

Business Plan

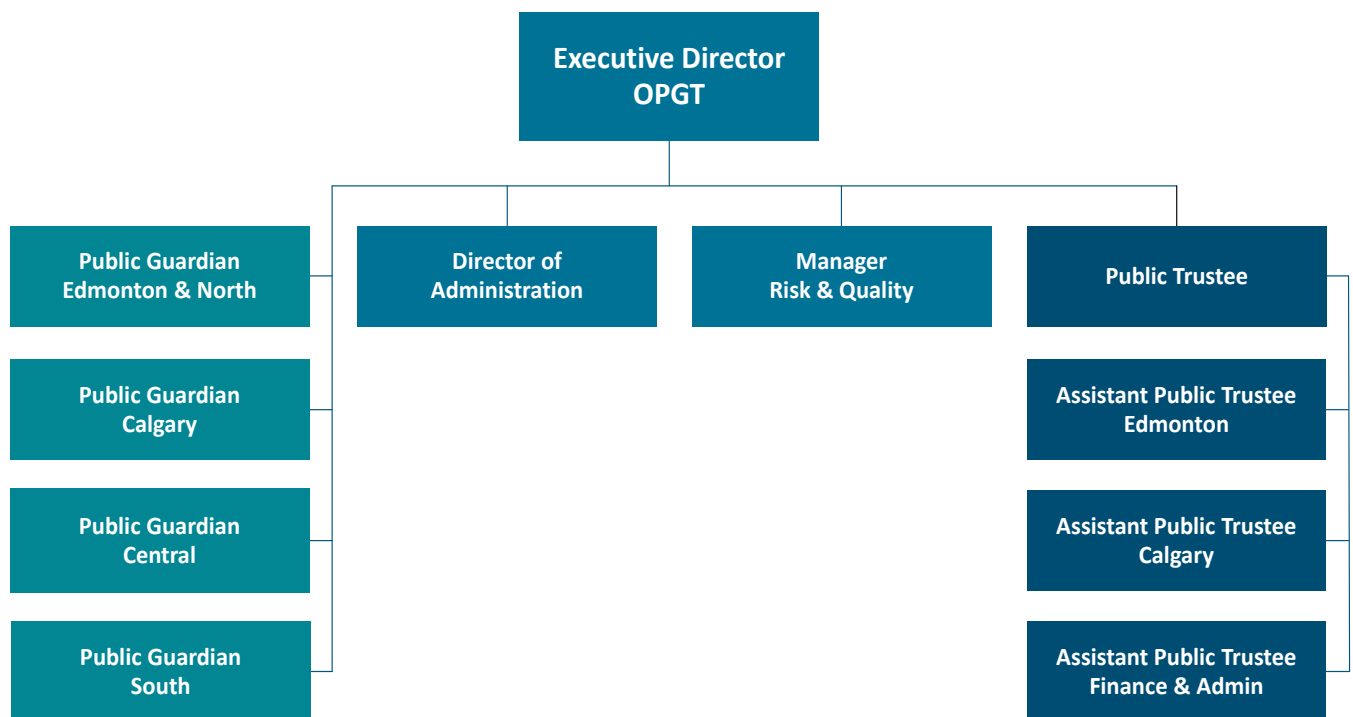
Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee

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Business Plan 2022-25

Mandate and Structure

The Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT or the Office) is part of the Strategy, Support and Integrated Initiatives (SSII) division of the Ministry of Alberta Justice and Solicitor General (JSG). OPGT supports personal and financial decision-making for persons who cannot do so for themselves. The Office 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 permanent guardianship orders; administration of estates of the deceased; client asset management; promotion of advance care 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>.¹

¹ The Alberta Public Trustee is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor through Order-in-Council. The Public Trustee is a corporation sole, but its functional position within government, as depicted in the organization chart, is within OPGT.

Strategic Direction

Values

The four words boxed below are the Alberta Public Service's fundamental values. The eight values of OPGT, shown beneath the boxes, align with these central values and guide all of our actions.

Respect	Accountability	Integrity	Excellence
Professional Cooperative	Responsible Transparent	Honest Trustworthy	Innovative Responsive

Mission

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

Vision

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

Intended 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.

The following sections expand on our three intended outcomes in the 2022-25 period. Context, key objectives and initiatives are provided for each outcome. Performance metrics including measures, targets and indicators are

also offered where relevant. A performance *measure* is a yardstick for OPGT progress. Using performance measures, we establish *targets* specific to given periods of time. Performance *indicators* allow us to track important related influences and their impact on Albertans.

Business Plan – Core

Outcome 1

Albertans receive guardianship, trusteeship and related 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 our clients. OPGT is focusing on its legislatively mandated activities and ensuring that those activities are quality-driven to ensure sustainability. OPGT's Quality Management System (QMS) generates data and processes that are utilized to ensure OPGT continues to deliver a high standard of services into the future.

