

# Human Services

BUSINESS PLAN 2015–18

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## ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of October 15, 2015.

*original signed by*

Irfan Sabir, Minister

## THE MINISTRY

The ministry consists of the Department of Human Services. Within the department's budget, funding is provided for the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Youth Secretariat, the Premier's Council on Alberta's Promise, the Social Care Facilities Review Committee, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, the Family Violence Death Review Committee and the Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance.

Human Services works to improve quality of life for Albertans through delivery of respectful, adaptive supports and innovative, prevention-focused programs and policy. The ministry strives to ensure that Albertans are supported – that they have the resources and skills to optimize their quality of life, that they are protected and safe in their homes and communities and that they are enabled and empowered to be successful.

A more detailed description of Human Services and its programs and initiatives can be found at:  
[www.humanservices.alberta.ca](http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca).

## LINK TO GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The desired outcomes and priority initiatives identified in this business plan are aligned with the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Human Services operates in a very complex environment. For many years, Alberta has had one of the strongest economies and has been one of the fastest growing populations in Canada. Alberta's population has grown to almost 4.2 million people as employment opportunities, higher wages and the possibility of a better future have drawn people from across Canada and the world to Alberta. A growing and diverse population means increased pressure on programs and services. At the same time, there is growing understanding, as demonstrated by the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that all orders of government must focus attention on the needs and strengths of Aboriginal people and communities. This includes working with the federal government to ensure jurisdictional conflicts do not prevent children from receiving services they need and implementing the objectives and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Approximately one in 10 of Alberta's children live in poverty and nearly one-third do not have the basic skills they need when they start kindergarten. Children, youth and families with mental health concerns, addictions and other complex needs require dedicated services and supports. Improving outcomes for children means improving the quality of life for families. Thoughtful consideration must be given to how government can best align programs and services to continue to assist lower-income families, particularly when Albertans currently working full-time at minimum wage may still fall below the low-income measure.

Despite these challenges, the government is committed to achieving better social outcomes for Albertans by ensuring service delivery is integrated, transparent, person-centred and collaborative. The ministry is focused on assuring the quality of services and improving how Albertans navigate services. Historically, social service programs have been spread across a number of ministries, making it difficult for Albertans to know how to access and navigate the system to get the supports they need. A person-centred, integrated service delivery approach that focuses on the individual's unique needs and circumstances will make the system easier to navigate and help ensure Albertans receive the services and benefits they need, when they need them.

In addition, the ministry is placing unprecedented emphasis on preventive initiatives so future generations of strong, self-reliant Albertans will need fewer interventions and supports in their lives. Preventive efforts include addressing the root causes of poverty, family violence, sexual violence, bullying and homelessness. For example, government is focusing on giving children the best start in life by providing resources and support to create nurturing families, secure early learning environments and inclusive communities that children need to grow and thrive.

To facilitate better integration of the support systems that have been created to support Albertans in need and to ensure that assistance is getting to those who need it, the Government of Alberta is committed to creating stability in social service delivery in the province. Funding provided to Human Services will be an investment to improve the system and provide assistance to families who need it.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES, PRIORITY INITIATIVES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

### **Desired Outcome One: Alberta families and communities thrive through improved supports by strengthening prevention and addressing the root causes of social and economic challenges**

The well-being of the province is dependent on the well-being of Albertans, their families and communities. Better social outcomes become possible with resilient individuals, thriving families and inclusive communities. While assisting Albertans in crisis is important, focusing on root causes of social and economic exclusion in the present helps to prevent future crises from occurring and supports the development of stronger individuals, communities and families.

