

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

2024/25 – 2026/27 Service Plan

February 2024



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General 2024/25 – 2026/27 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 blue ink that reads "Mike Farnworth". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
February 12, 2024

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Strategic Direction

In 2024/25, the Government of British Columbia will remain focused on providing the services and infrastructure that people depend on to build a good life. Government will continue delivering results that matter to British Columbians including helping people with costs, attainable and affordable housing, strengthened health care, safer communities, and a secure, clean, and fair economy. Government will continue working collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples as it implements the [Action Plan](#) for the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (DRIPA) and delivers initiatives that advance reconciliation in ways that make a difference in communities throughout the province.

This 2024/25 – 2026/27 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General will support the government’s priorities, including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the [December 2022 Minister’s mandate letter](#).

Purpose of the Ministry

The [Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General](#) (PSSG) and the [Ministry of Attorney General](#) (AG) work together as the justice and public safety sector to advance a shared vision of a safe, secure, just, and resilient British Columbia.

PSSG’s mission is to develop public safety policy and legislation and deliver associated services and programs, and administer regulations for the liquor, cannabis, and gambling sectors.

The ministry is responsible for: [policing and law enforcement superintendence](#); [911 emergency communication services](#); [correctional services](#); [victim services](#); [crime prevention and reduction](#); [restorative justice](#); [civil forfeiture](#); [coroners’ services](#); [liquor and cannabis regulation](#); [gambling regulation](#); [problem gambling prevention and treatment services](#); [road safety](#); [criminal record checks](#); the [protection order registry](#); [security industry regulation](#); [consumer protection](#); and [structure fire prevention and safety](#).

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General is also responsible for the [BC Liquor Distribution Branch](#) (LDB) (see [Appendix A](#)) and a number of agencies and boards, including the [Insurance Corporation of British Columbia](#) (ICBC), and the [Organized Crime Agency of BC](#) within the [Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia](#) (see [Appendix B](#)).

Operating Environment

The ministry continues to strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations. These partnerships are integral to advancing the priorities of the ministry, including reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples adversely involved in and impacted by the justice and public safety system; addressing gender-based violence, especially against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+¹ people, who are disproportionately

¹ The acronym 2SLGBTQIA+ refers to people who are Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and/or asexual.

affected; and supporting culturally relevant policies, programs, and services. This is consistent with government's commitment to true, lasting reconciliation, the [Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#), DRIPA and the associated Action Plan, the [B.C. First Nations Justice Strategy](#), and the [Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#).

The ministry remains committed to advancing its work through a [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#) lens and in alignment with the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) for the BC Public Service to deliver policies, programs, and services that are inclusive, intersectional, responsive, accessible, and culturally safe.

The Province has made significant changes and continues work to address the challenges communities throughout B.C. have faced with repeat offending – criminal activity from a small group of people who are disproportionately committing crimes in neighbourhoods – as well as unprovoked violent stranger attacks.²

Following the release of the [Safer Communities Action Plan](#) (SCAP) in November 2022, cross-sector collaboration resulted in the development and implementation of the [Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative](#) (ReVOII). This program is designed to enhance collaborative efforts between police, dedicated prosecutors, dedicated probation officers, and correctional supervisors, to help keep communities safe by focusing on repeat violent offending in the province. As the ministry continues to lead the program, factors that could impact it include the willingness of community partners to participate and engage; resource constraints and delays within the courts; stability of technology and use of virtual hearings; resource constraints within the forensic and mental health systems; and delays in access to information from justice and public safety partners.

There have been challenges associated with vacancies in the RCMP, which comprises B.C.'s [Provincial Police Service \(PPS\)](#); however, RCMP recruitment is progressing following the Province's November 2022 funding [announcement](#) of a \$230 million investment over three years to allow the RCMP to reach a full staffing level of 2,602 in B.C. It is particularly important to fill vacancies in rural and remote RCMP detachments and regional units, and to hire more officers for specialized units such as the [BC Highway Patrol](#), and units combatting issues such as major crime, the sexual exploitation of children, and money laundering. Factors that may impact the RCMP's ability to reach full staffing levels include retention and retirement trends, and a declining interest in policing as a career.

There is an ongoing need for transformative change to policing and community safety in B.C. This includes policing reforms and enhanced oversight and improved coordination of services across government to better support people with mental health and substance use challenges, people at risk of entering the justice system, people leaving correctional centres, and people

² Repeat violent offending has been linked to unintended impacts of federal law changes and case law, and the increased mental health and addiction challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the toxic drug crisis. For a detailed analysis of trends in repeat violent offending, see [A Rapid Investigation into Repeat Offending and Random Stranger Violence in British Columbia](#), released in September 2022 by Amanda Butler and Doug LePard.

who are in crisis, or are at risk of experiencing or have experienced violence, trauma and/or significant loss. Challenges to policing reforms include the complexity and scope of the [recommendations](#) of the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act (the Special Committee), and the engagement capacity of Indigenous partners and local governments that is required for the co-development of legislation.

British Columbians continue to suffer the tragic effects of the toxic and volatile drug supply in the province. Nearly 14,000 deaths have been caused by unregulated drug toxicity since the public health emergency into substance-related harms was first declared in April 2016. 2,511 British Columbians lost their lives to unregulated toxic drugs in 2023 and many others experienced tremendous harm and loss. In every year of this public health emergency, Indigenous Peoples have been disproportionately impacted and overrepresented in toxic drug poisoning events and deaths.³ While the [decriminalization](#) of people who possess certain illegal drugs for personal use is a critical step in B.C.'s fight against the toxic drug crisis, there is much more work to be done. The ministry continues to support the Province's commitment to saving lives and helping people struggling with addiction while simultaneously addressing concerns regarding public drug use and building safe, healthy communities for everyone.

