

**Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Poverty Reduction**

**2019/20 – 2021/22  
SERVICE PLAN**

**February 2019**



## Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction 2019/20 - 2021/22 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

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

Honourable Shane Simpson  
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
January 28, 2019

## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction ([SDPR](#)) focuses on reducing poverty, creating opportunities, and increasing inclusion. The purpose of the ministry is to provide strategic leadership and quality services that empower the broad range of British Columbians in need to share in the Province's prosperity, to participate fully in their community, and to reach their full potential.

SDPR is guided by four pieces of legislation: the [Employment and Assistance Act](#), the [Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act](#), the [Poverty Reduction Strategy Act](#), and the [Community Living Authority Act](#). The Minister is responsible for Community Living BC ([CLBC](#)) and also supports the Parliamentary Secretary for Poverty Reduction. The Ministry's key responsibilities include:

- Leading development and implementation of a cross-government, province-wide poverty-reduction strategy – [BC Poverty Reduction](#);
- Leading development and implementation of a homelessness action plan to reduce the homeless population through permanent housing and services – in partnership with provincial ministries and agencies, local governments, first responders and service providers;
- Providing income, disability and supplemental assistance for people in need
- Providing an integrated system of employment programs and services and supports to all British Columbians – [WorkBC](#) ;
- Working with community, business and government partners to increase accessibility, employment, independence and inclusion for individuals with disabilities (including exploring options for provincial accessibility legislation); and
- Supporting community living services for adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

## Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia is putting people at the heart of decision-making by working to make life more affordable, improve the services people count on, and build a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

Over the past year, significant government investments in areas including housing, child care and the elimination of fees, such as Medical Service Premiums, have contributed to making life more affordable for British Columbians today and into the future. Ministries are engaged in ongoing work to improve the availability of services citizens rely on including those related to primary medical care, education and training, transportation, the opioid crisis and poverty.

A strong economy that works for all regions of B.C. is diversified, resilient and improves the standard of living for people across the province. With that in mind, government is focusing on sustainable economic growth that strengthens our natural resource sectors, continues the development of the emerging economy, supports small business and uses innovation and technology to solve B.C. problems. A key priority in 2019/20 and beyond will be driving economic growth with cleaner energy and fewer emissions. At the same time, ministries continue to build prudence into budgets and plan for challenges.

Underpinning the work of all ministries are two shared commitments: reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and consideration of how diverse groups of British Columbians may experience our policies, programs and initiatives. As part of these commitments, ministries are working to implement the

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and Gender-Based Analysis+ policy and budgeting.

In July 2017, each minister was given a formal mandate letter that identifies both government-wide and ministry-specific priorities for implementation.

This service plan outlines how the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction will support the government's priorities, including selected action items identified in the Minister's [Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction made progress on these priorities by:

- Introducing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Act which was unanimously passed by the legislature and commits government to targets and timelines for reducing poverty;
- Lead Reimagining Community Inclusion, an initiative struck by the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to engage individuals, families and stakeholders in proposing a new vision and roadmap to help improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and provide a consensus report to be received for consideration by the Minister in 2019;
- Appointing an expert committee to study the potential for using a basic income to reduce poverty and prepare income support programs to meet the needs of British Columbians in the changing labour market; and
- Completing the re-procurement of WorkBC services, which provided an opportunity to improve supports available to vulnerable British Columbians and help them reach their employment goals.

The following performance plan outlines how the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction will continue to track progress on key mandate letter commitments and other emerging government priorities.

## **Performance Planning**

### **Goal 1: Reduce Poverty in British Columbia**

#### **Objective 1.1: Release and implement the cross-government, province-wide poverty-reduction strategy**

##### **Key Strategies:**

- Release and implement a comprehensive, cross-government Poverty Reduction Strategy that reduces the overall poverty by 25% and poverty of children by 50% over the next five years by addressing key areas of need including housing; families, children and youth; education; employment; income supports; and social supports;
- Launch a new advisory committee, which replaces the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction, to advise the minister on matters relating to poverty reduction and prevention;
- Support the basic income expert panel's research project into whether giving people a basic income is an effective way to reduce poverty and improve health, housing and employment; and into how basic income principles might be used to improve B.C.'s existing income and social-support system; and
- Lead the implementation of the Homelessness Action Plan in partnership with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and others, including a provincial unit to provide overall coordination, oversight and provincial leadership on reducing homelessness, an encampment prevention and response strategy, provincial homeless counts and policy enhancements to help prevent homelessness and support vulnerable clients to access income support.

##### **Linking Performance Measure to Objective:**

The province-wide poverty-reduction strategy is to be released in early 2019. Legislated targets require that the strategy include initiatives intended to reduce the poverty rate for 2024 below the poverty rate for 2016 by at least 25% among all people living in poverty and 50% among children under 18 years of age. Annual targets for these two measures have not yet been determined because they rely on the timing of new initiatives that will be determined when the strategy is released. The intent is to publish the annual targets in the Ministry's next Service Plan.

