Annual Report Community and Social Services 2020-2021





Community and Social Services, Government of Alberta \mid Community and Social Services 2020–2021 Annual Report

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Preface

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 20 ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta contains ministers' accountability statements, the consolidated financial statements of the province and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's strategic plan, previously published in one volume entitled *Measuring Up* report.

This annual report of the Ministry of Community and Social Services contains the minister's accountability statement, the financial information of the ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This ministry annual report also includes:

- other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*, as separate reports, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report; and
- financial information relating to Persons with Developmental Disabilities Clients Trust Funds.

Each Ministry Annual Report should be considered along with the Government of Alberta Annual Report to provide a complete overview of government's commitment to openness, accountability and fiscal transparency.

Minister's Accountability Statement

The ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2021, was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at June 4, 2021, with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in the preparation of this report.

(Original signed by)

Rajan Sawhney Minister of Community and Social Services

Message from the Minister



As Minister for Community and Social Services, I am pleased to present my ministry's 2020-21 Annual Report.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a devastating mark on communities across the province, dramatically changing our lives. Over the past year, COVID-19 has disproportionately affected vulnerable people. Community and Social Services is committed to protecting vulnerable Albertans, and this is especially vital during the pandemic.

This report highlights the positive impacts we have had on protecting the lives and livelihoods of Albertans. We have worked hard over the past year to enhance our programs, adjust our services, and modify funding to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. It also outlines many ways we worked to cut red tape to reduce administrative and regulatory burdens for Albertans.

COVID-19 has put the health and safety of Albertans at risk in a variety of ways, but it has disproportionately affected women. We know domestic violence issues can be made more challenging during times of crisis, and there has been a notable surge in domestic and sexual violence incidents this past year. The United Nations has dubbed this worldwide spike the "shadow pandemic," and Alberta is not exempt. Our province has some of Canada's highest rates of police-reported intimate partner violence and family violence, and Alberta's government is taking action.

In April 2021, Alberta's version of Clare's Law came into effect. This legislation allows people at risk of domestic violence to find out if their intimate partner has a violent or abusive past. This important new tool will help stop violence before it happens by giving people the power to make an informed choice about potentially harmful relationships. In addition, we provided women's emergency shelters \$5 million in funding to adjust program and service delivery to ensure women fleeing violence were protected and supported to start and live new lived, free from violence.

The civil society sector has been a critical partner in our efforts to support vulnerable Albertans during the pandemic. In addition to the \$30 million we invested in civil society organizations to support their response to COVID-19, my ministry launched a new Civil Society Fund in December 2020 to support their recovery and build capacity to work together more effectively. The fund is providing \$7 million in 2020 and a further \$7 million in 2021 to support a sustainable recovery for civil society organizations.

Along with our dedicated ministry staff, our partners, and our stakeholders, I will continue to do the work necessary to support vulnerable Albertans as we navigate the ever-changing society we live in. We continue to be dedicated to providing vulnerable Albertans with the important programs and services they need to meet their basic needs, participate in their communities, and find opportunities to succeed.

As we work together to recover from the pandemic as individuals and as a province, Community and Social Services will be there every step of the way, supporting Albertans and organizations as we rebuild our lives and livelihoods.

(Original signed by)

Rajan Sawhney Minister of Community and Social Services

Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The Ministry of Community and Social Services includes:

- Department of Community and Social Services
- Citizen's Appeal Panel
- Family Violence Death Review Committee
- Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
- Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society
- Family Support for Children with Disabilities Provincial Parent Advisory Committee

The executives of the individual entities within the ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the respective entities. Collectively, the executives ensure the ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and strategic plan, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the accompanying ministry financial information and performance results for the ministry rests with the Minister of Community and Social Services. Under the direction of the Minister, I oversee the preparation of the ministry's annual report, which includes the financial information, performance results on all objectives and initiatives identified in the Ministry Business Plan, and performance results for all ministry-supported commitments that were included in the 2020-23 Government of Alberta Strategic Plan. The financial information and performance results, out of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial information is prepared using the government's stated accounting policies, which are based on Canadian public sector accounting standards. The performance measures are prepared in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Reliability** Information used in applying performance measure methodologies agrees with the underlying source data for the current and prior years' results.
- **Understandability** the performance measure methodologies and results are presented clearly.
- **Comparability** the methodologies for performance measure preparation are applied consistently for the current and prior years' results.
- **Completeness** outcomes, performance measures and related targets match those included in the ministry's Budget 2020.

As Deputy Minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I am responsible for the ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money;
- provide information to manage and report on performance;

- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under ministry administration;
- provide Executive Council, the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Community and Social Services the information needed to fulfill their responsibilities; and
- facilitate preparation of ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executives of the individual entities within the ministry.

(Original signed by)

Cynthia Farmer Deputy Minister of Community and Social Services June 4, 2021

Results Analysis

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Ministry Overview

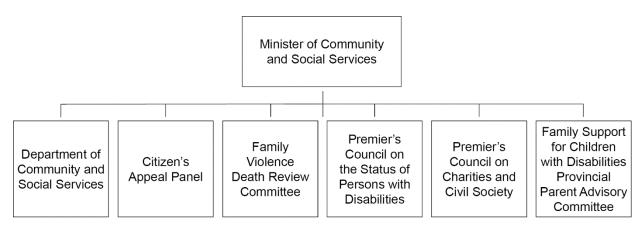
The key accomplishments identified in this annual report align with and support the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta, as well as the outcomes and key objectives outlined in the 2020-23 Community and Social Services Business Plan.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services exists to support the social inclusion of Albertans. The ministry funds a range of programs and services for Albertans in the areas of disability supports; prevention of family and sexual violence; community well-being and resilience; employment services; housing stability and homeless supports; and financial stability. Community and Social Services is committed to providing supports to the most vulnerable Albertans, being fiscally responsible and taking actions to ensure these supports are sustainable for future generations.

To attain this vision, the ministry is focused on achieving three outcomes:

- **Outcome One:** Stability Albertans are safe and have timely and consistent access to supports to meet their basic needs.
- **Outcome Two:** Participation Albertans participate in their communities through employment and other opportunities to reach their individual potential.
- **Outcome Three:** Inclusion Alberta's communities provide a sense of belonging and foster resiliency.

Organizational Structure



Operational Overview

Community and Social Services aims to accomplish the three outcomes through the work of the department shown below:

Office of the Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister oversees the ministry under the direction of the Minister and is the liaison between the elected official and ministry employees. The Deputy Minister provides strategic advice, oversees the ministry's day-to-day operations, budget and program development.

Disability Services

The Disability Services division is responsible for the delivery of legislated programs, services and supports for children, youth and adults with disabilities to live and participate in their communities. Programming includes the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program, the Persons with Developmental Disabilities program, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder initiatives and Guide & Service Dogs among others.

The division works with stakeholders and communities to identify issues that affect people with disabilities, and effectively delivers supports and services to people with disabilities and their families. Disability Services supports the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, the Minister's Disability Advisory Forum and the Family Support for Children with Disabilities Provincial Parent Advisory Committee.

Employment and Financial Services

Employment and Financial Services is responsible for policy development and delivering employment and income services, including Alberta Supports services, contracted employment services, career resources, and the Income Support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped programs. The division develops career and employment resources, including those available on the alis.alberta.ca careers website, as well as through Disability Related Employment Supports. Employment and Financial Services also facilitates Child Support Services and oversees the Corporate Services Investigations Unit to ensure the integrity of community and Social Services income programs.

Preventive Community Services

Preventive Community Services designs, develops and implements initiatives that support the needs of Albertans experiencing homelessness, family violence, sexual violence and abuse. The division works with civil society organizations, municipalities and Metis Settlements to prevent and address social issues. Through cross-ministry and multi-stakeholder partnerships, the division develops and implements policy frameworks, funding strategies, and practices to ensure comprehensive services support individual, family and community well-being. The division provides secretariat support and strategic leadership to two government agencies, board and commissions: the Family Violence Death Review Committee and the Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society. The division manages grant administration of the Civil Society Fund, which supports innovation and capacity building in the civil society sector. The division also manages the Family and Community Support Services program, which partners with municipalities and Metis Settlements to design and deliver preventive social services.

Strategic Services

Strategic Services helps define and support the strategic direction of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The division is responsible for effective strategic planning, policy development and coordination, informed and data-based decision making, intergovernmental relations, and overall improvement of services provided to Albertans. Strategic Services provides governance oversight to our Agencies, Boards and Commissions, conducts research and analysis, provides quality assurance oversight to our programs, promotes continuous improvement and innovation of our programs, provides provincial training to our workforce, and supports our Citizen Appeal Panels. The division also leads red tape reduction efforts, business continuity and emergency response planning for the department, and provides accommodations and corporate security services.

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance provides strategic advice to Community and Social Services about financial and administrative issues related to legislation, regulations and policies. The division is responsible for the Ministry's budget development process and provides financial advice and support related to planning and forecasting. Corporate Finance oversees the preparation and implementation of ministry financial reporting, financial compliance and accountability, contract policy and management, and financial processes and policies to support the delivery of programs.

Communications

Through a service agreement with Communications and Public Engagement, the Communications branch offers strategic communications advice, writing and planning services. Responsibilities also include delivering clear and timely information to the public about the ministry's key initiatives, programs and services.

Human Resources

Under the "One HR" approach, Human Resources service delivery is provided by Public Service Commission staff assigned to support Community and Social Services. The department is supported by a dedicated team who provide strategic advice in employee relations, occupational health and safety, talent development engagement and internal communications. People leaders are connected to common human resource services such as recruitment, classification, policy development and analytics through service centres within the broader human resource system.

Legal Services

Legal Services is a team of Justice and Solicitor General lawyers and staff that provides a full range of non-litigation services and related strategic advice to all areas of the ministry, including work on contracts, grants, procurement and legislation. For litigation matters, supports are provided by the Justice and Solicitor General Litigation team and external counsel.

Key Highlights – Support to Albertans during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected vulnerable people. Community and Social Services is committed to providing the programs and services Albertans need to meet their basic needs, participate in their communities, and find opportunities to succeed.

Throughout the pandemic, Community and Social Services has continued to help vulnerable Albertans find employment and participate in their communities. The ministry collaborated with community partners to address the needs of vulnerable Albertans facing homelessness, poverty, and family and sexual violence. Community and Social Services also enabled greater flexibility and easier access to supports and services for Albertans with disabilities. To help all Albertans stay safe, the ministry ensured consistent access to supports and services during Alberta's relaunch.

Further information on activities over the past year that supported Albertan's during COVID-19 can be found throughout this report. Some of the key highlights are referenced in the table below:

Providing Safe Spaces to Isolate during COVID-19	Provided self-isolation hotel rooms to over 1,800 adults and children who tested positive for COVID-19 (page 21)
Keeping Albertans Experiencing Homelessness Safe during COVID-19	Provided \$50.4 million to homeless shelters and community organizations to protect people struggling with homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic (page 24-25)
Providing Support to Families Affected by Violence during COVID-19	Allocated \$5 million to ensure safe isolation spaces for women and children experiencing family violence during the pandemic (page 28-30)
Recognizing Critical Workers during COVID-19	Worked directly with social service sector stakeholders and not-for-profit organizations to distribute \$19 million in Critical Worker Benefits to eligible workers delivering frontline services to vulnerable Albertans (page 47-48)
Supporting Vulnerable Albertans during COVID-19	Distributed \$26 million through the Family and Community Support Services program to civil society organizations to provide support services to Albertans affected by COVID-19 (page 59-60)
Supporting Alberta's Civil Society COVID-19 Recovery	Provided \$7 million to support civil society's recovery from COVID-19 through the Civil Society Fund (page 69-70)

Other Key Highlights in the Past Year

Throughout the fiscal year, Community and Social Services undertook a number of other key projects and innovations. Achievements in these areas continue to make life better for individuals, families and communities in Alberta by ensuring the key outcomes of stability, participation and inclusion remain the priority focus of the ministry. Some of the key highlights are referenced in the table below:

Housing and Supporting Vulnerable Albertans	Provided housing and supports to 6,544 Albertans through Housing First between April 1 and December 31, 2020 (page 25-26)
Engaging Albertans on Clare's Law	Conducted Phase Two of Stakeholder Engagement to support implementation of Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act (page 26-27)
Supporting Sexual Assault Centres	Provided \$11.5 million to expand sexual assault centre services to rural, remote, and underserved areas through satellite offices and a network of outreach counselors (page 30-31)
Supporting Transportation Needs	Provided \$4 million to help low-income families afford transportation to access jobs, education, health care, community resources and government services (page 43)
Supporting Educational Opportunities for Albertans with Developmental Disabilities	Provided \$4.2 million for Inclusive Post- Secondary Education to support educational opportunities for students with developmental disabilities (page 43-44)
Connecting Albertans to Employment	Connected 2,464 individuals receiving Persons with Developmental Disabilities services to employment (page 44-46)
Engaging Albertans and Families on Family Support for Children with Disabilities	11,551 Albertans shared feedback through an online survey about ways to enhance and modernize the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program (page 48-49)
Family Violence and Bullying Prevention Campaigns	Increased twitter impressions of the #WhereToTurn and #GoPurpleAB family violence and bullying prevention campaigns by 74 per cent (page 62-63)
Working with Civil Society to Address and Prevent Family Violence	Provided \$7.1 million in grant and contract funding to 43 civil society organizations to deliver Family Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships programs (page 65-66)

Discussion and Analysis of Results

Red Tape Reduction

The Ministry of Community and Social Services is committed to the ongoing review of programs and services to ensure that the best possible outcomes are being achieved for Albertans. As part of this ongoing review, the ministry is committed to making life easier for hard-working Albertans and job creators by reducing regulatory requirements by one-third by 2023, and eliminating administrative burden through more efficient processes. This work will improve service delivery for Albertans; foster economic growth, innovation and competitiveness; create a strong and attractive investment climate; and make Alberta one of the freest and fastest moving economies in North America.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services advanced a number of Red Tape Reduction initiatives that have had tangible, positive impacts to individuals, families and communities within Alberta, and have resulted in a cumulative red tape count reduction of 6.6 per cent from the May 2019 baseline.

- **Reducing the use of Physical Signatures** The Use of Signatures project developed a clear and consistent approach to the use of signatures across ministry programs, including enabling digital signatures, where appropriate. Unnecessary signature requirements were eliminated and forms were modified to use digital signatures saving Albertans and government time and resources. (page 17)
- Alignment of Renewal dates for the Alberta Adult and Child Health Benefit programs In collaboration with the Department of Health, Community and Social Services adjusted the Alberta Adult and Child Health Benefits renewal period from July to October to align with the Canada Revenue Agency Income Verification process. This change reduced health benefit interruptions for approximately 7,500 Albertans and minimizes administrative work for government staff. (page 20)
- **Protection Against Family Violence Act Amendments** The *Protection Against Family Violence Act* was amended to allow for telecommunication, such as telephone or videoconference, to apply for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO). Claimants stay safe and save time by submitting EPO applications through telecommunication. During the first eight months of 2020-21, approximately 30 per cent of all EPO applications were submitted by telecommunication, saving an estimated 45 minutes to two hours for each Albertan accessing the program. (page 27-28)
- **Simplified Women's Shelter Reporting** Reporting templates for grants were streamlined and over 200 reporting requirements were eliminated, greatly reducing administrative burden to shelter providers. (page 28-30)
- Multi-Year Women's Shelter Agreements Work was initiated to shift grants for Women's Shelters from single-year to multi-year agreements. Multi-year agreements stabilize funding, reduce overall reporting requirements, and save time and administrative costs. (page 28-30)
- **Streamlined Sexual Assault Centre Reporting** Reporting requirements for Sexual Assault Centres grants were streamlined to align with the Department of Health grants. By combining two reports into one, and substantially reducing the number of questions, both government and agencies reduce administrative work and related costs. (page 30-31)

- Persons with Developmental Disabilities Contract Template Streamlining A standardized provincial approach was developed for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) service provider contracts. The provincewide approach reduces administrative burden through multi-year contracts, which eliminates the need for service providers to complete annual reporting. It also standardizes templates to improve regional consistency and financial accountability for government. (page 49-50)
- Multi-Year Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network Grants - Grants for all 12 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) networks transitioned from single-year to multi-year agreements. The threeyear agreements stabilize funding, reduce overall reporting requirements, and save time and administrative costs as networks and ministry staff no longer have to produce and review lengthy annual business plans. (page 51)
- Single Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Funding Agreements 24 FASD service providers with multiple funding agreements with Community and Social Services, Children's Services and Labour and Immigration were transitioned to single funding agreements. Single funding agreements streamline reporting and funding oversight for the FASD networks, and reduce administrative burden for both service providers and the Government of Alberta. (page 51)
- Streamlined Family and Community Support Services Reporting Implementing streamlined reporting requirements and enhanced reporting systems reduced administrative burdens to Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) grant recipients. This enables FCSS programs to spend more time on designing and delivering local preventative programs. (page 58)
- Eliminating Duplication with Civil Society Through the closure of Alberta Job Corps and the McCullough Centre, Community and Social Services eliminated programs that were costly to run and served fewer individuals then similar civil society programs. (page 69)

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 1: Supporting Job Creation

Objective 3: Reducing red tape

- From May 2019 through December 2020, Albertans were encouraged to submit their ideas for red tape reduction. Community and Social Services received one of the highest volumes of submissions amongst Government of Alberta ministries, tracking, monitoring and responding to over 430 submissions from staff, public and stakeholders.
- Community and Social Services streamlined processes and reporting requirements within the ministry to allow service providers to focus on serving clients. Examples include combining grant reporting from multiple ministries into one reporting requirement, streamlining and standardizing contracts across ministries and regions of the province.

Outcome One: Stability – Albertans are safe and have timely and consistent access to supports to meet their basic needs

Community and Social Services delivers financial benefits to eligible Albertans, and works with civil society organizations to improve access to supports to create positive outcomes for people affected by homelessness, family violence, sexual violence, disabilities and unemployment.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Review programs, including legislation, regulation, policy and procedures, to ensure that service delivery is fiscally responsible, focusing on reducing red tape and regulatory burden for service providers and Albertans.
- 1.2 Maintain financial support systems for low-income Albertans.
- 1.3 Partner with civil society organizations and municipalities to provide emergency shelter for vulnerable Albertans.
- 1.4 Partner with civil society organizations, municipalities and other ministries to improve housing stability through programs such as Housing First and provide appropriate supports for Albertans affected by homelessness.
- 1.5 Partner with civil society organizations to provide resources and supports to Albertans impacted by domestic and sexual violence.
- 1.6 Work with the financial services industry, the federal government and the disability community to improve access to disability-related financial supports.

1.1 Review programs, including legislation, regulation, policy and procedures, to ensure that service delivery is fiscally responsible, focusing on reducing red tape and regulatory burden for service providers and Albertans.

