

*House of Assembly
Newfoundland & Labrador*



*Colonial Building
1850-1959*

*Confederation Building
1960-present*



2020-23 Activity Plan

House of Assembly Service





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MESSAGE FROM SPEAKER



The House of Assembly Service is designated a Category 3 entity, and as per Section 7 of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* (the Act), must submit an Activity Plan every three years.

I am therefore pleased to present the House of Assembly Service Activity Plan for the period from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023. It has been prepared as appropriate for a Category 3 entity in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The 2020-23 Activity Plan was prepared by the House of Assembly Service. In accordance with my obligations under the Act, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the specific objectives contained therein.

Hon. Scott Reid, MHA
Speaker of the House of Assembly



OVERVIEW

The House of Assembly Service (HOAS) was established by statute in the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act** to support the functioning of the House of Assembly and its committees, the House of Assembly Management Commission and Members of the House of Assembly.

As of April 1, 2020, the House of Assembly Service had the following number of employees (this includes permanent, sessional and temporary employees in Office of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk, Corporate and Members' Services Division and Information Management Division):

Female:	37
Male:	11
Total:	48

The Speaker is the impartial presiding officer of the House and is the guardian of its rights and privileges. As established by statute, the Speaker must also act as the Chair of the House of Assembly Management Commission. The Speaker's Office provides support to the Speaker in carrying out these duties and responsibilities.

The Office of the Clerk supports the activities of the Clerk of the House of Assembly in all parliamentary and administrative matters. The Clerk is the non-partisan, chief permanent officer of the House whose duties can be divided in two main areas: Chief Parliamentary Officer and Chief Administrative Officer.

As the Chief Parliamentary Officer, the Clerk provides advice to the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly on matters pertaining to parliamentary procedure. He or she is responsible for interpreting the Standing Orders, conventions, precedents and usages of the House and must ensure the preparation of the Order Paper and Minutes of proceedings. The Clerk also has a responsibility for the safe - keeping of all records of the House of Assembly.

As the Chief Administrative Officer, the Clerk is responsible for the management of the operations of the House of Assembly Service and the administration of the Statutory Offices. The Clerk also serves as Secretary to the House of Assembly Management Commission and is responsible for providing full administrative support to the Commission.

The Corporate and Members' Services Division provides services in Accounts Payable; Financial Planning and Reporting; General Operations and Purchasing; and Human Resources and Payroll Administration. The Information Management Division includes the services of the Legislative Library, Broadcast Centre, Hansard and Records Management.



BUDGET

The House of Assembly has a budget of **\$15,728,500** for 2020-21 fiscal year. In addition to funding for the House of Assembly Service, this includes funding for Members' Resources, Government Members' Caucus, Official Opposition Caucus, Third Party Caucus and independent Members. It does not include the budgets for the Statutory Offices.

The details are noted as follows:

Salaries	\$	12,166,900
Employee Benefits		16,900
Transportation and Communications		333,300
Supplies		197,300
Professional Services		65,000
Purchased Services		422,000
Property, Furnishings and Equipment		113,900
Allowances and Assistance		2,363,700
Grants and Subsidies		77,500
Revenue		(28,000)
Total		15,728,500

Source: 2020-21 Estimates

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MANDATE

The House of Assembly Service derives its mandate from the provisions of the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act** (the Act). It is also informed by the **House of Assembly Act** and the **Elections Act, 1991**.

