

Justice and Public Safety

Strategic Plan

2020 - 2023





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, we, the Honorable Steve Crocker, Minister of Justice and Public Safety, and the Honorable Andrew Parsons, QC, Attorney General, hereby submit the Department of Justice and Public Safety's Strategic Plan 2020-23. In August 2020, the responsibilities of Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General were assigned to two separate Ministers. As Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General, we share joint responsibility 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**.

In developing this plan, consideration was given to the strategic directions of Government applicable to the Department of Justice and Public Safety as well as commitments made to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. As such, we are pleased to present the Strategic Plan that outlines the department's two strategic issues for 2020-23: enhancing community safety and well-being; and improving and modernizing the justice system.

Over the next three years, the department is committed to responding to the challenges facing the justice system and ensuring the overall well-being of our province and its people. Implementation of robust and meaningful programs that promote the use of restorative justice principles and focus on prevention and rehabilitation are key priorities for fulfilling the outcomes of this plan. We look forward to continuing dialogue and working collaboratively with departmental staff, community and justice stakeholders, and residents on initiatives that ensure the department is responsive to the justice and public safety needs of all.

Sincerely,

Hon. Steve Crocker
Minister of Justice and Public Safety

Sincerely,

Hon. Andrew Parsons, QC
Attorney General

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Departmental Overview

Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Justice and Public Safety reflects the responsibilities of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General for Newfoundland and Labrador. The Department of Justice and Public Safety provides legal services to Government and is primarily responsible for the protection of residents of the province in respect of their persons and property. This objective is met through the provision of legal advice to Government departments, police protection, the prosecution of accused persons, the administration of the courts, including family justice services, operation of the province's correctional systems, services to victims of crime, protection of human rights, and Legal Aid services. Drafting of legislation for the House of Assembly is undertaken by the Office of the Legislative Counsel. The department is also responsible for the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Office, the Support Enforcement Program, Fines Administration, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Serious Incident Response Team, and the administration of public inquiries. In August 2020, the department was assigned responsibility for Fire and Emergency Services in the province.

Lines of Business

- **ATIPP Office** oversees the implementation and coordination of the **Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015** by providing guidance and assistance to public bodies that are subject to the Act. This is done through training, providing advice and guidance as well as the development of policies, procedures, guides and educational resources.
- **Civil Division** is responsible for providing legal services to Provincial Government departments and agencies. These services include providing legal opinions, drafting commercial and financial documents, and representing the Provincial Government and its agencies in negotiations and civil actions before administrative tribunals, all levels of court and judicial inquiries.
- **Corrections and Community Services** is responsible for the safe and secure custody of young and adult offenders, for providing adult community corrections in the form of probation services, and for providing services to victims of crime.
- **Court Services** is responsible for providing infrastructure and administrative support to the Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador. Family Justice Services, which falls under the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador, is responsible for promoting dispute resolution outside the Court process. The program assists parties in resolving parenting and support issues and offers parent information sessions, mediation, and counselling.
- **Emergency Services** develops and maintains an emergency management system in NL to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. Services and programs include the Provincial Emergency Management Plan, Emergency Management

Training Program, Emergency operations, 24/7 on-call system, and Regional Emergency Management Planning, among others.

- **Fines Administration** is responsible for the processing, billing and collection of fines penalties and surcharges imposed on individuals by Provincial Court, summary offence tickets, or other legislation. Ticket processing, billing and collection services are also provided to third parties such as municipalities, hospitals, and post-secondary institutions.
- **Fire Services** Fire Services Division provides oversight to local governments, fire departments and other stakeholders on matters related to fire protection services, including firefighter training and certification, fire department assessments, and education. The division is also responsible for the Office of the Fire Commissioner in fulfilling the duties outlined in the Fire Protection Services Act.
- **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner** is an independent entity that is responsible for reporting, investigating and recording deaths pursuant to the **Fatalities Investigation Act**. The Chief Medical Examiner is also responsible for appointing physicians to act as medical examiners and appointment of medical investigators.
- **Office of the High Sherriff** is responsible for providing administrative services to the Supreme and Provincial Courts. The Office of the High Sheriff administers the jury system, provides court security, judgement enforcement and trust account services, and executes orders and decisions of the Court.
- **Office of the Legislative Counsel** provides legislative drafting services to Government. Additionally, in conjunction with the Queen's Printer and the House of Assembly, the office ensures the publication and dissemination of provincial legislation.
- **Policing Services** are delivered through the province's two policing agencies: the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Through a broad range of policing services, both police forces are responsible for fostering and maintaining peaceful and safe communities.
- **Public Prosecutions** is responsible for prosecuting all offences pursuant to the **Criminal Code of Canada** and provincial statutes. Prosecutors appear in every level of court in the province and in the Supreme Court of Canada. Public Prosecutions also provides legal opinions and advice on criminal and criminal-related matters to policing agencies and other government departments that enforce provincial statutes.
- **Serious Incident Response Team** is an independent civilian-led police oversight agency responsible for conducting independent investigations into serious incidents involving death, serious injury, sexual offence, domestic violence or any matter of significant public interest that may have arisen from the actions of a police officer in the province.
- **Support Enforcement** performs a number of services related to the collection and distribution of court-ordered funds for support, maintenance or alimony. This includes registering and transmitting Support Orders, issuing Notices of Garnishment, tracing delinquent payers, and receiving and transmitting Interjurisdictional support orders (ISO) applications.

Staff and Budget

As of September 30, 2020, the department employed 1,350 individuals throughout the province, including the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC). The overall gender breakdown for staffing in the department is approximately 52 per cent individuals identifying as women (697) and 48 per cent individuals identifying as men (653). Additionally, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) employed approximately 436 officers and 112 civilian members and support staff to provide frontline policing services in approximately 44 locations throughout the province, pursuant to the Provincial Policing Services Agreement and Community Tripartite Agreements.