Increasing Access to Digital Options and Remote Service Delivery

Community and Social Services is committed to providing Albertans with digital service delivery options and remote access to services. The need for, and benefit of, remote service delivery was emphasized in 2020-21. During the pandemic, digital and remote access to services ensured Albertans could continue to receive services when in-person delivery was no longer an option. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services developed an Integrated Service Delivery Channel Strategy that outlines how the ministry manages Alberta Supports delivery options. The Strategy reflects the current environment of challenging fiscal realities, evolving technology trends and changing expectations from Albertans. The strategy is based on the principles of ease of access, flexibility to recognize the unique needs of Albertans, and the provision of effective online services to support self-sufficiency. Recommendations from the strategy include adopting a digital-first approach, building user experience capacity, using modern and agile tools and technology, and removing obstacles to increase flexibility and responsiveness. In 2020-21, the ministry conducted research, jurisdictional scanning and stakeholder consultation, and identified obstacles and opportunities for the recommendations. In 2021-22, a transition strategy will be finalized to move to a digital-first approach.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services initiated the Use of Signatures project to develop a clear and consistent approach to the use of signatures across ministry programs, including enabling digital signatures, where appropriate. The project educates leaders and staff on the use of electronic signatures, eliminates unneeded signature requirements on forms and modifies forms to use digital signatures.

In collaboration with Service Alberta, Community and Social Services is modernizing the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) and Income and Employment Supports (IES) programs. Development will continue into 2021-22 with an aim to simplify the programs, enhance consistency and efficiency of service delivery and reduce red tape for Albertans. The modernized programs are targeted to be launched in late 2021 and will include:

- a new, user-friendly online application that tailors the information asked of Albertans based on their circumstances, thereby reducing errors and delays;
- a new digital service hub that replaces legacy systems and allows staff to view incoming
 applications and conduct assessments more easily. This will simplify planning and followup with Albertans; and
- expanded self-service options, including a dashboard where clients can access and update their information, book appointments, receive notifications, upload documents and actively contribute to their action plan.

1.2 Maintain financial support systems for low-income Albertans.

Improving Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Accessibility

My Alberta Supports Citizen Portal

Albertans can access Alberta Supports and apply to programs and services through the My Alberta Supports Citizen Portal at myalbertasupports.ca A disability, whether physical, cognitive or due to a mental health diagnosis, can substantially limit an individual's ability to earn a living. Community and Social Services provides financial and health benefits through the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program to eligible adult Albertans with a permanent disability. In 2020, approximately 70,000 people received assistance through the AISH program. Supports may include a monthly living allowance, a child benefit, health benefits and personal benefits. Alberta's AISH rates remain the highest among provinces with similar programs.

In 2020-21, over 10,000 applications were received for the AISH program. To enhance program efficiency, Community and Social Services streamlined the AISH application process by centralizing the AISH application processing team, which manages all general and medical eligibility decisions and represents the AISH program at appeal hearings related to general and medical eligibility. The AISH application process was adapted so medical eligibility would be determined prior to financial eligibility, streamlining the application review process by reducing unnecessary administrative work. AISH adjudicators are now able to determine medical eligibility on all applications, including high priority applications, resulting in fewer hand offs of applications between staff. The centralization of the AISH application process created a streamlined and efficient process for assessing AISH applications. Albertans now have one centralized phone number to contact for questions related to AISH applications.

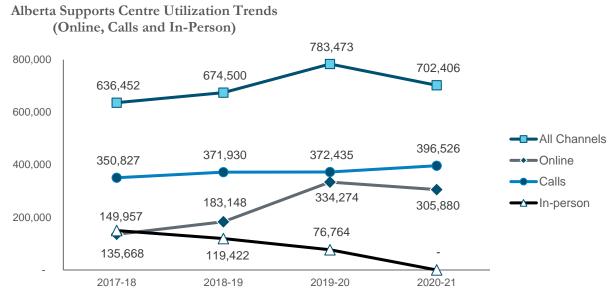
In 2021-22, Community and Social Services will continue to enhance AISH by improving the ministry's ability to track, monitor and report on AISH performance measures, and by implementing a new, user-friendly online application.

Maintaining Access to Supports and Services

Alberta Supports helps Albertans access a wide range of government social programs and services on behalf of the Ministries of Community and Social Services, Seniors and Housing, Justice and Solicitor General, Advanced Education, Children's Services, Labour and Immigration and Health. Through Alberta Supports, Albertans can access more than 30 programs and 120 community services for seniors, children and youth, parents and families, people with disabilities, employment, homelessness, financial needs, guardianship/trusteeship information and bullying and family violence resources and prevention, including elder abuse. Alberta Supports also provides information and referrals in over 200 languages and dialects to help Albertans connect with other government, community and civil society organizations across the province.

To protect the safety of staff and Albertans during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ministry suspended all in-person visits to Alberta Supports and Alberta Works offices throughout the province and continued service delivery remotely. Albertans accessed Alberta Supports online through the My Alberta Supports Citizen Portal at myalbertasupports.ca, or by calling toll-free at 1-877-644-9992. This change ensured services were delivered safely and more efficiently, met the needs of Albertans, and provided a consistent client experience to Albertans no matter where they lived in the province. Using remote delivery practices, staff were able to efficiently issue and commence benefits for the Income Support and AISH programs. Albertans continue to access these programs, without having to travel, by contacting the Alberta Supports Contact Centre.

Several cost savings were realized through remote access for individuals seeking program referrals and financial assistance. Remote service delivery helped promote public and staff safety because Albertans no longer needed to travel to an in-person office for a needs identification or an employability assessment.



Albertans adapted quickly to this new service delivery model with Alberta Supports Contact Centre answering 396,526 calls in 2020-21. Call volumes increased for information on the Income Support program, health benefits, the Residential Access Modification Program, and general information. Call volumes for information on seniors programs, Child Care Subsidy, and AISH decreased with fewer Albertans accessing the contact centre for these programs.

Community and Social Services provides assistance to Albertans in crisis situations who do not have the available resources to meet an emergency need. When an emergency situation presents a serious health or safety risk and is outside the control of the Albertan, assistance may be provided to help with emergencies such as an eviction, food instability or utility disconnection. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services provided approximately \$5.8 million to Albertans accessing Income Support and AISH to assist with emergencies, compared to approximately \$14.9 million in 2019-20. Starting in March 2020, monthly demand and expenditures for emergency benefits began to decrease for the Income Support and AISH programs. This decrease is most likely due to program clients accessing available federal pandemic-related financial supports related to the pandemic.

The Citizen's Appeal Panel provides fair, impartial and independent hearings for Albertans who are appealing decisions about Community and Social Services programs. In 2020-21, the ministry implemented virtual appeal hearings. When public health measures were first put into place, appellants who had already scheduled in-person hearings had the ability to reschedule hearings by teleconference or videoconference. Appeal processes were adjusted to reflect the different requirements and information needs for virtual hearings and no in-person services. Teleconference and videoconference allowed for appeal hearings, including emergency appeals, to proceed in a timely manner and in accordance with public health measures.

Simplifying Alberta Adult and Child Health Benefit Renewals

The Alberta Adult Health Benefit (AAHB) program covers health benefits for Albertans in low-income households who are pregnant or have high ongoing prescription drug needs. The Alberta Child Health Benefit program covers health benefits for children up to 18 years old in low-income households. Albertans applying for health benefits through these programs provide information regarding their household, prescriptions needs and pregnancy status. They also must consent for the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) to verify their income to determine their eligibility.

Adults leaving the Income Support or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) programs due to excess income from employment, self-employment or Canadian Pension Plan – Disability benefits, and who are not receiving health benefits from other government programs, are automatically enrolled for the AAHB program. Eligibility for AAHB is determined annually during the renewal period by using the CRA to confirm household income is under the qualifying income level for their family size in order to be automatically enrolled for AAHB for another year.

Health Benefits for Low-Income Albertans

On March 31 2021, there were:

- 56,532 Alberta Adult Health Benefits recipients
- 34,765 Alberta Child Health Benefits recipients

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Community and Social Services adjusted the AAHB renewal period from July to October. The previous renewal period in July occurred just two weeks after the federal income tax deadline and approximately 7,500 recipients would temporarily lose health benefits coverage each year when their tax information was not yet processed by the CRA, which then required Government of Alberta staff to manually reactivate health benefits coverage. By changing the AAHB renewal period from July to October, the majority of recipients have ample opportunities to submit their taxes so they can continue receiving health benefits without interruptions. In 2020-21, the number of files for which CRA information was not available at renewal dropped from 7,901 to 4,493, a reduction of 43 per cent. This resulted in better outcomes for recipients and reduced administrative workload for staff, including fewer requests for information from applicants, fewer calls from applicants and a reduction in manual work required to correct mismatched files.

Improving Coordination with Employment Insurance

The *Income and Employment Supports Act* is in place to provide supports for Albertans to meet their basic needs, medical and other benefits essential to health and well-being are available. Employment Insurance claimants who are unable to meet their basic needs during the waiting period may apply for Income Support benefits. Assignment of Benefits is an intergovernmental process that allows Community and Social Services to recover Income Support benefits provided to an individual while waiting for Employment Insurance benefits to start, thereby minimizing the duplication of Employment Insurance and Income Support payments paid to an individual for the same period. During 2020-21, Community and Social Services received a total reimbursement of \$500,000 from the federal government through the Assignment of Benefits process.

Community and Social Services has been working with federal counterparts to streamline and simplify the Assignment of Benefit process to make it easier to administer. In 2020-21, Service Canada updated their policy to allow the verbal authorization of the Assignment of Benefits form, which eliminated the need for an Albertan to come into an office to physically sign paperwork. In addition, representatives from Community and Social Services and Service Canada met quarterly to discuss program changes, updates, and service delivery enhancements.

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped, Income Support, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the Canadian Recovery Benefit

Total Number of Albertans Accessing Federal COVID-19 Benefits

As of October 4, 2020:

 1,071,450 Albertans accessed the Canada Emergency Response Benefit

As of April 11, 2021:

- 246,880 Albertans accessed Canada Recovery Benefit
- 50,690 Albertans accessed the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit
- 83,810 Albertans accessed Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit

The Government of Alberta is committed to supporting the province's most vulnerable people impacted by COVID-19. Community and Social Services allowed Income Support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) recipients who lost work and income because of COVID-19 to exempt a portion of the federal government's Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), which provided financial support to employed and self-employed Canadians directly affected by COVID-19. This allowed AISH clients who received CERB to remain on the AISH program and may have allowed some larger households to remain eligible for the Income Support program while receiving CERB.

Community and Social Services fully exempted Canadian Recovery Benefits (CRB) for Income Support and AISH clients from September 27, 2020, to June 30, 2021. This allowed AISH and Income Support clients to receive CRB payments in addition to full provincial benefits, providing additional supports for financially disadvantaged households during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Providing Outreach to Communities with High Rates of COVID-19 Infection

The Government of Alberta introduced outreach programs and supports specifically for residents in communities with very high rates of COVID-19 infection and transmission. An outreach campaign was developed to communicate important public health information directly to Albertans who may have English language barriers through expanded access to translated materials and other supports. Messages were delivered in 10 languages through radio, television and print advertising, as well as through various social media channels and web platforms, reaching 91 per cent of adult Albertans.

As of March 31, 2021, Community and Social Services invested \$3.5 million to provide over 1,900 adults and children space in a self-isolation hotel when Alberta Health Services adjudication determined they could not safely isolate in their homes thereby limiting the spread of COVID-19. The hotel rooms were free-of-charge for 14 days and were able to meet specialized dietary requirements. Individuals were also eligible for temporary financial aid in the amount of \$625 when they completed their self-isolation. Over 900 Albertans accessed the financial aid in 2020-21.

COVID-19 Public Awareness Campaigns

Public health information was shared in 10 languages:

- English
- Spanish
- French
- Punjabi
- Cantonese
- Hindi
- Vietnamese
- Arabic
- Tagalog
- Urdu

Upholding Program Compliance and Accountability

The Income Services Investigation Unit receives complaints from various sources, including the public and government staff, regarding allegations of fraud or abuse of program benefits from Income Support, Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) and other benefits programs administered by Community and Social Services. The unit investigates complaints, which include undeclared income, false information, unreported spouse or assets and identity theft. Complaints may result in an investigation and possibly criminal code or regulatory charges when fraud is substantiated with sufficient evidence. The unit provides proactive or preventive strategies to frontline delivery staff and assists in managing financial risk to the Government of Alberta. Unit investigators are designated Peace Officers, with the majority having worked for Canadian policing agencies in the past. On average, the ministry receives about 2,600 complaints annually with 67 per cent related to Income Support, 28 per cent to AISH and the remaining five per cent to other programs administered by Community and Social Services.

1.3 Partner with civil society organizations and municipalities to provide emergency shelter for vulnerable Albertans.

Responding to Alberta's Emergency Shelter Needs

The Government of Alberta is committed to ensuring those who require emergency shelter have a safe place to stay. Alberta's emergency shelters provide critical, short-term accommodation and support for people experiencing homelessness. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services provided approximately \$51 million to 25 civil society organizations to operate more than 3,800 regular spaces in homeless shelters in Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat and Red Deer.

Ν	umber	of	Community	/ and	Social	Services	Funded	Spaces
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Community	Emergency Shelter Beds/Mats	Additional Winter Emergency Shelter Spaces	Short-term/Long- term Supportive Housing beds	Funding	
Calgary	1,512	160	593	\$31,080,034	
Edmonton	589	201 310		\$10,096,460	
Fort McMurray	91	_	-	\$2,595,242	
Grande Prairie	89	_	33	\$1,772,702	
Lethbridge	110	110 –		\$2,042,666	
Lloydminster	20	20 –		\$143,738 ¹	
Medicine Hat	30	_	_	\$558,267	
Red Deer	135	11	_	\$2,226,686 ²	
Provincial Totals	2,576	372	936	\$50,515,795	

Notes:

^{1.} Operational funding for this shelter is cost-shared with the Government of Saskatchewan.

^{2.} Includes the Warming Centre.

Homelessness is not only an urban issue. In 2020-21, additional funding was made available to civil society agencies supporting people experiencing homelessness in rural communities to access safe shelter and isolation services during the pandemic. The ministry also invested \$120,000 to address youth homelessness in Camrose, Lloydminster and Peace River.

Over the last year, on average, 2,102 Albertans stayed in emergency shelters, short-term and long-term supportive beds each night. An individual's need for emergency shelter could be due to many factors including low-income, job loss, substance use or addiction. Demand for emergency shelter in a community may increase due to a lack of safe and affordable housing, population growth, economic climate, harsh weather or a health crisis, such as COVID-19.

Community and Social Services Homeless Emergency Shelters, Utilization Rate

	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Q1 & Q2	Q3 & Q4								
Average # of clients daily	2,924	2,995	2,800	2,957	2,829	2,942	2,653	2,788	2,084	2,119
Average # capacity	3,836	3,883	3,876	3,900	3,865	3,923	3,879	3,842	3,451	3,108
Utilization Rate	76%	77%	72%	76%	73%	75%	68%	73%	60%	68%

Source:

Occupancy Data provided directly by funded shelters.

Note

Capacity is the number of shelter bed spaces approved by fire department and health inspectors. Utilization rates for shelter spaces may vary due to a number of factors. For example, the rate during the first and second quarters of each year tends to be lower than in the third and fourth quarters because clients are more likely to seek shelter in cold weather.

Community and Social Services continues to work with shelter operators to address challenges and prioritize services for people with the most critical needs by using housing focused shelter service delivery, embedded in a recovery-oriented system of care.

Efforts to ensure the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic response has facilitated innovative solutions and collaborations. Community and Social Services will continue to work with partnering agencies and municipalities to sustain successful practices and strategies used during the pandemic for the long-term.

Enhancing Shelter Facilities

Construction of the Hope Mission's Herb Jamieson Centre, the largest shelter for homeless men in Edmonton, continued in 2020-21. In collaboration with the Ministry of Seniors and Housing, Community and Social Services is supporting the rebuild of Hope Mission's Herb Jamieson Centre to replace the aging emergency shelter.

Community and Social Services leads the service delivery design for the new Herb Jamieson building to ensure service delivery is housing focused and incorporates a recovery-oriented system of care. The service delivery design will be informed by data and input from key stakeholders, including the City of Edmonton, Homeward Trust and other homeless serving agencies in surrounding neighbourhoods. Community stakeholders will guide the future service delivery design to ensure shelter guests are provided access to housing supports, treatment and community resources in a facility that operates 24/7, with access to showers, laundry, food, day sleep and housing supports.

The new emergency shelter will be more accessible to those with mobility issues, have improved safety measures, and offer better support for people affected by homelessness. The shelter is expected to open in the fall of 2021.

Keeping Albertans Experiencing Homelessness Safe during COVID-19

During the pandemic, Community and Social Services helped ensure Albertans experiencing homelessness had access to safe isolation and emergency shelter services. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services provided \$50.4 million to homeless shelters and community organizations to protect people struggling with homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As COVID-19 infection rates varied over the course of the fiscal year and across communities, emergency shelter operators were nimble and adapted to changing local circumstances. To ensure efficient and effective service delivery, responses were continuously scaled to meet changing conditions and to ensure supports targeted the communities where it was most needed. In 2020-21, emergency funding provided by Community and Social Services supported over 3,000 shelter spaces to meet physical distancing requirements. The additional funding enabled shelters to implement provincial public health measures designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Many shelters also increased their hours of operation to offer 24/7 access to day sleep services, showers, laundry, meal services and connection to housing related supports.

Over the course of the year, over 400 isolation spaces were activated for people experiencing homelessness who were in need of a place to isolate due to COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19 or being identified as a close contact to a positive case. Located in 12 communities across the province, hotels, repurposed on-site shelter spaces, recreation centres and churches, were converted into isolation spaces for people who had no other option to safely isolate. Supports to Albertans in isolation included regular health and safety check-ins to ensure an individuals' basic needs were met, in complement to the medical supports provided by Alberta Health Services (AHS) and other community health providers.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services collaborated with AHS to develop Shelter Guidance: Preventing, Controlling and Managing COVID-19. This resource provided essential and detailed guidance to service providers on operational adjustments needed to provide safe services to people experiencing homelessness during the public health emergency. Short-term and long-term supportive housing facilities implemented necessary service delivery adjustments to meet pandemic protocols such as screening individuals on entry, physical distancing within shelters, modified sleeping arrangements, food handling and provision adjustments, hygiene facility adjustments and environmental cleaning.

As part of the COVID-19 response, personal protective equipment was made available to homeless-serving agencies at no-charge through the Provincial Operations Centre and AHS. This helped protect homeless-serving agency staff and clients, who are among the most at-risk individuals for contracting and experiencing long-term effects of COVID-19.

