

2022-23  
**Annual Report**

**Children, Seniors  
and Social Development**







## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, I am pleased to present the 2022-23 Annual Report for the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, which was prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. This report covers the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

Together with our community partners and other government departments and agencies, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development is committed to ensuring an inclusive, accessible and socially advanced province that supports children, youth, families, seniors, persons with disabilities and people living with poverty. The department continues to deliver programs and services and support the development of policies across government that are designed to improve overall social well-being for all individuals across the life span; enhance accessible communities; promote healthy aging; ensure child and adult protection; and collaborate with Indigenous Governments and Organizations to provide services to Indigenous children, youth and families as well as support their journey to assert jurisdiction over child and family services. The department's policies, practices and services focus on respecting diversity, increasing equity and reducing barriers to self-determination while emphasizing prevention, early intervention and protection to ensure that all individuals in the province are supported to thrive. The Annual Report for 2022-23 demonstrates the department's progress on objectives set out in year two of the Strategic Plan to achieve these goals.

As Minister, my signature below demonstrates my accountability for the results reported within this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Pike". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hon. Paul Pike  
Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development



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## Departmental Overview

### Organizational Structure

The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD) is a category 1 Provincial Government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, which focuses on improving the well-being, inclusion and social development of individuals, families and communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

During 2022-23, the department's programs and services were provided through the following four branches:

- **Child and Youth Services:** responsible for front-line service delivery of child protection, kinship, in-care, youth services, adoptions and youth corrections programs at the regional level. This branch ensures that a wide array of responsive services are available to meet the needs of children, youth and their families in three regions (Metro, Central-West and Labrador).
- **Corporate Services and Performance Improvement:** responsible for ensuring fiscal, human and information resources are available to provide client services within a quality framework. The four key corporate areas are: Finance and General Operations; Information Management; Policy and Planning; and Quality and Performance Improvement.
- **Policy and Programs:** responsible for policy, program and legislative development in the following areas: Child Protection and Support Services; Children In-Care; Adoptions; Youth Corrections; Youth Services; Disability Policy; Aging and Seniors; and Adult Protection.
- **Prevention and Early Intervention:** focused on improving well-being and supporting individuals, families and communities to realize their full potential. The branch administers and delivers the Income Support Program, as well as other social supports, and leads policy development related to income and social supports, poverty reduction, the community sector, and prevention and early intervention to foster the best long term outcomes for the people of the province.



Additional information about the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development can be found on the department's website: [www.cssd.gov.nl.ca](http://www.cssd.gov.nl.ca).

## Staff and Budget

Branch	# of Employees	Budget
Minister's Office and Executive Support	19	\$1,775,300
Corporate Services and Performance Improvement	104	\$5,387,200
Child and Youth Services	627	\$134,830,200
Policy and Programs	29	\$4,122,800
Prevention and Early Intervention	224	\$230,415,400

As of March 31, 2023, CSSD had 1,003 positions - 907 permanent, 81 temporary and 15 contractual. The Provincial Office has 165 positions which carry out work in all of the identified lines of business. Below is a breakdown of the number of employees per region.

The Child and Youth Services Branch is structured into Central-West Region, Labrador Region and Metro Region, as follows:

- Central-West: 284 positions, with offices located in Baie Verte, Bay Roberts, Bonavista, Botwood, Channel-Port-aux-Basques, Clarenville, Conception Bay South, Conne River, Corner Brook, Deer Lake, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Harbour Breton, Harbour Grace, Holyrood, Lewisporte, Marystown, Musgrave

Harbour, Placentia, Roddickton, Springdale, St. Alban's, St. Anthony, Stephenville, Summerford and Whitbourne;

- Labrador: 120 positions, with offices located in Cartwright, Forteau, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Hopedale, Labrador City, Makkovik, Nain, Natuashish, Rigolet and Sheshatshiu; and
- Metro: 223 positions, with offices located in Bell Island, Ferryland, and St. John's.

The Income Support Service Delivery Division, within the Prevention and Early Intervention Branch, has 211 positions located in St. John's, Mount Pearl, Carbonear, Marystown, Clarenville, Gander, Lewisporte, Grand Falls-Windsor, St. Albans, Springdale, Stephenville, Corner Brook, Channel-Port- aux-Basques and Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

As of March 31, 2023, CSSD had total expenditures of \$363,675,549 for the 2022-23 fiscal year. Additional information is included in the Financial Information section.

## Vision

A socially advanced province, where all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians live fulfilling lives of purpose, balance and meaning for them.