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 men to women. The following table reflects the branch structure of the department as of September 2020.

Branch	Staff Complement			2020-21 Budget
	Total	Women	Men	
Courts and Corporate Services	253	212	41	\$27,182,000
Legal Services	57	37	20	\$33,076,100
Public Safety and Emergency Services	506	196	310	\$153,244,300
Corrections and Community Services	469	203	266	\$42,013,200
Public Prosecutions	65	49	16	\$7,014,800
Total	1,350	697	653	\$262,530,400

- The overall gender breakdown for staffing in the department is 52 per cent female and 48 per cent male.
- The staffing count for Legal Services does not include the Legal Aid Commission, but does include its budget.
- The staffing count for the Public Safety and Emergency Services Branch does not include the RCMP, but does include its budget.

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

Issue One – Enhanced Community Safety and Well-being

The work of the Department of Justice and Public Safety is essential in ensuring the safety of all residents of the province. Strengthening the safety and well-being of communities is an important focus for the department over this planning cycle.

The department is committed to ensuring residents of the province feel safe and secure with initiatives that focus on safety, offender rehabilitation and alternatives to traditional approaches. This will offer opportunities to address underlying issues of crime and create community connections in support of that objective.

In support of the safety and well-being of individuals and communities, it is recognized there is a need for additional tools to protect those at risk of intimate partner violence. The department will work to identify opportunities and enhance prevention initiatives that directly target violent behavior and resist the social normalization of violence.

GOAL 1:

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have enhanced community safety and well-being.

Indicators:

- Work begun on initiatives to enhance community safety and well-being.
- Advanced work towards implementing initiatives to enhance community safety and well-being.
- Community safety and well-being initiatives implemented.

Objective 1.1:

By March 31, 2021, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have implemented initiatives to enhance community safety and well-being.

Indicators:

- Continue development of the Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol.
- Undertaken evaluation of the Electronic Monitoring Pilot Program.
- Undertaken work towards the expansion of Family Violence Intervention Court.
- Completed the Ground Search and Rescue Inquiry.
- Allocated funding to support the replacement of fire protection vehicles and firefighting equipment.

Objective 1.2:

By March 31, 2022, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued implementing initiatives to enhance community safety and well-being.

Objective 1.3:

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have implemented initiatives that enhance community safety and well-being.

Issue Two – Improve and Modernize the Justice System

The Department of Justice and Public Safety is committed to working with its partners in government, the court system, and community to support the improvement and modernization of the justice system. The general public relies on the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system to protect people's fundamental rights, liberties and freedoms. This occurs through the full range of services and interventions available through all lines of business.

During the 2020-23 strategic planning cycle, the department will identify initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system, enhance services, and promote access to justice. The department will examine barriers and identify mechanisms to increase access and enhance services, particularly for vulnerable populations. These mechanisms will include enhanced services and programs with restorative justice principles as well as exploring alternative measures to allow individuals to more widely avail of supports.

The Covid-19 global pandemic caused the department to shift from its normal operations to a focus on maintaining and delivering critical services in an effort to reduce the spread of the virus, including remote programming and virtual visitation in correctional facilities and supporting the Courts in establishing virtual trials and hearings. While technology plays an integral role in maintaining services, there may be some challenges to overcome in regards to access, particularly in rural areas. Ensuring health and the safety of staff and those accessing the justice system at all times throughout the remainder of the pandemic will be an important consideration for the department.

The department will continue efforts to improve the justice system through infrastructure improvements, the use of alternative measures, enhancing outreach with stakeholders, increasing the use of available technologies, and providing training opportunities to ensure that those accessing justice based programs and services receive holistic trauma informed interventions.

GOAL 2:

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have improved and modernized the justice system through the enhancement of access, services and the availability of alternative measures.

Indicators:

- Commenced initiatives to improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services, and the availability of alternative measures.
- Continued to work towards implementation of initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services, and the availability of alternative measures.
- Implemented initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services and the availability of alternative measures.

Objective 2.1:

By March 31, 2021, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have implemented initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services and available alternative measures.

Indicators:

- Implemented the Bail Supervision Program.
- Completed the statutory review of the **Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015**.
- Continued to explore the expansion of Drug Treatment Court.
- Explored the expansion of Adult Diversion to other areas of the province.
- Continued planning work, in partnership with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, for the construction of a new correctional facility to replace Her Majesty's Penitentiary.

Objective 2.2:

By March 31, 2022, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued to implement initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services and available alternative measures.

Objective 2.3:

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have advanced implementation of initiatives that improve and modernize the justice system through enhanced access, services and alternative measures.

Annex A: Strategic Directions

Strategic directions represent significant desired outcomes that the department will work towards and that 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. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified the following strategic directions for the 2020-2023 planning cycle. Outcomes will support the policy direction of government and require focus in the following areas:

- A Better Economy
- Healthier People
- Better Living
- A Bright Future
- A More Efficient Public Sector

For this planning cycle, the Department of Justice and Public Safety Strategic Directions are:

Strategic Direction #1: Enhanced Community Safety and Well-being

Outcome: Enhanced community safety and well-being through strengthened initiatives focused on prevention and rehabilitation.

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

- Violence prevention.
- Rehabilitative programming and services.

Strategic Direction #2: Improve and Modernize the Justice System.

Outcome: Identify and develop mechanisms through which to break down the barriers that are presented by the justice system to improve access and modernize the justice system.

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

- Infrastructure improvements.
- Increased access, enhanced services and availability of alternative measures.