Over the past five years, there has been a rising trend in fire-related deaths across the province as documented in the Office of the Fire Commissioner's (OFC) [annual reports](#). In 2023 62 fire-related deaths and 262 fire-related injuries were reported in British Columbia.⁴ People over the age of 65 are over-represented in fire-related deaths. A working smoke alarm was present in only 45 per cent of reported residential structure fires. In working to reverse the trend in fire-related deaths and injuries, the priorities of the OFC are informed by trends in the natural environment (e.g., impacts of climate change; wildfire incidents), the built environment (e.g., aging building stock; increases in building density; building development in rural areas), and the population (e.g., an aging population; increasing vulnerable populations).

Lastly, the rising frequency and intensity of natural disasters resulting from climate change continue to affect British Columbians and the work of the ministry, as is indicated by the frequent implementation of states of emergency and emergency orders over recent years.

³ Further information on data sources and trends regarding the drug toxicity crisis and Indigenous Peoples can be found [here](#).

⁴ There may be differences between OFC and BC Coroners Service (BCCS) fire fatality reporting. The information presented here is based on fire reports submitted to the OFC on fire-related incidents, injuries and deaths. Fire categories include outdoor fires, structure fires, vehicle fires, and person fires (accidental or otherwise involving a person and fire, e.g. refueling, fireworks, campfire, etc.). The OFC and the BCCS work together on an ongoing basis to reconcile their data sets.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: The justice and public safety sector in British Columbia protects people

A foundational role of British Columbia's justice and public safety sector is to protect people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Objective 1.1: Improved public safety for all British Columbians

The ministry will continue to advance strategies to improve public safety through a broad range of program areas, including policing; crime prevention and reduction; support for integrated, community-based mental health and social services; road safety; structure fire prevention and safety; and other core functions such as corrections and coroners' services. Safe communities, along with positive public perceptions of safety, are central to the well-being of British Columbians.

Key Strategies

- Utilize the Police Superintendence Framework to assist the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the Director of Police Services in meeting their statutory obligations under the [Police Act](#) to ensure adequate and effective policing and law enforcement in British Columbia.
- Continue to provide oversight of the PPS to ensure the PPS and the federal government adhere to commitments in the [Provincial Policing Service Agreement](#).
- Support the 12 multi-agency ReVOII hubs operating in B.C., which focus on addressing the specific public safety needs of the communities in which they are located along with the surrounding communities. These hubs ensure that identified individuals are continuously monitored from investigation, charge assessment, bail, trial or plea and sentencing, through to enhanced release planning and ongoing case management of community supervision orders.
- Support efforts to create and enhance existing [Situation Tables](#) to help front line staff to identify vulnerable people and collaboratively and rapidly connect them to services before they experience negative or traumatic events.
- Work to increase the proportion of sentenced individuals under BC Corrections' supervision, either in-custody or in the community, who are referred to cognitive-behavioural and/or skills-based programming to help them make meaningful, positive, and lasting changes in their lives and contribute to [reducing reoffending](#).
- Work with police to address serious and organized crime, including targeting mid-level and high-level drug traffickers, and make communities across the province safer from gangs and guns through a variety of measures, such as:

- Continued implementation of the BC Organized Crime Strategy designed to enhance the Province's oversight of coordinated efforts to combat organized crime and gang violence through the Organized Crime Agency of BC; and
- Measures to combat illegal firearms, such as the regulation of the purchase of imitation firearms and the disruption of the illegal transportation and possession of firearms through enforcement of the [Firearm Violence Prevention Act](#), and operation of the [BC Provincial Forensic Firearms Laboratory](#) to help police build intelligence on illegal firearms and aid in prosecutions.
- Continue to support initiatives that are proven to prevent and reduce crime and promote an integrated, cross-sector approach to increasing the use of [restorative justice](#) in B.C., including:
 - supporting community-based projects through the [Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Remediation Grant Program](#); and,
 - working with the [Law Foundation of BC](#) to implement the \$3 million in one-time grant funding [announced](#) in June 2023 to enhance and expand restorative justice.
- Continue work to improve road safety, with a focus on reducing high-risk driving behaviours (e.g., alcohol, drugs, speeding and distraction), increasing the efficacy of traffic enforcement, and ensuring that B.C.'s licensing system supports safe driving.
- Work in collaboration with other ministries and levels of government to prevent structure fires, reduce the number of structure fire-related injuries and deaths, and strengthen the firefighting capacity of local fire departments through:
 - use of the [Community Fire Risk Reduction Dashboard](#), a geospatial tool developed in partnership by Statistics Canada and the OFC to enable the targeting of fire prevention resources within neighbourhoods at greatest risk of structure fires;
 - enhanced public fire prevention efforts, including through a focused smoke alarm program in collaboration with the [BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit](#) and fire departments across the province; and
 - supporting fire services across the province through access to a funding stream for structure fire training and equipment under the [Community Emergency Preparedness Fund](#), a provincial grant program.

Objective 1.2: Improved outcomes for Indigenous Peoples across the justice and public safety sector through strengthened partnerships with Indigenous leadership and communities

Social and economic disparities persist in B.C. with disproportionate impacts on Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples continue to be overrepresented in the justice and public safety sector as both offenders and victims, while being underrepresented in positions of leadership, and face unique challenges to their physical, social, and economic well-being.