Outcome 1 aligns with the ministry's current business direction. JSG is committed to protecting Albertans and their interests, ensuring a safe and inclusive Alberta and a system that is responsive to Indigenous, racialized and marginalized populations. The ministry undertakes ongoing program reviews to ensure that Albertans receive efficient and client-focused services from their government. Continued collaboration with key stakeholders will allow OPGT to identify and action a collective approach to supporting guardianship and trusteeship clients.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Ensure that OPGT's service offering is in alignment with its legislatively mandated scope of services.
- 1.2 Ensure clarity and consistency of decision-making criteria.
- 1.3 Manage client assets in accordance with the Public Trustee's fiduciary obligations, applicable provincial legislation, and the best practices of Canadian Public Trustees.
- 1.4 Ensure that OPGT services are delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **Scope Alignment.** Scope alignment involves assessing our current services, seeking revisions in legislation and regulations where appropriate, and adjusting our activities accordingly.
- **Guardianship Services Re-Design.** This initiative will result in an update of guardianship services, along with a revision of related policies, procedures and forms. The plan is to update the service offering and ultimately to put all procedures on a three-year rolling review schedule.
- **Protection of Client Data.** This initiative will ensure, particularly for client information requiring the highest level of protection, that we have categorized client data correctly and that we have training in place to continue to manage and protect the data.
- **Intake.** This is the review and revision of client intake policies, procedures and decision-making criteria.
- **Partnerships.** This consists of communicating and collaborating with others to ensure client-centric coverage for the overall benefit of Albertans.
- **Reconciliation.** OPGT will ensure that the ministry's truth and reconciliation response is documented and actioned in the context of guardianship and trusteeship.

Performance Metrics

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

OPGT strives to manage clients' invested assets in our clients' best interests. At the close of 2020-21, the minimum regulated rate² (MRR) was 1.28% and OPGT clients received an interest rate of 2.5%.

Targets	2022-23	MRR	2023-24	MRR	2024-25	MRR
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1.b Performance Measure: Percentage of health care decisions under Specific Decision-Making that are made within three working days of all information being received

The speed with which OPGT is able to make time-sensitive decisions is a reflection of operational efficiency and quality management. Certain decisions, of course, require additional time to ensure the best decision is made given the circumstances. In 2020-21, 87% of health care decisions under Specific Decision-Making were made within three working days of all the information received.

Targets	2022-23	90%	2023-24	90%	2024-25	90%
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1.c Performance Indicator: Adult Albertans with private guardians or private trustees as a percentage of all represented adult Albertans

OPGT encourages the use of private guardians or trustees over a Public Guardian or Public Trustee in all cases for which it is feasible as this typically involves positive, pre-existing relationships and can be considered less intrusive. In 2020-21, 14,112 adult Albertans had a private guardian or trustee, which was 67.6% of all adult Albertans with a guardian or trustee. On an absolute basis, this progress against this metric has not reduced OPGT's workload, but it has slowed its growth.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Proportion of represented adult Albertans with a private guardian or trustee	60.5%	60.3%	61.1%	66.6%	67.6%
Proportion of represented adult Albertans with a public guardian or trustee	39.5%	39.7%	38.9%	33.4%	32.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

1.d Performance Indicator: Annual financial audit recommendations

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

² MRR on a particular day is the average of the effective annual rate on the Government of Canada five-year benchmark bond for each day during the immediately preceding five-year period for which the Bank of Canada publishes rates.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Audit recommendations	0	0	0	0	0

Outcome 2

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, creating opportunities to improve our services, expand client access to services and deliver them more efficiently, while optimally safeguarding client information. The pandemic has catalyzed much of our recent progress toward this outcome.

Outcome 2 reflects JSG's business plan, which includes the modernization of services to ensure they remain accessible now and into the future, and are enhanced to better serve client needs. One of JSG's central objectives is to continue to implement digital transformation to improve access, promote system sustainability and reduce red tape. By investing in service digitization, the ministry intends to improve the availability of services for communities across the province.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Realize the benefits of a modernized trustee information system for our clients.
- 2.2 Leverage technology to enhance efficiency and extend our capability to serve clients in a timely manner.
- 2.3 Improve how we handle inquiries from clients and the general public.
- 2.4 Achieve deeper integration of data in decision-making processes to drive improved service outcomes.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **System Replacement.** This is a critical initiative to replace the Public Trustee Information System (PTIS).
- **Electronic Document Management.** This is an initiative to reduce use of paper while expanding information and services online.
- **Call Tree.** This initiative involves the implementation of a call tree service delivery model for inquiries, which will improve the consistency and accuracy of information provided to Albertans.
- **Data Management.** Management of data will be improved through implementation of the OPGT Information Management Strategy (IMS), ensuring data protection and improved decision-making.

