

2025-2026

Annual Report

Office of Women
and Gender Equality





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister of Women and Gender Equality, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Office of Women and Gender Equality for the period April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. This Report has been prepared in accordance with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's **Transparency and Accountability Act** provisions. The Office of Women and Gender Equality is a Category 2 Provincial Government entity, and I am accountable for the results reported in this document.

Advancing the social, economic, cultural, and legal status of women and gender-diverse people remains a priority. Collaboration with community partners, government departments and agencies, and Indigenous governments and organizations is integral to ensuring voices and contributions are respected and valued.

A key highlight of 2025-26 was the April 3, 2025, celebration marking the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote and hold public office in Newfoundland and Labrador. The celebration recognized women who served as Lieutenant Governor, in the House of Assembly, House of Commons, and Senate, as well as the Chief Justice of Newfoundland and Labrador, and public servants across the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

Another highlight was the presentation of an all-party statement from Newfoundland and Labrador to the Senate of Canada and the Federal Government, supporting Bill S-242 An Act respecting national action for the prevention of intimate partner violence (Short title: Georgina's Law), calling for coordinated national action to prevent intimate partner violence and strengthen prevention and protection efforts across jurisdictions. Georgina McGrath of Branch, Newfoundland and Labrador, is a survivor and advocate for ending intimate partner violence, and the women behind this Bill.

In addition, by consistently applying Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets, and by taking action to address gender-based violence throughout the province, I am confident we can continue to improve the lives and opportunities of women and gender-diverse people.

Sincerely,

Hon. Lela Evans
Minister of Women and Gender Equality

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Departmental Overview

Organizational Structure

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is the central agency within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that supports the development of policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets to advance the social, economic, cultural, and legal status of women and gender-diverse people in the province.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is housed within Executive Council, and staff report to the Minister of Women and Gender Equality. The Office conducts research and analysis to inform provincial policies, programs, services, and budgets, promoting gender equality in legislation and decision-making.

Please refer to the Office of Women and Gender Equality's 2023-26 Business Plan for detailed information about the Office's mandate, lines of business, programs and services.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is located in St. John's, Newfoundland, and Labrador on the fourth floor of the Confederation Building, West Block. Further information about the Office can be found at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/wge/office/>.

Staff and Budget

In 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality had a core staff complement of 15 positions seven (7) permanent, five (5) temporary positions, and three (3) contractual positions. For 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality had a total budget of \$9,434,300, inclusive of the Minister's Office and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Minister's Office	3	\$ 266,500
Office of Women and Gender Equality	15	\$ 8,640,900
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women	4	\$ 456,200

Vision

The vision of the Office of Women and Gender Equality is to advance true social, legal, cultural and economic equality of women, girls and gender-diverse people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mandate

The Office of Women and Gender Equality supports an 'all of government' approach to the application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus to programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets.

The Office supports the work of community partners to achieve a common goal - advancing the social, economic, cultural, and legal status of women, girls and gender-diverse people in our province. The Office undertakes initiatives to encourage, promote, support and retain women and gender-diverse people in leadership roles, including in running for elected office.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality collaborates with women's equity-seeking organizations, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and Indigenous governments and organizations to ensure Newfoundland and Labrador is a safe, accessible and inclusive place for all.

Within this mandate, the Office of Women and Gender Equality is responsible for the **Status of Women Advisory Council Act**.

Lines of Business

Staff in the Office of Women and Gender Equality are Responsible for:

Policy Analysis and Advisory Services

The Office of Women and Gender Equality applies gender-based analysis plus to government policy, legislation, budgets, programs and services. The Office applies gender-based analysis plus to government policy and provides advice on how women and gender-diverse people are affected, on needs and gaps, and advises on how gender equity can be achieved. The Office delivers gender-based analysis plus training to the public service, in partnership with the Centre for Learning and Development. Further, the Office participates in various working groups and committees to support the inclusion of gender-based analysis plus principles into policy efforts across government.

Information Collection and Communication Services

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is responsible for collecting policy relevant information from a variety of sources, to provide evidence-based policy advice and report annually on the status of women and gender-diverse people. To meet this responsibility, the Office collects statistics and conducts research to assess the status of women and gender-diverse people, as well as to identify systemic inequities and information gaps. As part of the information collection process, the Office consults regularly with women and equality-seeking organizations to identify ongoing and emerging issues of special concern as well as potential solutions. Beyond providing policy advice to government departments, the Office communicates information on the status of women, girls and gender-diverse people through publications, events and initiatives.