Community and Social Services participates in coordinated planning and response forums alongside AHS, municipal representatives, community-based organizations, shelter operators and other housing and homeless service agencies in urban and rural communities across the province. These collaborations were essential in identifying local needs, coordinating resources, and deploying responses within rapidly changing environments. Funding provided by Community and Social Services enabled organizations to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections and transmission among people experiencing homelessness, within the shelter community, as well as the broader community.

Recognizing the best place to isolate is in one's own home, shelter operators have renewed focus on moving new and existing shelter guests into housing as quickly as possible. Shelter operators collaborated with community-based organizations as necessary to ensure people had the appropriate housing and supports to address their specific needs.

The Government of Alberta is committed to ensuring communities are able to maintain effective and sustainable COVID-19 responses for the duration of the pandemic. The implementation of rapid testing in emergency shelters and access to COVID-19 vaccines for Albertans experiencing homelessness and staff of homeless-serving agencies helps to prevent outbreaks and reduce need for isolation services. Community and Social Services will continue to support emergency shelters and other service providers to move people into appropriate housing with supports.

On December 17, 2020, the Minister of Community and Social Services hosted a virtual Homeless Roundtable Discussion with shelter providers and community based organizations. Key experts and organizations that implemented responses to homelessness in a COVID-19 environment discussed their experiences, opportunities for government and service providers to continue to respond effectively to COVID-19 and support for individuals experiencing homelessness in Alberta.

1.4 Partner with civil society organizations, municipalities and other ministries to improve housing stability through programs such as Housing First and provide appropriate supports for Albertans affected by homelessness.

Addressing Homelessness

Many Albertans who are experiencing prolonged homelessness may have difficulty accessing and maintaining permanent housing. The Housing First approach, a recognized international best practice for addressing homelessness, involves moving people experiencing chronic homelessness into stable accommodations, without any preconditions. Once in housing, people are provided with supports and access to services that address their specific needs. This may include mental and physical health services, addictions treatment, employment training, housing and possibly rent support.

Housing First

People successfully housed through Housing First programs¹:

- spend 85 per cent fewer days incarcerated.
- spend 60 per cent less time hospitalized.
- have 41 per cent fewer emergency room visits.

Note:

1. Self-reported data from 2019-20.

Community and Social Services works closely with community partners to provide options for housing and supports for those struggling with homelessness. In 2020-21, the ministry provided funding of \$89 million to civil society organizations and municipalities to deliver homelessness programming, including Housing First, in the province's seven major centres: Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer.

Community and Social Services will continue to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic in order to address priority areas for provincial responses to homelessness such as:

- ensuring sufficient and appropriate emergency shelter services;
- amplifying efforts to connect people to housing and supports; and
- working collectively with stakeholders to adopt action-oriented approaches to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.

The ministry works with agencies who utilize recoveryoriented systems of care. This approach respects the choices, autonomy, dignity and self-determination of individuals, and uses empowerment strategies for harm reduction and recovery.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 5:

Building better communities

- Community and Social Services provided \$89 million to civil society and municipalities to deliver homelessness programming.
- 6,544 Albertans were provided with housing and supports through Housing First between April 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, including 1,463 Albertans who were newly admitted to Housing First programs.

1.5 Partner with civil society organizations to provide resources and supports to Albertans impacted by domestic and sexual violence.

The Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act

In Canada, half of all young women and girls who are victims of domestic violence homicide are murdered by someone with a prior conviction. Alberta has the fourth highest rate of police-reported intimate partner violence in Canada. Community and Social Services supports anyone experiencing or at-risk of domestic violence with options to protect themselves, allowing Albertans to live and participate safely in their communities. The *Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act* helps prevent domestic violence in Alberta by giving people who believe they may be at risk the information they need to protect themselves from harm.

Modelled after "Clare's Law" in the United Kingdom, this legislation is named after a young woman killed by an ex-boyfriend with a history of violence against women. The act allows people at risk of domestic violence to find out if their intimate partner has a violent or abusive past. The legislation also allows law enforcement to proactively inform an individual of their intimate partner's history of domestic violence.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services invested \$600,000 to support the implementation of Clare's Law. A cross-ministry working group, co-led by Community and Social Services and Justice and Solicitor General, and with the advice of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, engaged stakeholders and developed the operational processes that need to be in place for the implementation of Clare's Law. Community and Social Services conducted a public online survey specifically targeting domestic violence stakeholders, police services, Indigenous organizations and designates, victim advocates, offender advocates, multicultural and multiethnic organizations, LGBTQ2S+ organizations, academics and organizations with experience providing supports and services related to domestic violence in diverse communities across Alberta.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 3:

Supporting Albertans most in need

 In July 2020, Community and Social Services conducted a public online survey, specifically targeting domestic violence stakeholders, to inform the implementation of Clare's Law planned for 2021-22. As a part of ongoing stakeholder engagement, a Police Working Group and a Social Supports Advisory Working Group were established to validate the final approach and support the implementation of Clare's Law. Composed of external subject matter experts on domestic violence, the Social Supports Advisory Working Group provided input to ensure implementation of Clare's Law was informed by subject matter experts. After implementation of Clare's Law, the Social Supports Advisory Working Group will continue to share insights from community members and organizations addressing domestic violence as to how Clare's Law is being experienced in the community.

In collaboration with Service Alberta and with advice from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, an online application portal and secure database for processing applications was developed in 2020-21. Data from the secure database will be analyzed to understand the nature and scope of applicants to inform any future enhancements to the Clare's Law processes.

Connecting Virtually to Keep Albertans Safe

When victims of family violence and vulnerable family members such as children require immediate protection, *Alberta's Protection Against Family Violence Act* (PAFVA) helps to ensure their safety. Emergency Protection Orders (EPO) issued under PAFVA are granted where family violence occurs as described in the act. An EPO can be issued by a provincial court judge or a presiding justice of the peace on a 24-hour basis when there is a need for immediate protection. In 2020-21, the PAFVA regulation was amended to allow application for an EPO using telecommunication. Previously, individuals applying for EPOs without the help of police, peace officers, or other designated persons, were required to appear in court in person. The in-person requirement created barriers for Albertans seeking an EPO who were not assisted by designated persons. Limited court access in rural areas also created significant challenges for rural Albertans seeking an EPO.

Albertans' ability to appear in person for EPO applications was further impacted by COVID-19 public health measures. The requirement to apply for EPOs in person was temporarily suspended in April 2020, to ensure Albertans could continue to access this protection during the pandemic. In August 2020, the PAFVA regulation was amended to reflect this change as an ongoing measure to protect victims of family violence, increase access to justice services across the province and reduce red tape by allowing for a digital platform, eliminating the unnecessary steps and burden of appearing inperson.

Emergency Protection Orders

In 2020-21, 3,508 EPO applications were made in Alberta. Of those:

- 782 were applied for over the phone by individuals themselves; and
- 482 were applied for over the phone by law enforcement on behalf of an individual.

Supporting Women's Shelters

Community and Social Services remains committed to partnering with women's shelters throughout Alberta to address safety risks posed to women and children escaping domestic violence. The ministry works closely with shelter partners across the province to make sure women and children fleeing violence have access to important services and supports, both in shelters and in the community, to help rebuild their lives.

Vulnerable women and children are provided with intensive supports in shelters and in the community so that they can live free of violence. Funded services address multiple and complex needs and include:

- women's emergency shelters where individuals are provided with temporary accommodations with accompanying services and supports;
- second stage shelters where women requiring additional assistance are accommodated for a longer period;
- outreach;
- Intensive Case Management:
- child trauma informed services; and
- innovative child care.

Provincially funded women's shelters are located across the province in both urban and rural communities. In 2020-21, the ministry invested over \$51 million in women's shelter programming and outreach services to women and families both in shelters and in the community. The funding also included approximately \$1 million to support innovative child care programs operating in shelters across the province. Innovative child care programs provide safe, accessible, and specialized child care services during the day and after school for children who have been exposed to domestic violence. Programs may include a Child and Youth Counselor and a Child and Youth Worker to provide regular child care services and therapeutic intervention. Innovative child care programs also work with women to help them understand their children's needs and the effect domestic violence has on their development and well-being.

Women and Family Shelters

Supports and Services	Number of Shelters	Funding
Women's emergency shelters	29	\$40,760,000
Second-stage shelters	16	\$9,461,000
Elder abuse shelters	2	\$806,000
Fee-for-service reserve shelters	5	\$480,000
Outreach program – grants	_	\$332,000
Alberta Council of Women's Shelters – support initiatives	_	\$995,000
Provincial Totals	52	\$52,834,000

Note:

Funding is provided for individuals ordinarily living off-reserve who access on-reserve shelters.

In 2020-21, \$5 million was allocated to provide support to families affected by violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately \$3.9 million was distributed during the fiscal year, with the remaining funding allocated for 2021-22. This funding was used to:

- support safe isolation for women and children in alternate locations such as hotels;
- adjust operational and programming requirements, while respecting physical distancing and being responsive to increased crisis calls;
- provide more frequent welfare checks to families needing to self-isolate;
- offer community-based supports, food, transportation and other necessities to address health and safety; and
- address unexpected costs related to public health guidelines, such as use of personal protective equipment, cleaning protocols and meal service.

Women's shelters experience increased pressures as they manage complex situations while supporting the needs of individuals accessing the shelter. The ministry supports Intensive Case Management teams across the province, consisting of intensive case managers and child trauma workers to meet the needs of complex clients. This includes women and children impacted by severe trauma, mental health and substance abuse issues. Community and Social Services allocates these positions based on the unique needs of each shelter and community. The ministry continues to work with women's shelter providers to determine how Intensive Case Management can support women and children to address housing challenges and support families transitioning from emergency and second-stage shelters with system navigation and complex case management.

Funding for Intensive Case Management increased the capacity of shelters to provide outreach supports to women and families both in shelter and in the community. In 2020-21, outreach services were vital when public health restrictions made it more difficult for women to access inperson services. Over the phone one-on-one support, safety planning and risk assessments continued to be available to women experiencing violence.

Albertans Supported by Shelters and Outreach Programs

Supports and Services	Adults Served	Children Served
Women's emergency shelters	3,312	2,443
Women's second-stage shelters	319	503
Elder abuse shelters	64	_
Women's fee-for-service shelters	77	35
Women's outreach supports and Intensive Case Management	5,034	1,666

Note:

Includes Albertans admitted in 2019-20 who continued to receive services in 2020-21.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services initiated the work to shift single-year agreements to multi-year agreements for Women's Shelters. Reporting templates for grants were also streamlined and over 200 reporting requirements were eliminated, greatly reducing administrative burden to shelter providers. These transformations reduce red tape and administrative burden, enabling organizations to focus on effective service delivery.

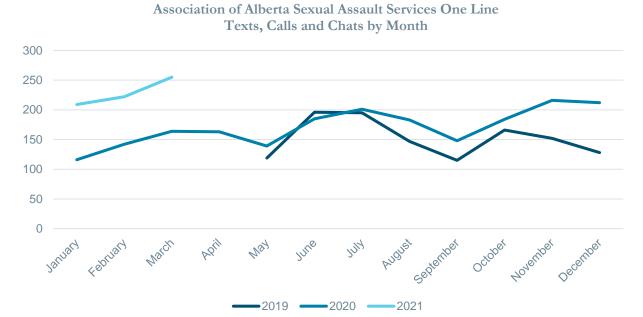
Community and Social Services is committed to protecting Albertans who may be at risk or affected by domestic violence and abuse. The ministry continues to collaborate with community partners to build on lessons from COVID-19 and ensure survivors of domestic violence are safe and get the help they need.

Supporting Sexual Assault Centres

Sexual violence is an act committed against someone's sexual integrity without that person's freely given consent. According to Statistics Canada, Alberta has the fourth highest rate of sexual assault among the provinces. Indigenous women and girls, children and adolescents, people with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ2S+ community are more likely to experience sexual violence than the general public. Since 95 per cent of survivors do not report assaults to police, sexual violence is the most under-reported crime in Canada.

Community and Social Services is committed to reducing sexual violence in the province to ensure all Albertans can participate safely in their communities. Sexual assault centres in Alberta offer supports such as crisis intervention, counselling, police and court support, public education, outreach services and supports, volunteer services, and coordination and collaboration. Community and Social Services allocated an additional \$1.2 million, for a total of \$11.5 million, to expand sexual assault centre services to rural, remote, and under-served areas through satellite offices and a network of outreach counselors. The ministry also funded costs for the core service of police and court support.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, sexual assault centres offered support, counselling and crisis intervention through enhanced phone and virtual counselling sessions. Albertans can contact Alberta's One Line at 1-866-403-8000, a provincewide central platform for sexual assault support services operated by the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS), which launched in May 2019. Private, toll-free talk, text, and chat services connect individuals who have been impacted by sexual violence to support, information and referrals to specialized sexual violence services. Texts, calls and chats to the One Line increased from 1,640 in 2019-20, to 2,317 in 2020-21, an increase of 41 per cent. For the first three months of 2021, text, call and chat volumes increased by an average of 64 per cent over the same time period in 2020.



During the fiscal year, Community and Social Services streamlined reporting requirements for Sexual Assault Centre grants to align with Department of Health grants. Combining two reports into one, and substantially reducing the number of data submitted, reduces administrative work and related costs for both agencies and government. Further work to streamline grant reporting for the AASAS will be undertaken in 2021-22.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services completed a full review on the current state of sexual assault service provision to further understand service delivery, geographic accessibility, and funding allocation across the province. In consultation with the AASAS and its member agencies, this review will inform future regional expansion of sexual assault services in underserved areas in 2021-22.

The Government of Alberta is committed to supporting survivors of sexual violence. With a focus on prevention, funding for the sector addressing sexual violence will increase in 2021-22 to provide more supports and services for Albertans affected by sexual violence.

1.6 Work with the financial services industry, the federal government and the disability community to improve access to disability-related financial supports.

Helping to Save for the Future

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a long-term savings plan to help eligible Canadians with disabilities and their families financially prepare for the future. Canadians with an RDSP may qualify for associated federal grants and bonds to enhance their long-term savings, which can be especially helpful for persons with severe disabilities who live on a low or modest income.

Canadians with disabilities have long experienced barriers to accessing RDSPs, such as qualifying for the Disability Tax Credit, navigating the financial services industry and setting up a RDSP account properly. As a result, many Albertans have not been able to maximize the benefits of this federal disability program. In 2017, the usage of RDSPs for eligible Albertans was less than 32 per cent.

Community and Social Services is committed to helping Albertans open RDSPs and access the thousands of dollars in federal government grants and bonds available for people who meet the eligibility criteria. In 2020-21, the department explored and developed an approach to engage key stakeholders in the disability community and financial sectors to increase the uptake of RDSPs in Alberta. Further work will continue in 2021-22.

Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

What is the eligibility for a RDSP?

- Eligible for the Disability Tax Credit;
- Under the age of 60; and
- Canadian residency with a Social Insurance Number.

What is the Canada Disability Savings Bond?

• Up to \$1000 per year bond the Government of Canada contributes to an RDSP of low and modestincome Canadians.

What is the Canada Disability Savings Grant?

 Matching grant of up to 300 per cent on contributions to an RDSP depending on the beneficiary's family income.

More information on RDSPs can be found at https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/registered-disability-savings-plan-rdsp.html

Performance Measure 1.a: Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) quality-of-life-index (biennial survey)

	Prior Year	2020 24	2020 24		
2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21 Target	2020-21 Actual
76%	76%	77%	77%	77%	N/A ²

Notes:

- 1. Only prior years with surveys conducted are represented.
- 2. The 2020-21 survey was postponed due to the pandemic.

The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program provides financial and health benefits to eligible adult Albertans with a permanent medical condition that prevents them from earning a living. AISH recipients may have a variety of disabilities, including physical, mental health and/or developmental disabilities.

Since 2007, an annual survey administered to randomly selected AISH recipients has been used to measure satisfaction with personal benefits. Based on this survey, this performance measure assesses the extent to which benefits received by AISH recipients are: meeting basic needs; helping to manage health issues; allowing more independent living; and resulting in more involvement in their community. The result is derived by averaging the percentage of positive responses for each of these four areas.

Effective 2019-20, the survey shifted from being conducted every year to every other year. Shifting to a biennial schedule aligns with other ministry surveys, such as the Persons with Developmental Disabilities and Family Support for Children with Disabilities family/guardian satisfaction surveys. This reduces department costs while continuing to assess individuals every two years. The 2020-21 survey was postponed due to the pandemic.

The AISH quality-of-life-index result from 2018-19 is the most current. In 2018-19, 77 per cent of survey participants agreed that financial assistance from AISH improved their quality of life. The value was unchanged from the previous year and three percentage points less than the 2018-19 target of 80 per cent.

Performance Indicator 1.b: Average annual financial support system caseloads¹

	2016	2017	2018²	2019²	2020
Total Income Support Caseload	48,233	55,169	57,147	60,865	52,397
Expected to Work	29,111	34,375	34,564	38,477	31,364
Barriers to Full Employment	19,122	20,794	22,583	22,388	21,033
AISH Caseload	54,330	57,946	60,679	65,363	69,424

Note:

Income Support provides financial benefits to individuals and families in Alberta who do not have the resources to meet their basic needs, including food, clothing and shelter. The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program provides financial and health benefits to eligible adult Albertans with a permanent medical condition that prevents them from earning a living, as well as to their families. AISH recipients may have a variety of disabilities, including physical, mental health and/or developmental disabilities.

This performance indicator shows Alberta's average annual financial support caseloads with a breakdown of the two main programs: Income Support and AISH. Income Support consists of two client categories: Expected to Work (ETW) and Barriers to Full Employment (BFE). The ETW category includes those who are searching for work, working but not earning enough income to meet their basic needs or are temporarily incapable of working. The BFE category includes those having multiple barriers, or a persistent mental or physical health problem that limits their ability to sustain competitive employment. All types of caseload are composed of single individuals, single-parent families, couples with children and couples without children.

In 2020, the Income Support program supported an average of 52,397 cases per month. Of the total numbers of average annual Income Support caseloads, 31,364 and 21,033 cases represent ETW and BFE categories respectively. The total average annual Income Support caseload has decreased by 13.9 per cent over the past year, from 60,865 in 2019 to 52,397 in 2020. In terms of a breakdown of the total average annual Income Support caseload, the average annual ETW caseload has decreased by 18.4 per cent over the past year, from 38,477 in 2019 to 31,364 in 2020. In contrast to average annual ETW caseload, the average annual BFE caseload has decreased by 6.1 per cent over the past year, from 22,388 in 2019 to 21,033 in 2020.

