



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

August 3, 2023

The Honourable Jason Nixon
Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services

Dear Minister:

I want to thank you for your service to this government and congratulate you on your new role as Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services.

Our Cabinet is made up of talented, diverse, and experienced leaders and I am proud to share with you our responsibility to fulfill the mandate given to us by Albertans. We all love this beautiful province and want the best for our families and our future. Over the next four years, we will take clear and decisive action to grow and diversify our economy while ensuring our health, education and other core social programs are world class.

I have full confidence that our team will build on our solid foundation of stability, informed decision-making, and good governance to improve the lives of Albertans and help our province realize its potential.

As in many cities across Canada, it is becoming increasingly difficult to buy or rent a home in Calgary, Edmonton and other Alberta communities. The reasons for this range from a dramatic spike in interest rates brought on by federal overspending, to unnecessary red tape for those trying to add additional suites in their properties, to poor urban planning in general.

Overcoming this challenge will require a multi-ministry effort and a willingness to be creative and innovative while avoiding simplistic knee-jerk policies, such as rent control, that will only deepen the crisis by driving out investment in new builds.

Under your leadership as Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services, I expect you to work closely with your Cabinet and Caucus colleagues and the public service through the committee, Cabinet, and legislative processes to deliver on the following commitments to support Albertans, including:

- As lead, working in cooperation with relevant ministries, including the Minister of Affordability and Utilities, to develop and implement an affordable and attainable home ownership and rental strategy that focuses on incentivizing the construction of new homes and rental units and creating additional financing options for prospective homeowners, while removing barriers for both homebuyers and



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renters. The strategy should be focused on both middle-income and low-income prospective renters and buyers, including seniors.

- Exploring the feasibility of a “short-term disability” program to better facilitate, where medically appropriate, the return of Albertans to work when medically able to do so.
- Ensuring supports for the vulnerable, including AISH and the seniors’ benefit, continue to be indexed to inflation.
- Ensuring those with severe disabilities have seamless support from first diagnosis through childhood and adulthood without interruption of needed supports.
- Working with the federal government and municipalities to ensure housing-related programs align with the housing needs of Albertans.
- Continuing to implement Stronger Foundations, Alberta’s 10-year strategy to address affordable housing across the province.
- Providing adequate ongoing funding to food banks and other operators to ensure families have access to nutritional food in times of need.
- Ensuring adequate funding is provided to partners to ensure low-income Albertans can access municipal transit at lower prices.
- Working with seniors lodge providers to undergo a planned review for the purpose of expanding seniors lodges and facilities to keep up with increased growth and demand.
- Ensuring the Office of the Public Guardian is funded appropriately to support aging seniors who become mentally or physically unable to make personal decisions for themselves.
- Working with the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, who is lead, to align the policies of your ministry with the Alberta model recovery-oriented system of care.
- Designing a ministry-specific job-attraction strategy that raises awareness for young Albertans (aged 16 to 24) and adults changing careers of the professions available in the seniors and community supports sector, including pathways for education and training.



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I direct you to work closely with the public service, including your Deputy Minister and other senior officials in your ministry, to support the priorities outlined in this letter with the highest standard of professionalism, integrity, and creativity.

I also expect you to regularly and proactively reach out to all ministry-related stakeholders in order to take feedback and identify potential solutions on issues of importance to them, including finding ways our government can reduce burdensome and unnecessary red tape and barriers that are hurting their members' ability to grow the economy and improve quality of life for the Albertans they serve.

Together with you and our Caucus and Cabinet colleagues, I look forward to serving all Albertans to ensure our province remains one of the best places on earth to live, work and raise a family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Danielle Smith

Premier of Alberta