CSSD collaborates with a broad array of partners and community stakeholders and provides leadership in government to ensure that policies, practices, and services respect diversity, increase equity and social well-being, as well as reduce barriers, while emphasizing prevention, early intervention, protection, self-determination and self-reliance.



## Mandate

CSSD supports individuals, families and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador in achieving improved social well-being and reduced poverty, and delivers programs and services to support children, youth and adults who have experienced abuse or neglect as well as individuals and families without sufficient financial resources to meet basic needs. The department collaborates with the community sector to foster their role in social and economic development. Further, it promotes the values of inclusion and diversity and leads the development of policies, programs and partnerships to improve services and overall social development across the lifespan of residents of the province.

The mandate for the department is primarily established under the following legislation:

- **Accessibility Act;**
- **Adoption Act, 2013;**
- **Adult Protection Act, 2021;**
- **Children, Youth and Families Act;**
- **Income and Employment Support Act;** and
- **Young Persons Offences Act.**

## Lines of Business

The department fulfils this mandate through the following lines of business:

- Adoptions - finds permanent homes for children available for adoption.
- Adult Protection - protects adults who do not understand or appreciate the risk of abuse and neglect.
- Child Protection and In-Care - helps ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in need of protective intervention.
- Community Sector - collaborates with the community sector to foster their role in the social and economic development in the province.

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- Community Youth Corrections - provides services to youth who come into conflict with the law between their 12th and 18th birthdays.
- Disability Policy - removes barriers and enhances the inclusion of persons with disabilities through government policies and programs.
- Income Assistance and Basic Benefits - provides monthly benefits, earning supplements and one-time benefits to qualifying people.
- Increasing Income Security - prevents, reduces and alleviates poverty, and fosters opportunities through horizontal policy development for all individuals and families to share fully in our society and economy.
- Seniors and Aging - promotes healthy aging across the lifespan and fosters a healthy society that honours, listens to and includes seniors in building stronger, more dynamic communities.
- Youth Services - assists youth in need of protective intervention during their transition to early adulthood.

## Highlights and Partnerships

### Highlights

Throughout 2022-23, CSSD continued to deliver on its commitment to enhance the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians by strengthening the social advancement of this province. Much of the work CSSD completes is in conjunction with internal and external partners, giving rise to significant achievements that are beyond the scope of the established goals and objectives for the Department, as outlined in CSSD's Strategic Plan 2021-23. Toward this end, CSSD has many initiatives and partnerships to highlight, which include:

- **Accessible Vehicle and Taxi Grants:** CSSD opened applications to individuals or families who wished to acquire or adapt personal vehicles for accessibility. An additional grant for individuals, companies and agencies that are able to deliver accessible taxi services was also available. In 2022, there were eight Accessible Vehicle grants and one Accessible Taxi grant awarded.
- **Establishment of Accessibility Standards Advisory Board:** In 2022, eight members were appointed to the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board under the province's new **Accessibility Act**.
- **Amendments to the Adoption Act, 2013:** Amendments to the **Adoptions Act, 2013** were made in 2021 and received Royal Assent in 2022. The approved amendments strengthened the province's adoption legislation and recognized the unique needs of Indigenous children and their families in the adoption process.
- **Basic Income Program for Youth Receiving Residential Services:** A new Basic Income Program for youth receiving residential services through the department's voluntary Youth Services Program was implemented in 2023.
- **Increase in Income Support Basic Rate:** In the fall of 2022, there was a five per cent increase in the Income Support basic rate for those receiving Income Support.

- **New Adult Protection Legislation:** The **Adult Protection Act, 2021** protects adults 18 years of age and older in Newfoundland and Labrador who are at risk of abuse, neglect and/or self-neglect, and who do not understand or appreciate that risk. Updates to the **Adult Protection Act, 2021**, which received Royal Assent in 2022, are a result of the legislated five-year statutory review of the Act.
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program:** The Community Transportation Program provided funding support to incorporated municipalities, not for profit groups and Indigenous Governments and communities to develop, implement and evaluate accessible and inclusive community-based transportation programs. In 2023, six recipients were awarded funding through the Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program.
- **A new On Demand Contact Centre (ODCC) telephone system for Income Support:** The new ODCC system, implemented in April 2022, included a single provincial toll-free telephone number and improved service features, including ability to receive a call-back while holding place in queue and flexibility in assigning staff to meet real time needs. This new system has reduced average wait-times to speak with staff to six minutes.