Gender-Based Violence Prevention

The Office of Women and Gender Equality administers grants to 10 regional violence prevention organizations, which include: Burin Peninsula Voice Against Violence, Communities Against Violence, Corner Brook Violence Prevention, Violence Prevention Gander and Area, Violence Prevention Avalon East, Violence Prevention East, Violence Prevention Northern Peninsula, Violence Prevention Southwest, Violence Prevention

Labrador, Violence Prevention South and Central; coordinates the administration of National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence funding; conducts research; coordinates departmental projects; facilitates meetings of violence prevention committees; and coordinates public awareness on violence prevention.

Grant Programming

The Office of Women and Gender Equality provides non-repayable grants to organizations for activities and initiatives that seek to advance the status of women, girls and gender-diverse people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Working Within Government

Many government departments and agencies share responsibility for issues of special concern to women and gender-diverse people. The Office of Women and Gender Equality works with all departments and agencies to identify and analyze the issues and to help develop policies, programs, and legislation that advance the status of women and gender-diverse people.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality acts as a catalyst within government, heightening awareness and initiating changes where needed. Representatives from the Office sit on cross-departmental committees such as the Atlantic Domestic Homicide Review Network, Equity and Resilience Advisory Council, Accessibility Oversight Committee and the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Committee with the Public Service Commission.

Acting as Federal-Provincial Liaison

The Office of Women and Gender Equality maintains a close working relationship with our Federal, Provincial and Territorial counterparts. Through ongoing participation in intergovernmental working groups, including those overseen by Women and Gender Equality Canada and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ Secretariat, the Office engages on a broad range of issues, including women's economic participation and prosperity, leadership and democratic participation, gender-based violence and access to justice, Gender-Based Analysis Plus,

intergovernmental strategic planning, and missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

Working with the Community

The Office of Women and Gender Equality consults with women's groups and equity-seeking organizations as well as individuals. The Office has an extensive list of partners throughout the province. Women, gender-diverse people and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are regularly consulted so we can identify the issues of concern and ensure they have a say in government strategies designed to enhance their economic and social status.

Community groups, businesses and labour organizations are consulted to ensure that their concerns are considered at every level of decision-making.

Highlights and Partnerships

Highlights

100th Anniversary of Women Achieving the Right to Vote and Hold Public Office

On April 3, 2025, the Office of Women and Gender Equality launched a year-long celebration to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women achieving the right to vote and hold public office in Newfoundland and Labrador. The event was held in the Confederation Building's East Block, and attended by Her Honour, the Honourable Joan Marie Aylward, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador. The celebration recognized women who have served in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the 40 women who have served in the House of Assembly, those who have served in the House of Commons and the Senate, as well as the Chief Justice of Newfoundland and Labrador. The event also recognized public servants in the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government.

At the heart of this celebration was the creation of a one-time, \$100,000 scholarship program designed to support the leadership development and/or post-secondary goals of young women in grades 10-12 throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The Office of

Women and Gender Equality received 284 applications for the program, which was an extraordinary response that reflects the drive, ambition, and leadership of young women eager to share their achievements, leadership and community involvement. From the applications, 100 young women were selected, with each being awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

On March 20, 2026, the Honourable Lela Evans, Minister of Women and Gender Equality was joined by Her Honour, the Honourable Joan Marie Aylward, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Honourable Tony Wakeham, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Honourable Helen Conway Ottenheimer, Minister of Justice and Public Safety, for a recognition event in St. John's, where the scholarships were presented.

Violence Prevention Progress

In 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality made notable strides towards violence prevention. On November 25, 2025, the Honourable Tony Wakeham, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Honourable Helen Conway Ottenheimer, then Minister of Women and Gender Equality, joined families and friends of victims of gender-based violence to mark the beginning of the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, also known as the Purple Ribbon Campaign, for a flag-raising and proclamation-signing event.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality makes significant investments to violence prevention efforts through core funding to women centres, violence prevention organizations and other equity seeking organizations. This work is fundamental to supporting women and gender-diverse people with the proper resources to meet their needs including counselling, support services and critical exit planning to find safety and care. The National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence has been pivotal in enhancing services and adding new tools and resources to advancing this work.

In total (including both provincial and federal National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence funding), in 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality dispersed over

\$7 million for gender-based violence prevention initiatives. This funding included approximately \$1 million for Indigenous-led initiatives, such as the Indigenous Violence Prevention Grant Program.