Key Strategies

- Continue to implement DRIPA as it relates to public safety and work toward fulfilling designated commitments in the associated Action Plan.⁵
- In partnership with the AG, the federal government and Indigenous communities, continue work with the [BC First Nations Justice Council](#) to advance the [B.C. First Nations Justice Strategy](#) and work with [Métis Nation BC](#) to develop, endorse and advance the Métis Justice Strategy.⁶ These strategies are Indigenous-led and require ongoing collaboration with Indigenous partners.
- Continue to work with Indigenous leadership and communities to take action to reduce the number of Indigenous Peoples adversely involved in and impacted by the justice system, including recognizing culture for its role in prevention, rehabilitation and recovery and providing culturally relevant programming in communities and correctional centres.
- Provide comprehensive BCCS mortality data and analyses to the [First Nations Health Authority](#) and First Nation communities to inform community-based initiatives that reduce health and safety risks and support wellness. Work with First Nations in investigating suspected remains on the sites of former residential schools and hospitals.
- Continue to support Indigenous participation in the regulated cannabis sector through agreements with Indigenous Nations pursuant to Section 119 of the [Cannabis Control and Licensing Act](#), and work with Indigenous partners to advance a collaborative approach to cannabis-related governance and jurisdiction.

Objective 1.3: Strengthened prevention, protection and support for victims of crime, and marginalized and vulnerable women and children

Gender-based violence (GBV) happens in communities of every kind, urban and rural. It happens at work, at school and in the home. Indigenous women and girls, immigrants and newcomers, racialized people, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and people with disabilities, are especially targeted with violence.

Key Strategies

- Continue work to implement [A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C.](#) and the [Calls for Justice](#) of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Collaboratively develop and implement community-driven activities

⁵ The [Declaration Act Action Plan](#), released in March 2022, includes collectively identified goals and outcomes that form the long-term vision for implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in B.C. It also identifies 89 priority actions, which are tangible steps to advance this work. PSSG is identified as the lead ministry for actions 3.08, 3.11, 4.11 and 4.47.

⁶ The [Indigenous Justice Secretariat](#) within the AG leads the transformative work and implementation of the First Nations Justice Strategy within government, including influencing social sector areas that provide housing and social supports for individuals in the justice system.

to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through further funding increases to the Path Forward Community Fund in 2024/25.

- Support the [Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity](#) and continue working with the Ministry of Finance's [Gender Equity Office](#) to implement [Safe and Supported: British Columbia's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan](#) (GBV Action Plan) announced by the Province in December 2023.
- Support implementation of the [Intimate Images Protection Act](#) by providing victims of non-consensual disclosure of intimate images with a dedicated and centralized [support service](#).
- Continue to support the continuum of [victim services and violence against women programs](#) across B.C. and domestic violence prevention and intervention measures, such as Domestic Violence Units, Interagency Case Assessment Teams, domestic violence programming in BC Corrections, and the [Protection Order Registry](#).
- Conduct [coroners' investigations](#) of all deaths of women and children related to violence and criminal activity; provide key information to law enforcement investigators; inform the development of policy and legislation protecting and supporting victims of crime; conduct inquests and death review panels to highlight risks to marginalized and vulnerable populations; and identify opportunities for greater protection and support.

Discussion

Continued advancement of the strategies highlighted above needs to be done in partnership with Indigenous organizations and communities, and through collaboration with other ministries and sector partners. The ministry will monitor implementation progress on these strategies through project milestones, deliverables, and/or metrics, as appropriate. As well as the metrics included for Goal 1 in the Performance Measures section below, the following are examples of areas that will be tracked and evaluated as indicators of progress in meeting the three objectives identified under that goal.

Objective 1.1: Improved public safety for all British Columbians

- Trends in homicide rates.
- Police resource strength and vacancy rates, which directly impact the ability to keep communities safe.
- Number of ReVOII program participants, including referrals and designated individuals.
- The effectiveness of Situation Tables operating in the province.
- Total amount of grant funding for communities through the Civil Forfeiture Grant Program, along with the number of projects funded.
- Rates of structure fire-related injuries and deaths.

Objective 1.2: Improved outcomes for Indigenous Peoples across the justice and public safety sector through strengthened partnerships with Indigenous leadership and communities

- Milestones in implementing the PSSG-led actions in the DRIPA Action Plan.
- Milestones in developing new Indigenous justice programs, improving existing traditional justice programs, strengthening culturally appropriate programming in community corrections and correctional centers, and supporting the successful reintegration of Indigenous Peoples returning to their community and/or remaining connected to their community following incarceration.⁷
- Number of agreements pursuant to Section 119 of the Cannabis Control and Licensing Act and milestones in advancing a collaborative approach to cannabis-related governance and jurisdiction.

Objective 1.3: Strengthen prevention, protection and support for victims of crime, and marginalized and vulnerable women and children

- Implementation of initiatives to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people as identified in the GBV Action Plan.
- Milestones in implementation of a specialized and centralized support service for victims of non-consensual disclosure of intimate images.
- Milestones in establishing new policing standards for responding to sexual assaults.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2022 Baseline ¹	2023 Forecast ²	2024 Target ³	2025 Target	2026 Target
[1a] Violent Crime Severity Index (CSI) for B.C. ⁴	100.78	102.85	100.79	98.77	96.79
[1b] Non-violent CSI for B.C. ⁵	101.06	101.19	99.17	97.19	95.25

Data source: [Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics](#) (CCJCSS). Each index has been standardized at 100 for the base year of 2006. Results are reported by calendar year.

¹ 2022 is the most recent year for which results are available. The 2022 baseline figures for British Columbia are higher than the national CSI averages for the same year, which were 81.42 for the Violent CSI and 72.50 for the Non-violent CSI.

² The 2023 forecast for the Violent CSI is an estimate based on projected trends using data since 2019 when changes to the [Uniform Crime Reporting Survey](#) scoring rules were implemented. The 2023 forecast for the Non-violent CSI is an estimate based on projected trends using data since 2020 to exclude the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been linked to a significant decline in non-violent crimes in 2020 compared to 2019.