## Partnerships

- **Collaboration with community organizations:** CSSD regularly collaborates with a wide range of community organizations. Of particular note in 2022-23, CSSD collaborated with Stella's Circle and Choices for Youth (as well as the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, with Federal funding through the Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Workforce Development Agreement), on the development and delivery of an Employment Stability Pilot. This pilot offers people receiving Income Support new and enhanced incentives and supports to assist with making the transition to employment, helping to stay working, and increasing connection to the labour market.

- **Collaboration with City of St. John's:** CSSD collaborated with the City of St. John's to deliver the expansion of the Bus Pass Program to seniors over aged 65 who are receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement, and youth receiving services from the Youth Services Program.
- **Federal/Provincial/Territorial Collaboration:** CSSD continued to work with federal and provincial counterparts through forums established to promote inter-jurisdictional discussion, discuss new and emerging issues and work collaboratively on key issues, including those related to: child welfare; disability supports; income support; Indigenous children and youth in care; poverty; and seniors.

## Report on Performance

### Issue 1: Prevention and Early Intervention for Families

Throughout 2022-23, CSSD was actively leading the development of a cross-departmental Social Well-Being Plan. This included a widespread consultation process with stakeholders and communities, including people with lived experience of poverty and social exclusion. Achievements during the 2022-23 reporting period have positioned CSSD to lead work to reduce poverty, respond to the social determinants recommendations of the Health Accord and improve the well-being of all people in this province.

#### Goal:

By March 31, 2023, CSSD, in collaboration with community and government departments, will have developed and implemented a horizontal action plan on prevention and early intervention for families.

#### 2022-23 Objective:

By March 31, 2023, CSSD, in collaboration with other government departments, will have implemented the horizontal action plan to strengthen programs, policies, and services focused on prevention and early intervention for all children and youth.

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<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Report on Performance</b>
<p>Completed research, analysis, and a jurisdictional scan on the factors that will foster social and economic well-being throughout the lifespan, including prevention and early intervention for all children and youth.</p>	<p>In 2022-23, CSSD gathered research on best practices regarding social and economic well-being. Information was gathered from other jurisdictions that are doing similar work, including New Zealand, Iceland, Wales and Scotland. CSSD analyzed this information within the Newfoundland and Labrador context. This analysis will inform the development of the Social Well-Being Plan.</p>
<p>Completed consultations with stakeholders and people with lived experience on the development of a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.</p>	<p>In 2022, CSSD engaged with community organizations, governments and experts, including people with lived experience, to help inform the development of the Social Well-Being Plan. This engagement focused on six key components that impact social and economic well-being: early years; education; income and benefits; food security; housing; and community.</p> <p>Over 200 individuals and groups provided submissions in response to an Engage NL online consultation opportunity; over 300 individuals participated in over 30 sessions held by community partners for people with lived experience of poverty and other social issues; over 100 community organizations participated in CSSD-led community partner roundtables. Sessions were also held with eight Indigenous organizations and a discussion took place with Indigenous leaders as part of the Premier’s Roundtable.</p>



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<p>Developed a Social and Economic Well-Being Plan that includes a focus on prevention and early intervention.</p>	<p>The name of the plan has changed to the Social Well-Being Plan. CSSD commenced the development of this plan; however, given the link to the Health Accord, work was delayed while waiting for final recommendations of the Health Accord. As a result, the plan was not fully completed by March 31, 2023. It is anticipated that this work will be finalized in 2023-24.</p>
<p>Initiated implementation of the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.</p>	<p>The implementation of the Social Well-Being Plan did not commence in 2022-23, as the plan was not completed. It is anticipated that implementation will commence in 2023-24.</p>

**Goal Summary:**

Throughout the 2021-23 planning period, CSSD focused its efforts on the development of a Social Well-Being plan to better the lives of families in this province.

<p><b>Indicator</b></p>	<p><b>Report on Performance</b></p>
<p>Established an interdepartmental committee to oversee and support the development and implementation of an action plan on early intervention and prevention for all children and youth.</p>	<p>As noted in CSSD's 2021-22 Annual Report, development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social Well-Being Plan. An executive steering committee and senior management working group have been meeting since January 2022 to oversee and support the development of the Social Well-Being Plan.</p>

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<p>Consulted with community and research partners to formulate a better understanding of best practices and identify specific opportunities to improve prevention and early intervention services to support vulnerable families in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>During 2021-22, CSSD worked with Newfoundland and Labrador Center for Applied Health Research (NLCAHR) to research best practices on prevention and early intervention to help inform the development of the Social Well-Being Plan. This work was published in March 2022 through NLCAHR's Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program as a Snapshot Report. Consultations on prevention and early intervention were carried out in 2022 with community stakeholders and people with lived experience.</p>
<p>Lead the development and implementation of a horizontal action plan on prevention and early intervention for children and their families in conjunction with community and research partners.</p>	<p>As noted in CSSD's 2021-22 Annual Report, development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social Well-Being Plan. CSSD commenced the development of this plan; however, due to the delay in awaiting the final recommendations of the Health Accord, this work was not fully completed by March 31, 2023. It is anticipated that this work will be finalized in 2023-24.</p>