National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence

The Office of Women and Gender Equality continued the ongoing implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence. Since the signing of this federal-provincial contribution agreement in December 2023, the Office of Women and Gender Equality has taken a community-based approach to this agreement and has had awarded funding to 63 partners. Over the past three years, most funding has gone directly to community partners, with the goal of expanding capacity and programming, by supporting both established partners and new groups who are not previously engaged.

In 2025-26, funding from the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence supported initiatives such as:

- Funding women's centres throughout the province to provide Right Here, Right Now counselling and peer support.
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters Eastern Newfoundland PRISM Mentoring Program;
- THRIVE's violence prevention initiatives with the Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth.
- First Light's initiative with the Provincial Indigenous Women's Steering Committee to mobilize research, policy advice and ensure fully informed decision-making.
- Targeted violence prevention projects with Quadrangle NL for underserved populations, such as 2SLGBTQIA+ and youth.
- Projects under the Community Violence Prevention Grant Program that supported projects throughout the province including:
 - Trans Support NL for 'From Surviving to Thriving: Addressing GBV Through Affirming Mental Health & Peer Support' program;
 - Canadian Council of Muslim Women (Atlantic Chapter) for intersectional gender-based violence prevention for Muslim women in St. John's;
 - John Howard Society of Newfoundland and Labrador for violence prevention programming with the Youth Corrections Centre; and,

- Labrador Friendship Centre for a preventative men's wellness project.

As the province enters the final year of the initial four-year contribution agreement, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will be working with Federal, Provincial and Territorial partners to move forward on the next phase of gender-based violence prevention.

Georgina's Law

The Office of Women and Gender Equality was pleased to announce the development of a joint, all-party statement in support of Bill S-242 – **An Act Respecting National Action for the Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence** (known by its short title of Georgina's Law). This legislation calls for coordinated national action to address intimate partner violence, ensuring that efforts across jurisdictions are consistent and focused on prevention and protection.

Georgina's Law is named after Georgina McGrath of Branch, Newfoundland and Labrador, a survivor of intimate partner violence, whose advocacy has helped drive meaningful change in Newfoundland and Labrador and across Canada. Her collaboration with Newfoundland and Labrador Senator Fabian Manning has been instrumental in advancing the legislation at the national level, showcasing the leadership and impact of voices from this province.

Menstrual Equity Program

On January 27, 2025, the Office of Women and Gender Equality announced an agreement between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Shoppers Drug Mart for a donation of 4.7 million menstrual products to advance menstrual equity in the province. Menstrual equity is a global movement focused on ensuring all those who menstruate have access to safe facilities, affordable products, and the knowledge required to manage their periods with dignity.

In 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality collaborated with NL Health Services and the Community Food Sharing Association on the first phase of distributing these products to schools and 25 non-profit organizations. Newfoundland and Labrador

is the first jurisdiction in the country to include post-secondary institutions, women's centres and equity-seeking organizations, transition houses, friendship centres, emergency shelters, and food banks, as part of the distribution agreement with Shopper's Drug Mart. Over the course of the agreement (2025-27), this initiative will see approximately \$1.9 million in menstrual products distributed throughout the province.

Partnerships

The Office of Women and Gender Equality actively partners with women's organizations and equity-seeking groups, while regularly consulting with women and gender-diverse people from all backgrounds to better understand the issues that matter most to them. This approach supports the development of programs and policies to improve economic and social well-being for women and gender-diverse people.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality works with a broad network of community and Indigenous partners throughout the province, to advance the status of women and gender-diverse people. In 2025-26, the Office provided \$6.765 million, including funding from the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence funding to Indigenous partners, community organizations, and municipalities throughout the province. Beyond provincial partnerships, the Office also collaborates with Federal, Provincial, and Territorial partners, including through the Forum of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, and the Indigenous Federal, -Provincial, and Territorial Working Group on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, on shared initiatives to advance gender equality and address violence both in Newfoundland and Labrador and across the country.

Report on Performance

The 2025-26 fiscal year marks the third and final year of the Office of Women and Gender Equality's 2023-26 Business Plan. In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, the Plan identifies strategic issues, three-year goals, and annual objectives for each of the three years.

