

2023-2026

# BUSINESS PLAN

**Public Service Commission**



## Message from the Chair and Chief Executive Officer

As the Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Public Service Commission (PSC), I am pleased to present the 2023-26 Business Plan. In accordance with government's **Transparency and Accountability Act**, this plan was prepared under my direction and as such, I am accountable for its preparation and for the achievement of the goals and objectives contained therein.

This Business Plan identifies the specific goals and objectives to be accomplished during the 2023-26 planning period. Goals and objectives have been prepared in consideration of the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (attached as Annex A), and in accordance with the mandate of the PSC.

The PSC is committed to increasing promotion of PSC programs and services and enhancing leadership capacity. The public service is evolving, and the essential programs and services that we offer must evolve as well. It is fundamental that our programs and services remain modern, and employees are aware of what is available to them. The PSC will also focus on building upon current knowledge, skill sets, and level of expertise so that employees are well equipped to fulfil their roles ensuring not only continued success in our program and service delivery, but in our public service.

In 2024, the PSC will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> year of operation. I am pleased to use the occasion to acknowledge the varied, and successful endeavours and achievements of the organization. This milestone is the result of the committed, dedicated and skilled employees who have served the commission and in turn, public service employees and the people of the province. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, and I look forward to our continued success in achieving the goals and objectives of this plan.

Sincerely,



George Joyce, Chair and Chief Executive Officer



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## Overview

The PSC is one of the key accountability entities within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The principal statutory role of the PSC is to act as an arm's length agency tasked with the protection of merit in public service hiring and in appointments to agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs), ensuring the existence of a professional, non-partisan public service including ABCs.

The PSC is also responsible for the Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Programs; employee safety and wellness programs and initiatives; administration of classification appeals; corporate-wide learning, development and training; leading and supporting the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee; and, administering the Harassment-Free Workplace Program for public service employees.

The integrity and impartiality of these programs is enhanced by the neutral and independent nature and reputation of the PSC. For more information, please visit [www.psc.gov.nl.ca/psc](http://www.psc.gov.nl.ca/psc).

## Mandate

The mandate of the PSC is provided by its governing legislation, the **Public Service Commission Act** (PSC Act). The core mandate of the PSC is the protection of the merit principle in recruitment within the public sector. The PSC is also tasked with facilitating the application of the merit principle in the recommendation of board members and certain executive positions to various agencies, boards and commissions scheduled to the PSC Act and the **Independent Appointments Commission Act**. Merit is a rule of conduct that provides for the recommendation of candidates for a position on the basis of the best demonstration of bona fide levels of required qualifications, knowledge, abilities and personal suitability.

## Staff and Budget

The PSC includes Commissioners appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

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The Lieutenant Governor in Council designates one Commissioner as Chair. The Chair is the Chief Executive Officer of the PSC and has Deputy Minister status. The Chair directs and supervises the administrative and technical activities of the PSC.

The 2023-24 budget allocation for the PSC is \$10,670,100. The following table provides additional information related to the budget and staff complement of each division.

<b>Division</b>	<b># of Employees</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Executive and Corporate Services	11	\$1,418,500
Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Division	8	\$1,618,300
Strategic Staffing Division	29	\$2,007,900
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities (Opening Doors Program)</li> </ul>		\$3,043,200
Centre for Learning and Development	13	\$1,904,000
Employee Safety and Wellness Division	8	\$678,200

The PSC’s Executive and Corporate Services, Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Division, and the Employee Safety and Wellness Division are located at Metro Place, 261 Kenmount Road, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Strategic Staffing Division is located at the Howley Building, 87 Higgins Line, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Centre for Learning and Development is located at Confederation Building, 100 Prince Philip Drive, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. All regions of the province are served from these locations.

## Lines of Business

### Recruitment Services

Recruitment within the core public service is conducted in accordance with the Act for the core public service and through delegated staffing authority with those agencies scheduled to the Act. The PSC establishes staffing policy, and the standards and methods by which employment opportunities are advertised and candidates are assessed, and recommended for employment. The commission is also accountable for the oversight of merit-based appointments and promotions within those areas of the broader public sector that are scheduled to the Act. The PSC is responsible for government's recruitment function, the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities, Student Employment Advisory Services (at the post-secondary level), and the training/mentoring of selection board chairs.

### Recommendations for Appointments to Agencies, Boards and Commissions

The **Independent Appointments Commission Act** (IAC Act) was passed in the House of Assembly in May 2016 to establish a merit-based process for generating recommendations for appointments to provincial ABCs. The Independent Appointments Commission (IAC) has the responsibility to apply a merit-based process to generate recommendations for approximately 30 Tier One ABCs. The PSC and IAC jointly administer the process for Tier One entities, and the PSC supports and advises the IAC in its role. The PSC is also responsible for applying a merit-based process to generate recommendations for over 120 Tier Two ABCs. The PSC maintains the IAC website, which details ABC profiles, upcoming vacancies, and provides an application portal.

