

# Human Services

BUSINESS PLAN 2014-17

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## ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of February 12, 2014.

*original signed by*

Manmeet S. Bhullar, Minister

February 19, 2014

## THE MINISTRY

The ministry consists of the Department of Human Services. Within the department's budget, funding is provided for the ministry's Family and Community Engagement Councils, the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Youth Secretariat, 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 Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance, and the Implementation Oversight Committee responsible for overseeing progress on the ministry's five-point plan to improve the child intervention system.

Human Services assists Albertans in creating the conditions for safe and supportive homes and communities so they have opportunities to realize their full potential. The ministry works collaboratively with government, community, partners and stakeholders to deliver citizen-centred programs and services that improve quality of life for Albertans. Alberta's Social Policy Framework helps guide and frame this work, providing overall direction to planning and decision-making to improve the lives of Albertans.

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).

## RESULTS-BASED BUDGETING AND THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC PLAN

Programs and services delivered by the ministry are reviewed for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency in accordance with the Government of Alberta's *Results-based Budgeting Act*.

This business plan supports the "Investing in Families and Communities" theme outlined in the *Government of Alberta Strategic Plan* by improving the quality of life of Albertans through creating opportunities to maximize the potential of individuals, families and communities.

The plan supports the achievement of the following strategic goals set out in the government's strategic plan:

- Goal 1: Honour Alberta's Communities. Family and Community Engagement Councils will work with community partners to develop integrated solutions to social policy challenges.
- Goal 2: Support Vulnerable Albertans. Human Services works with communities to provide programs and services that improve the quality of life for vulnerable Albertans.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Human Services is operating in a very complex environment. The social issues facing Albertans are multidimensional and interconnected, but historically, social service programs have been spread across a number of ministries and Albertans have not always known where they should go or how to get the help they need.

Approximately one in 10 children are living in poverty and nearly one-third of Alberta's children do not have the basic skills they need when they start kindergarten. Poverty can lead to long-term health problems and create barriers to educational, employment, and recreational opportunities. In 2011, an estimated 8.2 per cent of Albertans were income poor, including approximately 84,000 children, and Alberta's income support caseload was one per cent of the population.

These persistent challenges exist in a world where emergencies also arise. In June 2013, devastating floods took place in Southern Alberta and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Full recovery from the disasters will take years. The ministry is supporting the flood recovery and mitigation efforts. The response to this disaster confirmed that government and communities can meet great challenges when working together in a coordinated way.

Better outcomes for Albertans are possible, even in the midst of these challenges, by ensuring the system of supports is truly integrated, transparent, person-centered and collaborative. This requires transformational change in delivery, community engagement, governance and the ways information is managed and shared. The system must strengthen families and communities and address root causes, rather than simply treating symptoms, to help keep children healthy and safe.

Human Services places a special focus on supporting the healthy development of all children by working with communities to build a connected early childhood system of evidence-based prevention, early intervention and protection services and through the prevention of child sexual abuse. For children involved in the child intervention system, a five-point plan is being implemented that focuses on enhancing information sharing, addressing the root causes that bring children into care, and supporting collaborative research to improve services to children and their families.

At the heart of the Human Services transformation is a commitment to support the outcomes identified in the Social Policy Framework that all Albertans are safe, healthy, secure and resilient, lifelong learners, included, and active and engaged.

## **GOALS, PRIORITY INITIATIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

As a result of the ministry's review of its goals, environment, opportunities and challenges, a number of priority initiatives have been identified. Focused agenda items, several specific areas where government will focus its attention over the next three years, are identified with a \*. Additional government commitments to Albertans are identified with a ✓.

### **Goal One: Keeping children healthy and safe**

Human Services is focused on providing services aimed at keeping children healthy and safe. The first six years of a child's life are critical, laying the foundation for future health and success. The ministry's aim is to ensure that those first six years provide the right start for every child in Alberta. Supportive and nurturing families, early learning environments and communities provide children with the security they need to grow and thrive.