### **Goal 2: British Columbians in need have services, supports and opportunities that make life better**

#### **Objective 2.1: Deliver reliable, responsive, consistent, accessible and secure income and disability assistance services**

##### **Key Strategies:**

- Consider the diverse needs of clients to improve the quality and responsiveness of income assistance services;
- Increase community presence through increased outreach and working collaboratively with Service BC and other community partners;
- Continue to expand and improve online self-service options;

- Regularly monitor client feedback and satisfaction to help improve services; and
- Ensure administrative fairness through the provision of an effective and efficient reconsideration and appeal system.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2018/19 Forecast	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
2.1 Number of clients using My Self-Serve <sup>1</sup>	40,000	60,000	65,000	70,000	75,000

<sup>1</sup> Data Source: Service Delivery Division, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

### Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

This measure reflects the number of Ministry clients using My Self-Serve, the ministry’s online service portal. An increase in this number means that more clients are accessing income assistance services through the most flexible and efficient means available.

### Objective 2.2: WorkBC Employment Service clients achieve employment

#### Key Strategies:

- Reduce barriers and provide employment services and supports to British Columbians looking to reach their full potential through employment;
- Work collaboratively with partner ministries to ensure ministry employment programs and supports are aligned with the needs of individuals and the labour market; and
- Continue to engage with communities and employers to ensure that the program is responsive to local labour market needs.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2018/19 Forecast	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
2.2 Number of case managed clients who achieve employment <sup>2</sup>	27,288	26,200	27,300	27,800	28,300

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. Employment is defined as when a client attains a full-time job (30 or more hours/week) or a part-time job (when part-time employment is desired; less than 30 hours/week), or self-employment (business is implemented and considered operational), after participating in case management services through WorkBC Employment Services.

### Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The measure captures the number of British Columbians who achieve employment after receiving case management through WorkBC Employment Services. Clients may continue receiving case management services after finding employment, until sustainable employment that meets their needs is achieved. Currently about 60% of case managed clients obtain employment after receiving case managed services by WorkBC Employment Services.

### Goal 3: Individuals with disabilities live, work and participate in their communities on an equal basis with all British Columbians

**Objective 3.1: Support a comprehensive and integrated system of supports and services for individuals with disabilities**

**Key Strategies:**

- Provide adults with disabilities access to responsive services that support them in participating as full citizens and in achieving improved outcomes;
- Continue to work with people with disabilities and their families, community stakeholders, public organizations and the business community to develop solutions and strategies that improve the lives of people with disabilities in British Columbia;
- Engage stakeholders and the public to identify barriers and solutions to improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities;
- Support the implementation of the new ten year vision and consensus roadmap developed through the Reimagining Community Inclusion initiative to help improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities; and
- Monitor and support the transition process for youth with special needs who are entering adulthood to ensure they access the ministry’s disability assistance program, STADD’s youth (16-24) transition planning program, and the adult community living services offered through Community Living BC.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2018/19 Forecast	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
3.1 Total amount of earnings exemptions reported by Persons With Disabilities cases <sup>3</sup>	\$115 million	\$130 million	\$137 million	\$145 million	\$153 million

<sup>3</sup> Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

**Linking Performance Measure to Objective:**

Employment provides meaningful participation and inclusion as well as the ability for the ministry’s Persons with Disabilities clients to take advantage of earnings exemptions and increase their total income. An increase in the total amount of exempted earnings reported by these clients is an indicator that both participation in employment and incomes have improved.

## Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2018/19 Restated Estimates <sup>1</sup>	2019/20 Estimates	2020/21 Plan	2021/22 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses (\$000)</b>				
<b>Income Assistance</b>	2,318,986	2,459,638	2,489,413	2,504,113
<b>Employment</b>	29,029	29,169	29,169	29,169
<b>Community Living Services</b>	1,001,261	1,068,015	1,097,104	1,116,304
<b>Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal</b>	1,800	1,828	1,823	1,823
<b>Executive and Support Services</b>	12,651	12,947	10,911	10,911
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,363,727</b>	<b>3,571,597</b>	<b>3,628,420</b>	<b>3,662,320</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)</b>				
<b>Executive and Support Services</b>	1,549	5,709	1,331	381
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,549</b>	<b>5,709</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>381</b>

<sup>1</sup> For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2018/19 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2019/20 Estimates.

\* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).



## **Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals**

### [Community Living BC](#)

Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) is a crown agency that funds supports and services that meet the disability-related needs of two groups of eligible individuals and their families in British Columbia:

- Adults with a diagnosis of developmental disability. Criteria include age of onset, intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour.
- Adults who have a diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder or autism spectrum disorder (also known as pervasive developmental disorder) and significant limitations in adaptive functioning.

### [Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal](#)

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal is an administrative tribunal established under the authority of the Employment and Assistance Act to provide clients with an efficient and transparent appeal process that is independent from the Ministry of Social Development. The Tribunal hears appeals from decisions made by the Ministry of Social Development to refuse, reduce or discontinue certain benefits or supplements. The Tribunal also hears appeals from decisions made by the Ministry of Children and Family Development that refuse, reduce or discontinue a subsidy under the Child Care Subsidy Act.

