

Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

Business Plan

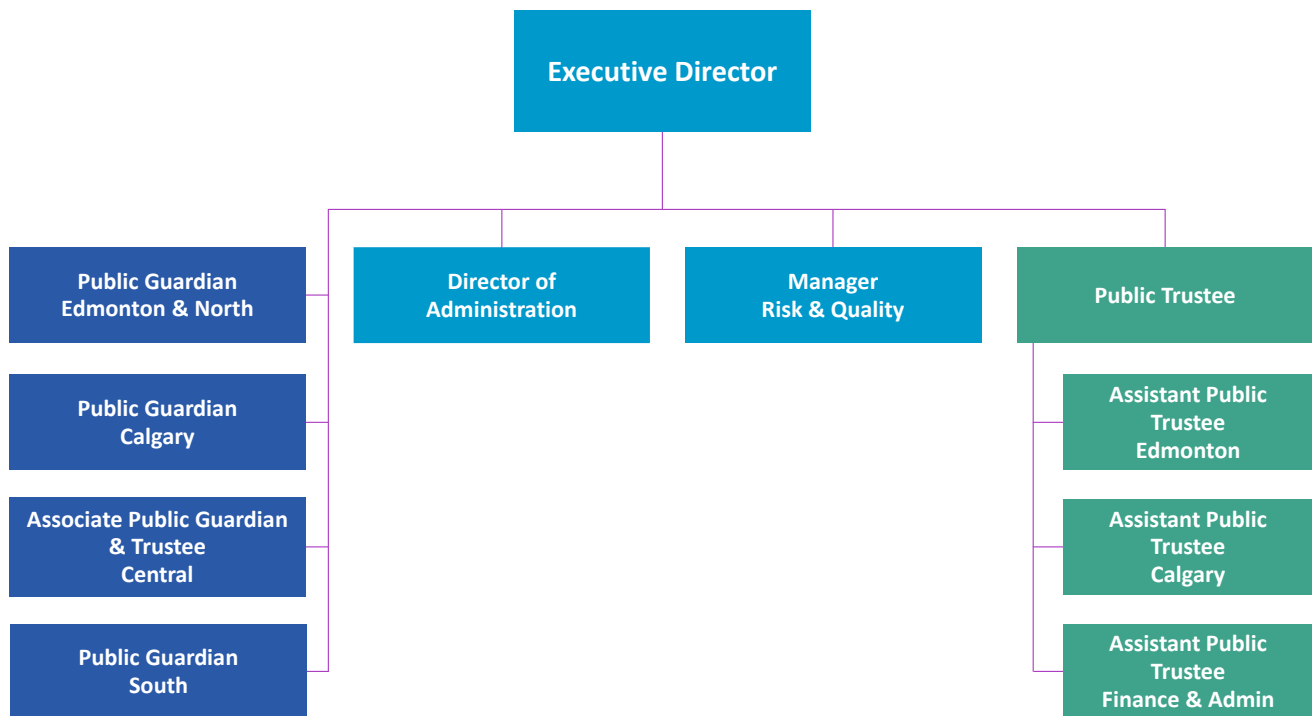
2020-23

Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

Business Plan 2020-23

Branch Mandate and Structure

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) is a branch of the Justice Services Division in the Ministry of Alberta Justice and Solicitor General (JSG). OPGT advocates for vulnerable Albertans and provides them decision-making support including legal guardianship, property administration, information and education. Specific OPGT responsibilities include: guardianship and trusteeship; provision and enablement of decision-making options; management of the property of minors; administration of estates of the deceased; client asset management; promotion of advance planning; capacity assessment; and investigations.

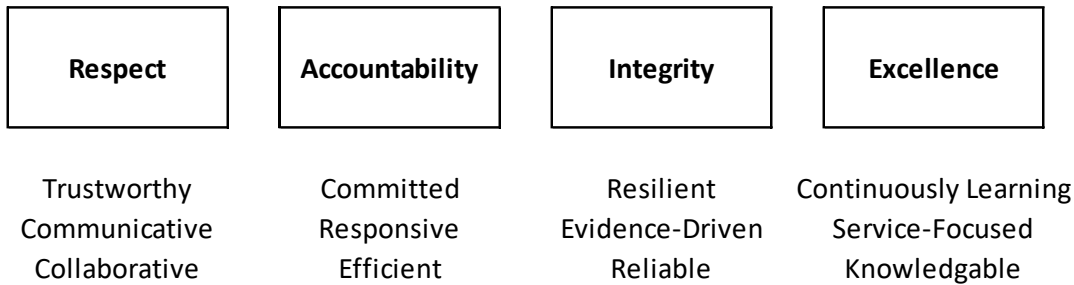


A more detailed description of OPGT and its services can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/office-public-guardian-trustee.aspx>.

Branch Strategic Direction

OPGT Values

The values of OPGT are aligned with Government of Alberta values, per figure below.



OPGT Mission

To ensure the sustainable and efficient delivery of guardianship, trusteeship and related services to Albertans, while managing quality and risk and employing a sound evidence basis for our activities.