^{1.} Average annual financial support system caseloads is calculated by averaging the monthly caseload numbers between January and December for each calendar year.

^{2.} Caseload numbers previously extracted from a live data source have been updated to align with more recent static numbers reported on the Open Data Portal.

The Income Support caseload can be impacted by population growth, economic forces and the availability of other benefits. The population of Alberta grew by 0.8 per cent from January 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021. This is down from the previous growth of 1.7 per cent from January 1, 2019 to January 1, 2020. Caseloads may change in accordance with unemployment rates, although unemployment rate fluctuations do not immediately translate into caseload changes in the ETW program. Typically, there is a four to six-month lag based on numerous reasons such as employability factors, seasonal impacts and accessing Employment Insurance. Income Support caseloads also declined due to potential clients accessing COVID-19 related supports from the Government of Canada, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit program and the Canadian Recovery Benefits program.

In 2020, the AISH program supported an average of 69,424 cases per month. The average annual AISH caseload has increased by 6.2 per cent over the past year, from 65,363 in 2019 to 69,424 in 2020. From 2016 to 2020, the average annual AISH caseload has increased by 15,094 cases at an average rate of 6.3 per cent per year. Caseload growth in 2020 was lower than the average, due to decreasing applications and the impacts of the pandemic. In 2019, the approved application adjudication process resulted in higher than usual AISH caseload growth, at 7.7 per cent. In 2020, applications for AISH decreased, from 13,846 in 2019 to 10,551 in 2020. This was likely due to the availability of other provincial and federal pandemic-related benefits. The AISH caseload is also affected by overall population growth and changing population demographics in the province. As the population grows and ages, the number of individuals with disabilities is likely to increase, resulting in a greater demand for AISH benefits.

Performance Indicator 1.c: Number of women and children admitted to provincially-funded women's shelters

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 ¹	2019-20 ¹	2020-21 ²
Number of Women	4,961	5,518	5,473	5,266	3,160
Number of Children	3,881	3,948	4,027	3,784	2,209

Note:

- 1. Numbers have been updated to address previous data errors.
- 2. Lower numbers may in part reflect reduced shelter capacity caused by public health recommendations requiring social distancing.

This performance indicator shows the number of women and children admitted to provincially funded women's emergency shelters. This indicator does not include: clients receiving outreach services, admitted to second-stage shelters or on-reserve fee-for-service shelters; women admitted to seniors' abuse shelters or emergency homeless shelters for women; or youth living in emergency youth shelters.

In 2020-21, women's emergency shelters admitted 3,160 women and 2,209 children. There has been a 40.0 per cent decrease from 2019-20 in the number of women admitted to shelters and a 41.6 per cent decrease in the number of children admitted to shelters.

The proportion of shelter users aged between 25 and 40 increased from 2019-20 (62 per cent in 2020-21 vs. 57 per cent) and the proportion of shelter users aged between 41 and 59 decreased from 2019-20 (22 per cent in 2020-21 vs. 24 per cent). Although these differences are not large, they represent departures from the trend seen in the previous five years of data, which show overall increases in older women accessing shelter services relative to those aged between 25 and 40.

The large decrease in the number of women and children admitted to shelters in 2020-21 may be explained, in part, by the number of public health measures that were in place to protect Alberta's health system and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Although women's emergency shelters remained open throughout the pandemic, many shelters had to reduce their capacity to accommodate Alberta Health Services' shelter guidelines, including social distancing requirements. In cases where shelter operators had to pause new admissions due to on-site outbreaks, Community and Social Services and operators coordinated with other local providers to ensure clients were redirected and had continued access to shelter services and supports.

During the pandemic, some women may have been hesitant to access congregated residential services due to perceived risk of exposure to COVID-19. Early data from the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) showed a correlation between reduced shelter admissions when provincial restrictions are increased.

In 2020-21, Albertans spent more time at home: working or schooling from home or due to unemployment during the pandemic. Some women experienced additional barriers to leaving an unsafe situation, as they may have not been able to safely call for help because they were always with their abuser. Reports from shelter providers and the ACWS showed that some families have been unable to safely leave their home because they were isolated with their abuser.

Disruptions caused by the pandemic, including the need to adhere to public health requirements, impacted women at risk of or experiencing family violence, many of whom opted not to come to shelters due to concerns about COVID-19 transmission. During the pandemic, shelters addressed the impacts of these measures on the availability and accessibility of their services by:

- ensuring outreach programming was available to women seeking supports and services who may not have been able to visit a shelter site; and
- continuing to adjust service and program delivery to provide a variety of in-person and virtual service pathways to vulnerable women and children in need of safe services.

Outcome Two: Participation – Albertans participate in their communities through employment and other opportunities to reach their individual potential

Community and Social Services is committed to helping vulnerable Albertans improve their lives and futures. The ministry supports initiatives that connect Albertans to employment and community participation opportunities.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Provide employment support services to help Albertans get back to work.
- 2.2 Facilitate post-secondary education and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through partnerships with civil society organizations, municipalities and other government departments.
- 2.3 Provide supports for persons with disabilities to participate in community life and for families to promote the development of their children with disabilities.
- 2.4 Collaborate with Alberta's Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Service Networks to offer programming and resources for prevention, diagnosis, assessment and support for Albertans.
- 2.5 Work with First Nations, other Indigenous communities and the disability community to promote awareness of and increase access to culturally sensitive supports and services for Indigenous persons with disabilities living both on- and off-reserve and on Metis Settlements.

2.1 Provide employment support services to help Albertans get back to work.

Supporting Job Seekers

Community and Social Services is focused on helping Albertans return to work as the economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. The alis.alberta.ca (alis) website provides employment resources to help Albertans make informed career choices, enhance their employability, plan for education or training, and connect to and be successful in the labour market. Available 24/7, this self-help tool can be accessed on mobile devices and content is continuously refreshed to ensure it is up-to-date and reliable.

Albertans can use alis to connect to the jobs they want, develop the tools they need to apply for a job and be successful in an interview. The website provides access to:

- job postings;
- links to popular job banks and in-person and virtual career fairs happening across the province;
- tools to help Albertans write a resumé or cover letter;
- examples of typical interview questions with appropriate responses;
- program and school information to learn about what education and training opportunities are available in Alberta; and
- over 500 occupational profiles featuring information on wages and salaries, educational requirements and typical duties.

Support for those dealing with job loss and information on how to move forward is also available through alis. Albertans can learn about transferable skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving. Job seekers also learn how these skills can be beneficial in transitioning to a new occupation or industry.

During 2020-21, numerous technological enhancements were made to alis and content was continually added. The site's job postings interface was enhanced to make it more robust and easier to use. Customized job alerts were improved, lists of agricultural, trades-related, and work-from-home jobs were added and job postings continued to be updated on an hourly basis.

Three new occupational profiles were published and over 100 others were updated. Over 10 new videos were released to support a variety of occupational profiles. The occupational profile's Abilities & Interests sections were updated to include a new Top 10 Skills Employers Are Looking For chart, which updates daily based on data from recent job postings. Thousands of post-secondary school and program records were also updated.

New page designs and interactive forms were implemented to support the ongoing conversion of alis print publications into web-based content. Over the course of 2020-21, 10 high-priority publications were converted to web content, over 50 articles were updated, six key articles were translated into French, and all major navigation pages were redesigned to improve usability.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 1:

Supporting job creation

Objective 6:

Making Alberta more dynamic, innovative and sustainable

- Increased alis.alberta.ca

 (alis) website visits provided labour market information to support informed decision-making by Albertans, government, communities, training providers and employers.
- 2020-21 alis website traffic:
 - 3.7 million visits to alis, a 22 per cent increase over the previous year.
 - 1.8 million views on the alis job posting page, up 28 per cent from the previous year.

New guided content functionality was added to allow career services providers and Albertans to create and share custom ToDo lists built from exiting alis content. The Privacy Impact Assessment, Freedom of Information and Privacy statements, security scanning, and digital records management processes were updated to support ongoing enhancements to alis accounts for Albertans and frontline career advisors.

In 2020-21, an expert review of disability-related content on the alis website was conducted and initial technology enhancements were made to improve the accessibility of the website for people with disabilities.

During the fiscal year, alis distributed approximately 19,000 print publications to primary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, career development agencies, immigrant-serving agencies, independent businesses and individuals throughout Alberta. This is a decrease of 93 per cent from the previous year's distribution of 225,000 and is largely due to government and third-party agencies transitioning to virtual service delivery during the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the need for job seekers to use technology to find work and further their careers. In 2021-22, alis will continue to meet these needs by enhancing the interactive career planning tool, CAREERinsite; redesigning secondary navigation pages to be more intuitive; working to continually enhance the user experience for Albertans; and translating additional content into French.

Safely Delivering Employment Services to Albertans

Albertans can access career and training information through the alis website and the Alberta Supports Contact Centre. Community and Social Services provides financial support, employment services, career resources, referrals, information on job fairs and workshops, and local labour market information to all Albertans who present with employment needs.

During 2020-21, many employment services shifted to virtual and remote delivery. Virtual technology was implemented to enable clients to interact with program delivery staff, allowing employment supports to continue without having to go in-person to a support centre. Workshops were delivered virtually, while resumé and job search support and coaching were provided remotely. Demand for services decreased as a result of both the COVID-19 pandemic and the various federal benefits available to Albertans.

The Career and Employment Information Services program includes large and small-scale career and employment service centres, partnership driven career information services and career centres that target vulnerable and under-represented populations in the labour market. Targeted employment services are provided for:

- vouth to connect with job opportunities and obtain strategies to gain work experience:
- persons with disabilities, so staff can provide accessible equipment and tools as well as strategies to disclose disabilities with employers;

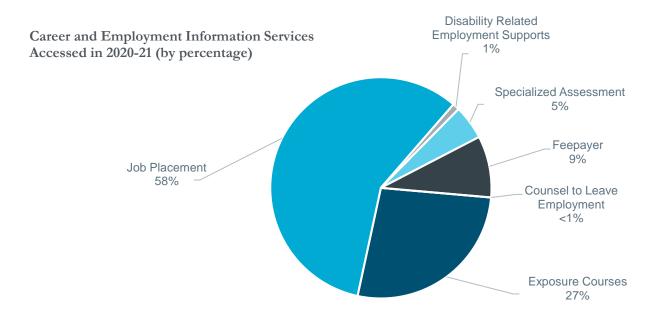
- immigrants to access services in multiple languages;
- internationally educated professionals to secure employment and gain accreditation;
- · Indigenous and francophone individuals to connect to employment; and
- Albertans accessing the Income Support program.

Alberta Supports Contact Centre staff provide information on and referrals to career and training resources in local communities, including referrals to Career and Employment Consultants, contracted agencies and alis. Through the Career and Employment Information Services program, Albertans have access to a service needs determination process to help identify needs for information, career, training and employment services, and financial and non-financial supports. This process may lead to further assessment to determine how best to help improve their employability and self-sufficiency in the labour market. Career and Employment Consultants then provide proactive case management to Albertans accessing the Income Support program who are in the Expected to Work client category. This proactive case management supports their job search and helps them find and maintain employment.

Primary Career and Employment Information Services offered by Alberta Supports

Exposure Courses	provide job-ready individuals with funding for short-term courses in order to gain the certification and/or job-specific skills they need, such as first aid or basic computer skills.
Job Placement	helps individuals who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for employment, but need support to develop or refine job search skills, make connections to employers and maintain employment.
Disability Related Employment Supports	provides funds for assistive technologies and aids, such as specialized computer software and assistive services, such as tutors and job coaches, and worksite modifications, such as wheelchair ramps.
Specialized Assessment	conducts an in-depth analysis of a client's educational, vocational, medical, intellectual and psychological capabilities to determine accommodations or supports required to enable them to find and maintain employment.
Feepayer	allows individuals to request consideration for continued regular Employment Insurance benefits while in training. Feepayers are responsible to pay for the costs of their training, including tuition, books and supplies.
Counsel to Leave Employment	supports individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Government of Alberta funded training because they are working. This is accessed by individuals who want to leave their employment for further education and training to advance or sustain long-term employment and financial independence. Individuals receive extensive counselling prior to approval and must meet eligibility and policy criteria.

Contracted career and employment information services are in place to support Career and Employment Consultants to connect clients to job placements and job search supports. Through contracts and grants, service providers deliver a variety of career and employment services to unemployed and underemployed Albertans, including career and education planning, resumé writing, interview skills, job search skills, computer and internet skills, personal development and career decision-making.



In 2020-21, Albertans accessed Employment Assistance Services 58,439 times; including virtual workshops covering resumé development, interview preparations, job searching and career counselling. The Work Outcomes Reporting Project survey is conducted with clients three months after they have participated in a program, service or workshop. The Work Outcomes Reporting Project survey reported that 78.9 per cent of Albertans are satisfied or highly satisfied with the Career and Employment Information Services they received during the fiscal year.

Community and Social Services continued to partner with Labour and Immigration on the Lifemark Project in 2020-21, providing Career and Employment Information Services as well as connecting to a job through workplace training consisting of either on-the-job training or paid work experience. Approximately 250 Income Support clients participated in the Lifemark Project in 2020-21. Participants who successfully completed career and employment information services were then matched with willing employers as part of Labour and Immigration's Workplace Training program. After receiving the career and employment information services, clients stated they were more confident about how to look for work and that they had acquired knowledge about job search strategies, resumé writing and interview skills. The Ministries of Labour and Immigration and Community and Social Services will continue to work collaboratively and take the learnings from this initiative to inform future projects.

An internal review of the Career and Employment Information Services program was conducted in 2020-21 to inform the design of a cohesive approach to employment supports through understanding the current state, effectiveness and efficiency of existing employment services. The review provided recommendations related to streamlining operations, enhancing relationships with service providers and strengthening targeted services for clients.

Supporting Transportation Needs

The low-income transit support program in Alberta's two largest cities helps low-income families afford transportation to access jobs, education, health care, community resources and government services. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services invested \$4 million to support vulnerable Albertans by making transit more affordable. Through partnerships with the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, this program provides adult and youth monthly passes at a subsidized rate.

Access to subsidized transit passes is available to anyone who can demonstrate financial eligibility. Albertans accessing Income Support or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) can present their Health Benefits Card as proof of financial eligibility. AISH recipients in Edmonton may also choose to enroll in a direct debit option, which allocates funds directly from their AISH budget and provides an Edmonton transit pass in advance through the mail.

How to Purchase a Low-Income Transit Pass

- From the City of Calgary through the Fair Entry program, which uses a common application process for subsidized programs and services in Calgary.
- From the City of Edmonton through a common application for the Ride Transit Program and Leisure Access Pass Program.

Public transit ridership was affected during the COVID-19 pandemic when fewer people were moving around their communities due to public health recommendations. In 2020, approximately 270,000 low-income transit passes were sold in Calgary, down from over 480,000 in 2019. The City of Edmonton suspended sale of all transit passes from April to June and provided complimentary low-income transit passes from July to September to those who were eligible. In Edmonton, approximately 100,000 low-income transit passes were sold in 2020, down from over 216,000 in 2019. The annual surveys conducted by the cities of Edmonton and Calgary identify the two employment statuses most representative of low-income pass holders are individuals who are employed full-time and those receiving government assistance.

By reducing financial barriers for individuals and families in Edmonton and Calgary, the low-income transit support program provides greater access to public transportation and allows families to dedicate more of their financial resources to shelter, food and clothing needs.

2.2 Facilitate post-secondary education and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through partnerships with civil society organizations, municipalities and other government departments.

Providing Education Opportunities for Albertans with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may face a number of challenges to full participation in post-secondary education. Education accommodations play an important role in creating inclusive and accessible educational environments for many students with disabilities. Accommodations may include physically accessible classrooms, alternative course delivery, flexible exam formats or assistive technologies.

Community and Social Services supports vulnerable students to participate in their communities through schooling and education. Students with developmental disabilities are able to participate in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE), where they fully participate in regular post-secondary classes as non-credit (audit) students. Aided and supervised by a facilitator, the student sets goals, selects courses and accesses tutoring and peer supports. IPSE students receive a certificate of achievement upon completion of the program.

When post-secondary institutions moved to online delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic, students with disabilities were supported to participate actively in virtual classroom activities. IPSE supported students to make and maintain peer connections, get and maintain employment, understand public health orders, maintain personal safety, and make scheduling and routine changes to deal with the pandemic.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services supported students with developmental disabilities by providing \$4.2 million in funding for IPSE, an increase of almost \$300,000 from the previous year. Inclusion Alberta (a family-based non-profit federation that advocates on behalf of children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families) administrated approximately \$2.4 million at 15 post-secondary institutions. The remaining \$1.8 million was provided to directly fund IPSE at five post-secondary institutions across the province.

Promoting Employment Supports for Albertans with Disabilities

Labour force participation, which refers to individuals who are employed or seeking employment, is lower for adults with disabilities. People with disabilities who participate in the labour force are less likely to be employed compared with people without disabilities. Moreover, people living with disabilities may face multiple barriers that impact their ability to access or maintain employment. In 2020-21, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these employment trends for people with disabilities. According to Statistics Canada, among labour force participants in Canada aged 15 to 64 with a long-term condition or disability, 66 per cent reported being employed prior to the start of the pandemic, while only 55 per cent reported being employed in June of 2020. Of those who maintained employment during the pandemic. people with disabilities experienced reduced hours at a higher rate than people without disabilities.

Community and Social Services promotes equal opportunities for Albertans with disabilities. A number of initiatives support employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and helps employers tap into the unique skills of these individuals. The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program provides Employment Preparation and Placement Supports to assist individuals in developing skills and knowledge for finding and maintaining paid employment.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 3:

Supporting Albertans most in need

- In 2020-21, the ministry invested more than \$22 million connecting 2,464 individuals receiving Persons with Developmental Disabilities services to the labour market through:
 - Employment Preparation and Training; and
 - Employment Placement.

The federal government, through the Labour Market Transfer Agreement (LMTA), provides funding to Alberta to support employment and training programs for Albertans. In 2020-21, PDD staff received LMTA policy-to-practice training on reporting requirements for PDD employment services. Working with the Ministry of Labour and Immigration, Community and Social Services enhanced practices related to:

- required information gathering;
- addressing data error reports; and
- reviewing employment outcomes to align PDD's employment reporting and meet federal LMTA reporting requirements.

These improvements ensure that PDD employment services will be included in Alberta's LMTA reporting to the federal government. In collaboration with key stakeholders, Community and Social Services continues to increase partnerships and create job opportunities by identifying new projects that align with the federal labour market agreements.

Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES) provide individualized employment and training supports while also providing funds for assistive technologies such as specialized computer software, assistive services such as tutors and job coaches, and worksite modifications such as wheelchair ramps. Community and Social Services reviewed DRES in 2020-21 to understand the current state, effectiveness and the efficiency of the program, and to identify recommendations for improvement. Recommendations focused on streamlining processes and simplifying the program, with implementation planned for 2021-22.