### Delivery of Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Programs

The Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Programs (EARWP) Division provides a range of professional, confidential mental health and informal conflict resolutions services aimed at promoting psychological health and safety and



productivity in the workplace. The division operates from a model of independence provided through the PSC as an arm's length agency of government. Direct service delivery includes consultation and advisory services; mental health assessment and counselling; responding to traumatic workplace events; and, informal conflict management and resolution support. In accordance with the **Personal Health Information Act**, the division is also a custodian to employees' personal health information and provides services to approximately 14,000 public sector employees and their immediate family members across Newfoundland and Labrador.

### **Delivery of Employee Safety and Wellness Programs and Initiatives**

The Employee Safety and Wellness (ESW) Division provides strategic leadership on policies and programs to promote an enhanced culture of health, safety and wellness throughout the core public service. This division offers government-wide programming, and provides advisory support to individual departments in relation to safety and wellness.

### **Provision of Corporate-Wide Learning, Development and Training**

Executive development, leadership and management development, and compliance-based training are the core perspectives of the various programs and services offered by the Centre for Learning and Development. The centre offers its trainings via eLearning, virtual delivery and through an in-person classroom setting. The centre often collaborates with departments and agencies to provide government employees with learning opportunities that are unique, important and practical.

### **Administration of the Harassment-Free Workplace Program**

The Harassment-Free Workplace Policy is an employer policy of the Treasury Board Secretariat. A new policy was implemented in 2018. The PSC is responsible for the Harassment-Free Workplace Program, including promoting awareness, prevention, and

the appropriate and timely resolution of allegations of harassment for public service employees.

### **Administration of Classification Appeals**

The Management Classification Review Committee (MCRC) was established in 1987 to hear appeals from managers who are classified under the Hay Classification System. The MCRC is chaired by the chair and CEO of the PSC and comprised of senior level public sector employees appointed by government. Bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit/non-management employees are classified under the Job Evaluation System (JES). JES appeals are decided upon by the independent classification appeal adjudicator, which is situated within the PSC.

### **Coordination and Delivery of Conflict of Interest Advice**

The PSC supports the **Conflict of Interest Act** by facilitating the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee (COIAC). This includes responding to general inquiries; providing advice to deputy ministers on potential conflict situations and concerning post-office employment waivers; accumulating jurisprudence; and, preparing and distributing educational information related to conflict of interest. The COIAC is chaired by the chair and CEO of the PSC.

### **Primary Clients**

The primary clients of the PSC are the departments and ABCs scheduled to the PSC Act and the IAC Act; public sector employees and their bargaining agents; employees' family members for EAP; and the public which also has an interest, as opportunities for employment for the general population are part of the PSC's purview.

## **Vision**

As an independent and arm's length agency committed to the principles of merit, the PSC will lead, guide and build a professional public service that is inclusive, diverse, respectful and skilled, and will support a healthy and safe workforce.

## **Strategic Issues**

In consideration of government's strategic directions of government modernization and accessible, inclusive and healthy communities, as well as the mandate and financial resources of the PSC, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities for the next three years.

### **Strategic Issue 1 – Promotion of PSC Programs and Services**

The PSC remains committed to not only offering programs and services that currently benefit employees, but also to ensuring that those programs and services are modern and proactively address the needs of an evolving public service. The PSC will increase education and promotion of its programs and services to ensure that public service employees are aware of the programs and services that are available to them. It is also a priority for the PSC to ensure that managers and executive members are equipped to promote and champion our programs and services so as to support human resource management. Such efforts will contribute to greater awareness, increased stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement of PSC programs and services. It is of note that these are the key focus areas of government's overall strategic direction of government modernization and accessible, inclusive and healthy communities.

## **Goal**

By March 31, 2026, the PSC will have increased promotion of PSC programs and services to address the needs of an evolving professional public service.

### Goal Indicators

- Assessed the value of current strategies and related processes used to promote PSC programs and services.
- Conducted research and identified best practices related to how other governments promote similar programs and services.
- Developed and led government-wide wellness activities to promote a healthy public service.
- Enhanced promotional materials and developed promotional campaigns to increase stakeholder engagement and awareness.
- Increased utilization of the Public Service Network and the government employee intranet to promote PSC programs and services.
- Developed and launched a new recruitment marketing and branding strategy to increase attraction of talent to government, and to profile the diversity of careers available in the public service.
- Explored methods and platforms to modernize social media presence.
- Advanced recommendations for the development of new promotional strategies and/or to improvements to current promotional strategies.
- Implemented new promotional strategies and/or improvements to current promotional strategies put forward as recommendations.
- Evaluated efforts to increase promotion of PSC programs and services.

### Objective 2023-2024

By March 31, 2024, the PSC will have identified best practices and put forward recommendations to effectively promote PSC programs and services in a manner that is meaningful to public service employees.

### Indicators

- Reviewed current strategies and related processes used to promote PSC programs and services.