OPGT Vision

Making and supporting personal and financial decisions that allow Albertans to live with dignity, maximize their autonomy, and realize their full potential.

Branch Outcomes

1. Albertans receive guardianship, trusteeship and related services that are quality-driven and sustainable
2. Albertans experience modernized guardianship, trusteeship and related services
3. Albertans benefit from supported, engaged and empowered OPGT employees

Outcome 1

What We Want to Achieve

Albertans Receive Guardianship and Trusteeship Services that are Quality-Driven and Sustainable

OPGT activities have evolved and expanded over the years in tandem with the rising volume and diversity of its clients. This trend has led in some cases to OPGT providing services that are not specifically mandated by any of the several pieces of legislation governing OPGT, resulting in a strain on resources. To remain sustainable, OPGT's business model must align with legislation and be driven by quality. OPGT's Quality Management System (QMS) generates data and processes that can be utilized to improve our organization. We are acting now to ensure that OPGT, an essential service, continues to deliver high-quality service into the indefinite future.

This outcome aligns with the ministry's current business direction.¹ JSG, along with OPGT, is "committed to ensuring resources are used appropriately to enable justice system sustainability." Equally, JSG is committed to ensuring that the "justice system is fairer, provides timely outcomes, and is more responsive and effective."

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Ensure OPGT's service offering is in alignment with its legislatively mandated scope of services.
- 1.2 Strengthen OPGT services to ensure clarity and consistency regarding decision-making criteria.
- 1.3 Manage clients' assets within OPGT's risk management framework.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **Scope Alignment.** This initiative will involve: assessing our current services; seeking revisions in legislation and regulations where appropriate; and adjusting our activities accordingly.
- **Intake.** This is a review and revision of client intake policies, procedures and decision-making criteria.
- **Partners.** Consists of communicating and collaborating with others (including with Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services on Advance Care Planning) to ensure client-centric coverage.

¹ Justice and Solicitor General, *Ministry Business Plan 2020-23*, Government of Alberta. JSG's three business plan outcomes are: "Albertans are safe and protected," "Alberta's justice system is fair and effective," and "Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system."

- **Asset Management.** OPGT will procure an asset liability model (ALM) study in 2020-21 and prepare for another in 2024-25.

Performance Metrics²

1.a Performance Measure: Average annual interest rate paid to OPGT clients.

OPGT continually strives to manage clients’ invested assets in the clients’ best interests. At the close of 2018-19, the minimum regulated rate (MRR) was 1.35% and OPGT clients actually received an interest rate of 2.75%.

TARGETS

2020-21:	MRR+1.0%
2021-22:	MRR+1.0%
2022-23:	MRR+1.0%

1.b Performance Measure: Percentage of health care decisions under specific decision-making that are made within three working days of all the information being received.

The speed with which OPGT is able to make these time-sensitive decisions is a reflection of operational efficiency and quality management. In 2018-19, 85% of health care decisions under specific decision-making were taken within three working days of all the information being received.

TARGETS

2020-21:	88%
2021-22:	91%
2022-23:	94%

1.c Performance Indicator: Adult Albertans with private guardians or private trustees as a percentage of all adult Albertans with guardians or trustees.

² Per the 2019-22 Ministry Business Plans Reference Guide, a “performance measure” is meant to indicate the degree of success that OPGT has in achieving its outcomes. Together, a performance measure and its target provide a concrete statement of what is intended to be accomplished over a period of time. A “performance indicator” shows progress toward achievement of OPGT outcomes. Indicators track important influences and their impact on Albertans.

OPGT encourages the use of private guardians or trustees over the use of the Public Guardian or Public Trustee in all cases for which it is feasible. In 2018-19, 12,570 adult Albertans had a private guardian or trustee, which was 61.1% of all adult Albertans with a guardian or trustee.

HISTORICAL RESULTS

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
• Represented Adult Albertans					
○ Private Guardian or Trustee	n/a	61.3%	60.5%	60.3%	61.1%
○ Public Guardian or Trustee	n/a	38.7%	39.5%	39.7%	38.9%

1.d Performance Indicator: Annual financial audit recommendations.

Annually, the Auditor General of Alberta conducts an independent examination of OPGT's financial statements called an audit. Any recommendations arising from the audit must be addressed promptly. This indicator tracks the number of recommendations arising annually. The intent is to have the annual financial statements trigger no recommendations.

HISTORICAL RESULTS

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
• Audit Recommendations	0	0	0	0	0

Outcome 2

What We Want to Achieve

Albertans Experience Modernized Guardianship, Trusteeship and Related Services

How OPGT utilizes available technology has a large bearing on the quality and volume of services we provide. Technology has advanced around us by leaps and bounds, creating opportunities to improve our services, expand client access to them, and deliver them more efficiently. It is time to seize those opportunities.