The mandate of the House of Assembly Service is contained in subsection 25 (1) of the Act, which states:

25 (1) The House of Assembly Service consists of operations established, whether by law or otherwise, for the purpose of supporting the functioning of the House of Assembly, its committees and members, and includes

- (a) the speaker;*
- (b) the office of the clerk and other officers of the House of Assembly;*
- (c) the law clerk;*
- (d) the financial and administrative services;*
- (e) the legislative library;*
- (f) the office of Hansard;*
- (g) the broadcast centre; and*
- (h) other divisions that may be assigned by law or designated and provided for by the commission.*

The House of Assembly Service supports the work of the Speaker, the Clerk, the House of Assembly and its Committees, Members and the House of Assembly Management Commission by:

- Coordinating and supporting the decision-making process of the House of Assembly Management Commission;
- Providing advice and interpretation on parliamentary procedure and protocol;
- Providing financial, budgetary, human resources, payroll, administrative and information services;
- Providing legal advice on Parliamentary matters to the Speaker, the Clerk and to the House of Assembly;



- Providing parliamentary library, records and information services to all Members and Officers of the House of Assembly, including reference, research and records organization and control;
- Providing compliance with **Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015**;
- Providing official transcript of debates and proceedings of the House of Assembly and the House of Assembly Management Commission;
- Broadcasting the House of Assembly proceedings and meetings of the House of Assembly Management Commission; and
- Providing strategic communications advice and support to the Speaker, the Clerk and the House of Assembly Management Commission.



LINES OF BUSINESS

In fulfilling its mandate, the House of Assembly Service provides the following lines of business.

1. Support to the House of Assembly and the Committees of the House

The House of Assembly Service provides executive, administrative and advisory support to the House of Assembly and its Committees. It advises the Speaker and Members on parliamentary procedure, provides procedural advice to Committees, drafts minutes and reports, keeps records and organizes meetings.

The House of Assembly Service, through the Law Clerk, provides legal advice on Parliamentary matters to the Speaker, the Clerk and to the House of Assembly, and provides in-house corporate legal advice. The Law Clerk provides drafting services on amendments in committee where required and for Private Members' Bills.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for preserving order and maintaining security in the galleries, corridors and other areas in the Parliamentary Precinct.

Hansard provides the official and complete transcript of debates and proceedings of the House of Assembly, its Committees and the meetings of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

The Broadcast Centre is responsible for televising the House of Assembly proceedings and meetings of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

2. Support to the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission

The House of Assembly Service is the primary support for the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission. This role incorporates the preparation of briefing materials, the coordination and facilitation of Commission meetings and the maintenance of all Commission records.

Strategic communications advice and support are provided to the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission. This role includes developing communications policy and procedures and advising on communications issues.

3. Support to Members of the House of Assembly

The House of Assembly Service supports the Members of the House of Assembly in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. This includes providing Member orientation and relevant training, as required, setting up Members' offices,



purchasing required supplies and services for Members, processing Members' expense claims and providing payroll and human resources services.

The Legislative Library provides parliamentary library and information services to all Members and Officers of the House of Assembly in the execution of their duties, including reference and research services and information access and awareness.

4. Support to Statutory Offices

The House of Assembly Service supports the Statutory Offices in carrying out administrative responsibilities. This includes financial, budgetary, human resources, payroll and information management services.



VALUES

The following values are fundamental to all interactions and communications between the House of Assembly Service and its clients.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Action Statement</u>
Impartiality	Each employee provides services in a non-partisan manner to all Members and their staff.
Fairness	Each employee performs his or her duties in an unbiased and independent manner.
Respect	Each employee performs his or her duties in a manner that respects the rights of other employees, Members of the House of Assembly and the public.
Confidence	Employees will not abuse their official position for personal gain and will not accept any gift or benefit which may result in an obligation to a third party.
Trust	Each employee exercises due care and control of records created or collected in the exercise of their responsibilities, ensuring that records are organized, secured and managed according to applicable policy and legislation.
Integrity	Each employee performs his or her duties honestly, ethically and free of personal interests and activities which may appear to interfere with their duties.
Quality Service	Each employee builds and sustains relationships by assessing, anticipating and fulfilling needs of the clients.



