiding statements. These statements continue to guide our organization today.

The change in title from Director of Canadian Operations to Executive Director reflects a shift in the leadership needed for MDS Canada's future. The field operations component has been moved to a recently created Operations Manager position, which will allow more time for the Executive Director to engage our constituency.

The outgoing Executive Director has submitted a letter of intent to retire in spring 2026. At that time, his service with the organization will total 10.5 years.

The next Executive Director

Are you a highly motivated leader with a passion for faith in action?

As Executive Director, you will provide transformational leadership and implement the board's strategic direction. You will live out organizational values — faith in action, caring relationships and working together — in how you work and lead. While MDS Canada enjoys a strong donor base, you will create an intentional donor engagement strategy to cultivate and grow our donor relationships. And as we anticipate continued growth, you will work at developing strategies and systems with flexibility to support our growth and manage the ebb and flow of disaster response in Canada.

Qualifications

- Committed to the Anabaptist faith and peace position and an active member in an Anabaptist church
- Demonstrated commitment to the Mennonite World Conference Anabaptist Shared Convictions
- Understanding and commitment to MDS values, program and constituency
- Available and willing to travel throughout Canada and the U.S. approximately 30% time
- 5 years of experience developing and executing organizational strategies
- College or graduate level degree with at least 5 years of senior management experience
- At least 3 years experience managing human resource functions including personnel, compensation and recruiting
- At least 2 years of experience in multicultural settings
- Demonstrated experience working with volunteers and volunteer groups
- Knowledge and understanding of Anabaptist and other disaster response organizations in both Canada and the U.S.
- Successful experience working with boards
- Some knowledge of labour/HR law and not-for-profit agency law an asset
- Experience with planning and/or implementing a donor engagement strategy an asset

Search process

The search committee will begin reviewing applications June 30, 2025, and continue until the position is filled. With some flexibility around the start date, the new Executive Director is expected to assume office in April 2026.

Submit your cover letter and resume by email to jobsca@mds.org.

Location

As the Executive Director, you will be based at the MDS Canada office in Winnipeg. Winnipeg is a city of approximately 835,000 people, founded where the Red and Assiniboine rivers meet. It is the capital city of the prairie province of Manitoba. With its location near the centre of Canada, it's a major transportation hub. The city has a vibrant arts and culture scene, and a diverse population. Winnipeg has the largest urban Indigenous population in the country, and the top languages spoken include English, Tagalog, Punjabi, French, Mandarin, German and Spanish.