Issue 1 – Economic and Social Well-Being

Women and gender-diverse people continue to face systemic barriers to accessing key resources and opportunities in all economic and social spheres. The Office of Women and Gender Equality works collaboratively with government and community partners to address inequity and foster economic and social well-being for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by:

- Ensuring a Gender-Based Analysis Plus lens is applied consistently throughout the policy, program, services, and legislation development process;
- Development and implementation of Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plans for largescale resource development projects and Women's Employment Plans for medium-size commercial developments; and,
- Supporting the development of legislation and drafting regulations in relation to pay equity and pay transparency.

Promoting diversity and inclusion aligns with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's strategic direction of making this province a welcoming destination of choice to live, work and play.

Goal

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have strengthened an 'all of government' approach to address systemic barriers faced by women and gender-diverse people that impact economic and social well-being.

Indicators:

- Support the development of programs and policies that promote social and economic well-being.
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to highlight women and gender-diverse leaders in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly those working to advance social and economic well-being of the people of the province.

2025-26 Objective

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have worked with colleagues across government to support equitable access to programs and services that enhance social and economic well-being.

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
Supported the development of programs, policies, projects, and initiatives to promote social and economic well-being.	The Office of Women and Gender Equality provided feedback and recommendations through several avenues to support various programs and policies related to economic and social well-being of residents, particularly women, gender-diverse people and persons with diverse demographics such as ability, race, geography, status, culture, language, religions, age and income. Support included the review of over 290 Cabinet submissions, 99 budget submissions, 104 annual reports, and 51 environmental assessments. Launched and began distribution of the Menstrual Equity program across K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions and more than 26 community partners.
Operationalized targeted funding through Budget 2025 to support community-based organizations to advance social, health, economic, cultural well-being of vulnerable groups, including women, girls, Indigenous women, youth, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, etc.	The Office operationalized targeted funding through Budget 2025 into various initiatives to advance the social, economic and cultural status of women and gender-diverse people. This included \$3.5 million for initiatives under the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, \$980,000 to regional Status of Women Councils/Women's Centres, and \$879,100 to community violence prevention groups. More than \$828,000 in funding was provided for 19 projects through the Community Violence Prevention Grants Program, including programs and projects building community support networks at regional and municipal levels, supporting survivors, their families, and their communities, engaging men and boys in gender-based violence prevention, ending the normalization of violence within communities, addressing the stigma against gender-based

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
	violence and promoting the healing and well-being of those impacted by gender-based violence.
Collaborated with Federal/Provincial and Territorial partners to advance issues related to the status of women and gender equality in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Staff from the Office participated in the 43rd Annual Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, from July 9-10, 2025. The work of the Forum is advanced through five priority pillars: • economic participation and prosperity; • education and skills development; • leadership and democratic participation; • gender based violence and access to justice; and • poverty reduction, health, and well-being. The meeting also discussed identifying best practices and strategies to support economic equality for women, the participation and retention of women in high-growth and high-paying sectors and ensuring that women have equal opportunities in Canada's evolving economy. Work on Federal, Provincial, and Territorial task teams on Gender-Based Violence and Access to Justice, Gender-Based Analysis Plus, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls working group.
Worked with government departments, community and Indigenous partners to address women and gender-diverse economic and social well-being and leadership.	The Office of Women and Gender Equality advances systemic equity and community inclusion through sustained collaboration with provincial departments and Indigenous partners. This includes working alongside the Centre for Learning and Development on Gender-Based Analysis Plus training, as well as partnering with the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network to support culturally responsive programming. A key example of this commitment to advance women's leadership and public participation is the 100th Anniversary of Women Achieving the Right to Vote and Hold Public Office Scholarship Program. To support the leadership,

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
	development and post-secondary goals of young women in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Office awarded 100, one-time scholarships, each valued at \$1,000, to outstanding students in grades 10-12. By recognizing their academic achievements, leadership qualities, and community contributions, the program directly supported the next generation of women leaders across the province. Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador hosted their annual Symposium in May 2025, and their annual conference, trade show, and annual general meeting in November 2025, both of which included dedicated Women and Gender Equity networking events sponsored by the Office. These sessions bring together women and gender-diverse people working in the municipal sector to connect, share experiences, and support one another while advancing inclusive leadership within municipalities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Empowering Indigenous Women for Stronger Communities has a mission to financially, culturally, and emotionally empower Indigenous women in the province. This year, they ran a peer support program by bringing together 30 trained facilitators for a multi-day professional development gathering funded through the Indigenous Violence Prevention Grants.
Advanced the Menstrual Equity program province wide.	The Office of Women and Gender Equality entered into an agreement with Shoppers Drug Mart to allocate a donation of 4.7 million menstrual products over the course of three years starting in 2024-2025. This initiative is meant to advance menstrual equity in the province. The initiative has distributed free menstrual products to schools, post-secondary institutions, women's centres and equity-seeking organizations, transition houses, friendship centres, emergency shelters, and food banks throughout the province.

