

February 17, 2026

BACKGROUNDER

Safeguarding critical services

Budget 2026 protects critical services, such as health care and education, and makes new investments to support people who need care and assistance.

Supporting child care and K-12 education

- Budget 2026 includes \$634 million in new funding for teachers, student services, and to support inclusive learning as the number of inclusive learning students enrolled is on the rise.
 - A \$167-million investment in the Classroom Enhancement Fund will result in more teachers for everyone, as well as special education teachers and teacher psychologists and counsellors.
- Another \$3.9 billion in capital funding is allocated for seismic replacements and upgrades as well as projects to address enrolment growth in B.C.'s fastest-growing communities.
- Budget 2026 provides a \$330-million lift to ChildCareBC to stabilize the programs and services that families rely on as government works to modernize B.C.'s child care system.
 - This stabilization is critical as provinces and territories continue negotiations with the federal government to drive flexibility and resilience across the system.
 - This funding will maintain lower fees, and the spaces and support for operators and educators achieved over the past eight years.
- During this stabilization period, the Province will work to bring more equity into the system. After hearing from operators that current funding models limit their flexibility to support high-quality, inclusive care, the Province will pause enrolment of new providers into the Operating Funding Model and the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program during this stabilization period. Families and providers currently in the \$10-a-day program will see no changes.
- In fall 2025, the Province took steps to expand child care on school grounds, recognizing that schools are community hubs for families and could play a bigger role in offering child care.

- As the Province continues onboarding the remaining funded New Spaces Fund projects (11,800 spaces), government intends to shift to expanding before- and after-school care.
- Budget 2026 provides \$25 million to be used to expand child care on school grounds:
 - \$5 million in initial capital funding from the Ministry of Infrastructure
 - \$20 million in operating funding over three years from the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Strengthening health care services

- Budget 2026 invests \$2.8 billion in new funding for the health-care system over three years, including:
 - \$2.3 billion to increase health system capacity and support a growing need for services, including supporting hiring more doctors, nurses and health-care workers and the planning, development and operation of new and expanded hospitals and health care facilities across the province
 - \$131 million for intensive mental-health and addictions treatment, including increasing spaces for those who need involuntary care
 - \$34 million annually to provide access to in-vitro fertilization for almost 1,800 B.C. families
- As part of the Province's work to secure outside funding, \$447 million in federal contributions will help support health services for seniors, including outside of hospital treatment for complex medical conditions and improving the safety and quality of long-term care facilities.
- Another \$653 million in federal funding will expand public coverage to include free medications for diabetes and enhanced coverage for menopausal hormone therapy.

Help for children and youth with disabilities

- Investment of \$475 million will build a more flexible, streamlined and equitable system that is better aligned with the needs of children and youth.
- Budget 2026 invests in three priority areas:
 - The new BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit will provide direct funding for approximately 12,000 families of children with significant disabilities who require higher and individualized support.
 - The new BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement will offer as much as \$6,000 per year to ease financial pressures on low- and middle-income families raising a child with a disability.
 - All families will benefit from a 40% expansion in community-based services, including increased behavioural and mental-health supports.

Safer communities

- The Province has been taking action on all fronts – enforcement, housing, health and justice – to stop the cycle of crime and get people the help they need to make B.C. communities stronger and safer for everyone.
- Budget 2026 provides \$139 million more over three years to reduce repeat, violent offending and chronic property crime, and support timely access to justice. This includes:
 - \$73 million to continue to improve access to the justice system and support court operations, including sheriff recruitment and retention, Crown counsel, the judiciary, legal aid, and the BC Prosecution Service
 - \$16 million for the new Chronic Property Offending Intervention Initiative that strengthens monitoring and enforcement for crimes such as vandalism and shoplifting that are hurting businesses
 - \$26 million for the Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative, for which, early evaluations show the program is resulting in significantly fewer police interactions and faster charge approvals for high-risk violent offenders
 - \$24 million for the continuation of the Special Investigation and Targeted Enforcement program and the Community Safety and Targeted Enforcement program, both of which provide valuable resources to police to combat repeat violent offending and address street disorder, and to connect individuals to community services
- The Province will continue to support the fight against extortion, including through the BC Extortion Task Force, which brings municipal, provincial, and federal agencies together on intelligence sharing and investigations. The Province has secured federal support for more police officers, increased RCMP helicopter resources, and national co-ordination of efforts to combat extortion.

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