

Justice and Public Safety

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-20





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

In accordance with the Transparency and Accountability Act, I hereby submit the Department of Justice and Public Safety Strategic Plan 2017-20. I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives pursuant to subsection 5(4) of the Transparency and Accountability Act.

The strategic directions of Government applicable to the Department of Justice and Public Safety were considered in the preparation of this plan, as were the commitments communicated in “The Way Forward: A vision for sustainability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador”. Based on these commitments, as well as the commitments I have made to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, this plan outlines two broad issues:

1. Specialized responses to justice and public safety issues; and
2. Enhanced oversight and administration of justice.

Additionally, I have engaged in conversations with residents and stakeholders. I have listened to the concerns and suggested solutions you raised. In addition to the commitments referenced above, over the next three years, the department will also consider these concerns and endeavor to address them, whenever and wherever possible.

I look forward to continued conversations and initiatives to ensure the department is responsive to the justice and public safety needs of all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AP', written over the printed name of the minister.

Honourable Andrew Parsons
Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General

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Departmental Overview

The mandate of the Department of Justice and Public Safety derives primarily from the Executive Council Act. This mandate reflects the dual responsibilities of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General for Newfoundland and Labrador. While several other Canadian jurisdictions have separate ministries for Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General, the structure is consolidated in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Department of Justice and Public Safety is responsible for administering the various aspects of the province's legal system. The principal components include family justice services, fines administration, support enforcement, policing, sheriff's office, adult secure custody, adult probation services, secure youth custody, victim services, access to information and protection of privacy, office of the public trustee, and administration of the courts.

Reflecting the role and authority of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice and Public Safety provides legal services to the Crown including legal advice to departments, litigation, prosecution and legislative drafting. While the Executive Council Act is the primary legislative authority for the Department of Justice and Public Safety mandate, the policies, services and programs are also governed by 102 pieces of legislation, which the Department of Justice and Public Safety administers.

Staff and Budget

In 2016-17, the department employed 1,502 individuals, including the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC). The overall gender breakdown for staffing in the department is approximately 50 per cent female (751) and 50 per cent male (751). The Department of Justice and Public Safety employees are situated throughout the province.

Additionally, pursuant to the Provincial Policing Services Agreement and the Community Tripartite Agreements, in 2016-17 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) employed approximately 422 officers and 108 civilian members and support staff to provide frontline policing services in approximately 50 locations throughout the province.

The Department of Justice and Public Safety employs lawyers, police officers, social workers, psychologists, counselors, correctional officers, youth care counselors, deputy sheriffs, information management specialists, administrators, financial managers, nurses, educators and administrative support staff. Efforts continue towards employment equity within sectors of justice and public safety that have historically been comprised of disproportionate numbers of males to females.

Branch	Staff Complement			2017-18 Budget
	Total	Female	Male	
Executive and Support Services	45	31	14	\$6,012,700
Legal and Related Services	300	172	128	\$48,899,400
Law Courts	167	147	20	\$17,277,600
Public Protection	990	401	589	\$170,575,800
Total	1,502	751	751	\$242,765,500
Notes:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The staffing count for Legal and Related Services does not include the Legal Aid Commission ▪ The staffing count for Public Protection does not include RCMP 				

For more information about the Department of Justice and Public Safety, please visit <http://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/just/>.

Issue One - Specialized Justice and Public Safety Responses

The Department of Justice and Public Safety is committed to exploring specialized responses to historical and emerging justice-related issues. Victims of crime require access to services that reflect their individual needs and circumstances. Similarly, many offenders face various challenges and the use of therapeutic court models offers innovative opportunities to deal with them more effectively and in ways that produce better outcomes for all. A Justice Summit hosted by the Department of Justice and Public Safety in March 2017 confirmed that officials and stakeholders agree that specialized and alternative responses are needed to prevent recidivism and to reduce the burden on the traditional criminal justice system.

Over the next three years, the department will focus its efforts on responses to victims of crime and innovative mechanisms to deal with offenders that build upon traditional criminal justice processes. This work also reflects commitments related to justice and public safety as communicated in “The Way Forward: A vision for sustainability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador”.

GOAL 1:

By March 31, 2020, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have implemented specialized initiatives to address justice and public safety issues.

Indicators:

- Work begun toward specialized justice initiatives
- Work toward the implementation of specialized justice initiatives continued
- Implementation of specialized justice initiatives continued and further work identified

Objective 1.1:

By March 31, 2018, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have begun work toward the implementation of specialized justice initiatives.

Indicators:

- Drug Treatment Court feasibility assessed
- Work toward the development of a Sexual Assault Response Pilot commenced
- Supports to individuals and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls provided

Objective 1.2:

By March 31, 2019, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued work towards the implementation of specialized justice initiatives.

Objective 1.3:

By March 31, 2020, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued implementation of initiatives and identified further work to address justice issues utilizing specialized responses.

Issue Two - Enhanced Oversight and Administration of Justice

The Department of Justice and Public Safety is committed to enhancing oversight of the justice system, as well as the continuous improvement of the administration of justice. The administration of justice includes matters related to enforcement services, courts, corrections, and various other aspects of the justice system.

Over the next three years, the department will follow through on commitments to hold public inquiries and reviews into matters important to citizens and to take action to address recommendations. The department will work to enhance its response to serious incidents. The department will consider the recommendations of the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions as they pertain to the delivery of justice services for clients and for staff. Additionally, the department will continue to review and assess ways to create efficiencies in the administration of justice.

While these are the areas that the department will focus on in this plan, the department will also consider other matters of importance related to enhancements to the administration of justice as they arise. Additionally, the department will continue to review and assess ways to create efficiencies in the administration of justice as committed in The Way Forward.

GOAL 2:

By March 31, 2020, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have implemented initiatives that enhance oversight of the justice system and improve the administration of justice.

Indicators:

- Work toward implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice begun
- Work towards the implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice continued
- Work towards the implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice further advanced

Objective 2.1:

By March 31, 2018, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have begun work toward implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice.

Indicators:

- Commission of Inquiry Respecting the Death of Donald Dunphy completed
- Commission of Inquiry Respecting Search and Rescue Inquiry commenced
- Review of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner completed
- Legislation to establish a Serious Incident Response Team introduced in the House of Assembly
- Review of court administration commenced
- Ability of justice system to respond to mental health and addictions issues enhanced

Objective 2.2:

By March 31, 2019, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued work towards the implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice.

Objective 2.3:

By March 31, 2020, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have further advanced work towards the implementation of initiatives that address oversight and administration of justice.

Annex A: Strategic Directions

Strategic directions represent significant desired outcomes that the department works towards and which may require combined effort. These major directions usually come from such sources as platform documents, Throne and Budget speeches, policy documents and other communiqués and public commitments. The department is required by legislation to incorporate these directions into the strategic planning process to ensure key commitments are being advanced and met. For this planning cycle, the Department of Justice and Public Safety Strategic Directions are:

Strategic Direction #1: Specialized Justice and Public Safety Responses

Outcome: Exploration and implementation of specialized responses to address root causes of violence and crime.

This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require focus in the following areas:

- Therapeutic court models
- Culturally appropriate responses
- Victim supports

Strategic Direction #2: Oversight and Access

Outcome: Enhanced mechanisms for oversight and access to information.

This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require focus in the following areas:

- Serious incident response model
- Public inquiries
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner review
- Legislative responses