#### **Priority Initiatives:**

- \*1.1 In collaboration across government and with communities, lead the implementation of An Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development to improve maternal, child and infant health, enhance supports for parents, enrich early learning and care and promote safe, supportive communities for children.
- 1.2 Continue the implementation of the five-point plan to improve the child intervention system, focusing on enhancing information sharing, addressing the root causes that bring children into care, and supporting collaborative research to improve services to children and their families.
- 1.3 Work with partners to promote stable, nurturing environments and communities that work together to prevent child sexual abuse.

- 1.4 Strengthen policies and practices leading to improved childrens' outcomes including implementation of a Children's Charter and review of government-wide programs under the *Children First Act*.
- 1.5 Continue to implement the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) 10-year strategic plan with a strengthened focus on the prevention of FASD.
- 1.6 Build capacity to deliver high quality, integrated and accessible early childhood development programs and services, including early learning and care, parenting information, supports and services.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2012-13	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
1.a Percentage of children and youth who received child intervention (family enhancement or protective) services and did not require protective services within 12 months of file closure	89%	90%	90%	90%
1.b Percentage of Aboriginal children in foster care/kinship care who are placed with Aboriginal families	39%	45%	50%	55%
1.c Percentage of licensed day-care programs and contracted family day-home agencies that are accredited or participating in accreditation	98%	98%	98%	98%

## Goal Two: Building stronger families and communities

The well-being of the province is dependent on the well-being of individual Albertans, their households, and their families. Stronger families and communities build the foundations to achieve better social outcomes. Through the establishment of Family and Community Engagement Councils, development of a poverty reduction strategy, and building strengths-based relationships with Aboriginal communities, the ministry seeks to better understand and address root causes to build stronger families and communities.

### Priority Initiatives:

- ✓ 2.1 Work with communities to develop a poverty reduction strategy that will eliminate child poverty in Alberta in five years, and reduce overall poverty in 10 years.
- 2.2 Collaborate across government and with communities to implement Family Violence Hurts Everyone: A Framework to End Family Violence in Alberta, and develop a revised bullying strategy, focused on primary prevention and building healthy relationships across the lifespan.
- 2.3 Work with communities to develop a coordinated provincial response to support Albertans impacted by sexual abuse, violence and exploitation.
- 2.4 Support the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness to continue implementation of *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*.
- 2.5 Implement actions and tools in support of Alberta's Social Policy Framework to guide planning and decision-making regarding social policy in Alberta.
- 2.6 Establish Family and Community Engagement Councils that will work to co-create solutions to social policy challenges involving a range of community partners such as Health Advisory Councils, school boards, and Family and Community Support Services.
- 2.7 Work with Aboriginal communities and leaders, and other partners to create strength-based relationships and develop collaborative strategies that lead to improved outcomes for Aboriginal people.
- 2.8 Provide targeted training and supports to assist vulnerable Albertans to find and maintain employment.
- 2.9 Increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through collaboration with employers and the public sector.
- 2.10 Increase family and community safety by addressing the root causes to build stronger families and communities.
- 2.11 In collaboration with community partners, academics and other stakeholders, develop implementation plans for the Social Innovation Endowment to improve social outcomes in Alberta.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
2.a Percentage of Albertans who have information to better help in situations of family violence or bullying: • Family Violence (biennial survey) • Bullying (biennial survey)	71% 74% (2011-12)	n/a n/a	75% 75%	n/a n/a
2.b Percentage of clients reporting they are either employed or in further education or training after leaving a skills training program	74% (2012-13)	75%	76%	77%
2.c Percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support	59% (2012-13)	65%	67%	68%
2.d Percentage of youth receiving Advancing Futures Bursaries who successfully completed their planned studies during the fiscal year	86% (2012-13)	87%	88%	89%

### Goal Three: Delivering better services for vulnerable Albertans

Delivering better services means focusing on the needs of Albertans (being “citizen-centred”) and using a more coordinated and transparent approach built upon a model of continuous improvement. With many programs aimed at meeting their needs, Albertans have not always known where to go for help. Integrating service delivery will allow us to provide better services while achieving better outcomes for Albertans. Sharing as much information as possible with experts and the public will help the ministry make the best decisions to improve services.