³ The ministry is targeting reductions in crime severity over time and the 2024 and subsequent year targets are based on projections of two per cent year-to-year decreases from the 2023 forecasts.

⁷ In previous years, the ministry included a service plan performance measure for the total number of First Nation communities with a Letter of Intent to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support the successful reintegration of Indigenous Peoples returning to their community and/or remaining connected to their community upon release from custody. This measure was created when this work with Indigenous communities was first initiated. As many MOUs have now been signed or are in the process of development, this indicator is no longer included. However, advancing MOUs for Supported Community Reintegration between First Nations and BC Corrections remains a priority of the ministry and progress in this area continues to be tracked.

⁴The Violent CSI is based on the total volume of police-reported violent federal statute offences and measures the relative severity of violent crime.

⁵The Non-violent CSI is based on the total volume of police-reported federal statute offences not considered violent in nature and measures the relative severity of non-violent crime.

Discussion

The CSI is a tool developed by the CCJCSS, a part of Statistics Canada, in 2009 for measuring police-reported crime in Canada. The CSI is a better indicator of trends in crime than are police-reported crime rates as it takes into account both the volume and severity of crime. The CSI accounts for changes in the level of severity of crime from year to year in comparison to other crimes. The overall CSI for any given year can be separated into the Violent CSI and the Non-violent CSI as reported in the table above.

CSIs use weights which assign higher values to more serious crimes and lower values to less serious high-volume crimes based on actual sentences handed down by the courts in all provinces and territories. They are based on all Criminal Code violations including traffic, as well as drug violations and other federal statutes. A jurisdiction with a higher proportion of more serious crimes will have a higher CSI value while a jurisdiction with a higher proportion of less serious crimes will have a lower CSI value.

While trends in crime rates and crime severity are influenced by factors outside of government’s control, they are tracked by the ministry as a high-level indicator of community safety and are helpful in informing where attention needs to be directed.⁸

Performance Measure		2022/23 Baseline	2023/24 Forecast ¹	2024/25 Target ²	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[1c] Percentage of the sentenced BC Corrections population, rated as moderate/high risk to reoffend ³ , who have been referred to at least one cognitive behavioural and/or skills-based program. ⁴	Indigenous ⁵	24.7	21.7	22.7	23.7	24.7
	Non-Indigenous	25.7	21.5	22.5	23.5	24.5

Data source: Results for this measure are derived from BC Corrections’ Cognos BI using data collected via CORNET—BC Corrections’ case management system.

¹ The 2023/24 forecast was estimated using 2023/24 year-to-date data and trends from the same period of time in 2022/23. Please see below for discussion of the factors which contributed to the decline in the referral rates forecasted for 2023/24 compared to the 2022/23 baselines.

⁸ There are many factors that influence police-reported crime statistics. First, an incident must come to the attention of police. The willingness of individuals to report criminal incidents to police has a considerable impact on the number of crimes ultimately recorded by police. Second, differences between individual police services—such as available resources or departmental priorities, policies, and procedures—can also affect police-reported crime trends. Third, and more broadly, social and economic factors can influence the volume of police-reported crime. In particular, crime rates can be affected by changes in age demographics, economic conditions, neighbourhood characteristics, the emergence of new technologies, and attitudes toward crime.

²The ministry is working to increase program referral rates and the 2024/25 and subsequent year targets are based on a conservative estimated trajectory of one per cent growth per year with an initial target of returning to 2022/23 rates. Due to the multitude of factors influencing program referrals, as discussed below, growth in this indicator is not expected to be linear.

³Sentenced individuals rated as moderate/ high risk on the Community Risk Needs Assessment, or moderate/high need on the Inmate Needs Assessment were considered for this metric, as per the [risk-need-responsivity principles](#); interventions for low risk/need clients should be kept to a minimum.

⁴Rates reflect the percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous sentenced individuals, who are rated as moderate or high risk/need, who are referred to BC Corrections programs (core programs and/or Essential Skills for Success) in the year specified and the prior fiscal year. A two-year window was selected as BC Corrections supervises individuals sentenced to two years less a day; referrals are typically made at the outset of one's sentence while developing a case management plan, and the two-year timeframe was therefore selected to ensure all referrals were included.

⁵Indigenous includes individuals who self-identify as Aboriginal, First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Native.

Discussion

Individuals who have been sentenced to custody or are under community supervision, and who are rated moderate or high risk to reoffend, may be referred to one or more of BC Corrections' programs to help them make positive changes in their lives. These include: [cognitive behavioural programs](#) (i.e., Respectful Relationships, Living Without Violence, Substance Abuse Management, and Thinking Leads 2 Change) designed to help people improve their coping skills, learn how attitudes lead to behaviour, and develop more positive ways of thinking and reacting to the world around them; and skills-based programming that targets living skills (e.g., goal setting, communication skills), and employability skills (e.g., resume writing, job search).

These referrals link individuals to the programs that will help to address their needs. Referral, enrollment, and completion rates for these programs are dependent on a multitude of factors, including a sufficiently sized cohort to run a given program, sufficient time remaining on an individual's sentence to complete the program, client motivation to participate in the program, and appropriate staffing levels to deliver it.

The downward trend forecasted for 2023/24 reflects the above noted factors, in addition to ongoing challenges with the recruitment and retention of correctional staff, and fewer individuals identified as suitable for programming due to the increasing complexity of clients under supervision. BC Corrections has taken action to address staffing challenges, including provision of a recruitment and retention incentive for staff in the Adult Custody Division, and is committed to monitoring program referral rates to ensure continued emphasis is placed on helping individuals gain new skills and improve their thinking, behaviour, and interactions with others.

