



Justice

Ministry Business Plan

Justice

Business Plan 2024-27

Ministry Fact Sheet – Mandate and Structure

The Ministry of Justice works to ensure a fair and accessible justice system for all Albertans where the rule of law is upheld and government undertakings are administered according to law. In collaboration with the judiciary, law enforcement, public safety, and health, the ministry provides programs and services that ensure access to justice and support the needs of Albertans involved in the justice system.

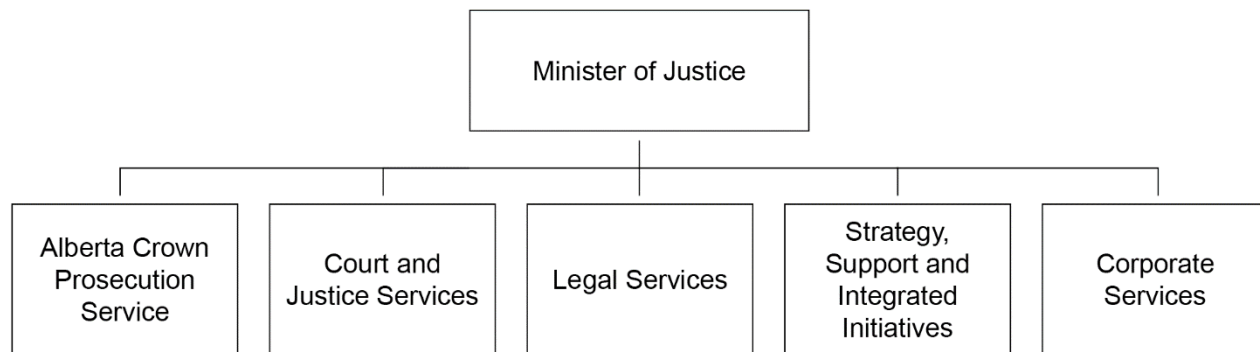
The ministry administers courts in Alberta and provides criminal prosecution services, information and dispute resolution options for people accessing the court system, and legal and strategic services to government. The Ministry of Justice administers federal firearms legislation and advocates for Alberta's firearms community, while working towards public safety. The ministry oversees the delivery of legal aid to Albertans through an agreement with the Law Society of Alberta and Legal Aid Alberta. It also facilitates the enforcement of child and spousal support orders and provides forensic death investigations into sudden, unexpected or unexplained deaths in Alberta.

The Ministry of Justice is taking active steps to protect the rights and interests of Albertans. The ministry is standing up for its citizens by participating in legal challenges to federal legislation to protect Alberta's jurisdiction under the Constitution of Canada, including intervening in two applications at the Federal Court of Canada brought by the Ontario Attorney General to prevent the federal government from making further decisions or taking further regulatory action under the *Impact Assessment Act*. The ministry is also advocating for law-abiding firearms owners by challenging the lawfulness and constitutionality of the federal firearm prohibitions legislation. In addition, the Ministry of Justice is improving service to Albertans by conducting timely investigation of firearms licence applications to ensure they are issued or renewed efficiently to law abiding, responsible Albertans.

The Ministry of Justice is striving to provide Albertans with more timely and accessible services. The continued rollout of the pre-charge assessment system will ensure charges are reviewed by a prosecutor before being laid by police. This system will reduce the number of cases entering the court system that do not meet the threshold for prosecution and create capacity within Alberta's three independent courts by ensuring valuable court time is scheduled for viable matters only. The ministry also advocates for the federal government to appoint additional superior court justices in key areas across the province to support timely access to justice where Albertans live and work. The ministry is exploring opportunities to streamline existing processes and improve service delivery to make the justice system easier and more accessible to Albertans. The Ministry of Justice is continuing efforts to improve the death investigation process within the province to provide Alberta families with timely access to information regarding the death of their loved one.

The ministry is focused on providing services that target the unique needs of Albertans involved in the justice system. It is collaborating with partners to develop alternatives to traditional judicial processes, including diversion and restorative justice programs, and specialized courts that provide a therapeutic and culturally appropriate approach to justice. Support for Indigenous people who are in contact with the justice system will continue with efforts by the ministry to provide culturally relevant programming and initiatives.