- Conducted a jurisdictional scan to identify how similar programs and services are promoted in other Canadian governments to identify best practices.
- Developed and promoted monthly messages on the Public Service Network to increase awareness and communication with government employees related to learning and development and employee safety and wellness.
- Updated employee safety and wellness related content on the government intranet consistently to increase awareness and uptake of safety and wellness programming and initiatives.
- Developed and led government-wide information sessions and wellness clinics to promote a healthy public service.
- Modernized the EARWP promotional materials to increase awareness of the programs and services it offers.
- Developed a poster campaign for trauma exposure and promoted trauma response protocol to employees, departments and stakeholders.
- Enhanced and relaunched an EARWP newsletter to provide regular communication on mental health topics and respect in the workplace.
- Developed and promoted a new recruitment marketing and branding strategy to increase attraction of talent to government, and to profile the diversity of careers available in the public service.
- Advanced recommendations for the development of new promotional strategies and/or improvements to current promotional strategies.

### **Objective 2024-2025**

By March 31, 2025, the PSC will have increased promotion of PSC programs and services through implementing recommendations and outcomes creating greater awareness amongst public service employees.

## **Objective 2025-2026**

By March 31, 2026, the PSC will have evaluated its promotional efforts to ensure they address the needs of an evolving public service.

## **Strategic Issue 2 – Leadership Capacity in the Public Service**

As our public service evolves, so must the essential programs and services in which we deliver. The PSC will focus on building upon employee skill sets and levels of expertise so that employees are well equipped to fulfill their roles. The PSC will also adopt a continuous improvement approach so that our programs and services remain modern and continue to address the needs of government employees. Such efforts will contribute to greater awareness of programs and services, increased stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement of PSC programs and services. It is of note that these are the key focus areas of government's overall strategic direction of government modernization and accessible, inclusive and healthy communities.

## **Goal**

By March 31, 2026, the PSC will have enhanced leadership capacity in the public service with a focus on continuous improvements in policy and programs.

## **Goal Indicators**

- Assessed the value of current strategies and related processes used to build leadership capacity.
- Conducted research, identified best practices, and put forward recommendations for new strategies and/or improvements to current strategies to enhance leadership capacity.
- Adopted a continuous improvement approach with a focus on service excellence in all divisions of the PSC and put forward recommendations accordingly.

- Established processes related to the PSC's role in pay equity and transparency.
- Implemented new strategies and/or improvements to current strategies to enhance leadership capacity as a result of research and identification of best practices.
- Implemented improvements in PSC policy and programs.
- Evaluated efforts to enhance leadership capacity and continuous improvements to policy and programs.

### **Objective 2023-2024**

By March 31, 2024, the PSC will have identified best practices and put forward recommendations for enhancements to leadership capacity while adopting a continuous improvement approach throughout all divisions of the PSC.

#### **Indicators**

- Reviewed current strategies and related processes used to build leadership capacity.
- Conducted research, identified best practices, and put forward recommendations for new strategies and/or improvements to current strategies to enhance leadership capacity.
- Researched best practices and established processes related to the PSC's role in pay equity and transparency.
- Adopted a continuous improvement approach with a focus on service excellence in all divisions of the PSC and put forward recommendations accordingly.
- Reviewed and modernized PSC policies.
- Developed Service Level Agreements for government departments and entities to enhance program and service delivery.

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- Developed the first PSC Progress Report for government departments to allow for a more proactive approach to program planning and utilization. PSC Progress Reports will be released biannually.
- Conducted a user experience survey to improve and enhance the Ergonomics program.
- Established Executive Safety and Wellness Leads in all government departments, and developed a communications plan to provide consistent information on safety and wellness emerging trends.
- Explored opportunities to increase engagement with Occupational Health and Safety Committees co-chairs.
- Developed modern and innovative recruitment strategies, particularly by recruiting for careers by occupation, attracting and managing resulting talent pools for consideration.
- Established leadership in Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) initiatives by establishing and leading an IDEA Committee comprised of key departmental stakeholders and representatives to advance recommendations for government-wide IDEA strategies.
- Collaborated with OCIO in the development of a new Learning Management System for an overall enhanced user experience.
- Explored strategies for career pathing and development to promote continued learning and engagement of employees
- Developed an executive development plan to ensure executive members are provided opportunities for enhanced networking, collaboration and professional development.
- Identified areas where course offerings may be required to address potential skill gaps and developed at least three new course offerings.
- Developed online application for the EARWP Division, which will reduce an employee's initial intake consultation time by up to 25%. With a 50%



utilization rate, the online application process would reduce administrative tasks up to 75% per interaction.

- Created a Respect at Work portal in PSAccess supported by articles, links and videos.
- Explored options in the development of a learning path for Harassment-Free Workplace Investigators to ensure training is relevant and kept up to date, and also, to equip investigators with specialized knowledge to be able to work within the emerging issues.

### **Objective 2024-2025**

By March 31, 2025, the PSC will have implemented recommendations to enhance leadership capacity and improve its policy and programs.

### **Objective 2025-2026**

By March 31, 2026, the PSC will have evaluated efforts made to enhance leadership capacity with a focus on continuous improvement to policy and programs.

## **Annex A – Strategic Directions**

### **Strategic Directions:**

- Government Modernization
- Accessible, Inclusive and Healthy Communities

The key priorities of the Public Service Commission for the 2023-26 business planning period are consistent with government's strategic directions of government modernization and accessible, inclusive and healthy communities, and will require focus in the following areas:

- Awareness of Programs and Services
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Continuous Improvement of Programs and Services