Community and Social Services supports business owners to identify and build employment opportunities for individuals, and remove barriers faced by persons with developmental disabilities, through funding to the Rotary Employment Partnership. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services expanded the Rotary Employment Program to increase employment opportunities for Albertans with disabilities. This was achieved by increasing funding to Inclusion Alberta by approximately \$220,000 for a total investment of approximately \$750,000, allowing the Rotary Employment Program to create more than 40 jobs for Albertans with disabilities, involving 35 Rotary Clubs.

Disability Employment Awareness Month

The Ministry of Community and Social Services recognizes every October as Disability Employment Awareness Month to promote awareness of people with disabilities in the workforce, celebrate their accomplishments and support employers in promoting inclusive hiring practices.

Community and Social Services, through enhanced employment supports, is committed to improving opportunities for unemployed or marginally employed individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities. Enhanced employment supports is a policy approach to contract, measure, and report outcomes that improve service delivery for Albertans.

The Government of Alberta is committed to becoming a leader in hiring Albertans with disabilities. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services collaborated with the Public Service Commission to develop the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities, a recruitment strategy designed to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in meaningful employment opportunities in the Alberta Public Service (APS). The program has two components – job carving and work experience. Job carving creates opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities to work in administrative support roles tailored to their skills and abilities. Goodwill Industries of Alberta and Inclusion Alberta are partnering with the APS to support the implementation of the job carving roles. Work experience provides two-year placements in program services roles for persons with disabilities who have high school or post-secondary education.

As the Alberta economy improves, there is great potential for more Albertans with disabilities to join the workforce with the right supports. Community and Social Services continues to work with civil society networks and coalitions to explore further partnership opportunities. These opportunities will allow for government to work with community organizations and the private sector to stimulate and sustain employment opportunities for Albertans with disabilities.

2.3 Provide supports for persons with disabilities to participate in community life and for families to promote the development of their children with disabilities.

Expanding Family Managed Services

Community and Social Services supports children, youth and adults with disabilities to live and participate in their communities through legislated programs, services and other initiatives. The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) and the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) programs support children and adults with disabilities to become fully included in community life.

The Family Managed Services model allows an individual, their family or a person close to the individual to manage the delivery of services by hiring staff directly or by obtaining supports through a FSCD or PDD service provider. This ensures families are able to have more say in the supports that are provided and the opportunity to choose what will work best for the individual with a disability.

Expanding Family Managed Services supports more families to manage services for loved ones with a disability. In 2021-22, the ministry will continue to support families who have a family member with a disability by establishing new Family Resource Centres and implementing new program policies to provide more flexibility for Family Managed Services. Optional in-person meetings and options to submit documentation electronically helped to keep individuals with disabilities and their families' safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Updating Policies to Support Individuals with Disabilities and their Families

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Community and Social Services created greater flexibility and easier access to supports and services for Albertans with disabilities by developing interim policies for the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) and Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) programs. To support physical distancing, requirements for in-person PDD and FSCD meetings were temporarily suspended and family managed agreements and amendments were accepted through email. The necessary closure of schools and child care centres to reduce the spread of COVID-19 created disruption, stress and challenges for families with children with disabilities. To assist families accessing FSCD supports and services, the ministry increased flexibility by permitting the use of community aide dollars for respite while children were not in school. The ministry worked closely with the FSCD-Provincial Parent Advisory Committee, self-advocates, families, Inclusion Alberta, ALIGN Association of Community Services and the Alberta Council of Disability Services to monitor the impact of COVID-19 and support Albertans with disabilities and their families.

During 2020-21, individuals with disabilities and their families were able to continue virtual meetings with program staff and submit agreements in an electronic format. To support smaller cohorts and to help ensure individuals with disabilities were able to access the services they need, the ministry suspended the need for a PDD policy exemption to hire family members.

Maintaining Safety for Persons with Disabilities and Frontline Staff

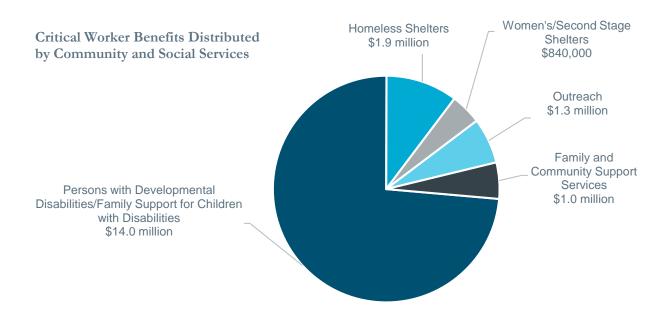
Many people living with disabilities may have regular interactions with multiple care providers, increasing their risk of exposure to COVID-19. People living with disabilities may also experience a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Community and Social Services and service providers have a shared responsibility to ensure that all individuals with disabilities and staff are safe and following the health protocols. While responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, interactions with care providers were adjusted to meet health protocols and ensure individuals with disabilities and staff were safe. The ministry collaborated with families of individuals with disabilities, self-advocates, advocates and service providers to inform the pandemic response. The ministry facilitated sessions with the Department of Health and Alberta Health Services to ensure the unique challenges and needs of Albertans with disabilities were understood.

In addition to COVID-19, staff delivering frontline social services may be exposed to a variety of risks when serving Albertans. In September 2020, Community and Social Services launched the new Staff Safety Initiative to help eliminate or mitigate these risks for ministry staff. The initiative provides new policies, procedures and training related to violence and harassment in the workplace, working alone, responding to opioid overdoses, hazard assessments and off-site/home visits.

Recognizing Critical Workers

During the COVID-19 pandemic, critical workers ensured that Albertans had the care and critical services they needed. The Critical Worker Benefit recognized Alberta's critical workers during the COVID-19 pandemic through a one-time payment of \$1,200 to eligible Albertans. The Critical Worker Benefit was available to workers in the public healthcare, social services, and education sectors as well as those in the private sector who deliver critical services to Albertans, or support food and medical supply chains.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services worked directly with social service sector stakeholders and not-for-profit organizations delivering frontline services to vulnerable Albertans to distribute approximately \$19 million in Critical Worker Benefits to eligible workers. Funding for the Critical Worker Benefit flowed through ministry contracts or grants directly to not-for-profit organizations delivering frontline services to vulnerable Albertans.



Listening to Families with Children with Disabilities

Families with a child with a disability may need additional supports for their child to be fully included in the community. Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) is available to families of children with a wide range of disabilities, including developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, physical disabilities, sensory impairments and other health conditions resulting in a disability. The FSCD program works with eligible families to provide support and services based on each child and family's needs, such as counselling, respite, and behavourial and developmental supports.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services invested \$193 million, including COVID-19 related expenditures, to provide over 15,000 families with FSCD services. During the fiscal year, Child Focused Services were the most utilized supports and services accessed by families with children with disabilities. These services include aid supports, respite, and disability related child care and specialized services where a team of health professionals work directly with the child to learn skills to participate in everyday routines.

Families with Children with Disabilities Engagement

- 86 participants engaged through 11 virtual roundtables
- 11,551 survey responses
 - 46 per cent from families accessing services
 - 54 per cent from friends and relatives of families accessing FSCD services, service providers and interested Albertans

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities-Provincial Parent Advisory Committee (FSCD-PPAC) provides a voice for parents of children with disabilities whose families receive FSCD assistance. During 2020-21, FSCD-PPAC worked with Alberta Health Services and the Ministries of Community and Social Services, Education and Health to facilitate supports for families during the pandemic. The Disability Support Line launched in May 2020 and connected Albertans living with disabilities to allied health clinicians to provide:

- strategies to manage day-to-day activities;
- activities and exercises that help with physical concerns;
- rehabilitation services open for in-person and/or virtual visits; and
- community-based organizations offering support.

Over the past decade, the FSCD program has experienced significant caseload growth. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services began reviewing the program to ensure the needs of children and families are met now, as well as in the future. Consultations were held with regional Parent Advisory Committees, community agencies and advocacy organizations to gather feedback on ways to enhance and modernize program supports, while also identifying opportunities to improve sustainability.

Families accessing FSCD services were randomly chosen, based on geographical representation, to participate in virtual roundtable meetings to share their experience and feedback for the FSCD program. The random sample was assessed to make sure there was a diversity of attributes represented, such as the nature of a child's disability, age of child and time spent in the program. Community and Social Services conducted 11 virtual roundtables, with 86 participants, to seek input on families' experience of program services and potential solutions to improve services for families.

In addition to the roundtables, a broader set of families accessing FSCD were invited to provide their thoughts, through a survey, on how to improve the FSCD program. This survey was open to the public and over 11,500 Albertans provided responses. An analysis of all engagement information is underway and a "What We Heard" report will be publicly posted when complete.

Protecting Disability Programs and Supports

Community and Social Services helps eligible adults plan, coordinate and access services to live as independently as they can in their community through the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program. The PDD program works with eligible adults to provide individualized support and services, which may include home living, employment, community access and specialized supports. Community living supports are the most used PDD services, with approximately 80 per cent of individuals receiving PDD services accessing these supports in order to be able to live as independently as possible in their own home.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services invested \$967 million, including COVID-19 related funding, to provide supports and services to over 12,500 adults with developmental disabilities. During the fiscal year, Community and Social Services initiated a review of indirect PDD costs to determine how program spending compares across the province. The ministry aims to maximize program spending on direct services to Albertans and to compensate service providers fairly and consistently.

Community and Social Services is committed to protecting supports for Albertans with disabilities and will continue to take steps to deliver the PDD program more sustainably, including streamlining processes and reducing red tape wherever possible. The program faces an increasing demand for timely services and rising caseloads.

Community and Social Services worked with an appointed PDD Transformation Steering Committee consisting of stakeholders, academics and program leadership to set a course for the PDD program's future. Building on the 2018-19 PDD review and inputs from Minister's Disability Advisory Forums, the Steering Committee drafted a set of opportunities that could lead to improved outcomes for Albertans with developmental disabilities through program efficiencies, innovation, red tape reduction, and clarification of roles and responsibilities.

In addition, Community and Social Services has been reviewing the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program to ensure services and supports can continue to be delivered, now and in the future. Alberta's AISH and Income Support programs help people meet their basic needs, find good jobs and live independently. As part of the work to review AISH and Income Support, the C.D. Howe Institute was commissioned to examine the programs. The ministry also reviewed other studies of Alberta's social assistance programs, such as the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy report comparing the disability benefit caseload in Alberta and three other provinces. No changes were made to program availability or eligibility. Eligible Albertans continued to receive benefits at the established rates.

2.4 Collaborate with Alberta's Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Service Networks to offer programming and resources for prevention, diagnosis, assessment and support for Albertans.

Supporting Individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and their Families

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a preventable lifelong disability that may happen when a developing baby is exposed to alcohol during pregnancy. Community and Social Services is committed to reducing the incidence of FASD and ensuring individuals with FASD and their caregivers get the critical supports they need.

Alberta is a member of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership of the four western provinces and three territories. The partnership works to advance evidence-based FASD policy development and service design, develop cross-jurisdictional priorities that progress the FASD agenda and to support the infrastructure of the Canada FASD (CanFASD) Research Network. In 2020-21, the ministry collaborated with partners to provide advisory support to CanFASD and Health Canada in the development of FASD-informed best practices and tools for substance use and addictions treatment programs.

During 2020-21, Community and Social Services developed an FASD Workforce Development Framework in partnership with CanFASD. The framework and related training equip staff across community and government systems to deliver FASD-informed supports and services. Cross-sector foundational training in FASD and more advanced training for educators supporting students with FASD is available across Canada. All Albertans are able to access the Foundations in FASD training for free and over 3,000 learners from the province have completed the course. More than 750 learners have taken the course designed to help school staff and educators meet the unique needs of students with FASD. Globally, nearly 20,000 learners accessed the trainings in 2020-21.

Across the province, FASD Service Networks provide services to support the well-being and quality of life for individuals living with FASD and their families. Albertans access services through FASD Service Networks, such as supports for daily living, rehabilitation, respite services, service coordination and case management. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services and the FASD Service Networks partnered to launch Let's Get Real, a website to educate youth about healthy lifestyles, including alcohol use and pregnancy.

The Alberta Prevention Conversation trains professionals to have safe discussions about alcohol use during childbearing years. In 2020-21, the Prevention Conversation manual and resources were updated by Community and Social Services in consultation with FASD Service Networks and key stakeholders to reflect advancements in research and best practice. Further enhancements to the Prevention Conversation manual and resources are underway to reflect Indigenous perspectives and ensure culturally appropriate service delivery.

Mocktails for Me

The Mocktails for Me social media campaign promoted healthy pregnancies by encouraging women who are pregnant or wanting to become pregnant to choose a non-alcohol, Mocktail, drink.

In one month the campaign:

- reached 509,825 Albertans; and
- received 1,145,752 total impressions.

Community and Social Services is developing an FASD Policy Framework and Toolkit to guide cross-ministry policies and service delivery. The framework will support incorporating an FASD-informed lens when developing, analyzing, or reviewing government policies and programs. The FASD Policy Framework and Toolkit are targeted to be completed in fall 2021.

Every year, September 9 is recognized as International FASD awareness day. The ninth day of the ninth month represents nine months of alcohol-free pregnancy. In 2020-21, FASD Service Networks throughout Alberta celebrated FASD Awareness Day by hosting a variety of events, including online awareness campaigns, FASD etraining workshops and virtual walks.

Stabilizing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Funding Agreements

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services streamlined reporting by introducing multi-year funding agreements for all 12 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Service Networks to reduce administrative burden, while still maintaining stringent accountability measures. The ministry also combined 24 FASD funding contracts from Children's Services with nine FASD Service Network grants to reduce the number of overall contracts. This further reduces Government of Alberta administrative workload and streamlines reporting by funding recipients. Reducing red tape simplifies program administration and decreases paperwork, allowing organizations to focus on delivering programs and services, rather than grant administration and reporting.

2.5 Work with First Nations, other Indigenous communities and the disability community to promote awareness of and increase access to culturally sensitive supports and services for Indigenous persons with disabilities living both on- and off-reserve and on Metis Settlements.

Supporting all Albertans with Disabilities

Indigenous Albertans experience multiple barriers to accessing critical disability supports. Albertans living in remote communities, on-reserve or Metis Settlements may have limited access to services due to financial barriers, stigma of disability, low awareness of programs and lack of available services. Far too often, there may be a lack of culturally appropriate supports and services.

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program is available on-reserve, and Community and Social Services continues to work with First Nations and other Indigenous communities on opportunities to improve access to this program. In 2020-21, the ministry presented to the First Nation Health Consortium to raise awareness about the FSCD program. First Nation Health Consortium members will be able to use this knowledge to support families who have children with disabilities

Community and Social Services is working with the federal government to ensure the needs of adults with developmental disabilities on-reserve are met. The Government of Alberta is working with the Government of Canada to seek reimbursement for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) services provided to First Nations individuals ordinarily residing on-reserve and to extend PDD services to those residing on-reserve.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 6:
Partnering with Indigenous
Peoples to pursue
opportunities

 Community and Social Services is collaborating with the federal government to streamline how Indigenous Peoples access disability services.

Performance Measure 2.a: Percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support

Prior Years' Results ¹			2020	2020	
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Target	2020 Actual
59%	64%	64%	68%	66%	59%

Note:

In 2020, approximately 59 per cent of former Income Support clients gained employment after leaving the program. This result reflects a difference of seven percentage points below the target set for 2020 and a decrease of nine percentage points relative to the previous year's result.

Those who have stopped receiving Income Support without obtaining employment may have transitioned to a training program, had a change in marital status, moved out of Alberta or received financial support from other sources. Income received from Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, other disability related income or COVID-19 related supports from the Government of Canada, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) program, may result in an Income Support Client leaving the program without gaining employment.

Clients leaving Income Support due to excess income from sources other than employment depress the percentage of participants leaving Income Support due to employment. The availability of COVID-19 related supports may have impacted the Income Support caseload as clients accessed CERB in place of Income Support. Further, net interprovincial migration out of Alberta totaled 2,152 in 2020, which may have also impacted the lower percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support.

^{1.} The labels for historical years have been corrected to reflect that data represented calendar years, not fiscal years, which aligns with the timeframe former Income Support clients were surveyed.

Performance Measure 2.b:

Percentage of families accessing the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program who indicate the services provided had a positive impact on their family (biennial survey)

Prior Years' Results ¹				2020-21	2020-21 ²
2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	Target	Actual
91%	90%	90%	87%	88%	N/A

Notes:

- 1. Only prior years with surveys conducted are represented.
- 2. The 2020-21 survey was re-scheduled to align with the timing of the biennial Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Family and Guardian Survey scheduled to occur in 2021-22.

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program provides a wide range of family-centred supports and services to strengthen a family's ability to promote their child's growth and development. The program also enables families to care for their child at home and encourage their child's participation in activities at home and in the community.

FSCD assesses the satisfaction and outcomes of families receiving services and supports through a biennial family/guardian satisfaction survey to track performance and inform planning. This performance measure shows the percentage of families accessing the FSCD program who indicate the services provided had a positive impact on their family.

Community and Social Services has re-scheduled the timing of the biennial FSCD Family Survey and the biennial Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Family and Guardian Survey to occur concurrently in 2021. By running the surveys simultaneously, the ministry reduces costs incurred from the independent contractor and increases efficiencies for ministry staff. This shift in survey timing also allows government communications, such as survey invitations and social media activities, to be coordinated.

The results of the next FSCD Family survey will be available in the ministry's 2021-22 Annual Report. The 2018-19 results are the most current for this measure. In 2018-19, 87 per cent of families indicated services provided had a positive impact on their family. This was a decline of three percentage points over the results of 2016-17 and four percentage points below the 2018-19 target.

Performance Indicator 2.c: Median time on Income Support (in months)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Expected to Work	6	7	8	9	13
Barriers to Full Employment	34	31	32	36	41

Income Support provides financial benefits to individuals and families in Alberta who do not have the resources to meet their basic needs, including food, clothing and shelter. Income Support consists of two client categories: Expected to Work (ETW) and Barriers to Full Employment (BFE). The ETW category includes those who are searching for work, working but not earning enough income to meet their basic needs or temporarily incapable of working. The BFE category includes those having multiple barriers, or a persistent mental or physical health condition that limits their ability to sustain competitive employment.

This performance indicator describes the median duration of active Income Support clients. The median time is defined as the midpoint duration length, where 50 per cent of the cases have a shorter duration and 50 per cent have a longer duration. Since BFE clients experience more barriers to achieving full employment than ETW clients, the median time is expected to be longer for the BFE clients.