Fiscal sustainability is a government priority. Steps are being taken to ensure Albertans are receiving value for their tax dollars. The ministry continues to examine cost-effective ways to deliver services, while ensuring a sustainable, accessible, and efficient justice system.



A more detailed description of the Ministry of Justice and its programs and initiatives can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/justice>.

The Ministry of Justice remains committed to regulatory approaches and program delivery that reduce unnecessary government oversight and emphasize outcomes in order to improve access to government services, attract investment, support innovation and competitiveness, and grow Alberta businesses.

Ministry business plans should be considered in conjunction with all budget documents - including the Fiscal Plan, Government Strategic Plan, and Estimates - which work together to provide a complete overview of government's commitment to responsible fiscal management.

2024-27 Business Plan

Outcome 1

Albertans' rights and interests are protected

The ministry continues to stand up for Albertans and make the province’s voice heard in Ottawa. By challenging federal legislation and policies that are unconstitutional or may be harmful to the province, the ministry is defending our province from federal overreach and supporting the best interests of Albertans. The ministry is also reviewing election-related legislation to increase public trust in elections and strengthen democracy in Alberta.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Take actions to stand up for Albertans, including improving firearms licence processing time and preparing legislation to protect provincial jurisdiction with respect to the regulation of firearms.
- 1.2 Take steps to protect Albertans' interests and ensure that Alberta’s constitutional areas of jurisdiction are not infringed upon.
- 1.3 Advance a review of election-related legislation and make recommendations to improve the enforcement of election rules, and ensure election results are made public on a more timely basis.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, the ministry will invest \$6.6 million to support the Alberta Chief Firearms Office in administering federal firearms legislation and supporting Alberta’s lawful firearms owners.

Performance Metrics

1.a Performance Measure: Percentage of Possession and Acquisition Licences (new and renewal) for Albertans that are processed within the target timeline

This measures the service delivery effectiveness of the Canadian Firearms Program to Albertans through the provincial firearms office in reviewing, investigating and completing these applications. The measure accounts for client court scheduling issues and capacity issues from unpredictability of extraordinary federal changes to legislation and associated regulations. The 2022-23 actual result was 52 per cent.

Targets	2024-25	70%	2025-26	80%	2026-27	90%
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Outcome 2

Alberta’s justice system is fair and accessible

Albertans deserve a justice system that is fair and accessible. The ministry is exploring ways to increase the availability of online services in the future and continuing the implementation of a pre-charge assessment system across the province to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of justice system resources.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Improve Albertans' access to justice and ensure a sustainable justice system that utilizes court and prosecution resources efficiently and effectively.
- 2.2 Continue to implement digital transformation and streamline processes to improve Albertans’ access to justice, including the development of a renewed strategy aimed at providing the most efficient and effective way for Albertans to access the courts and the services they provide.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, the ministry will invest \$12 million into new enhanced online services, digital platforms and video conferencing that will better meet the needs of citizens, court users and the judiciary.

Performance Metrics

2.a Performance Measure: Alberta Court of Justice lead time to trial for serious and violent matters

This is a direct measure of the Alberta Court of Justice availability to process these types of criminal cases. In 2022-23, the Alberta Court of Justice's lead time to trial for serious and violent matters was 25 weeks.

Targets	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	24 weeks	24 weeks	24 weeks

2.b. Performance Measure: Number of traffic ticket matters handled online by the Advanced Projects and Traffic Office

This monitors the number of traffic ticket matters handled online by the Advanced Projects and Traffic Office. The availability of online services helps improve access to justice for Albertans and supports a fair justice system by eliminating in-person visits to courthouses, thereby freeing up court time for serious matters that require trial or sentencing. In 2022-23, this service handled 91,226 traffic ticket matters.