It's important to note that in addition to programs delivered by BC Correction's staff, individuals are also referred to external programs offered by community agencies. Further, probation officers routinely provide cognitive-behaviourally based services one-on-one with clients that wouldn't be reflected in the results for this performance measure. As such, these rates only reflect one component of BC Corrections' services to clients.

Performance Measure	2018 - 2022 Baseline ¹	2023 Forecast ²	2024 Target ³	2025 Target	2026 Target
[1d] Number, per 100,000 population, of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from a motor vehicle crash where alcohol, drugs, speeding and/or distraction were suspected to be a factor ⁴	26.0	24.7	24.2	23.0	21.9

Data source: Data on the number of traffic fatalities for the 2018-2022 baseline is from the Traffic Accident System (TAS) maintained by ICBC. Population estimates and projections are from BC Stats and are as of July 1 each year. Results are reported by calendar year rather than fiscal year. All numbers have been rounded to the closest tenth.

¹ The baseline is the average rate from 2018 through 2022. 2020 was artificially low due to decreased traffic volumes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Results for 2023 were not included in the baseline as the data has not yet settled for that year or been fully approved.

² The 2023 forecast is based on the most recent data available, extrapolated from January to November RCMP Fatal Victims data, and the average actual from 2017 through 2021 of seriously injured victims. This forecast is to be considered preliminary until the data have settled and been fully approved.

³ The 2024 and subsequent year targets are based on annual reductions of three per cent from the 2023 forecast, taking into account population projections.

⁴ Police attend most crashes occurring on a public road that result in serious injuries or fatalities. At the scene of such crashes, police record the factors they believe influenced the crash and assess whether victims have serious or fatal injuries. Serious injuries are assessed by the officer and may differ from hospitalization counts. A fatality or serious injury with more than one of the high-risk driving contributing factors (alcohol, drugs, speeding and/or distraction) will be counted once for each incidence reported.

Discussion

This performance measure is an indicator of success in protecting the public from high-risk driving behaviours (alcohol, drugs, speeding and distraction), which are the leading cause of traffic fatalities and serious injuries in B.C. The ministry operates [high-risk driver programs](#) to combat these behaviours and contribute to improved road safety across the province.

Goal 2: The justice and public safety sector in British Columbia is fair

Fairness in the justice and public safety sector requires sound regulatory measures that protect public safety and interests while minimizing regulatory impacts on businesses and restrictions on civil liberties.

Objective 2.1: Regulatory systems that promote public safety and interests, and fair and efficient business practices

In regulating the liquor, cannabis, and gambling sectors, and overseeing ICBC and consumer protection policy, the ministry works to support and balance business and community interests. This is done through policy development and implementation and by ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks to reduce related threats to public safety and well-being through public education and enforcement actions.

Key Strategies

- Support the continued growth and development of the regulated cannabis sector while disrupting the illicit cannabis supply chain and removing illicit product from the market.
- Continue to streamline liquor and cannabis regulation, compliance and enforcement practices and facilitate improved service delivery, including moving more services to the [Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Portal](#) and increasing the accessibility of information, such as the terms and conditions of each class of licence.
- Enhance the effectiveness of the gambling regulatory framework by continuing work to bring the new [Gaming Control Act](#) into force with completion of regulations and implementation of an independent office.
- Review consumer protection laws on an ongoing basis to ensure that they continue to be responsive to current business practices and meet the needs of British Columbians, while minimizing regulatory impacts on businesses.
- Work with ICBC to monitor the [Enhanced Care](#) model to ensure it continues to meet the needs of British Columbians by delivering affordable auto insurance and providing improved care and recovery benefits for people who are injured in a crash in Canada or the United States, regardless of fault.

Discussion

In addition to the metrics identified in the Performance Measures section below, the ministry will monitor implementation progress on these strategies through key milestones and deliverables. Examples of areas where progress will be tracked and evaluated include:

- Steps taken to support the legal, regulated cannabis sector;
- Milestones in streamlining liquor and cannabis regulation, compliance, and enforcement practices;
- Milestones in completing regulations under the new Gaming Control Act and implementing an independent office; and
- Advancements in consumer protection measures.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2022/23 Baselines	2023/24 Forecasts ¹	2024/25 Targets ²	2025/26 Targets	2026/27 Targets
[2a] Percentage of Food Primary liquor licences granted within four months of application ³	81	83	85	87	89
[2b] Percentage of Manufacturer liquor licences granted within six months of application	85	87	89	91	92
[2c] Percentage of Liquor Primary licences granted within six months of application ⁴	64	65	66	68	69
[2d] Percentage of Cannabis Retail Store applications granted within 13 months of application ⁴	73	74	75	77	79

Data source: Data for these measures is from the case management system of the ministry's Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB).

¹ The 2023/24 forecasts were based on current 2023/24 trends.

² The 2024/25 and subsequent year targets represent efforts to achieve year-to-year improvements in the timeliness of application processing through the LCRB.

³ Food Primary liquor licence application volumes lend themselves to potentially greater gains in processing times.

⁴ The processing times for Liquor Primary licences and Cannabis Retail Store licences can be impacted and made longer because they involve local government processes that are outside the ministry's control. Liquor Primary licence processing timelines were previously measured for those completed in under 12 months. Consistent improvements in 2022/23 and 2023/24 have resulted in a new expected timeline of six months.

Discussion

LCRB tracks the percentage of licences granted within established service standards for key licence classes as an indicator of the timeliness of service delivery.⁹ Efficient and timely licensing of liquor and cannabis establishments allows licensees to operate in the legal industry sooner, which ensures that products are sold safely to the public while contributing positively to British Columbia's economy.