#### Priority Initiatives:

- 3.1 Implement an open data approach to improve information sharing and to ensure ongoing improvement of services.
- 3.2 Build on Alberta’s Information Sharing Strategy to support and engage leadership and management teams in training staff to make well-informed decisions leading to improved outcomes for Albertans.
- 3.3 Ensure the integration of disability programs and services, so persons with disabilities receive appropriate supports in the most efficient and effective manner.
- 3.4 Implement coordinated service strategies for individuals with complex needs.
- 3.5 Improve outcomes for vulnerable Albertans and their families through implementation and evaluation of enhanced outcomes-based service delivery processes and practices.
- 3.6 Implement changes to the Office of the Public Trustee (OPT), including the *Public Trustee Amendment Act*, to improve outcomes, and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of OPT services.
- 3.7 Improve services to Albertans through greater integration in service delivery and by continuing to implement Alberta Supports across the province.
- 3.8 Work with the contracted agency sector to implement measures to improve quality of services for individuals.
- 3.9 Align income support programs to ensure vulnerable Albertans have the support needed to reach their full potential.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
3.a 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)	91%	n/a	91%
3.b Satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with PDD-funded services (biennial survey)	87% (2012-13)	88%	n/a	89%

<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Last Actual (Year)</b>	<b>Target 2014-15</b>	<b>Target 2015-16</b>	<b>Target 2016-17</b>
3.c Service providers' satisfaction with supports and decision-making services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian (biennial survey)	92% (2011-12)	n/a	95%	n/a
3.d Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) client quality-of-life index <sup>1</sup>	78% (2012-13)	79%	80%	81%

**Note:**

- 1 The index comprises three equally-weighted components based on questions from the annual AISH client survey related to ability to live independently, manage health issues, and get involved in the community.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

(thousands of dollars)	Comparable			2014-15 Estimate	2015-16 Target	2016-17 Target
	2012-13 Actual	2013-14 Budget	2013-14 Forecast			
<b>OPERATIONAL EXPENSE</b>						
Ministry Support Services	38,292	38,293	38,293	<b>39,441</b>	42,759	43,078
Employment and Income Support	755,248	697,087	709,240	<b>702,850</b>	716,190	723,308
Child Intervention	675,169	693,088	693,088	<b>734,677</b>	761,638	788,975
Child Care	260,363	269,582	269,582	<b>287,753</b>	299,314	305,721
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	848,755	900,159	900,159	<b>940,966</b>	977,420	1,008,812
Support to Persons with Disabilities	849,590	850,287	913,287	<b>967,448</b>	1,008,720	995,997
Public Guardian and Trustee Services	28,798	30,257	30,257	<b>31,382</b>	30,998	31,228
Family and Community Support Services	75,941	76,124	76,124	<b>76,131</b>	76,131	76,137
Homeless Support	109,982	111,682	111,682	<b>130,733</b>	136,847	136,912
Common Service Access	13,023	14,776	14,776	<b>15,816</b>	16,862	17,014
Early Intervention Services for Children and Youth	82,942	81,677	81,677	<b>95,441</b>	98,021	99,981
Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying	58,674	43,637	43,637	<b>72,491</b>	75,688	77,305
Social Innovation Endowment Account	-	-	-	-	22,500	45,000
2013 Alberta Flooding	-	-	67,999	<b>7,597</b>	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,796,777</b>	<b>3,806,649</b>	<b>3,949,801</b>	<b>4,102,726</b>	<b>4,263,088</b>	<b>4,349,468</b>

CAPITAL PLAN SPENDING

Ministry Support Services	521	578	578	<b>578</b>	578	578
Employment and Income Support	2,182	3,020	3,020	<b>3,020</b>	3,020	3,020
Child Intervention	2,407	1,800	1,800	<b>1,800</b>	1,800	1,800
Support to Persons with Disabilities	248	640	640	<b>640</b>	640	640
Public Guardian and Trustee Services	2,305	3,144	3,144	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,663</b>	<b>9,182</b>	<b>9,182</b>	<b>6,038</b>	<b>6,038</b>	<b>6,038</b>