

**Ministry of  
Social Development  
and Poverty Reduction**

**2020/21 – 2022/23  
SERVICE PLAN**

**February 2020**



## Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction 2020/21 - 2022/23 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".

Honourable Shane Simpson  
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
February 7, 2020

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## 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 British Columbians in need to share in the Province's prosperity, so that everyone has the opportunity 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 is supported by 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 – [TogetherBC: BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#);
- 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;
- Leading development and implementation of cross-government, province-wide accessibility legislation to identify and remove barriers and prevent the creation of new barriers for people with disabilities;
- 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 through [WorkBC](#);
- Working with community, business and government partners to increase accessibility, employment, independence and inclusion for individuals with disabilities;
- Leading a collaborative engagement across the social services sector to help strengthen the important community social services that people count on every day; and
- Through, [Community Living BC](#), supporting community living services for adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

## Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services, and investing in a sustainable economy.

Ministries are actively working to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to budgeting and policy development, Ministries will ensure that equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs.

Additional key initiatives underpinning lasting prosperity in 2020/21 and beyond are the implementation of:

- A Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living which will provide the foundation for quality economic growth in our province and a pathway to a more inclusive and prosperous society;

- The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, demonstrating support for true and lasting reconciliation; and
- The [CleanBC](#) plan, putting B.C. on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water.

The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) expects B.C.'s real GDP to grow by 2.4 per cent in 2020 and 2.3 per cent in 2021. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 1.7 per cent in 2020 and 1.8 per cent in 2021. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to outperform Canada's in the coming years. Risks to B.C.'s economic outlook include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies and weak global economic activity, as well as lower commodity prices and slower domestic economic growth. Meanwhile, LNG development in the province is expected to have a positive impact on B.C.'s economy.

This 2020/21 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 [July 2017 Minister's Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction made progress on these priorities by:

- Designing and implementing [TogetherBC: BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), B.C.'s first poverty reduction strategy, including legislated targets and timelines;
- Completing analysis and redrafting of our legislation, regulations and policies, to meet commitments made in [TogetherBC](#) we deliver services so that people know supports will be there when they are needed;
- Public release of the [Re-imagining Community Inclusion Roadmap](#) in May 2019 and starting on implementation planning with partners;
- As part of [TogetherBC](#), creating a new Office of Homelessness Coordination responsible for coordinating actions on homelessness;
- Conducting consultations across the province to inform the development of Accessibility Legislation; and
- Renewing the [WorkBC](#) program with a streamlined, flexible and accessible range of services to help British Columbians get good, lasting jobs and to help citizens in need to break the cycle of poverty.

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: Implement the cross-government, province-wide Poverty-Reduction Strategy

##### Key Strategies:

- Implement TogetherBC, the comprehensive, cross-government Poverty Reduction Strategy addressing key areas of need including housing; families, children and youth; education; employment; income supports; and social supports, aiming to meet statutory targets to reduce the overall poverty rate by 25% and poverty rate of children by 50% by 2024;
- Produce an annual report on the actions taken to implement the strategy, the effects of the strategy on poverty reduction, and any progress made toward the targets in the previous calendar year;
- Engage with the Minister's Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee, which advises the minister on matters relating to poverty reduction and prevention;
- Support the basic income expert committee's research 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 other agencies. Implementation involves providing overall coordination, oversight and provincial leadership on reducing homelessness. In addition, work includes: an encampment prevention and response strategy, the provincial homeless counts, and policy changes to decrease homelessness and support vulnerable clients to access income support.

##### Discussion

The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* sets out legislated targets for the reduction of both the overall poverty rate and the poverty rate for children by 2024. The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* also requires annual reporting on the Strategy – including progress made towards the legislated targets. This annual reporting is required by October 1 of each year, beginning in 2020.

**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;
- Continued community presence through outreach by Community Integration Specialists, working collaboratively with 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	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target <sup>2</sup>	2021/22 Target <sup>2</sup>	2022/23 Target
2.1 Number of clients using My Self-Serve <sup>1</sup>	69,500	78,000	82,500	86,500	90,500

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

<sup>2</sup> The 2019/20 target of 65,000 is forecast to be exceeded. The Ministry increased the 2020/21 - 2022/23 targets based on current usage rates.

**Linking Performance Measure to Objective:**

This measure reflects the number of Ministry clients using My Self-Serve, the ministry’s online service portal. Targets can be achieved through increased marketing and robust communication. 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 Services clients achieve employment**

**Key Strategies:**

- Reduce barriers and provide employment services and supports to British Columbians looking to reach their full potential through employment;
- Provide access to training and employment supports that will increase economic opportunities;
- Work collaboratively with partner ministries to ensure ministry employment programs and supports are aligned with the needs of individuals and the labour market;
- Implement awareness and information campaigns to enhance the recognition and consistent knowledge of the suite of services available through the network of WorkBC Centres across B.C.;
- Continue to actively promote awareness of the Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) program to effectively respond to emerging labour market events, support employers and

communities to address labour market needs and improve employment outcomes for unemployed British Columbians; and

- Engage and support province-wide employers and employer associations to use WorkBC centres as a key resource in the recruitment and retention of diverse talent.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.2 Number of case managed clients who achieve employment <sup>1</sup>	24,400	19,000	27,800	28,300	28,300

<sup>1</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, just over 55% of case managed clients obtain employment after receiving case managed services by WorkBC Employment Services.

The number of people accessing WorkBC services has decreased over the past few years, driven by a strong economy and more jobs. However, future targets remain the same because there are focused strategies to increase the number of clients served and better support those to achieve employment outcomes. As WorkBC program changes are more established, the number of individuals employed is expected to increase after 2019/20.

## 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 10-year [Re-imagining Community Inclusion Roadmap](#) 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 and the adult community living services offered through Community Living BC.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.1 Total amount of earnings exemptions reported by Persons with Disabilities cases <sup>1</sup>	\$135 million	\$145 million	\$153 million	\$160 million	\$168 million

<sup>1</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	2019/20 Restated Estimates <sup>1</sup>	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
<b>Operating Expenses (\$000)</b>				
<b>Income Assistance</b>	2,458,903	2,501,257	2,534,497	2,552,833
<b>Employment</b>	29,169	29,169	29,169	29,169
<b>Community Living Services</b>	1,064,750	1,139,699	1,173,202	1,203,202
<b>Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal</b>	1,828	1,837	1,849	1,849
<b>Executive and Support Services</b>	12,947	10,858	10,989	10,989
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,567,597</b>	<b>3,682,820</b>	<b>3,749,706</b>	<b>3,798,042</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)</b>				
<b>Executive and Support Services</b>	5,709	1,449	1,499	1,499
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,709</b>	<b>1,449</b>	<b>1,499</b>	<b>1,499</b>

<sup>1</sup> For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 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 provides supports and services to 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 behavior; and
- 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 and Poverty Reduction. The Tribunal hears appeals on decisions made by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to refuse, reduce or discontinue certain benefits or supplements. The Tribunal also hears appeals on decisions made by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to refuse, reduce or discontinue a subsidy under the *Child Care Subsidy Act*.