<p>Reviewed the Grants to Youth Organizations program to ensure it is aligned with departmental priorities, including prevention and early intervention.</p>	<p>In 2021-22, CSSD reviewed the Grants to Youth Organizations program to ensure its alignment with departmental priorities. Based on this review, the evaluation criteria for these grant applications was expanded to include “Provide opportunities for intergenerational activities that help build relationships between generations.”</p>
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## Issue 2: Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, CSSD focused on strengthening social advancements of individuals in this province by commencing the drafting of the Social Well-Being Plan to reduce poverty and increase social inclusion, as well as implementing an Accessibility Standards Advisory Board.

### Goal:

By March 31, 2023, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by engaging with stakeholders and communities to formulate actions to reduce poverty, support healthy aging across the lifespan, and encourage inclusive, accessible communities.

### 2022-23 Objective:

By March 31, 2023, CSSD will have strengthened the social advancement of the province by further implementing policies and supporting actions to reduce poverty, support healthy aging across the lifespan and encourage inclusive, accessible communities.

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<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Report on Performance</b>
Developed draft Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.	The name of the plan has changed to the Social Well-Being Plan. CSSD commenced the development of this plan; however, given the link to the Health Accord, work was delayed while waiting for final recommendations of the Health Accord. As a result, the plan was not fully completed by March 31, 2023. It is anticipated that this work will be finalized in 2023-24.
Launched an age-friendly reward and recognition program.	The launch of an age-friendly reward and recognition program was not completed in 2022-23. The Seniors and Aging division is awaiting a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Seniors, and from there, discussions will be held at that table to determine how the age-friendly reward and recognition program aligns with the Cabinet Committee on Seniors.
Developed draft of an intergenerational program guide to aid increased interaction between youth and older adults across Newfoundland and Labrador.	Due to competing priorities, drafting of an intergenerational program guide was not completed in 2022-23. Work was ongoing in 2022-23 to plan public engagement sessions as well as targeted consultations, which are scheduled to take place in Fall 2023. These exercises will inform the development of the intergenerational guide, which is anticipated to be launched in late 2023-24.

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<p>Completed consultations with stakeholders to ensure persons with disabilities, and community-based organizations representing persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to inform the development of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p>	<p>Consultations with stakeholders to inform the development of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities did not occur in 2022-23, as a review of statutory offices of the House of Assembly commenced in December 2022 and is ongoing. The outcome of the review will determine next steps with respect to an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.</p>
<p>Consulted with key stakeholders to ensure persons with disabilities, and community-based organizations representing persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to inform the development of the Disability Advocate position.</p>	<p>Consultations with stakeholders to inform the development of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities did not occur in 2022-23. As noted above, a review of statutory offices of the House of Assembly is ongoing and the outcome of this review will determine next steps.</p>
<p>Brought forward a recommendation from the Public Service Commission to Government to establish appointments to the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board.</p>	<p>In June 2022, an Accessibility Standards Advisory Board (the Board) was established and eight members were appointed via a merit-based process through the Public Service Commission. Members of the Board are responsible for making recommendations to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities regarding priorities for the establishment of accessibility standards; measures, policies, practices and other requirements that may be implemented by the government to improve accessibility; and recommendations</p>

	regarding the establishment and content of accessibility standards, and time-periods for their implementation.
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**Goal Summary:**

Throughout the 2021-23 planning period, CSSD focused its efforts on consulting and engaging stakeholders and communities in an effort to reduce poverty and improve the well-being of all persons in this province. Additionally, CSSD implemented legislation to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, and worked to improve adult protection.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Report on Performance</b>
Developed a renewed strategy to reduce poverty in consultation with stakeholders, experts and communities.	As noted in CSSD’s 2021-22 Annual Report, development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social Well-Being Plan. CSSD commenced the development of this plan; however, due to the delay in awaiting the final recommendations of the Health Accord, this work was not fully completed by March 31, 2023. This work will be finalized in 2023-24.