Income Support clients categorized as BFE report a number of barriers to employment when compared to those not on Income Support. There is a strong positive relationship between the number of barriers and their duration on Income Support. Clients with more barriers are less likely to find employment after leaving Income Support and those that do find employment are more likely to return to Income Support. As Income Support clients face increased challenges to employment a variety of employment supports and services are required to meet their diverse needs.

In 2020, the median times on Income Support for ETW and BFE clients were 13 and 41 months, respectively. These values represent a four month and five month increase relative to 2019 results, respectively, for ETW and BFE client categories. From 2016 to 2019, the median time for the ETW category has increased by one month per year. The median time of BFE clients ranged from 31 months and 36 months during 2016 to 2019. In 2020, pandemic-related disruptions led to significant job losses in service industries, which may have impacted both ETW and BFE clients from being able to access employment.

Outcome Three: Inclusion – Alberta's communities provide a sense of belonging and foster resiliency

The ministry collaborates with civil society organizations, municipalities, Indigenous communities and other governments to create more inclusive communities.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Provide funding to municipalities and Metis Settlements through Family and Community Support Services to design and deliver preventative social programs.
- 3.2 Raise awareness on matters relating to persons with disabilities through the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Minister's Disability Advisory Forum and other mechanisms.
- 3.3 Work with communities and other ministries to advocate and raise awareness for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.
- 3.4 Collaborate with civil society organizations to identify and implement actions to make program and service delivery more efficient and effective in supporting the stability, participation and inclusion of Albertans.
- 3.5 Create a Premier's Charities Council to advise government on how best to assist the efforts of civil society groups in helping to make Alberta a more compassionate society, preventing and reducing increased social problems.

3.1 Provide funding to municipalities and Metis Settlements through Family and Community Support Services to design and deliver preventative social programs.

Enhancing Community Well-Being

The Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program is a partnership between Community and Social Services, participating municipalities and Metis Settlements. This program supports the local design and delivery of preventive social services to improve the well-being of individuals, families and communities. These services enhance strengths, skills and abilities, build individual and environmental safeguards and address protective and risk factors that may exist within individuals and across the various settings in which they live. Local FCSS programs are prevention focused and reduce the need for costlier interventions. Some FCSS programs focus on:

- early learning and preschool;
- parent, child and youth development;
- family cohesion and positive parenting programs;

- home support services;
- life skill programs; and
- short-term counseling.

FCSS programs follow a unique 80/20 funding model, where Community and Social Services provides up to 80 per cent of the funding and the municipality or Metis Settlement contributes a minimum 20 per cent. The ministry invested \$100 million for the 2020-21 fiscal year, which was matched with \$25 million from the participating communities.

FCSS partners are critical to ensure preventive social services are available and meet local needs to address social problems. Programs offered through FCSS serve all ages and demographics, and reach rural and remote communities. In 2019-20, 314 municipalities and Metis Settlements provided FCSS services to Albertans through 205 local FCSS programs, serving approximately 1.2 million Albertans. Currently, 99 per cent of the province's population has access to FCSS services where they live.

Providing COVID-19 Information to the Low German Mennonite (LGM) Population

- The Barons-Eureka-Warner FCSS, operated through the Town of Coaldale, recognized the importance of distributing information about COVID-19 to the Low German Mennonite (LGM) population in that southern Alberta community.
- Working with the South Zone Low German Community Resources Committee, Barons-Eureka-Warner FCSS created two new Low German audio files for the LGM population, which they made available on their FCSS YouTube page.

Community volunteers are critical to managing and delivering FCSS programing. Volunteering contributes to a sense of integrity, self-worth and interdependence. Based on the most recent annual Provincial Progress and Outcomes report, 78,654 volunteers contributed nearly 2.1 million volunteer hours in support of local FCSS programs. Using the minimum wage of \$15 per hour, this volunteer contribution is equivalent to a \$31.5 million contribution to programming.

To accommodate public health measures, 2020-21 programming was moved to virtual platforms where possible. Funding priorities shifted based on current and emerging social issues, such as increases in: the need for emotional supports; instances of family violence; and food insecurity. Food security allows individuals and families to remain independent, strengthens their ability to persevere under the public health restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 and be more resilient to other impacts of the pandemic. Providing food directly to individuals and families enhances social well-being and safety. The restrictions under the FCSS regulation were temporarily suspended from April 14 to August 14, 2020, to allow programs to use FCSS funding to address local food security needs.

Outcomes of FCSS programming are measured by improved self-esteem, confidence, quality of social relationships, access to services, quality of social networks and community awareness. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services began developing a stronger prevention-focused FCSS policy and accountability framework to provide clarity around government priorities, funding mechanisms and desired outcomes.

In September 2020, the ministry conducted targeted stakeholder engagement for the FCSS program, focusing on mandate, funding prioritization, collaboration and accountability mechanisms. Stakeholders included municipalities, Metis Settlements, the FCSS Association of Alberta, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and the Rural Municipalities of Alberta association. Representatives for FCSS from across the province and all eight FCSS regions offered valuable perspectives on preventive social services in Alberta. Significant, positive support was received for the current FCSS program, while suggestions for regulations and program improvements as well as learnings from the pandemic were provided. Key recommendations included:

- program flexibility in extraordinary circumstances;
- further streamlining of provincial reporting requirements and an enhanced online reporting system; and
- improved cross-ministry work across government and between community agencies.

In 2020-21, cross-ministry engagement discussions were held with ministries with intersecting mandates to explore opportunities to improve cross-ministry coordination, collaboration and communication. Policy changes were brought forward to enhance the FCSS program by clarifying the type of prevention supported by the province and developing a robust accountability framework that aligns with provincial prevention priorities and local community needs to support efficient and effective use of public dollars.

Streamlining Grant Reporting

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services streamlined Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) reporting by transitioning 205 grants for municipalities and Metis Settlements from single-year funding agreements to three-year multi-funding agreements. This red tape reduction simplifies program administration and reduces paperwork, allowing organizations to focus on delivering programs and services, rather than grant administration and reporting.

As part of red tape reduction, Community and Social Services is exploring opportunities to reduce FCSS administrative requirements by streamlining processes, such as replacing the current financial and outcomes reports with one combined simplified report and identifying common outcomes for reporting purposes.

Supporting Albertans Impacted by COVID-19

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services allocated \$30 million to support charitable and not-for-profit social services organizations. This funding enabled organizations to provide and enhance social support for seniors, families, and other vulnerable Albertans who are isolated or impacted by measures to contain COVID-19.

Supporting Vulnerable Albertans during COVID-19

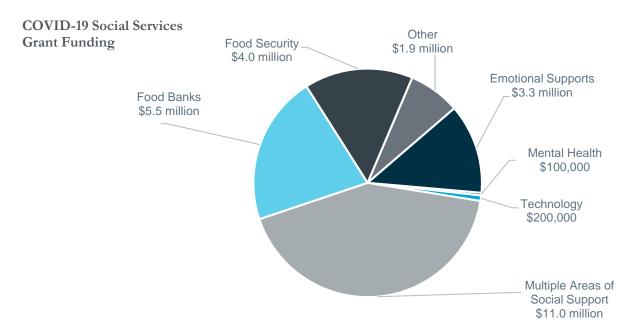
St. Aidan's House Society received a grant for \$40,000 to provide nutritious meals and information on how to access supports for vulnerable seniors. They reached 422 seniors; provided 3,714 meals; distributed 1,210 informative newsletters; and contributed 445 volunteer hours.

Community and Social Services provided funding directly to three Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) partners. These FCSS partners then flowed funding to local charitable and non-profit organizations to deliver social supports and services to Albertans across the province. Local FCSS partners understand the needs of individuals and families in their communities and have strong relationships with the charitable and non-profit organizations who serve their communities. By distributing COVID-19 funding through FCSS partners, Community and Social Services leveraged existing social infrastructure ensuring funding was provided to communities quickly and efficiently.

Services considered for COVID-19 funding had to address the social well-being of those most affected by the pandemic and the public health measures implemented to limit the spread of the virus. The funding was intended to benefit vulnerable populations such as seniors, individuals with chronic medical conditions or those experiencing mental health challenges, caregivers, families with children at home, individuals with low or limited income, individuals or families experiencing violence and individuals with limited access to supports.

To be eligible for funding, services were required to align with one or more of the following priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- help people maintain independence, build resiliency and strengthen their ability to cope with the impact of the restrictions related to health measures;
- provide supports that help people remain members in the community;
- fund civil society organizations to deliver projects for vulnerable Albertans in need; and
- coordinate services and programs to address the social well-being of vulnerable Albertans.



Community and Social Services received a total of 907 applications for funding. In 2020-21, there were 457 projects approved for a total of \$26 million in grant funding. The remaining \$4 million will be distributed in 2021-22.

3.2 Raise awareness on matters relating to persons with disabilities through the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Minister's Disability Advisory Forum and other mechanisms.

Increasing Awareness of Albertans with Disabilities

Community and Social Services is committed to providing equal opportunities to people with disabilities and enhancing inclusion throughout the province. The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities represents Albertans with disabilities and provides advice and guidance to the ministry about opportunities for equal participation within the communities.

In 2020-21, the council was engaged for advice by the Affordable Housing Review Panel, a panel appointed by government to explore ways to improve affordable housing. The Ministry of Education also engaged the council regarding access to education.

In 2020-21, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities developed a 2020-23 Strategic Plan that included a focus on employment and income security, housing, and supports for Indigenous Albertans with disabilities.

The Council supports increased awareness of diverse abilities and promotes accessibility and inclusion for Albertans with disabilities by recognizing International Day for Persons with Disabilities annually on December 3. The Council hosted virtual celebrations, where the Premier's Council Awards were presented to honour 10 Albertans whose outstanding leadership changed the lives of people with disabilities. Grants were distributed to seven communities across the province to host virtual International Day for Persons with Disabilities events.

Advocating for Albertans with Disabilities

Community and Social Services is committed to providing supports that address the needs of Albertans today and into the future, and to do that, Albertans who require government supports need to be heard. The Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities was established to represent the rights, interests and viewpoints of people with disabilities and serves as a point of contact between the community and Alberta's government. In 2020-21, the advocate received input from 908 individuals and community organizations. These interactions generated 1,260 cases related to concern resolution, education and informing systemic change.

The advocate works collaboratively with governments and ministries whose programs impact people with disabilities. In 2020-21, the advocate engaged in the Post-COVID-19 Re-Entry Strategy Taskforce and responded to the Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society COVID-19 Recovery Questionnaire. The advocate also facilitated meetings between Albertans Advocating for Change Together and the Community and Social Services minister's office to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of people with disabilities.

A legislative review of the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities was conducted in 2020-21, and included interviews with key partners, staff, and agencies. The report found that overall the office fulfilled its role and delivered the mandated functions to support individuals with disabilities in Alberta. The report also identified opportunities for increasing capacity in order to fulfil the advocate's mandate, raising awareness of the advocate's role in both the disability community and the Government of Alberta, and improving the advocate's ability to effect change.

In 2021-22, the priorities of the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities include:

- diversifying avenues to inform change initiatives;
- · increasing opportunities for community engagement and developing relationships; and
- increasing opportunities for online engagement.

Engaging the Disability Community

The Minister's Disability Advisory Forum was established in 2019 to provide a venue for the Minister of Community and Social Services to engage with and seek ideas and input from individuals, families and other key stakeholders on disability issues and opportunities. Meetings with the Disability Advisory Forum are called by the Minister. Albertans with disabilities, their families, advocacy groups, disability service providers and others are invited to participate in the meetings based on their knowledge of and involvement with specific disability-related opportunities and challenges relevant to the agenda.

A Disability Advisory Forum meeting was held in July 2020 with a group of 14 academics and researchers from across Alberta with varied backgrounds from the University of Calgary School of Public Policy, the CanFASD Research Network, Blood Tribe, anti-poverty organizations and the Premier's Economic Recovery Council. This forum focused on sustainability of Community and Social Services programs. Participants emphasized the need for smart investments in early intervention, as it is proven to be more cost-effective in the long term. Participants also noted the importance of coordinated supports and services to ensure program efficiency and provide for long-term sustainability. Participants focused on potential avenues to increase program sustainability through social innovation, particularly related to civil society organizations. While exploring challenges and opportunities for program sustainability, participants highlighted the critical nature of social programs and poverty. Participants also explored Indigenous dimensions of the sustainability of social programs, and discussed the potential for Community and Social Services

to collaborate with Indigenous leaders and the federal government to bring employment and disability services to First Nations and other Indigenous communities.

Ensuring the Concerns of Persons with Disabilities are Heard

Community and Social Services works to ensure people with disabilities have the supports they need. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services collaborated with the Ministry of Health to facilitate discussions about COVID-19 with various disability stakeholders including Autism Alberta, families of people with disabilities, advocates, self-advocates, and service providers. The ministries then provided input to the public health orders issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health to ensure that the specific needs of people with disabilities were addressed.

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Community and Social Services and Alberta Health Services provided personal protective equipment (PPE) to families of people with disabilities to ensure people could continue to safely receive the disability services they require. The distribution of PPE was later transitioned to the Provincial Operations Centre as part of a provincially coordinated response.

3.3 Work with communities and other ministries to advocate and raise awareness for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

Increasing Awareness of Family Violence and Bullying

Family violence includes physical, verbal, emotional, financial or sexual abuse, neglect, stalking, being kept from seeing other people or being forced to stay in one place. Alberta has the fourth-highest rate of police-reported intimate partner violence among Canadian provinces. Family violence is preventable. Community and Social Services is committed to protecting vulnerable Albertans in all communities, and to take action to raise awareness and prevent family violence and bullying.

November is Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta. Community and Social Services leverages this month to increase awareness of the resources and supports available to end family violence and build healthier relationships in Alberta communities. In 2020-21, the ministry built on momentum from the previous year's #WhereToTurn and #GoPurpleAB digital awareness campaigns and saw a 74 per cent increase in Twitter impressions (number of times a tweet/message is seen by people) during November 2020. The top tweet from November 2020 earned 17,200 impressions, while the top Tweet in November 2019 earned 3,780 impressions. Each public awareness activity included promotional graphics designed specifically for social media and websites for stakeholders to download and post on their own accounts.

Albertans were encouraged through #WhereToTurn to learn about available resources in their community to support those affected by family violence. This fulfills a recommendation from Case Seven of the Family Violence Death Review Committee to develop public awareness strategies that educate Albertans about where and how to get help.

Community and Social Services also continued the use of #GoPurpleAB to encourage Albertans to wear purple, a colour associated with family violence, during Family Violence Prevention Month. Wearing a purple ribbon or purple clothes can start a conversation on family violence and demonstrate support for survivors of family violence.

Information about Family Violence and Bullying Prevention

- The Alberta Family Violence Prevention Month and the Bullying Awareness Week webpages contained campaign messaging and digital promotional items such as posters, social media graphics, proclamation, help cards and email signatures.
- In 2020, compared to 2019, unique visits:
 - to the Alberta Family Violence
 Prevention Month webpage increased
 by 46 per cent; and
 - to the Bullying Awareness
 Week webpage increased by 465 per cent.

On November 30, 2020, the Minister of Community and Social Services hosted a virtual Roundtable Discussion on Family Violence Prevention with stakeholders and community leaders. Organizations shared information about their role in preventing family violence and promoting healthy relationships. Highlights of the discussion were posted on the ministry Twitter account.

Also in November, Bullying Awareness Week promotes awareness and understanding of bullying and its impacts. Bullying is repeated mean, cruel, hurtful behaviours done on purpose by someone with more power than another. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social or online, and has serious impacts on individuals, including anxiety, depression and chronic stress.

Pink Shirt Day began in 2007 when a student in Nova Scotia was bullied for wearing a pink shirt to school. Since then, it has been recognized worldwide as a day to stand against bullying. The Government of Alberta recognized Pink Shirt Day on February 24 with a digital campaign on bullying prevention and the promotion of healthy relationships at all ages. Children, youth, adults and seniors are encouraged to talk about how they would respond to bullying and learn #WhereToTurn if they, or someone they know, experience bullying.

Preventing Family Violence and Bullying

Community and Social Services is the lead ministry of the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence, which works to prevent, reduce and end family violence in Alberta. Community and Social Services coordinates the provincial response to family violence in collaboration with: Children's Services; Education; Health; Alberta Health Services; Justice and Solicitor General; Seniors and Housing; Indigenous Relations; and Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

In partnership with service providers and communities, the committee builds on effective practices already in place and implements priority initiatives in the areas of family violence prevention, intervention and response. In 2020-21, the committee provided a forum for government partners to connect on the effect of the pandemic on family violence rates in Alberta, to track trends and help identify issues which require resolution or escalation. As an example, the committee identified that changes were needed to allow for telephone and virtual applications for Emergency Protection Orders, instead of requiring applicants to appear in person. This change was put in place and is benefitting applicants during the pandemic, and also helps with issues of access in rural and remote areas.

The Government of Alberta is represented at IMPACT Domestic and Sexual Violence, the provincial collective impact table. This goal of this stakeholder-led table is to eradicate domestic and sexual violence in Alberta with a primary prevention focus.

Safer Spaces

No one should feel trapped in a situation of domestic violence. The *Residential Tenancies* (*Safer Spaces for Victims of Domestic Violence*) *Act* allows victims of family violence to end a residential tenancy agreement early without financial penalty. This applies to instances where if the tenancy continues, the safety of the tenant, a dependent child or a protected adult is at risk. The act gives authorization to certified professionals, such as a medical doctor, registered nurse, pediatric nurse, psychologist, psychiatrist, police officer, RCMP officer, social worker, victim services worker or a shelter worker, to sign the Safer Spaces certificate. For the purposes of the legislation, Community and Social Services is appointed as the Designated Authority to issue the certificates.

Safer Spaces in 2020-21

- 404 Safer Spaces Certificates were issued, an average of 34 per month.
- 51 per cent of the issued certificates were for individuals with dependents in their care.
- Social workers, shelter staff and law enforcement issued the majority of professional certified statements.

The number of Safer Spaces certificates issued in 2020-21 was down only slightly from 2019-20, indicating a significant number of family violence related circumstances across Alberta that resulted in the need to break leases and leave unsafe situations. As the pandemic eases, people may feel safer in reaching out for help, which could lead to an increase in certificates in 2020-21.

Family Violence Info Line

Albertans have the ability to find supports, stay safe and help others who are experiencing an abusive relationship, by accessing the Family Violence Info Line or through an anonymous online chat with trained staff and counsellors. The ministry contracts with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Edmonton Region and the Distress Centre Calgary to operate the Family Violence Info Line, which provides support, information and referrals to Alberta-based resources on family violence.