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
Collaborated with stakeholders to advance work on pay equity and pay transparency.	With the support of the Office of Women and Gender Equality, the Department of Government Services led consultations on pay transparency reporting for over 10 employer organizations. The consultations were intended to solicit feedback on drafting regulations for pay transparency reporting.
Advanced recommendations of the “Hear Our Voices” Provincial Indigenous Women’s Reconciliation Council, to promote the social, economic, health, legal and cultural wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, particularly, women, girls, seniors, persons with disabilities, children, youth, and 2SLGBTQIA+ persons.	The Deputy Minister of the Office of Women and Gender Equality is one of the co-chairs of the Reconciliation Council since it was first established. The Office participates in all meetings of the Provincial Indigenous Women’s Reconciliation Council. The Council held three meetings and one discussion in 2025-26, July 23, October 28, January 15-16 and March 24-25, 2026. The purpose of these meetings is to advance the 196 recommendations outlined in the ‘Hear Our Voices’ report. The Reconciliation Council meeting held on March 24 and 25, 2026 focused on why Indigenous people are overrepresented in the justice system, and how this is linked to intergenerational trauma, mental health challenges, addictions and a lack of access to culturally appropriate supports. Meetings in 2025-26 included conversations on the social, economic and cultural impacts of Churchill Falls development on Indigenous communities, cultural identity, navigating the health care system, access to economic supports, energy and food security. There were also discussions on housing insecurity and homelessness, which focused on Indigenous led housing initiatives, drawing an alignment with housing as a critical determinant of health and well-being for Indigenous people.
Enhanced access to and use of official data for more tailored socio-economic statistical reporting to aid policies, decisions, programs and initiatives towards the wellbeing of women, 2SLGBTQIA+ people and all other marginalized groups.	The Office of Women and Gender Equality has enhanced its access to data through a partnership with Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency to deliver Community Accounts training. Community Accounts provides users with a single comprehensive source of community, regional, and provincial data. It allows users to generate key social and

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
	economic indicators organized by geography and topic. This effort also includes the acquisition of new data from Statistics Canada funded under the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence. These steps have strengthened access to, and more tailored use of statistical data on the economic and social well-being of women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people throughout the province, and where available, at the national and international levels.
Collaborated with internal and external stakeholders to highlight women and gender-diverse leaders in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly those working to advance social and economic well-being of the people of the province.	The Office worked with key partners to advance social and economic well-being of women and gender-diverse people in the province. The Office collaborated with the Public Procurement Agency to review the new Social Procurement Guide under the Procurement Strategy. The Guide requires departments and public bodies to incorporate sustainability measures in environmental, social, economic procurement and trade agreement obligations, aiming to support social enterprises and under-represented groups. The Office worked with the Interdepartmental Working Group on Trade with the Trade Policy Division to advance the progress of work of various internal and external trade agreements. This included the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement under Canadian Free Trade Agreement and the Canada-Mercosur and Canada-Thailand free trade agreements as well as the Canada-India and Canada-United Arab Emirates economic partnerships. The Office provided statistics on gender and leadership gaps in the province to support Minister's statements in the House of Assembly regarding work on pay equity, pay transparency and to advance women's social and economic well-being. The Office held the 100th Year Anniversary celebration in honour of the remarkable women from our province, including those who have

Indicators	Results (2025-26)
	served in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the forty women who have served in the House of Assembly, those from this province who have served in the House of Commons and the Senate, as well as the Chief Justice of Newfoundland and Labrador. The event also recognized public servants in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. The Office noted that three more women were elected as Members of the House of Assembly during the October 2025 provincial election. The Office participated in the Association for New Canadians' public event on human trafficking, with focus on socio-economic and cultural consequences on victims and at the individual, local and regional levels.

Issue 2 – Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive, deadly and deeply rooted human rights violations of our time. Gender-based violence is rooted in gender inequality and is further intensified by systemic inequalities, such as sexism, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, colonialism, racism, ableism, ageism, classism, poverty, and a collective history of trauma. Gender-based violence can have long lasting negative health, social, and economic consequences, often leading to intergenerational cycles of violence and abuse.