<p>Developed and implemented new provincial accessibility legislation.</p>	<p>The <b>Accessibility Act</b> was introduced in the House of Assembly in October 2021, received Royal Assent and became law on December 3, 2021. This legislation allows the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to outline the principles and goals for an accessible province. The <b>Accessibility Act</b> improves accessibility by identifying, preventing and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participation in society.</p>
<p>Worked toward the establishment of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>The establishment of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities did not occur during the 2021-23 planning period as a review of statutory offices of the House of Assembly is ongoing. The outcome of the review will determine next steps in the establishment of an Advocate for Persons with Disabilities.</p>
<p>Developed an action plan, informed by the recommendations of the Seniors' Advocate, to create an environment that fosters healthy aging, social inclusion, and age-friendly communities.</p>	<p>The age-friendly communities program is continuing and expanding. The Seniors and Aging division has been working closely with the Social and Economic Well-Being division to ensure the recommendations of the Seniors' Advocate are reflected in the Social Well-Being Plan that is currently under development.</p>



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<p>Completed a five-year review of the <b>Adult Protection Act</b>.</p>	<p>In October 2019, an engagement process for the five-year statutory review of the <b>Adult Protection Act</b> was launched. Proposed changes to the <b>Adult Protection Act, 2021</b> were introduced for second reading in the House of Assembly, as a result of the legislated five-year statutory review of the Act, and feedback gathered from key stakeholders. In December 2022, the new <b>Adult Protection Act, 2021</b> came into effect.</p>
<p>Developed a plan to move forward with the establishment of a social incubator/accelerator model.</p>	<p>As noted in CSSD’s 2021-22 Annual Report, development of a renewed Poverty Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan have been combined into an overall well-being plan referred to as the Social Well-Being Plan. This will include an action related to a social incubator / accelerator. As previously noted, CSSD commenced the development of this plan; however, due to the delay in awaiting the final recommendations of the Health Accord, this work was not fully completed by March 31, 2023. This work is anticipated to be finalized in 2023-24.</p>

## Opportunities and Challenges

CSSD is committed to strengthening the social advancement of the province in order to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion, and is focused on prevention and early intervention for families to improve outcomes for all children and youth. There are a number of opportunities and challenges facing CSSD as work progresses to meet its commitments:

### Opportunities:

- Establishment of Accessibility Standards Advisory Board, which will help improve accessibility by identifying, preventing and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participation in society.
- Opportunities to improve specific social, economic and environmental conditions affecting the health of people in the province through the planning and development of the Social Well-Being Plan.
- External reviews have been completed to identify and explore measures to help mitigate workload pressures to better support Child and Youth Services social workers as they play a critical role in protecting and supporting the health and well-being of children and youth in the province.
- CSSD has very strong, collaborative relationships with community-based organizations and is committed to working with community partners to best meet the needs of people in the province, particularly those who experience social exclusion and poverty.

### Challenges:

- The recruitment and retention of frontline Child and Youth Services social workers has been a long-standing concern. These social workers face ongoing workload challenges including safety, stress and high caseloads.
- Recent increases in the cost of living have caused additional financial difficulties for low income individuals and families. Such financial difficulties can translate into challenges associated with food security, healthy eating, adequate housing,

transportation, child care, overall emotional well-being, financial and educational planning, community engagement and community participation.

- Individuals and families in low income are struggling with the high costs of necessities. With respect to seniors and people with disabilities many are struggling on fixed incomes and have experienced discrimination in the areas of healthcare and employment. They also can have limited internet access. These challenges can negatively impact well-being and social inclusion, which can arise due to poor financial planning, literacy, lack of knowledge and increased cost of living. CSSD continues to work with the community, government and external agencies in an effort to reduce ageism and ableism, and to improve financial and internet literacy among seniors and people with disabilities.

## Financial Information

Revenue and expenditures in this document are based on the information provided in the Public Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 2023.

	Actual (\$)	Estimates – Amended (\$)	Estimates – Original (\$)
Minister's Office	227,563	251,700	251,700
Executive Support	1,795,625	1,805,000	1,523,600
Corporate Services and Performance Improvement	5,617,107	5,689,200	5,387,200
Child and Youth Services	132,283,996	155,321,900	134,830,200
Seniors and Aging	1,566,847	1,581,300	1,402,300
Disability Policy	985,028	1,074,800	1,288,300
Child Welfare Program and Policy	1,380,272	1,427,200	1,432,200
Income Support Regional Client Services	11,367,850	11,444,000	12,911,100
Income Support Program and Policy	204,400,791	204,288,400	213,755,700
Poverty Reduction and Community Sector	4,050,470	4,101,100	3,748,600
<b>Total (Department)</b>	<b>363,675,549</b>	<b>386,984,600</b>	<b>376,530,900</b>