⁹ The established service standards are informed by average processing times and incorporate consideration of the factors that can affect those averages, such as local government processes and the actions of applicants. Average processing times may be skewed by a small number of outliers where processing times were significantly extended through factors not in the control of the LCRB. The established service standards serve as goalposts for licence applicants with what may be expected regarding processing times.

LCRB will continue to explore opportunities for process improvements, including evaluating and potentially amending existing requirements prescribed in the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation that may no longer add value to the oversight of licensees.

Goal 3: The justice and public safety sector in British Columbia is sustainable

The justice and public safety sector must be innovative, adaptive, well-managed, and efficient to remain sustainable.

Objective 3.1: Strengthened sustainability of the justice and public safety sector to deliver accessible and effective programs and services

The ministry continues efforts to ensure that appropriate resource levels are sustained to facilitate the successful delivery of core public safety services, with resources and decision making oriented to optimize public safety benefits to British Columbians.

Key Strategies

- Oversee the RCMP's continued implementation of core police funding to bring the PPS to its full authorized strength of 2,602 members, providing police with the resources they need to address public safety concerns and support adequate and effective levels of policing across B.C.
- Continue to implement the PSSG and MAG Workforce Plan 2023 – 2026 with a focus on evidence-based practices for recruitment, retention, succession management, and leadership and supervisory development, to ensure the ministries have the talent required to deliver on their strategic goals and objectives.
- Continue to enhance and support digital roadside tools for police through electronic ticketing (eTicketing), digitization of roadside forms, and enhanced and automated road safety enforcement across B.C. These tools and supports help to intervene more quickly with dangerous drivers while allowing police to spend more time on other enforcement activities and enable more efficient information sharing between agencies.
- Advance the multi-year initiative to streamline the way people in British Columbia access security and screening licensing processes through online services.¹⁰
- Continue work to improve B.C.'s [Driver Fitness Program](#) to reduce backlogs and enable faster removal of unsafe drivers from the province's roads.
- Advance implementation of the [Justice and Public Safety Sector Digital Strategy](#) to unify digital transformation efforts and coordinate investments in data, technology, and resources to optimize how programs and services are delivered.

¹⁰ Services include processing criminal record checks for individuals working with vulnerable populations, administering licences for security guards and businesses, and performing security screening for the provincial public service and other public bodies.

Discussion

In addition to the metric identified in the Performance Measures section below, the ministry will monitor implementation progress on these strategies through project milestones and deliverables. Examples of areas where progress will be tracked and evaluated include:

- Advancements made by the RCMP in reducing vacancy rates;
- Progress in strengthening evidence-based workforce planning in the ministry.
- Milestones in streamlining security program operations;
- Reduction of backlogs in the Driver Fitness Program; and
- Milestones in implementation of the sector’s digital strategy.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Baseline ¹	2023/24 Forecast ²	2024/25 Target ³	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[3] Percentage of traffic violation tickets issued through eTicketing	65	75	80	90	90

Data source: Results for this measure are derived from the eTicket Adoption Dashboard.

¹The 2022/23 baseline is from data in the eTicket Adoption Dashboard.

²The 2023/24 forecast is based on the anticipated rate of adoption of the system and completion of the project.

³The 2024/25 and subsequent year targets are based on ongoing training and adoption of the system throughout the province. It is anticipated that by 2026/27, the maximum rate for eTicketing will have been achieved as all police cars that enforce traffic will have adopted the system. The additional ten per cent includes traffic violation tickets that are issued by officers from police boats, horses, and foot patrols, which will remain paper-based tickets.

Discussion

Through the eTicketing process, police officers scan drivers’ licence information into an online ticket template that auto-populates offence details, ensuring accuracy while saving time. The vehicle-mounted equipment then rapidly shares this information with justice and public safety sector partners like ICBC, eliminating the need to mail tickets to these partners and for them to re-enter the details.

Through eTicketing, police officers can leverage technology with a process that is more efficient, facilitating faster identification of drivers and enforcement against unsafe driving behaviours and allowing police officers more time for additional enforcement activities.

Goal 4: The justice and public safety sector in British Columbia has the public’s confidence

British Columbians must have confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of the justice and public safety sector for it to function effectively and to ensure continued public participation and support.

Objective 4.1: Increased public confidence in the justice and public safety sector

This objective is linked to the three previous goals. For the public to have confidence in the justice and public safety sector, it must protect people, be fair, and be sustainable.

Public confidence in the police is of particular importance. How police are viewed affects the public's willingness to report crimes, to cooperate with police investigations, to contact the police if victimized, and to abide by laws and police orders. A positive perception of police among British Columbians is a critical aspect of public safety and contributes to lower levels of crime.

Key Strategies

- Develop and implement comprehensive policing reforms to address systemic biases and racism, including co-developing a new Police Act and police oversight statute with Indigenous Peoples and local governments. This includes reviewing [Provincial Policing Standards](#) and mandatory training requirements; strengthening board governance; clarifying the roles and responsibilities of police officers in the context of complex social issues such as mental health, addictions, and homelessness; and contributing to the reform of the federal [First Nations Policing Program](#).
- Advance upgrading B.C.'s 911 emergency communications system to Next Generation 911 (NG911) to strengthen emergency services throughout the province.
- Continue to support the Province's response to the drug toxicity public health emergency by providing comprehensive aggregate mortality data and coroners' reports to the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, key partners, and the public.
- Continue to explore the factors resulting in all unexpected and unnatural deaths in B.C. with the goal of identifying and addressing public safety risks, through:
 - Conducting independent and impartial coroners' investigations, inquests and death review panels into unexpected deaths, including deaths caused by unregulated drugs;
 - Collecting data and conducting statistical analyses regarding deaths to allow for collaboration with partner agencies that informs and advances injury and death prevention, and promotes evidence-based public health policies; and
 - Reviewing the deaths of all children age 18 and under to better understand how and why children die, and use those findings to improve the health, safety and well-being of all children in B.C.
- Informed by the [Commission of Inquiry into Money Laundering in British Columbia](#), continue work toward eliminating money laundering in the province through a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach. This includes exploring the development of a dedicated law enforcement unit; strengthening and expanding civil forfeiture, including the use of Unexplained Wealth Orders; and ensuring appropriate policies and police training are implemented for law enforcement.