Community Resource Specialists are certified staff who respond to calls and chats and have a deep understanding of family violence and bullying. These staff, who have advanced training and experience in crisis intervention, are equipped to handle multiple issues, such as suicide prevention and bereavement support. A Community Resource Specialist assesses whether there is any immediate physical danger, listens to the caller's concerns, and provides safety strategies and numerous practical resources, such as information regarding counselling, legal support, housing options, women's shelters or other civil society organizations. The majority of callers are female.

In 2020-21, to abide by public health recommendations, phone operators began working from home answering calls, with the level of services and supports offered to callers remaining consistent. As call volumes increased, Family Violence Info Line users did not experience any disruption in service as a result. Calls and chats to the Family Violence Info Line fluctuated during the pandemic with an overall increase in calls and a significant increase in chats. The increase in chats may be due to users preferring to use the chat function over the phone for two reasons: quick access to services and safer access to services. They may feel safer in domestic violence situations to use the chat function over the phone to avoid be overheard.

In 2021-22, the Family Violence Info Line chat services will be expanded to be available 24/7. Around the clock availability will ensure that Albertans who may be at risk, or affected by domestic violence and abuse, are always able to connect with information and supports. Texting will also be added to the service provision.

Bullying Helpline

Bullying is a relationship problem that involves a power imbalance, which is why it can be so challenging for someone to overcome alone. All Albertans should be able to feel safe at home, work, school, and in their communities. Community and Social Services works to ensure Albertans are aware of, and have access to, bullying supports. Albertans can access the Bullying Helpline or chat function for help with issues including elder bullying, cyberbullying or for parent support to assist a child experiencing bullying at school.

Community and Social Services contracts the Canadian Mental Health Association – Edmonton Region and the Distress Centre Calgary to operate the Bullying Helpline. Through the helpline, certified staff provide support and information and offer referrals to community resources to address the caller's situation.

In 2020-21, to abide by public health recommendations, phone operators began working from home answering calls, with the level of services and supports offered to callers remaining consistent with no disruption.

The number of calls and chats continues to decline over recent years. Bullying Helpline users are most likely to be adults and calls and chats are mainly on behalf of a child being bullied in school or the adult experiencing bullying at the workplace.

In 2021-22, the Bullying Helpline chat services will be expanded to be available 24/7 to ensure that Albertans experiencing and witnessing acts of bullying are always able to connect with information and supports. Texting will also be added to the service provision.

Safety Connections

Helplines and online chat services are available for Albertans seeking information or support regarding family violence or bullying.

- 24/7
- 170+ languages available for the helplines (online chat available in English)

Family Violence Info Line 310-1818 (2,056 calls in 2020-21)

Bullying Helpline 1-888-456-2323 (338 calls in 2020-21)

Provincial Abuse Helpline 1-855-4HELPAB 1-855-443-5722

alberta.ca/SafetyChat 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily (447 chats in 2020-21)

alberta.ca/BullyingChat 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily (42 chats in 2020-21)

Albertans can contact Alberta Supports at 1-877-644-9992 for emergency funding to help leave an abusive situation.

Grants for Family Violence Prevention

Rates of family violence increase during and following natural disasters, public health emergencies and economic downturns. In March 2020, Alberta declared a public health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and implemented physical distancing measures to contain the spread. Isolation as a result of stringent public health measures, which include physical distancing and restricted opportunities to access service delivery providers, is dangerous for victims.

Community and Social Services is the lead ministry for responding to family violence in Alberta. The ministry provides grant funding to civil society organizations to provide services and supports to address family violence and abuse. In 2020-21, the ministry provided \$7.1 million in grant and contract funding to 43 civil society organizations to deliver Family Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships programs. Adjustments were made to grant funding agreements to allow more flexibility or change in focus during the pandemic where necessary. During the fiscal year, six Family Violence Prevention grants were assumed from the Ministry of Children's Services, as the grants no longer fit Children's Services' criteria for funding.

Family Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships Grants

Type of Grant	Number of Grants	Funding
Supporting Family Violence Hurts Everyone: A Framework to End Family Violence in Alberta	13	\$2,277,729
Collaborative Community Response	13	\$1,984,476
Victim Supports Outreach	7	\$1,210,000
Safe Visitation	5	\$659,000
Supporting Alberta's Plan for Promoting Healthy Relationships and Preventing Bullying	3	\$604,980
Family Violence Info Line and Bullying Help Line Contracts	2	\$337,404
Provincial Totals	43	\$7,073,589

Civil society organizations provide counseling to victims of family violence and ensure services and supports are culturally sensitive and geared to diverse populations and communities. Civil society organizations also provide direct intervention services such as crisis intervention, risk assessments, safety planning and long-term support.

When possible, civil society organizations work to support positive interactions to maintain a relationship between a child and an offending parent. Perpetrators are able to receive services and supports to address their abusive behaviours. In addition, by providing families with a highly secure and supervised space, children are able to interact with their non-custodial, offending parent, while being protected from further exposure to family violence.

Funding from Community and Social Services also supports collaboration among local service providers to offer a continuum of services for victims and families through multi-agency teams or coalitions. In preparation for an increase in family violence and abuse incidents, service providers adapted services to address the social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Albertans. Service changes included remote service provision, including telephone or online counselling, implementing physical distancing practices for direct client contact, and increasing cleaning and sanitation practices.

With a renewed focus on prevention, Community and Social Services remains committed to support civil society working to address family violence and support Albertans who may be at risk or affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Raising Awareness of Sexual Violence

According to Statistics Canada, Alberta has the fourth highest rate of sexual assault among the provinces. In January 2020, the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS) released the Prevalence of Sexual Assault and Childhood Sexual Abuse in Alberta, which estimated there are 1.5 million adult survivors of sexual abuse and 325,000 child survivors of childhood sexual abuse in Alberta. This translates to 43 per cent of the Alberta population; 56 per cent of Alberta females and 29 per cent of Alberta males.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 3:

Supporting Albertans most in need

- To protect survivors of human trafficking, the Government of Alberta established the Human Trafficking Task Force.
- The Protecting Survivors of Human Trafficking Act came into force in May 2020.

Young women under 25 years old and girls continue to have the highest rates of police-reported sexual assault. Since the #MeToo movement, there has been an increase in police reported sexual assaults that involved an accused offender known to the victim.

Community and Social Services works in close partnership with AASAS, other ministries and community stakeholders. In 2020-21, the ministry provided approximately \$943,000 in funding to AASAS to provide services and support to victims of sexual violence and abuse and to support initiatives to raise awareness of sexual violence. With the leadership, coordination and collaboration of sexual assault services provided by AASAS, member agencies are able to provide the day-to-day frontline delivery of services within their local communities and regional areas.

The Government of Alberta is committed to raising awareness of sexual violence. With a focus on prevention, funding to address sexual violence will increase in 2021-22 by \$1.2 million to increase awareness and provide more supports and services for Albertans affected by sexual violence.

Bringing Awareness to Human Trafficking

Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, or the exercising of control over the movements of a person. Human trafficking is a dehumanizing and predatory crime, which generally takes three forms: sexual exploitation, labour trafficking, or organ trafficking. Traffickers target the most vulnerable people, particularly those who are socially or economically disadvantaged, alone,

or in a vulnerable situation. Targets are most often women, youth, LGBTQ2S+, Indigenous and racialized persons, migrant workers and new immigrants. The majority of human trafficking victims are girls and women under 25 years old. Traffickers are most often men between 18-34 years of age. From 2009 to 2019, there were 120 cases of human trafficking reported to police in Alberta. According to Statistics Canada, in 2019 there were 341 cases in Canada of human trafficking reported to police.

Human Trafficking Awareness Day

Human Trafficking Awareness
Day is recognized on February
22 each year to help raise
awareness about human
trafficking in Canada and
encourage Canadians to take
steps to eradicate human
trafficking.

Justice and Solicitor General is leading efforts to implement the government's nine-point Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, with the support of: Community and Social Services; Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women; Children's Services; Education; Service Alberta; Health; Indigenous Relations; and Labour and Immigration. Community and Social Services participates in the Deputy Minister Steering Committee and internal government Human Trafficking Working Group to advance the action plan. Two major elements of the action plan were implemented in 2020-21:

- the creation of a Human Trafficking Task Force; and
- enacting the *Protecting Survivors of Human Trafficking Act*, which came into force in May 2020.

Community and Social Services provides an annual grant of \$150,000 for the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking, a community organization that works in collaboration with local, provincial and national partners to identify, respond to and prevent human trafficking. The purpose of this grant is to engage, educate and train stakeholders to identify and respond to human trafficking in Alberta, and to develop, refine and deliver education and training materials and provide appropriate follow-up with stakeholders.

In 2021-22, Community and Social Services will continue to support Justice and Solicitor General and the Human trafficking Task Force, which is expected to provide recommendations in 2021-22 to further the implementation of the nine-point Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.

Learning from Family Violence Deaths

Family violence deaths are preventable. The Family Violence Death Review Committee (FVDRC) is a public agency that reviews incidents of family violence deaths in Alberta involving intimate partner relationships. The FVDRC makes recommendations to the Minister of Community and Social Services on program, policy and service delivery for the prevention and reduction of family violence.

In 2020-21, the FVDRC publicly released two case reports with 38 distinct recommendations to Community and Social Services, Children's Services, Justice and Solicitor General, Advanced Education, Indigenous Relations, Health and Alberta Health Services. The recommendations aim to reduce and prevent family violence and include:

- strategies for increasing public awareness and education related to family and domestic violence;
- enhancing service coordination and systems cooperation within government;
- increasing access to mental health services for Albertans at risk;
- increasing screening and supports for family and domestic violence to both victims and perpetrators; and
- increasing Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training programs to frontline staff.

Learnings and data gathered through the FVDRC's case reviews, recommendations and annual reports provide crucial information to help understand the scale, impact of, and factors involved with family violence. Recommendations from the FVDRC are used to inform family violence policy and practice within Community and Social Services, and throughout collaborating ministries. The FVDRC-published annual reports are available at www.alberta.ca/family-violence-death-review-committee.aspx and on the government's Open Data Portal at https://open.alberta.ca/opendata.

3.4 Collaborate with civil society organizations to identify and implement actions to make program and service delivery more efficient and effective in supporting the stability, participation and inclusion of Albertans.

Eliminating Duplication with Civil Society

The Government of Alberta is committed to providing an efficient government on behalf of Albertans while ensuring people receive the services they need. Many civil society organizations are equipped to deliver programming and services for Albertans efficiently and effectively.

In 2020-21, Community and Social Services closed the McCullough Centre in Gunn to allow civil society to provide supported living environments for individuals struggling with mental health and addictions issues. The closure of the McCullough Centre will save the provincial government \$3 million each year.

The Alberta Job Corps program, which provided job readiness programing, was closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. As many civil society organizations provide employment services, Community and Social Services eliminated the duplication of this service through the closure of Alberta Job Corps, which will save the government approximately \$7 million each year.

The closure of the Alberta Job Corps program and McCullough Centre eliminated expensive programs that served few individuals when compared to similar civil society offerings that continue to provide these services to Albertans.

Supporting the Effective and Sustainable Recovery of the Civil Society Sector

Community and Social Services recognizes the critical role civil society plays in the well-being of Albertans and its significant contributions to the Alberta economy. Civil society includes non-profit and voluntary organizations, registered charities, informal groups or movements pursuing shared interests, or values and private-sector organizations and individuals pursuing social good.

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on civil society is significant and ongoing. With increased demand for services and devastating revenue losses, the pandemic sheds light on ways to improve and grow civil society organizations. The Government of Alberta is committed to supporting the recovery of the civil society sector from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020-21, Community and Social Services launched the Civil Society Fund. The fund will provide \$20 million over three years, including the \$7 million spent in 2020-21 to support civil society's recovery from the impacts of the pandemic.

Actions that Support the Priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Key Priority 2:

Making life better for Albertans

Objective 3:

Supporting Albertans most in need

 The Civil Society Fund will provide \$20 million over three years, including the \$7 million spent in 2020-21 to support civil society's recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Civil Society Fund received a total of 489 applications for funding in 2020-21. Eligible organizations included non-profit organizations, First Nations and Metis Settlements. There were 21 projects approved for funding in 2020-21. These diverse projects will support civil society organizations to explore improved ways of operating, build shared services that increase collaboration and collective impact, strengthen their capacity to collect and share information to address social issues, and increase their financial resiliency by adopting social enterprises or expanding access to new sources of social finance. An effective and sustainable recovery for civil society is an important component in Alberta's overall recovery.

3.5 Create a Premier's Charities Council to advise government on how best to assist the efforts of civil society groups in helping to make Alberta a more compassionate society, preventing and reducing increased social problems.

Addressing Pressing Social Issues through the Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society

The Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society provides independent advice to government on its relationship with civil society and how civil society organizations can be empowered to address social issues across Alberta. The council includes up to 15 members with a wide array of experiences and expertise, including fundraising and philanthropy, community development, social entrepreneurship and social service delivery leadership. The council is accountable to the Premier of Alberta through the Minister of Community and Social Services.

In 2020-21, the council provided advice to government on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on civil society organizations and Albertans supported by these organizations. At the request of the Minister of Community and Social Services, the council also provided strategic advice on civil society's recovery from the impacts of the pandemic in their report Moving Forward: Charting a Path for Civil Society Recovery. Informed by consultation with over 60 civil society organizations and experts, the report outlines strategic opportunities to advance civil society's recovery with funding from the Civil Society Fund.

The Premier's Council on Charities and Civil Society will continue to serve as a link with civil society to enhance sustainability in the sector and provide ongoing advice to government on ways to build sector capacity to address social issues.

Performance Measure 3.a:

Satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with Persons with Developmental Disabilities funded services (biennial survey)

	Prior Year	2020 24	2020-21			
2012-13	2014-15	2016-17	2019-20	2020-21 Target	Actual	
87%	87%	88%	88%	N/A	N/A	

Note:

The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program provides supports to over 12,500 adults with developmental disabilities in Alberta. The PDD program provides services to support individuals to participate in their communities as independently as possible. The services funded by the PDD program are an important mechanism for achieving successful outcomes for individuals. Families and guardians' opinions regarding these services, as measured by the biennial PDD Family/Guardian Satisfaction Survey, are an important element in assessing performance and making continuous improvements.

This performance measure assesses the overall satisfaction of individuals who access the PDD program. It is calculated by averaging the percentage of positive responses given to three survey statements: services met the person's needs; services provided enhance the person's quality of life; and services help him/her to be part of the community as much as he/she wants to be.

As this measure is derived from a biennial survey, there is no result available for the 2020-21 year. The 2019-20 satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with PDD funded services result is the most current. In 2019-20, 88 per cent of families and/or guardians (public and private) expressed overall satisfaction with PDD-funded services received by the person with a developmental disability. The result meets the target of 88 per cent and is consistent with the 2016-17 result, indicating a consistent trend of overall high satisfaction with the PDD program. The percentage of positive responses provided to the three survey statements that constitute the overall average of 88 per cent is as follows:

- services meet the person's needs, 84 per cent;
- services provided enhance the person's quality of life, 91 per cent; and
- services help him/her to be a part of the community as much as he/she wants to be, 88 per cent.

^{1.} Only prior years with surveys conducted are represented.

Performance Measure and Indicator Methodology

Performance Measure 1.a:

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) quality-of-life-index (biennial survey)

The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) client survey is used to collect data for this performance measure. The survey is conducted every two years (biennially) through an independent consultant. Prior to 2019-20, it was conducted annually. As the 2020-21 survey was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the methodology given below applies to the last survey undertaken in 2018-19.

Data collection was done through phone and online surveys of randomly selected AISH recipients, who were in receipt of benefits between December 1, 2017 and November 30, 2018. Letters were sent out to a minimum of 1,000 individuals one week ahead of time to advise that they may be contacted by phone or online to participate in a survey. Historically, the number of people who receive the mail-out has yielded an adequate sample size to ensure that accuracy of the overall survey is within ± five percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Surveying was completed when a minimum of 400 responses had been received or the sample had been exhausted (a minimum of five attempted contacts per client).

This performance measure result was derived based on the level of agreement with the following four statements, focusing on the benefits and services received under the AISH program.

- 1. The AISH Program helps meet my basic needs;
- 2. The AISH Program helps me manage my health issues;
- 3. The AISH Program helps me to live more independently; and
- 4. The AISH Program helps me to get involved in my local community.

For each survey statement, respondents selected from a four-point scale: *strongly agree, agree, disagree,* or *strongly disagree*. The performance measure was calculated as the average percentage of total agreement (*strongly agree* and *agree* responses) across all four survey statements being weighted equally as shown by the following equation.

(per cent of agreement of statement 1 + per cent of agreement of statement 2 + Performance Measure =

| per cent of agreement of statement 3 + per cent of agreement of statement 4) | 4

Source: Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) Client Survey

Performance Indicator 1.b:

Average annual financial support system caseloads

- Total Income Support Caseload
 - Expected to Work
 - o Barriers to Full Employment
- AISH Caseload

This performance indicator describes the average annual financial support system caseloads in Alberta, including two main client groups: Income Support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH). The total Income Support caseload is composed of two categories: those Expected to Work (ETW) and those who have Barriers to Full Employment (BFE).

The caseloads are defined as the number of households categorized as ETW, BFE or AISH recipients during the calendar year. The composition of the caseload is made up of single individuals, single-parent families, couples with children and couples without children. Each of these compositions is counted as one household in the caseload count.

Beginning in April 2012, the Income Support caseload data were extracted from the Strategic Information Environment (SIE). From October 2019, the Income Support caseload data were extracted from the Enterprise Data Mart (EDM). The source system change from SIE to the EDM provided for enhanced internal data integration. Beginning in 2021, the caseload data for both Income Support and AISH were extracted from the Open Government Portal (i.e., Open Data).

Claimants eligible for receiving support over a period of months are counted in the totals for each month they receive Income Support or AISH. The monthly caseloads on Open Data represent caseloads eligible for receiving payments during a particular month. The average annual caseload is then calculated by averaging the monthly caseload numbers between January and December, for each calendar year.

Source: Open Data Income Support and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Caseloads

Performance Indicator 1.c:

Number of women and children admitted to provincially funded women's shelters

- Number of Women
- Number of Children

This performance indicator shows the number of women and children admitted to provincially funded women's emergency shelters in Alberta. This indicator does not include women and children receiving outreach services, admitted to second-stage shelters or on-reserve fee-for-service shelters; women admitted to seniors' abuse shelters or emergency homeless shelters; or youth living in emergency youth shelters.

Shelter utilization information is entered by shelter staff into the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters database. The data is retrieved monthly by service providers using an automated reporting process. This data is then emailed to the Community and Social Services' Data Management and Reporting unit to collate and organize into an automated analysis table. Monthly values for women and children admitted are summed across each shelter, for each month to create provincewide values summarizing the entire fiscal year.