Gender-based violence disproportionately affects women and girls. Certain intersectional populations also experience high levels of violence or are underserved when experiencing this type of violence, such as Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals; people with disabilities; older persons; and women living in northern, rural, and remote communities. Implementing long-term systemic solutions to address the varying types of inequality that exist within our society is essential to creating an environment where women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals live free from the threat of violence and have an opportunity to reach their full potential.

The National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence has helped guide work and advance collective efforts to prevent gender-based violence across the country. This strategic framework for action supports a common vision, goals, and pillars, within and across jurisdictions, to support victims, survivors and their families. Preventing and addressing gender-based violence in Newfoundland and Labrador, and across Canada, requires a coordinated approach, with federal, provincial, and territorial governments working in close partnership with survivors, Indigenous partners, direct service providers, experts, advocates, municipalities, the private sector, and researchers.

Goal

By March 31, 2026, in collaboration with Federal Government counterparts, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have worked with community partners and Provincial Government departments and agencies to implement an intersectional, research-based, culturally sensitive approach to the prevention of gender-based violence and corresponding results framework.

Indicators:

- Work with Federal/Provincial and Territorial stakeholders to provide input on the next phase of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.
- Provide support to community and departmental partners to address forms of gender-based violence throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

2025-26 Objective

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have evaluated the impact of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence and identified best practices to inform provincial gender-based violence prevention efforts moving forward.

Indicators	Result
Responded to gender-based violence issues and needs on a regional and provincial level	The Office of Women and Gender Equality targeted funding via Budget 2025 to scale community-based violence prevention efforts. This work included allocating \$3.5 million to initiatives under the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, \$980,000 million directly to regional Status of Women Councils and Women's Centres, and \$879,100 to community violence prevention groups. Ten regional Violence Prevention organizations are located throughout the province for provision of violence prevention services in information and referral, public education and outreach, community leadership, coordination and accountability. The Office has disbursed \$6.8 million to community and Indigenous partners to expand wrap-around supports and counselling services, encourage primary prevention approaches, and strengthen coordination and social infrastructure, ensuring individuals and communities have the support they need for their well-being and to foster impactful change.
Participated in various Federal, Provincial, and Territorial task teams including gender-based violence and access to justice; Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+; and Human Trafficking.	The Office participated in the 43rd annual meeting of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial (FPT) Ministers responsible for the Status of Women on July 9 and 10, 2025 in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Achievements were highlighted from the first Annual Progress Report on the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, marking a united commitment to support and respond to the needs of victims, survivors, their families, and the organizations that serve them. The importance of increasing participation and retention of women in high-growth and high-paying sectors was discussed to ensure there are equal opportunities in Canada's evolving economy. The FPT meeting was preceded by a meeting with Indigenous leaders and representatives, which focused on common priorities, including addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, combatting human trafficking, and promoting economic empowerment.

Indicators	Result
	The fourth National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Federal, Provincial, and Territorial (IFPT) Meeting was held in hybrid format on February 11 and 12, 2026, bringing together over 145 participants in-person in Ottawa and 188 in a virtual capacity. The Minister of Women and Gender Equality spoke to how important this work is and the work happening with the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council. Discussions focused on key priority areas intended to meaningfully contribute to the advancement of the Calls for Justice and ending the violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.
Worked with the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council to address recommendations outlined in the report, "Hear Our Voices: MMIWG Policy Recommendations of the First Women of Newfoundland and Labrador".	The Office of Women and Gender Equality prioritizes the safety and well-being of Indigenous communities by actively responding to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice. The Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council, which the Office co-chairs, plays a pivotal role in acknowledging the historical injustices experienced by Indigenous communities in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Canada. By working in partnership with Indigenous women, their governments, and organizations, and listening to their concerns, the Office is making positive strides together to prevent violence. This work requires sustained investment in Indigenous-led programming that addresses the root causes of gender-based violence and supports culturally responsive justice initiatives. Gladue reports and aftercare services provide crucial support to Indigenous individuals navigating the justice system and aid in the reintegration and address systemic factors that contribute to legal issues. Gladue aftercare provides essential, culturally relevant support and community reintegration services for Indigenous individuals navigating the justice system, recognizing the unique systemic barriers they face.