PRIMARY CLIENTS

The House of Assembly Service defines its primary clients as those individuals, groups and organizations who are the principal beneficiaries of its lines of business. These clients include the following:

- a) House of Assembly and its Committees
- b) Members of the House of Assembly
- c) House of Assembly Management Commission
- d) Caucus Offices of the House of Assembly
- e) Statutory Offices of the House of Assembly
- f) Executive Branch of Government

VISION

The vision of the House of Assembly Service is one where the public, clients and employees are well informed on the operations of the Legislature.



ISSUES

A main priority for the House of Assembly Service is to ensure that the primary role of Parliament as the elected body that approves legislation and holds oversight of the Government within provincial jurisdiction is fulfilled in accordance with the Constitution of Canada.

A review of its lines of business with a forward-looking approach has identified the following priority areas over the 2020-23 planning cycle.

ISSUE 1: SUPPORT TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The House of Assembly Management Commission establishes, implements and controls financial and administrative policies applicable to the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Service and the Statutory Offices. The Commission oversees the finances of the House of Assembly including its budget, revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities. It ensures the proper administration of allowances for Members, as well as reimbursement and payment of their expenditures.

The support of the House of Assembly Service is critical to the Commission in carrying out its mandate as established in the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act**. The HOAS provides full secretariat support to the Commission including researching issues; preparing briefing notes and other support materials for the Commission's consideration; preparing and tracking Minutes of all meetings; and ensuring that all necessary work to properly action decisions of the Commission is fulfilled.

Objectives:

By March 31, 2021, the House of Assembly Service will have supported the operations of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

Indicators:

- Conducted research and prepared all briefing materials necessary for meetings of the Commission.
- Prepared and distributed Minutes of all Commission meetings.
- Tracked all decisions of the Commission and completed the work necessary to properly action them.
- Updated and maintained manuals and templates that support the work of the Commission as necessary.



As the focus of the House of Assembly Service will remain consistent, it will report on the objective and indicators noted above for the years ended **March 31, 2022** and **March 31, 2023**.



ISSUE 2: SUPPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

A main line of business for the House of Assembly Service is providing support to the 40 Members of the House of Assembly. The HOAS is responsible for ensuring that all Members have the tools and resources they require to effectively carry out their role as elected officials. While supports and services are provided to Members on an ongoing basis, the volume of work required is increased following general elections and by-elections. A provincial general election will take place during the upcoming reporting cycle. This will require additional planning and work by the HOAS to ensure the necessary tools and resources are in place to support the transition between general assemblies.

Objectives:

By March 31, 2021, the House of Assembly Service will have continued to provide the necessary support to Members of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

- Revised and updated Member guides, manuals and orientation materials, as required.
- Provided training and orientation to Members and their staff, as required.
- Provided ongoing services to Members, as required, to support them in carrying out their roles.

As the focus of the House of Assembly Service will remain consistent, it will report on the objective and indicators noted above for the years ended **March 31, 2022** and **March 31, 2023**.



ISSUE 3: SUPPORT TO STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

A main line of business for the House of Assembly Service includes support to the Standing and Select Committees of the House of Assembly. The Office of the Clerk provides supports to assist committees in their work such as procedural advice and expertise, research, report writing and media relations.

The committee clerk is the procedural and administrative advisor to both the Chair and the committee, carrying out these duties and responsibilities in consultation with the Chair and at the direction of the committee. The committee clerk is consulted for advice on the operation, procedural rules or mandate of the committee and also conducts non-partisan research and drafts reports and other documents (or delegates the work to other House of Assembly Service employees, as needed).

Objectives:

By March 31, 2021, the House of Assembly Service will have continued to provide support, as required, to Standing and Select Committees of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

- Organized logistics for Committee meetings, including the preparation of meeting agendas, minutes and clerking Committee meetings.
- Provided procedural and operational advice, as required.
- Conducted non-partisan research and reference support, as required.
- Drafted committee reports and other documents, as required.
- Developed and updated related orientation manuals and training materials, as required.

As the focus of the House of Assembly Service will remain consistent, it will report on the objective and indicators noted above for the years ended **March 31, 2022** and **March 31, 2023**.