Performance Metrics

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

Improving OPGT's website will lead to a number of benefits, including expanded access of the public to information and services, improved user experience, and increased efficiency. In the coming three years (2022-25), OPGT will: complete the web page updates; review those improvements and make selective edits to ensure accurate content; and then maintain the web pages as situations evolve.

Targets	2022-23	90%	2023-24	95%	2024-25	100%
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Outcome 3

Albertans benefit from supported, engaged and empowered OPGT employees

OPGT employees are the face of the Office. Creating the kind of workplace that inspires staff to deliver continued high levels of client-focused service is essential. Our employees bear significant responsibilities and face considerable workloads. The pandemic tested everyone’s ability to deliver services but the team responded positively under trying conditions. It is the strength and resilience of the OPGT team that will allow us to optimize our service to Albertans over the long term.

Outcome 3 reinforces the ministry’s continuing commitment to supporting personal and financial decision-making for persons who cannot do so for themselves. JSG, along with OPGT, aims to provide accessible, innovative, client-focused services, and to ensure an efficient and sustainable system.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Achieve balanced caseload sizes across all functions to improve service delivery.
- 3.2 Substantively advance diversity and inclusion within OPGT to ensure all of Alberta’s populations are served effectively.
- 3.3 Support staff in their career development and succession opportunities.
- 3.4 Ensure regular and meaningful internal communication.
- 3.5 Provide a safe and healthy work environment.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- **Reorganization & Boundary Realignment.** This initiative involves restructuring teams and realigning regional boundaries to balance caseloads.
- **Diversity & Inclusion.** This initiative consists of actioning the Alberta Public Service’s Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan³ within OPGT.
- **Training.** This is the implementation of Supervisor Training (including training related to employee Performance Agreements) as well as common onboarding training for all OPGT staff.
- **Communication.** We will update and continue to execute a communication strategy including quarterly interactive roadshows with OPGT staff.
- **Occupational Health & Safety.** We will ensure the continuation of occupational health and safety (OH&S) best practices.

Performance Metrics

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

³ This 2020 document presents four priorities: 1) Continue to support an inclusive and respectful workplace that embraces, develops and retains employees and strengthens engagement; 2) Continue to recruit and retain a workforce that reflects Alberta’s diversity and addresses barriers and biases faced by underrepresented groups; 3) Continue to support the

The approach to employee surveys was modified beginning in 2019-20 with the implementation of periodic, short, confidential online polls. This measure captures, on a 1-5 agreement scale where 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree, the percentage of respondents who responded to the statement with either a 4 or 5. In 2020-21, the result was 58.2%. The pandemic may have impacted performance against this metric, but we believe the targets below remain relevant.

Targets	2022-23	75%	2023-24	80%	2024-25	85%
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3.b Performance Indicator: Percentage of the OPGT workforce with current Performance Agreements in place

Exiting 2020-21, 82% of permanent OPGT employees had an active Performance Agreement in place. The Performance Plan is a critical tool because it sets out a roadmap for individual development. Our aim is ultimately to equip 100% of permanent employees with a current Performance Agreement.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Performance Agreement coverage	n/a	n/a	~33%	56%	82%

3.c Performance Indicator: Number of incident reports completed by OPGT employees

Employees are encouraged to document incidents as part of a comprehensive safety culture. Near-miss incidents were tracked on a fiscal year basis beginning in 2018-19. The procedure has since gone electronic. OPGT aims through this tracking to sensitize all employees to workplace safety and better inform adjustments leading to a safer workplace overall.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Incidents documented	n/a	n/a	30	20	16

Risks to Achieving Outcomes

OPGT's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system encompasses a robust, comprehensive approach to identifying, assessing and treating risk in a manner that drives decision-making, performance management, resource allocation, improved client service, job satisfaction and more.

OPGT's ERM governance and infrastructure ensure accountability. The formal ERM structure includes: the OPGT Business Area Management Leadership Team; the OPGT Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee (GRC); the OPGT Project Oversight and Accountability Committee; Government of Alberta risk management consultation; and external assurance and audit. The duty to manage risk falls on OPGT, and each individual employee has a role to play.

OPGT's Risk Register has categories that include project risks, operational risks and strategic risks. Risks to the successful execution of OPGT's business plan include:

- PTIS becoming non-operational prior to the system being functionally replaced.

development of all employees to reduce bias and systemic racism and increase inclusion; and 4) Enhance the knowledge of who is in our workplaces, how employees are treated and how we can advance diversity and inclusion in the APS.

- Lack of efficiency and/or accuracy of documentation due to not having an electronic document management system.
- Significant numbers of staff being absent due to illness.
- Our staff being harmed by a volatile person during the course of their duties.

The PTIS replacement project poses perhaps the largest specific risk to OPGT's 2022-25 plans. The Office is directing resources accordingly. OPGT's 2022-23 Annual Report will summarize how we have acted to manage all these risks.