

## CAO

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**Subject:** FW: AFSC Office Closure in Spirit River  
**Attachments:** AFSC Office Closure in Spirit River.pdf

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**From:** AF Minister <[AF.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AF.Minister@gov.ab.ca)>  
**Sent:** April 22, 2021 5:43 PM  
**To:** Rycroft Finance <[finance@rycroft.ca](mailto:finance@rycroft.ca)>  
**Cc:** [communications@afsc.ca](mailto:communications@afsc.ca); JEI Minister Office <[JEI.MinisterOffice@gov.ab.ca](mailto:JEI.MinisterOffice@gov.ab.ca)>; Minister Travis Toews <[tbf.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tbf.minister@gov.ab.ca)>; [centralpeace.notley@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:centralpeace.notley@assembly.ab.ca)  
**Subject:** AFSC Office Closure in Spirit River

Mr. James Verquin  
Mayor, Village of Rycroft

Dear Mr. Verquin:

Thank you for your April 8, 2021, email to my colleagues and I detailing the value of the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) office to Spirit River and surrounding area, and stating the Village of Rycroft's support for the Municipal District of Spirit River's generous offer of rent-free office space.

I am pleased to inform you that AFSC has accepted the offer to use the Municipal District office space on an itinerant basis, which will allow AFSC to maintain a direct presence within the community of Spirit River. Going forward, an AFSC team member will hold by-appointment office hours one day per month in Spirit River. During peak times—which include perennial sales season in February, crop insurance election season in April, land report season in June, and wildlife and hail claims seasons in August—an AFSC team member will hold by-appointment office hours two days per month. I appreciate the flexibility and collaborative partnership demonstrated by AFSC, as they have pivoted to make this unique situation possible.

The decision to amalgamate and relocate five one-person AFSC branch offices was not made lightly. In addition to client consultations, AFSC reviewed in-branch foot traffic, client use of AFSC's online digital platform, branch location, and proximity to other neighbouring branch offices. Other considerations included employee safety and the range of services available to clients in these smaller offices.

By amalgamating branches in Spirit River, High Prairie, Rimbey, Smoky Lake, and High River with larger, neighbouring branches, AFSC can offer increased support for its clients, including a full range of risk management and lending products for producers. The move also ensures staff from one-person branches can work more closely and collaboratively with their colleagues to offer the best client experience. Additionally, client inspections will not be affected by the amalgamations, as the distribution of claims to AFSC adjusters is automated and adjusters do not need to visit an office to manage claims.

AFSC clients throughout the province can do business at any branch of their choosing, and going forward, AFSC will continue working with all clients and staff members affected by these amalgamations to ensure a smooth transition and excellent client service. Ultimately, AFSC remains a committed partner in Alberta agriculture, and will ensure client needs are met.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

Honourable Devin Dreeshen  
Minister, Agriculture and Forestry