Indicators	Result
	To support Gladue report writing services, that are within the mandate of the Department of Justice and Public Safety, the Office of Women and Gender Equality provided \$101,700 to Miawpukek First Nation and \$100,000 to Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network for Gladue aftercare services. By supporting Gladue report writing and aftercare services, the province addresses the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system and furthers commitments under Pillar 3 (A More Responsive Justice System) of the National Action Plan to end Gender-Based Violence (GBV-NAP). The Office of Women and Gender Equality provides annual financial supports for the coordination of the annual Provincial Indigenous Women's Gathering. Additionally, the Office provides \$133,917 in annual core operational funding to the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network (NAWN). The Office provided \$600,400 in 2025-26 under the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence to Indigenous Governments and Organizations to support grassroots opportunities to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.
Collaborated with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community to ensure that the province is a safe, inclusive and accessible place for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.	Quadrangle NL received \$155,000 for a provincial resource centre and \$75,000 for 2SLGBTQIA+ outreach. Trans Support NL received \$41,000 towards the 'From Surviving to Thriving' program, which provides gender-affirming counselling, support groups, and service provider training. The Office works in partnership with Quadrangle NL and Trans Support NL to broker relationships with other departments, including the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's work on the Inclusive and Caring Schools policy and the Department of Health and Community Services' Inclusive Standard of Care for Mental Health and Addictions Professionals, and policy issues related to gender-affirming care and transition-related surgery coverage.

Issue 3 – Gender-Based Analysis Plus

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is an analytical tool often used with the intention of advancing gender equality. The ‘plus’ in the name highlights that Gender-Based Analysis goes beyond gender and includes the examination of a range of factors such as age, education, race, language, disability status, geography, culture, religion and income. Gender-Based Analysis Plus is used to assess the potential impacts of programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets on diverse groups of citizens, considering gender and other intersecting identity factors. Gender-Based Analysis Plus helps recognize and respond to the different situations and needs of citizens.

The goal of Gender-Based Analysis Plus is to ensure that gender and other diversity characteristics are properly considered in all government programs and policies that affect all of us. It can also be used to effectively gather and analyze data to better understand the root causes of circumstances and problems in our province. Understanding root causes for specific demographics allows for the efficient use of limited resources to achieve a greater result. Application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus early in the program, service, policy, legislation, and budget development process, greatly increases options and outcomes, prevents or reduces societal inequalities, leads to better informed government decision-making and potential cost saving measures.

Government is committed to ‘all of government’ approach to Gender-Based Analysis Plus.

Goal

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have strengthened the capacity of departments and agencies to fully understand, apply, and integrate Gender-Based Analysis Plus into all departmental accountability mechanisms.

Indicators:

- Improve tools and processes for public service employees to be better able to conduct GBA+ on programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets.
- Work with Public Service Commission on the provision of GBA+ training with the view to improving processes and outcomes.

2025-26 Objective

By March 31, 2026, through enriched Gender-Based Analysis Plus training of public service employees, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have supported government departments and agencies to strengthen their intersectional scope of Gender-Based Analysis Plus in programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets to better meet the diverse needs of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in the province.

Indicators	Results	Explanation of Variance
Offered additional Gender-based Analysis Plus training to government departments and agencies	The Office of Women and Gender Equality build capacity across the Public Service by advancing inclusive and equitable policy development. Central to this mandate is the promotion of Gender-Based Analysis Plus, a critical analytical framework that equips government employees with the tools to assess how diverse groups of people experience policies, programs, and initiatives. To deliver this education, the Office of Women and Gender Equality facilitate the 'Introduction to Gender-Based Analysis Plus' training course, hosted internally on the PSAccess learning platform. During 2025-26, 150 people accessed and completed this training. By driving participation in this course, the Office ensures that equity remains a central focus in the province's daily operations and strategic planning.	Since 2022, the Office of Women and Gender Equality has offered twice monthly training sessions on Gender-Based Analysis Plus, in collaboration with the Centre for Learning and Development and PSAccess. Each training session can accommodate 25 people. Training in the 2025-26 was suspended temporarily to allow the Office of Women and Gender Equality and the Centre for Learning and Development to devote time and resources to developing a new, online, self-directed training and reference tool on Gender-Based Analysis Plus. This new training is expected to be released during the 2026-27 fiscal year.