Source: The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters Database

Performance Measure 2.a: Percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support

The result for this measure is determined through the Work Outcomes Reporting Project survey. This survey is conducted monthly by an independent consultant.

Participants for the survey are selected by using stratified random sampling method applied to former Income Support clients three months after they leave the program. A census approach is applied when the program leaver population size is small. All participants selected to be surveyed receive a letter by mail inviting them to answer the questionnaire either online or by phone (by contacting the survey company via a toll-free line). Three days after the letter has been sent, the survey company starts to contact all participants by phone who have not already participated in the survey. The survey company makes up to eight call attempts to contact a participant. The same question wording is used in both the phone and online questionnaires. Both phone and online responses are captured in the performance measure calculation.

The performance measure result is derived based on the answers given to the following two questions:

- 1. What is your current main activity?
- 2. Have you been employed at any time since you stopped receiving Income Support?

A response of employed or self-employed to question one and a yes response to question two will result in only one count.

The performance measure is calculated by dividing the weighted sum of the number of participants employed (i.e., *employed*, *self-employed*, or *yes*) by the weighted sum of the responses for all program participants who left the program between September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020. These Income Support clients were interviewed between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. *Retired*, *don't know* and *no* response are excluded from the calculation. The results from the random sample are weighted to more accurately represent the population of all program participants.

Performance Measure =
$$\frac{\sum (employed + self\text{-}employed + yes responses)}{\sum (all respondents) - \sum (retired + don't know + no responses)} \times 100$$

Source: Income Support Work Outcomes Reporting Project Survey

Performance Measure 2.b:

Percentage of families accessing the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program who indicate the services provided had a positive impact on their family (biennial survey)

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) family survey is used to collect data for this performance measure. This survey is conducted biennially, with the next survey scheduled for 2021-22. The methodology given below applies to the latest survey undertaken in 2018-19.

Survey administration began in November 2018 and was completed in January 2019 through an independent consultant. All families who were in receipt of FSCD services as of October 2018 were invited to participate in the survey. The final valid population size was 12,556 people.

An introductory letter was sent, or emailed when available, to prospective respondents to inform parents of the intention of the study, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and the confidentiality of the information they would be providing. The letter explicitly stated that their participation in the survey would in no way affect their status with the program. Three options were given to complete the survey: online, by phone, or a paper version. Respondents were given approximately two weeks to complete the survey online, call a toll-free number or request a paper copy. If the regional minimal number of respondents was not met, follow up would occur through a phone call or email to non-respondents. Any respondent who requested to be contacted at a more convenient time was accommodated.

The survey was completed by 2,343 of the 12,556 valid population, resulting in an 18.7 per cent response rate. Of the 2,343 respondents, eight completed the paper survey, 551 completed it via phone and 1,784 completed it online. The overall margin of error for the survey results was equal to \pm 1.8 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

This performance measure is derived based on the answers given to the following question:

How much do you agree that the services provided to you by the FSCD program have had a positive impact on your family?

Respondents selected from a four-point scale: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree* and *strongly disagree*. The combined responses of *strongly agree* and *agree* are used to calculate the performance measure as shown by the following equation. The results are weighted to represent each region's proportion of the province's population.

Performance Measure =
$$\frac{\text{(number of strongly agree responses + number of agree responses)}}{\text{total number of valid responses}} \times 100$$

Source: Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) Family Survey

Performance Indicator 2.c:

Median time on Income Support

- Expected to Work (ETW)
- Barriers to Full Employment (BFE)

The median time on Income Support illustrates the length of time that clients received Income Support benefits. Using the median instead of the mean can show a more accurate representation of the length of time on Income Support as the median is not affected by outliers.

The median duration is calculated by taking the caseload at the end of the fiscal year and then calculating the duration of uninterrupted time each active client has been on assistance. The median value is identified by arranging the individual durations from the shortest to the longest, and then identifying the middle value. If there is an even number of durations, the average of the two middlemost values will be taken as the median.

Source: Central Client Directory and the Strategic Information Environment

Performance Measure 3.a:

Satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with Persons with Developmental Disabilities funded services (biennial survey)

The Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Family/Guardian Survey is used to collect data for this performance measure. This survey is conducted biennially, with the next survey scheduled for 2021-22. The methodology given below applies to the latest survey undertaken in 2019-20.

Survey administration began in September 2019 and was completed in October 2019 through an independent consultant. All guardians (often family) of adults with developmental disabilities that received PDD services as of August 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. The final valid population size was 6,248 people.

An introductory letter was sent, or emailed when available, to prospective respondents to inform guardians of the intention of the study, voluntary nature of their involvement and the confidentiality of the information they would be providing. The letter explicitly stated that their participation in the survey would in no way affect their status with the program. Three options were given to complete the survey: online, by phone, or a paper version. Respondents were given approximately 10 days to complete the survey online, call a toll-free number or request a paper copy. If the regional minimal number of respondents was not met, follow up would occur through a phone call or email to non-respondents. Any respondent who requested to be contacted at a more convenient time was accommodated.

The survey was completed by 1,897 of the 6,248 valid population, resulting in a 30.4 per cent response rate. Of the 1,897 respondents, 50 completed the paper survey, 588 completed it via phone and 1,259 completed it online. The overall margin of error for the survey results was equal to \pm 1.2 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

This performance measure was derived based on the level of agreement with the following three statements:

- 1. Services meet the person's needs;
- 2. Overall, I am satisfied that the services provided enhance the person's quality of life; and
- 3. Overall, I am satisfied that the person's services help him/her to be a part of the community as much as he/she wants to be.

For each of the statements, respondents selected from a scale with the following options: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *somewhat agree*, *somewhat disagree*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree*, *don't know*, and *does not apply*.

The performance measure is calculated as the average percentage of total agreement (*strongly agree*, *agree*, and *somewhat agree* responses) across all three survey statements being weighted equally. Cases with no response or responses of *don't know* or *does not apply* are treated as invalid and discarded from the final computation. The results are weighted to represent each region's proportion of the province's population.

	(per cent of agreement of statement 1 + per cent of agreement of statement 2 +
Performance Measure =	per cent of agreement of statement 3)
	3
Performance Measure =	3

Source: Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Family and Guardian Survey

Financial Information

Year ended March 31, 2021

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Ministry Financial Highlights

Statement of Revenues and Expenses (unaudited) Year ended March 31, 2021

	2	021	2020	Chang	e from 2020 Actual	
	Budget	Actual	Actual	Budget		
		(in thousands)				
Revenues						
Government transfers						
Government of Alberta grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 165	\$ -	\$ (165)	
Federal and other government grants	134,526	135,770	129,826	1,244	5,944	
Investment income	-	3	26	3	(23)	
Premiums, fees and licences	257	-	26	(257)	(26)	
Other revenue	29,045	49,932	33,378	20,887	16,554	
Ministry total	163,828	185,705	163,421	21,877	22,284	
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(17,627)	(14,893)	(15,849)	2,734	956	
Adjusted ministry total	146,201	170,812	147,572	24,611	23,240	
Expenses - directly incurred						
Programs						
Ministry Support Services	11,664	10,844	12,510	(820)	(1,666)	
Employment and Income Support	938,834	769,124	1,009,954	(169,710)	(240,830)	
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	1,289,565	1,314,425	1,310,099	24,860	4,326	
Disability Services	1,359,424	1,309,639	1,353,066	(49,785)	(43,427)	
Homeless and Outreach Support Services	195,851	252,365	227,276	56,514	25,089	
Community Supports and Family Safety	135,487	142,285	137,827	6,798	4,458	
Services Provided to Other Ministries	17,627	14,580	15,547	(3,047)	(967)	
Ministry total	3,948,452	3,813,262	4,066,279	(135,190)	(253,017)	
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(37,627)	(39,640)	(40,630)	(2,013)	990	
Adjusted ministry total	3,910,825	3,773,622	4,025,649	(137,203)	(252,027)	
Annual Deficit	\$(3,764,624)	\$ (3,602,810)	\$(3,878,077)	\$ 161,814	\$ 275,267	

Revenue and Expense Highlights

Revenues

The ministry's revenue was \$185.7 million, approximately \$22.3 million higher than 2019-20 and \$21.9 million higher than Budget 2020.

Compared to 2019-20 Actual

Higher revenues were primarily due to increases in prior year surpluses for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) contracts; collection of Assignment of Benefits – Canada Pension Plan (Disability); and Labor Market Development Agreements.

Compared to Budget 2020

Higher revenues were primarily due to increases in prior year surpluses for PDD contracts; collection of Assignment of Benefits – Canada Pension Plan (Disability); and services on First Nations Reserves under the Administrative Reform Agreement.

Expenses

The ministry's operating expense was \$3,813.3 million in 2020-21, \$253.0 million or 6.2 per cent lower than in 2019-20, and \$135.2 million or 3.4 per cent lower than budget.

Compared to 2019-20 Actual

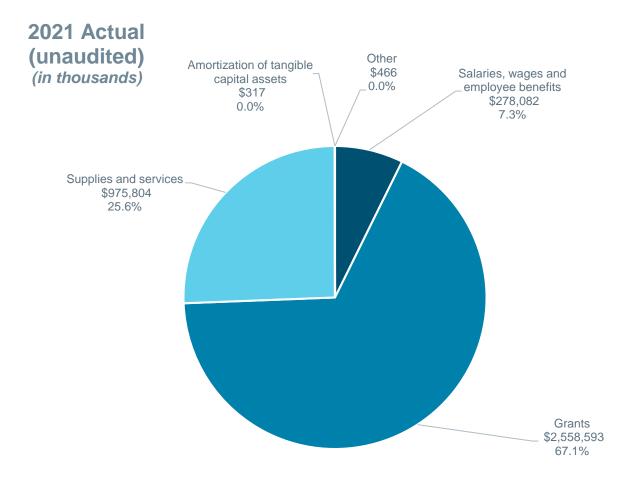
The decrease from 2019-20 was primarily a result of a caseload reduction in Employment and Income Support due to clients accessing available federal income supports during the pandemic and the Income Support cost per case decrease due to consistent delivery of supplemental benefit policies.

Compared to Budget 2020

- Employment and Income Support program expense was \$769.1 million, \$169.7 million lower than budget. This was primarily due to the lower than budgeted caseload resulting from clients accessing available federal income supports during the pandemic.
- Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped expense was \$1,314.4 million, \$24.9 million higher than budget. This was primarily due to the higher than budgeted caseload and cost per case.
- Disability Services expense was \$1,309.6 million, \$49.8 million lower than budget. This
 was primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in reduced caseload growth and
 service utilization for PDD and Family Support for Children with Disabilities programs.
 This was partially offset by an increase in COVID-19 costs, including the Critical Worker
 Benefit.
- Homeless and Outreach Support Services expense was \$252.4 million, \$56.5 million higher than budget. This was mainly due to COVID-19 related grants to Homeless and Women's Shelters.
- Community Supports and Family Safety expense was \$142.3 million, \$6.8 million higher than budget. This was mainly due to grant agreements budgeted for April 2021 but paid in March 2021.
- Services Provided to Other Ministries expense was \$14.6 million, \$3.0 million lower than budget. This was primarily due to reduced staffing due to hiring restraint.

Expenses - Directly Incurred Detailed by Object (unaudited)

The following information presents expenses of the ministry that were directly incurred by object of expenditure. The disclosure of expenses by object is to provide information that is useful in evaluating the economic impact of government acquiring or consuming various types of resources.



- The largest component of the ministry's operating expenses was grants, which totaled \$2,558.6 million (67.1 per cent) and was spent primarily on Employment and Income Support, Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped and Disability Services programs.
- Supplies and services expenses of \$975.8 million (25.6 per cent) was largely spent on service provider contracts in the Persons with Developmental Disabilities program.
- Expenditures for salaries, wages and employee benefits totaled \$278.1 million (7.3 per cent) and primarily for front line delivery of ministry programs.
- The remainder of ministry expenses were classified as amortization of capital assets (\$0.3 million) and other expenses (\$0.5 million).

Other Financial Information

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Trust Funds Under Administration

(in thousands)

The ministry administers trust funds that are regulated and other funds consisting of public money over which the legislature has no power of appropriation. As the ministry has no equity in the funds and administers them for the purpose of various trusts, they are not included in the ministry's financial statements.

At March 31, 2021, the trust funds under administration were as follows:

	2021	2020
Persons with Developmental Disabilities		
Clients Trust Funds	\$ 337	\$ 363

Statement of Remissions, Compromises, Write-offs

The following Statement has been prepared pursuant to section 23 of the *Financial Administration Act* .

The Statement includes all Remissions, Compromises and Write-offs of the Ministry of Community and Social Services made or approved during the Fiscal Year.

	(in thousands)
Remissions under section 21 of the Financial Administration Act:	\$ -
Compromises under section 22 of the Financial Administration Act:	
Income Support, Assured Income for Severely Handicapped, Alberta Adult Health Benefit	1
Other	
Sub total	1
Bankruptcies:	
Income Support, Assured Income for Severely Handicapped and Alberta Adult Health Benefit	64
Write-Offs:	
Income Support, Assured Income for Severely Handicapped, Alberta Adult Health Benefit	4,458
Other - Disability Services	367
TOTAL	\$ 4,890

Lapse/Encumbrance (unaudited) Year ended March 31, 2021

		Voted Estimate ⁽¹⁾			Voted Estimate sands)	Voted Actuals ⁽²⁾	Over Expended (Unexpended)	
Pı	ogram - Operating Expense			•	•		_	
1	Ministry Support Services							
	1.1 Minister's Office	\$ 786	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 786	\$ 807	\$ 21	
	1.2 Deputy Minister's Office	807	-	-	807	810	3	
	1.3 Strategic Services	2,900	-	-	2,900	2,677	(223)	
	1.4 Corporate Services	3,200	-	-	3,200	3,560	360	
	1.5 Appeals Panels	3,971	-	-	3,971	3,010	(961)	
	11	11,664	-	-	11,664	10,864	(800)	
2	Employment and Income Support 2.1 Program Planning and Delivery 2.2 Income Support to People	131,609	-	-	131,609	127,959	(3,650)	
	Expected to Work or Working 2.3 Income Support to People with	441,375	(60,300)	(35,000)	346,075	334,978	(11,097)	
	Barriers to Full Employment 2.4 Career and Employment	295,702	(33,300)	-	262,402	248,803	(13,599)	
	Services	69,648	-	(1,000)	68,648	57,823	(10,825)	
		938,334	(93,600)	(36,000)	808,734	769,563	(39,171)	
3	Assured Income for the Severly Hand	dicapped	, ,	,			<u> </u>	
	3.1 Program Planning and Delivery	31,358	-	-	31,358	33,714	2,356	
	3.2 Financial Assistance Grants	1,258,207	76,592	(25,092)	1,309,707	1,280,629	(29,078)	
		1,289,565	76,592	(25,092)	1,341,065	1,314,343	(26,722)	
4	Disability Services 4.1 Program Planning and Delivery 4.2 Persons with Developmental Disabilities - Supports to	65,300	-	-	65,300	63,818	(1,482)	
	Albertans 4.3 Persons with Developmental	995,531	14,400	-	1,009,931	966,984	(42,947)	
	Disabilities - Direct Operations 4.4 Family Support for Children with	42,066	7,500	-	49,566	40,850	(8,716)	
	Disabilities 4.5 Provincial Disability Supports	211,233	5,600	-	216,833	193,301	(23,532)	
	Initiatives 4.6 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum	18,155	-	-	18,155	15,771	(2,384)	
	Disorder Initiatives	25,239	-	-	25,239	27,197	1,958	
	4.7 Disability Advocate's Office	1,000	-	-	1,000	612	(388)	
		1,358,524	27,500	-	1,386,024	1,308,533	(77,491)	
5	Homeless and Outreach Support Ser	vices						
	5.1 Program Planning and Delivery	4,031	-	-	4,031	3,716	(315)	
	5.2 Homeless Shelters	48,700	51,000	(25,000)	74,700	94,000	19,300	
	5.3 Women's Shelters	51,319	10,000	(5,000)	56,319	54,030	(2,289)	
	5.4 Homeless Support Outreach			. , -,				
	Services	91,801	17,000	(20,000)	108,801	100,845	(7,956)	
		195,851	78,000	(30,000)	243,851	252,591	8,740	

Lapse/Encumbrance (unaudited) Year ended March 31, 2021

	Voted Estimate ⁽¹⁾	plementary Estimate		djust- ents (in thous	Voted Estimate sands)		oted ctuals ⁽²⁾	Expended xpended)
Program - Operating Expense								
6 Community Supports and Family Safe	ty							
6.1 Program Planning and Delivery6.2 Family and Community Support	2,709	-		-	2,709		2,809	100
Services	100,000	30,000		(30,000)	100,000		109,592	9,592
6.3 Family and Community Safety	32,778	-		-	32,778		29,804	(2,974)
	135,487	30,000		(30,000)	135,487		142,205	6,718
 7 Services Provided to Other Ministries 7.1 Services Provided to Other Ministries 	17,627 17,627	-		<u>-</u>	17,627 17,627		14,568 14,568	(3,059)
Total	\$3,947,052	\$ 118,492	\$ (121,092)	\$3,944,452	\$3.	,812,667	\$ (131,785)
(Lapse)				<u> </u>			· · ·	\$ (131,785)
Program - Capital Investment								
2.1 Program Planning and Delivery4.3 Persons with Developmental	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-	\$ -	\$	84	\$ 84
Disabilities - Direct Operations	547	-		-	547		217	(330)
Total	\$ 547	\$ -	\$	-	\$ 547	\$	301	\$ (246)
(Lapse)								\$ (246)

⁽¹⁾ As per "Expense Vote by Program", "Capital Investment Vote by Program" and "Financial Transaction Vote by Program" page 53 of the 2020-21 Government Estimates.

 $^{^{\}left(2\right)}$ Actuals exclude non-voted amounts such as amortization and valuation adjustments.

Annual Report Extracts and Other Statutory Reports

Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* reads:

- 32 (1) Every chief officer must prepare a report annually on all disclosures that have been made to the designated officer of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature for which the chief officer is responsible.
 - (2) The report under subsection (1) must include the following information:
 - (a) the number of disclosures received by the designated officer, the number of disclosures acted on and the number of disclosures not acted on by the designated officer;
 - (b) the number of investigations commenced by the designated officer as a result of disclosures;
 - (c) in the case of an investigation that results in a finding of wrongdoing, a description of the wrongdoing and any recommendations made or corrective measures taken in relation to the wrongdoing or the reasons why no corrective measure was taken.
 - (3) The report under subsection (1) must be included in the annual report of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature if the annual report is made publicly available.

There were no disclosures of wrongdoing filed with my office for your department between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.