This outcome reflects JSG's current business direction. The ministry is putting a priority on "enhancing the use of technology to deliver services and increase access to justice for Albertans." Programs that are "currently delivered in traditional channels will be digitized to improve services for Albertans and reduce red tape through efficiencies and modern service delivery platforms."³

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Realize the benefits of an integrated information system.
- 2.2 Leverage technology to enhance our efficiency and extend our abilities.
- 2.3 Improve how we handle inquiries from clients and the general public.
- 2.4 Achieve deeper integration of data into OPGT decision-making processes.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **Information System.** This initiative includes the replacement of the Public Trustee Information System (PTIS).
- **Technology Supports.** This initiative comprises the deployment of hardware and applications including reduced use of paper and increased placement of information and services online.
- **Call Centre.** Implementation of a call centre service delivery model for inquiries.
- **Data Analytics.** Implementation of the OPGT Information Management Strategy (IMS) ensuring protection of data and improved decision-making.

³ JSG *Ministry Business Plan 2020-23*, Government of Alberta; from the outcome "Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system."

Performance Metrics

2.a Performance Measure: Percentage by which the plan to upgrade OPGT's website has been implemented.

OPGT recognizes the opportunity to improve its website, which is anticipated to lead to a number of benefits, including: expanded access to information and services; improved user experience; and increased efficiency. In the coming three years, OPGT will: assess the current state; engage subject matter experts; collaborate with Service Alberta to achieve improvements; and evaluate our progress with a focus on continuous improvement. The upgrade targets over the next three years are a slower modernization than OPGT would normally aspire to; however, the branch is setting realistic targets accounting for the adoption of the new OPGT Information System, COVID mitigation in the current year, and the required integration with other supporting departments.

TARGETS

2020-21:	40%
2021-22:	70%
2022-23:	100%

Outcome 3

What We Want to Achieve

Albertans Benefit from Supported, Engaged and Empowered OPGT Employees

Service organizations are only as good as the quality of their human resources. OPGT employees bear significant responsibilities and face considerable workloads. OPGT recognizes the value of its team and strives to be as responsive as possible to employee needs in order to ensure that we are optimizing our service to Albertans over the long term.

This OPGT outcome reflects the ministry's commitment "to provide high quality, accessible, innovative, citizen-focused services to Albertans in their interactions with the justice system."⁴

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Achieve balanced caseload sizes for staff.
- 3.2 Ensure regular and meaningful internal communication.
- 3.3 Support staff in their career development and succession opportunities.
- 3.4 Provide a healthy and safe work environment for staff.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **Reorganization & Boundary Realignment.** This initiative is about restructuring teams and realigning regional boundaries to balance caseload.
- **Performance Management.** Our intent is to build upon OPGT's performance management system, encompassing recognition, engagement, goalsetting, accountability, and training & development.
- **Communication.** Implementation of a communication strategy including an online discussion board and continuation of quarterly roadshows.
- **Succession Planning.** Preparation for staff retirement and succession through the creation of meaningful opportunities for staff to be involved in leadership opportunities.
- **Occupational Health & Safety.** Continuation of occupational health and safety (OH&S) initiatives.

⁴ JSG *Ministry Business Plan 2020-23*, Government of Alberta; from the outcome "Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system."

Performance Metrics

3.a Performance Measure: Agreement level with the statement “As an OPGT employee I feel supported, engaged and empowered.”

Employee surveys have been carried out in the past, but this is a new measure for which historical data is unavailable. The question will be asked of OPGT employees as part of a short, confidential online poll. The measure will capture, on a 1-5 agreement scale, the percentage of respondents who responded with either a 4 or 5.

TARGETS

2020-21:	70%
2021-22:	75%
2022-23:	80%

3.b Performance Indicator: Percentage of the OPGT workforce with performance plans in place.

Exiting 2019-20, 56% of permanent OPGT employees had a performance plan in place. Prior to that, this indicator was not formally tracked. Now that tracking is in place, our ultimate aim is to equip 100% of permanent employees with a performance plan.

HISTORICAL RESULTS

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
• Performance Plan Coverage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	~1/3

3.c Performance Indicator: Number of near-miss incident forms completed by OPGT employees.

Employees are encouraged to document near misses as part of a comprehensive safety culture. In 2018-19, 29 near-miss forms were completed. OPGT has long promoted workplace safety but only recently began tracking near-miss forms. Our aim is to expand documentation in order to enable adjustments leading to more proactive approach and a safer workplace.

HISTORICAL RESULTS

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
• Near-Miss Forms Completed	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	29

Risks to Achieving Outcomes

OPGT's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system continues to mature. Using best-practice methodologies, OPGT has a robust, comprehensive system for identifying risk, assessing risk and treating risk in a manner that drives decision-making, performance management, resource allocation, improved client service, employee job satisfaction and more. Categories include strategic, operational and project risks; they are captured in the OPGT Risk Register.

OPGT's ERM governance and infrastructure ensure accountability. The formal ERM structure includes: OPGT Business Area Management Leadership Team; OPGT Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee (GRC); OPGT Project Oversight and Accountability Committee; Government of Alberta risk management consultation; and external assurance and audit. Every individual employee has responsibility for managing risk.

The following strategic risks to achieving OPGT outcomes are identified in the Risk Register:

- Reduction in funding amid continued growth in service demand.
- Continued diversion of resources to external audit demands.
- Historic challenges in completing legacy system replacement projects.

OPGT's annual report will summarize how we have acted to manage these strategic risks.