Targets	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	10% increase	5% increase	2% increase

Outcome 3

Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system

Recognizing the complex problems that can lead individuals down a path of crime, the ministry continues to support and grow targeted programs, such as drug treatment courts, that provide wrap-around supports, while holding offenders accountable. The ministry is also implementing strategies to improve services and supports to individuals and families involved in the justice system.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Work with the courts and other stakeholders to develop options for individuals interacting with the justice system who could benefit from targeted services, interventions, and supports where appropriate.
- 3.2 Implement strategies to make the justice system more responsive to the needs of Albertans, including the use of restorative justice practices to help victims, offenders, and communities affected by conflict or crime reach reconciliation.
- 3.3 Work with the courts and other stakeholders to expand the family justice strategy aimed at improving services and supports to Albertans with legal family matters.
- 3.4 Implement enhancements to policies and procedures to improve the death investigation process in Alberta, including recruitment, development of a Quality Management Program, review of workload standards and practices, and continued development of standard operating procedures.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, the ministry will invest \$3.3 million to fund the direct delivery of restorative justice programs and youth justice committees.
- In 2024-25, the ministry will invest \$4 million in funding to Alberta's seven drug treatment courts.
- In 2024-25, the ministry will invest an additional \$3 million to support front end family resolution services such as pre-court assessment, mediation and parenting intervention programs to improve outcomes for Albertans with family legal matters.

Performance Metrics

3.a. Performance Measure: Drug treatment court utilization rate

This measure demonstrates actions taken to increase support for Albertans involved in the justice system who are experiencing challenges with drug addiction. Drug treatment courts bring together criminal justice, drug treatment, and community partners to help eligible offenders break the cycle of criminal behaviour driven by addiction. This measure builds on the previous commitment of increasing the site locations and participant capacity of the drug treatment court program. In 2022-23, drug treatment court utilization rate was 35 per cent.

Targets	2024-25	60%	2025-26	70%	2026-27	80%
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3.b. Performance Measure: Number of family matters resolved by Alberta Justice dispute resolution programs (under development)

This measure captures the number of matters resolved by the array of dispute resolution services offered by Resolution Services. When families are able to resolve their matters outside of court, it reduces the time, cost, and stress they experience. Diverting matters away from the courts also frees up resources for more serious or urgent cases.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable		2024-25 Estimate	2025-26 Target	2026-27 Target
	2023-24 Budget	2023-24 Forecast			
REVENUE					
Transfers of Assets or Liabilities from Related Parties	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Transfers from Government of Canada	27,134	36,429	28,182	28,389	28,122
Investment Income	1,095	2,595	2,595	2,595	2,595
Other Premiums, Fees and Licences	26,780	27,360	27,360	27,360	27,360
Fines and Penalties	171,704	156,500	156,500	156,500	156,500
Maintenance Enforcement	16,593	18,093	18,093	18,093	18,093
Other Revenue	8,635	5,135	5,135	5,135	5,135
Ministry Total	255,941	250,112	241,865	242,072	241,805
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	251,941	246,112	237,865	238,072	237,805
EXPENSE					
Ministry Support Services	9,115	9,115	12,107	14,557	14,507
Court and Justice Services	260,395	268,404	283,726	290,759	294,665
Legal Services	65,833	59,133	70,199	71,350	71,976
Alberta Crown Prosecution Services	129,098	129,098	139,384	141,852	143,421
Strategy, Support and Integrated Initiatives	187,488	196,580	171,489	172,559	172,930
Alberta Human Rights	7,037	7,037	7,751	8,702	8,692
Ministry Total	658,966	669,367	684,656	699,779	706,191
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(513)	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Total	658,453	669,367	684,656	699,779	706,191
Net Operating Result	(406,512)	(423,255)	(446,791)	(461,707)	(468,386)
CAPITAL INVESTMENT					
Court and Justice Services	9,527	11,877	9,830	9,830	9,830
Alberta Crown Prosecution Services	1,000	1,570	2,500	2,500	2,200
Strategy, Support and Integrated Initiatives	11,289	13,406	5,789	5,789	5,789
Ministry Total	21,816	26,853	18,119	18,119	17,819
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	17,816	22,853	14,119	14,119	13,819