Discussion

In addition to the metrics identified in the Performance Measures section below, the ministry will monitor implementation progress on the key strategies through project milestones and deliverables. Examples of areas where progress will be tracked and evaluated include:

- Milestones in developing and implementing comprehensive policing reforms;
- Milestones in implementing NG911 across the province; and
- Advancements in the public safety response to recommendations to address money laundering.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2022 Baseline ¹	2023 Forecast ²	2024 Target ³	2025 Target	2026 Target
[4a]. Percentage of British Columbians who have “complete confidence” or “a lot of confidence” in the RCMP ⁴	45.0	47.5	50.0	52.5	55.0
[4b]. Percentage of British Columbians who have “complete confidence” or “a lot of confidence” in their local municipal police (or local RCMP detachment)	50.0	52.5	55.0	57.5	60.0

Data source: The [Angus Reid Institute](#) conducts a biennial series of surveys assessing Canadians’ experiences with and opinions of the justice system, with responses broken down to the provincial level. The surveys sample Canadian adults who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#).

¹ 2022 is the most recent year for which results are available. In the 2022 Angus Reid survey, there were 577 survey participants from B.C. More detailed results from the 2022 survey are available [here](#).

² The 2023 forecasts are based on projected annual increases of 2.5 per cent.

³ The 2024 and subsequent year targets are based on targeted annual increases of 2.5 per cent.

⁴ The RCMP is British Columbia’s provincial police force. An overview of the structure of police services in British Columbia is available [here](#).

Discussion

The ministry is tracking public confidence in police as an indicator of public confidence in the justice and public safety sector.

For any police department to be effective in serving and safeguarding the public, promoting public confidence is critical. Public confidence is a precursor to peoples’ willingness to call upon the police when needed, to freely share information with police, and to maintain a cooperative and trust-based relationship with police in their community.

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline ¹	2023/24 Forecast ²	2024/25 Target ³	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[4c] Median time, in months, to conclude coroner investigations ⁴	15	13	11	9	7

Data source: Results for this measure are from the BCCS.

¹The baseline is an estimate based on the median number of months to complete a coroner’s investigation in the 2021/22 fiscal year. The baseline is subject to change as the data are finalized. Preliminary results for 2022/23 are not yet available as there are still open files to be settled.

²The 2023/24 forecast is based on the finalized actual for 2020/21 and anticipated improvements in case closure timelines due to additional staffing levels.

³The 2024/25 and subsequent year targets were established based on historical actuals and anticipated staffing hires.

⁴The time from the date the BCCS is notified of a death until the investigation is closed, after which the coroner’s report is then distributed.

Discussion

Through its impartial and independent investigations, the BCCS supports public safety and confidence in the justice and public safety sector by providing information about individual deaths and aggregated data reporting to inform evidence-based public safety legislation, policies, and programs.

Under the Coroners Act, the BCCS is mandated to investigate all sudden and unexpected, unexplained, or unattended deaths in the province, including:

- Deaths which appear to be the result of violence, injury, or self-harm;
- Deaths in which the cause of death is unexplained;
- Deaths that do not meet the above criteria but where the deceased person has not been under the care of a physician;
- All deaths which occur in provincial correctional facilities, federal penitentiaries, or other facilities where a person is involuntarily detained, such as those committed to a facility under the [Mental Health Act](#); and,
- All deaths of children under the age of 19 years.¹¹

At the conclusion of each investigation, a coroner’s report is completed that confirms the identity of the decedent and how, where, when and by what means their death occurred.

These reports determine the facts surrounding the death, do not determine fault or blame and, where appropriate, may include recommendations aimed at preventing future similar deaths. Every investigation is unique, and individual timelines for completion can be impacted by the complexity of the case, parallel investigations by other agencies, case loads, and other factors.

¹¹ In 2022/23, 13,746 deaths were reported to the BCCS; of those, 6,884 – or approximately 50 per cent – met at least one of these criteria and proceeded to an investigation.

Financial Summary

(\$000s)	2023/24 Restated Estimates ¹	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Corrections	296,131	316,846	319,041	319,798
Policing and Security	534,024	541,647	541,533	541,653
Community Safety and Victim Services	78,374	88,310	88,340	88,340
BC Coroners Service	22,696	29,284	29,650	30,020
RoadSafetyBC	29,244	36,440	36,190	36,240
Liquor and Cannabis Regulation	7,616	8,275	8,275	8,275
Gaming Policy and Enforcement	19,400	21,461	21,933	22,231
Cannabis, Consumer Protection and Corporate Policy	3,712	3,830	3,830	3,830
Office of the Fire Commissioner	3,173	3,261	3,261	3,261
Executive and Support Services	18,324	19,077	19,077	19,077
Statutory Services ²	15,194	15,222	15,222	15,222
Total	1,027,888	1,083,653	1,086,352	1,087,947
Capital Expenditures				
Corrections	1,062	1,062	1,062	1,062
BC Coroners Service	12	12	12	12
Office of the Fire Commissioner	0	36	0	0
Executive and Support Services	1,514	1,887	952	952
Total	2,588	2,997	2,026	2,026

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2023/24 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2024/25 Estimates.