#### **Priority Initiatives:**

- 1.1 Enhance and promote parenting resources and supports and community-based early childhood services.
- 1.2 Increase affordability and quality of child care and create new child care spaces.
- 1.3 Develop and implement a cross-ministry approach for poverty reduction.
- 1.4 Implement the Alberta Child Benefit to support children in all lower-income Alberta families and enhance the Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit.
- 1.5 Strengthen the focus on preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.
- 1.6 Build on preventive approaches in the child intervention system and implement reforms to the child intervention system, focusing on keeping families together, addressing the root causes that bring children into care and promoting collaborative solutions.
- 1.7 Prevent and address family violence, sexual violence and bullying by creating additional women's shelter spaces, collaborating with communities and other ministries to address root causes and promoting healthy relationships across the lifespan.
- 1.8 Partner with Health to improve addictions and mental health supports for children and youth.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
1.a Percentage of Albertans who have information to better help in situations of family violence and bullying (biennial survey): • Family Violence • Bullying	69% 70% (2013-14)	72% 72%	n/a n/a	73% 73%
1.b Percentage of youth receiving Advancing Futures Bursaries who successfully completed their planned studies during the fiscal year	80% (2013-14)	82%	82%	83%
1.c 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)	91% (2012-13)	n/a	92%	n/a
1.d Percentage of licensed day-care programs and contracted family day-home agencies that are accredited or participating in accreditation	96% (2013-14)	97%	97%	97%

### Desired Outcome Two: Albertans receive higher quality programs and services that are more coordinated, seamless and tailored to their needs to maximize their potential

Human Services is working to improve Albertans' experiences accessing and navigating social support systems. Better service delivery means focusing on individual Albertans' needs (being "citizen-centred") rather than focusing on programs. With many services in place to meet a variety of needs, Albertans may find it difficult to know where to go for help or what help is available. Integrating the service delivery system will enable Human Services to provide Albertans with better support and simplified access to the services and benefits they need – in person, online or over the phone – to help them achieve better outcomes for themselves.

#### Priority Initiatives:

- 2.1 Ensure disability supports and services are integrated so persons with disabilities receive appropriate supports in the most efficient and effective manner across their lifespan.
- 2.2 Prevent and address homelessness and improve housing stability for Albertans in need by integrating personal, financial and health supports with housing.
- 2.3 Improve access to integrated services through Alberta Supports' Call, Click and Come-in channels.
- 2.4 Simplify access to financial supports by integrating income programs.
- 2.5 Through evaluation, quality assurance and performance management, ensure effectiveness, accountability and transparency of Human Services programs and services.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
2.a Satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with Persons with Developmental Disabilities funded services (biennial survey)	87% (2012-13)	n/a	89%	n/a
2.b Service providers' satisfaction with supports and decision-making services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee (biennial survey)	93% (2013-14)	95%	n/a	95%
2.c Percentage of clients reporting they are either employed or in further education or training after leaving a skills training program <sup>1</sup>	75% (2013-14)	76%	77%	78%

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
2.d Percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support <sup>1,2</sup>	57% (2013-14)	60%	60%	61%
2.e Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) client quality-of-life index <sup>3</sup>	78% (2013-14)	79%	80%	81%

**Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> Starting in 2015, this measure will be based on a sample of clients surveyed between January and December each year rather than a sample surveyed between September and January.
- <sup>2</sup> Those that stopped receiving Income Support without obtaining employment could have transitioned to training programs, entered new partnerships (e.g., change in marital status) or received support from other sources (e.g., Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance and AISH).
- <sup>3</sup> The index is made up of four equally-weighted components based on questions from the annual AISH client survey related to meeting basic needs, the ability to live independently, manage health issues and get involved in the community.

**Desired Outcome Three: Greater collaboration between government, communities and Aboriginal partners to strengthen services and achieve shared social outcomes**

All sectors of our society have a role to play in improving the quality of life of Albertans. Human Services continues to build on already strong foundational relationships with government, community and Aboriginal partners to deliver on shared priorities. This means sharing the right information to help staff deliver services efficiently and to allow government to make the best decisions to improve services. It means engaging with Aboriginal leaders, communities and partners on challenges that affect Aboriginal children and families and building on the strengths in Aboriginal communities. It also means working with other government departments to ensure training and employment initiatives for all Albertans are planned and delivered in a coordinated way. Finally, it means working with the non-profit and voluntary sector to ensure a sustainable continuum of supports is available for vulnerable Albertans.