Indicators	Results	Explanation of Variance
	Additionally, in 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality provided in-person training sessions to government agencies, boards, and commissions, upon request.	
Enhanced Gender-Based Analysis Plus training opportunities through in-person, virtual, and online training options.	In collaboration with the Centre for Learning and Development, the Office developed comprehensive content for a new Gender-Based Analysis Plus e-learning module. The Office is currently finalizing this module for official approval and deployment across the public service. This training initiative directly advances the commitment to use gender-based analysis. The Office implemented key changes to its website. The revamped site now features an intuitive, accessible design that streamlines public and employee access to GBA+ tools, policy guidelines, and community resources. By pairing the upcoming e-learning rollout with an upgraded digital platform, the Office actively equips both decision-makers and the public with the resources necessary to effectuate systemic equity.	
Broadened the awareness, understanding, and intersectional application of Gender-based Analysis Plus among all levels of	Embedding equity into the core of government decision-making requires evaluation of proposed policies and financial	

Indicators	Results	Explanation of Variance
public service employees to ensure the needs of diverse populations in Newfoundland and Labrador are met	plans. During 2025-26, the Office of Women and Gender Equality reviewed government documents to ensure departments apply a comprehensive Gender-Based Analysis Plus lens. The Office provided strategic insight, hands-on assistance, and tailored recommendations to help departments strengthen their analysis. Through this collaborative process, the Office reviewed 291 Cabinet Submissions, 99 budget submissions, and 104 Annual Reports. This process aims to ensure that new provincial initiatives, investments, and public accountability measures consistently serve all communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.	

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is well-positioned to build on the progress of the 2025-26 fiscal year. The final phase of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence presents an opportunity to consolidate lessons learned, address gaps in service delivery, and advocate for sustained federal investment in provincial violence prevention programming. The Office of Women and Gender Equality possess the skills to apply an intersectional lens as regulatory frameworks are finalized, enabling it to meaningfully advance social and economic outcomes for equity seeking groups.

Going forward, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will leverage the development and launch of a new Gender-Based Analysis Plus e-learning module to deepen its impact across government and community. The new e-learning module will expand the reach of Gender-Based Analysis Plus training to public servants at all levels, embedding equity considerations more consistently into government decision-making.

The Office will also be developing a Gender-Based Analysis Plus e-tool that will be hosted on the main website and available to the public.

The strong public engagement generated by the 100th Anniversary of Women Achieving the Right to Vote and Hold Public Office demonstrates the appetite across the province for meaningful recognition of women's contributions in society. The Office will carry this momentum forward to continue inspiring the next generation of women and gender-diverse leaders, strengthen community partnerships, and advance a more equitable Newfoundland and Labrador.

Challenges

The Office of Women and Gender Equality continues to operate in a complex and evolving policy environment. Persistent barriers to sustained equity - including gender wage gaps, underrepresentation of women in leadership, and disproportionate rates of gender-based violence - require long-term investment strategies and coordination across government. Reaching women, girls, and gender-diverse people in rural, remote, and Indigenous

communities remains an ongoing challenge. Geographic barriers limit local service infrastructure, and the intersecting impacts of poverty, racism, ability, mental health and addiction mean that the populations most affected by inequality are often the hardest to reach. The Office of Women and Gender Equality will continue to prioritize culturally responsive, community-led approaches that work with Indigenous governments and organizations to ensure programming reflects the realities of those it serves.

Sourcing timely, localized, and intersectional data continues to present a challenge in delivering evidence-based policy analysis. Effectively applying a Gender-Based Analysis Plus lens requires data that goes beyond gender to capture the compounding effects of race, ability, age, geography, and other identity factors - information that is often unavailable, incomplete, or not disaggregated at the provincial or community level in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Office will continue to build data partnerships to strengthen its analytical capacity and better reflect the diverse realities of women, girls, and gender-diverse people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Financial Information

Executive Council - Women and Gender Equality	Original (\$) 2025-26	Actuals (\$) 2025-26
Minister's Office		
Salaries	219,800	236,308
Transportation and Communications	42,800	12,471
Supplies	2,400	135
Purchased Services	1,000	-
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	500	323
Total: Minister's Office	266,500	249,237
Office of Women and Gender Equality		
Salaries	1,428,500	1,166,332
Employee Benefits	-	60
Transportation and Communications	62,700	27,503
Supplies	4,400	15,316
Professional Services	345,000	221,291
Purchased Services	560,000	26,068
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	2,500	9,982
Grants and Subsidies	6,308,500	6,756,690
Revenue	(3,827,000)	(3,809,500)
Total: The Office of Women and Gender Equality	4,884,600	4,413,742
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women		
Grants and Subsidies	456,200	456,200
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women	456,200	456,200
TOTAL: WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY	5,607,300	5,119,179