² Statutory Services includes Civil Forfeiture Account, Corrections Work Program Account, Criminal Asset Management Fund, and Victim Surcharge Special Account.

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

Capital Expenditures

Major Capital Projects (over \$50 million in total)	Targeted Year of Completion	Project Cost to Dec 31, 2023 (\$m)	Estimated Cost to Complete (\$m)	Anticipated Total Cost (\$m)
Nanaimo Correctional Centre Replacement Project	2024	160	21	181
<p>Objective: The Nanaimo Correctional Centre (NCC) Replacement Project will replace the current aging and outdated 190-cell correctional centre located in Nanaimo, B.C. The new centre is being constructed on the existing site while the current centre remains operational, after which the existing centre will be deconstructed. The new NCC will be a 202-cell, multi-security level facility, including a 12-cell unit for short-term accommodation of women from Vancouver Island.</p> <p>Costs: NCC Replacement Project costs remain at the increased amount of \$181 million due to higher construction costs.</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new centre will better support staff and enhance the NCC’s unique, effective programs, including the Guthrie Therapeutic Community and vocational and educational programs delivered in partnership with Vancouver Island University. The project is expected to bring major regional economic benefits, including approximately 1,000 jobs during construction (650 direct and 275 indirect jobs, plus nearly 100 additional jobs associated with spending by workers). <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discovery of unanticipated geotechnical conditions or artifacts during demolition of the existing centre in phase two of the project. Materials availability and inflation placing upward schedule and pricing pressure on the contractor, subtrades, and contract commitments. Scarcity of skilled trades and labour negatively impacting project progress. 				

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of February 12, 2024, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

[BC Liquor Distribution Branch](#)

The LDB is one of two branches of government that provide oversight for the beverage alcohol and cannabis industries; the other is the LCRB. The LDB is responsible for the wholesale distribution and retail sale of beverage alcohol and cannabis.

The [Liquor Distribution Act](#) gives the LDB the sole right to purchase beverage alcohol both within B.C. and from outside the province, in accordance with the federal [Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act](#). The LCRB licenses private liquor stores, restaurants, pubs, and manufacturers and enforces regulations under the [Liquor Control and Licensing Act](#).

The [Cannabis Distribution Act](#) establishes a government wholesale distribution model for cannabis, public cannabis retail stores, and a publicly run e-commerce retail channel. The LCRB licenses private cannabis stores and enforces some aspects of the regulations under the [Cannabis Control and Licensing Act](#).

[Consumer Protection BC](#)

CPBC is responsible for administering British Columbia's consumer protection laws, namely the [Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act](#), the [Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act](#), the [Ticket Sales Act](#), and the [Motion Picture Act](#), along with a variety of associated consumer protection regulations. It is a not-for-profit corporation that protects consumers and promotes a fair marketplace in the province.

[Insurance Corporation of British Columbia](#)

ICBC's mandate is to provide universal compulsory (basic) automobile insurance for all British Columbian motorists and compete with private insurance companies to offer various optional vehicle insurance coverages. ICBC also provides non-insurance services on behalf of the provincial government, including driver licensing, vehicle registration and licensing, and fines collection. ICBC's board has the power and authority given to it by the [Insurance Corporation Act](#) and, subject to the Act, manages and supervises the affairs and business of ICBC.

[Municipal Police Boards](#)

Independent municipal police departments are overseen by appointed police boards made up of civilian members of the community. The role of these police boards is to provide general governance, oversight, and direction to the department, in accordance with relevant legislation and in response to community needs.

[Organized Crime Agency of British Columbia and Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia](#)

See Appendix B

Appendix B: The Organized Crime Agency of BC and Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – BC

Purpose of the Organization

In 1999, the [Organized Crime Agency of British Columbia](#) (OCABC) was created as an independent Designated Policing and Law Enforcement Unit under the provincial Police Act.

In 2004, the [Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit – British Columbia](#) (CFSEU-BC) was developed in consultation with the provincial government as an initiative to integrate the OCABC, the municipal police departments, and the RCMP.

The mission of the CFSEU-BC is to facilitate the disruption and suppression of organized crime that affects British Columbians. Its mandate is to investigate, support the prosecution of, disrupt, and suppress criminal organizations, consistent with local, regional, national, and international priorities. The CFSEU-BC also supports other agencies by assisting in organized crime and major crime investigations.

Governance Overview

The Board of Governance for the OCABC also acts as the Board of Governance for the CFSEU – BC.

The board is currently comprised of two civilian members who are community leaders in the areas of finance and governance, the Chief Constable of the Vancouver Police Department; the Chief Constable of the Victoria Police Department; the Deputy Commissioner Pacific Region and Commanding Officer “E” Division RCMP; the Assistant Commissioners of the “E” Division RCMP; and the Deputy Director of Police Services and the Associate Director of Police Services of PSSG’s Policing and Security Branch. The Director of Police Services sits as an ex officio member of the board.

The board determines the strategic direction of the CFSEU-BC and ensures its operational priorities are aligned with the policing priorities for British Columbia. The CFSEU-BC operates under the RCMP policies and procedures.

The Chief Officer in charge of the CFSEU-BC leads an executive team comprised of civilian members, in addition to regular RCMP and municipal officers seconded from across the province. The CFSEU-BC Gang Enforcement Unit, Investigation Teams, and the Joint Illegal Gaming Investigation Team are just a few of the teams that fall under the responsibility of the CFSEU-BC. Offices for the CFSEU-BC are located in the Lower Mainland, Prince George, Kelowna, and Victoria.