**Priority Initiatives:**

- 3.1 Work with Aboriginal communities, leaders and partners to strengthen relationships and develop collaborative strategies that support Aboriginal people.
- 3.2 Work closely with Aboriginal leaders to review ministry programs and policies to identify ways to implement the objectives and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 3.3 Provide targeted training and supports to assist Albertans with finding and maintaining employment, with special attention to specific populations who require extra support such as Aboriginal people, immigrants, people with disabilities and youth.
- 3.4 Increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through collaboration with public and private sector employers.
- 3.5 Work with key stakeholders and communities to develop an inclusion and accessibility strategy for Albertans with disabilities.
- 3.6 Work with contracted agency partners to enhance program and service delivery in the community.
- 3.7 Improve information-sharing practices within government and with service agencies to support the best outcomes for the health, education and safety of children and families.
- 3.8 Work with the Family and Community Support Services community on a renewed vision to support improved social outcomes for Albertans.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2013-14	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
3.a Percentage of children and youth with a new child intervention file who did not have a file closure in the previous 12 months <sup>1</sup>	84%	87%	87%	87%
3.b Percentage of Aboriginal children in foster care/kinship care who are placed with Aboriginal families	39%	50%	50%	53%

**Note:**

<sup>1</sup> Includes children and youth that are in care and not in care.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS  
Consolidated Financial Statements Basis

(thousands of dollars)	Comparable			
	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Estimate	2016-17 Target	2017-18 Target
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Services on First Nations Reserves	53,673	<b>60,478</b>	62,246	64,075
Labour Market Development	158,487	<b>151,560</b>	144,481	137,377
Other Federal Transfers	25,580	<b>22,113</b>	25,868	24,430
Premiums, Fees and Licences	5,516	<b>5,404</b>	5,372	5,372
Other Revenue	29,095	<b>20,205</b>	22,059	22,061
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(2)	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>272,349</b>	<b>259,760</b>	<b>260,026</b>	<b>253,315</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>				
Ministry Support Services	37,158	<b>37,683</b>	38,262	38,256
Employment and Income Support	728,227	<b>769,919</b>	750,209	751,350
Child Intervention	712,623	<b>736,231</b>	767,996	809,954
Child Care	280,612	<b>296,897</b>	371,897	396,897
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	917,610	<b>950,630</b>	960,613	980,612
Support to Persons with Disabilities	1,047,563	<b>1,067,411</b>	1,067,692	1,066,847
Public Guardian and Trustee Services	28,278	<b>30,098</b>	30,098	30,093
Family and Community Support Services	76,562	<b>101,131</b>	101,131	101,131
Homeless and Outreach Supports	162,240	<b>177,941</b>	177,941	177,941
Common Service Access	15,209	<b>15,081</b>	15,081	15,081
Early Intervention Services for Children and Youth	95,525	<b>90,279</b>	90,279	90,279
Family and Community Safety	21,309	<b>36,685</b>	21,674	21,674
Alberta Child Benefit	-	-	147,000	196,000
2013 Alberta Flooding	3,579	<b>1,400</b>	1,100	1,100
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(24,790)	<b>(23,500)</b>	(23,500)	(23,500)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,101,705</b>	<b>4,287,886</b>	<b>4,517,473</b>	<b>4,653,715</b>
<b>Net Operating Result</b>	<b>(3,829,356)</b>	<b>(4,028,126)</b>	<b>(4,257,447)</b>	<b>(4,400,400)</b>
<b>CAPITAL INVESTMENT</b>				
Ministry Support Services	119	<b>549</b>	494	494
Employment and Income Support	4,053	<b>2,869</b>	2,582	2,582
Child Intervention	661	<b>2,775</b>	1,539	1,539
Support to Persons with Disabilities	291	<b>608</b>	547	547
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,124</b>	<b>6,801</b>	<b>5,162</b>	<b>5,162</b>