

BUDGET 2022

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA | 2022-25

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# Ministry Business Plan

## Justice and Solicitor General

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## Business Plan 2022-25

### Ministry Fact Sheet – Mandate and Structure

Justice and Solicitor General helps ensure that all Albertans can live in safe and resilient communities while having access to a fair and innovative justice system where the rule of law is upheld and government undertakings are administered according to law. Working alongside its partners in law enforcement, family justice, health, the judiciary, and other criminal justice system stakeholders, the ministry has a direct or shared responsibility in all elements of the justice system in Alberta. The ministry's programs and services help ensure Albertans' security and access to justice through efficient functioning of courts, correction, and law enforcement.

The ministry provides the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service (ACPS), the administration of the courts in Alberta, information and dispute resolution options for people accessing the court system, legal and related strategic services to government, and effective custody and community supervision services. It also provides provincial policing services through an agreement with the federal government that establishes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as the provincial police service and supports municipal policing through policing grants. The ministry may support and work with areas experiencing unique and challenging crime situations, including rural crime with the implementation of the Rural Alberta Provincial Integrated Defence (RAPID) Response. The ministry supports victim services providers that help victims of crime, including those affected by domestic violence, hate-motivated crimes and human trafficking. Justice and Solicitor General 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, provides forensic death investigations into sudden, unexpected or unexplained deaths in Alberta and supports personal and financial decision-making for persons who cannot do so for themselves.

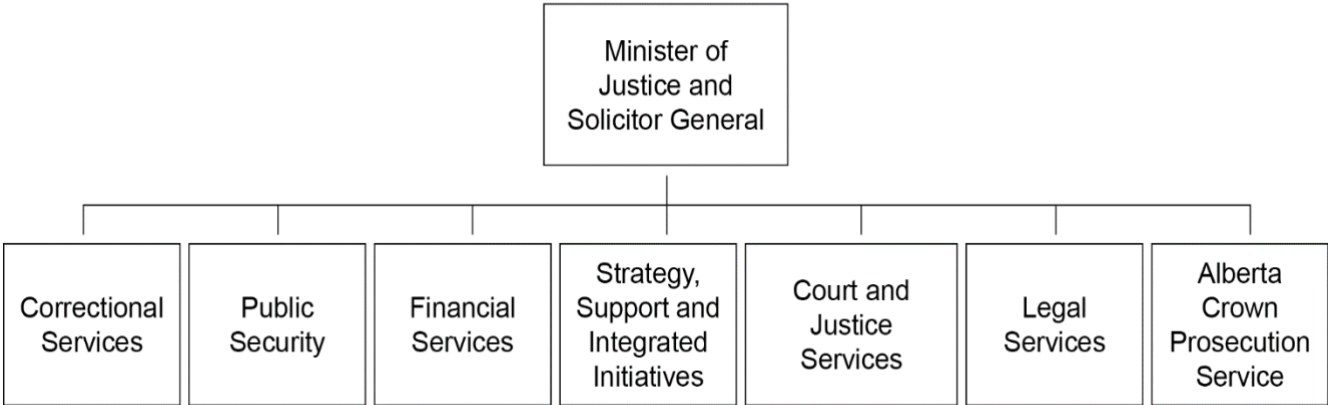
The ministry is striving to provide Albertans with more timely and accessible services, reduce red tape and maintain its focus on public safety. In response to COVID-19, services are being modernized to ensure they remain accessible now and into the future. The use of technology, including virtual courts, digital filings and adjournments, is improving the quality and effectiveness of the justice system, while also safeguarding Albertans' health. The ministry will continue to invest in service digitization to transform the way Albertans can interact with the justice system, reduce red tape and improve the availability of services for communities across the province.

The ministry is committed to reducing rural crime and ensuring Albertans feel safe and protected in their communities, no matter where they live within the province. Action is being taken through the implementation of RAPID Response, which allows Fish and Wildlife and Traffic Sheriffs to assist the RCMP on urgent calls and with investigating a wider range of traffic offences. The addition of new Crown prosecutors and support staff will strengthen the province's ability to respond to rural crime by ensuring criminal matters are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. Work continues to increase the capacity of the justice system to appropriately hold offenders to account. By shifting matters that can be dealt with using an administrative model rather than the court system and by ensuring only viable charges enter the justice system, capacity will be created in the justice system. The ACPS has established high-risk offender units in each judicial district to ensure repeat offenders are identified and addressed appropriately. Work will also be undertaken to ensure the quality of investigative documents is improved to ensure prosecutors have even better information with which to conduct first instance bail hearings.

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General is taking steps to ensure a safe and inclusive Alberta. The development of a hate crimes unit is intended to prevent hate-motivated violence before it occurs. The ministry is also supporting an informed justice system that is responsive to Indigenous, racialized and marginalized populations. The introduction of specialized training for key justice system officials will ensure the justice system can effectively serve a diverse population while preventing bias. Programs to assist and support Indigenous people who are in contact with the justice system will continue to be provided.

The ministry is focused on providing accessible services that target the unique needs of Albertans involved in the justice system. It is working 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. The ministry is also advocating with the federal government for additional superior court justices in key areas across the province to ensure timely access to justice where Albertans live and work. The ministry is examining the current victim service delivery model to ensure services are consistent and accessible and provide the appropriate supports to victims of crime.

The ministry is committed to protecting Albertans and their interests. It continues to study new and innovative approaches to policing, including the feasibility of a provincial police service. An independent report has been developed outlining operational requirements, processes and costs. Further work, including engagement with municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders, is required to ensure the province’s approach to policing serves the best interests of Albertans. Action is being taken to restore public trust on property rights. As directed by the Legislative Assembly, the ministry will continue to assess legislative and regulatory changes to protect Albertans’ right to own and enjoy property.



Fiscal sustainability is a government priority. Within Justice and Solicitor General, various measures are being undertaken to avoid duplication and ensure Albertans are receiving value for their tax dollars. The ministry continues to examine ways to deliver services more cost-effectively to ensure a sustainable, efficient justice system.

A more detailed description of Justice and Solicitor General and its programs and initiatives can be found at: [www.justicesolgen.alberta.ca](http://www.justicesolgen.alberta.ca).

The Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General continues to review programs to ensure Albertans receive efficient and client-focused services from their government. As part of this ongoing review, the ministry is committed to protecting and supporting Albertans and job creators by reducing red tape by one-third by 2023, modernizing regulations, eliminating unnecessary regulatory requirements, and reducing administrative burden through more efficient processes including digital solutions.

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.

# Business Plan – Core

## Outcome 1

Albertans are safe and protected

### Key Objectives

- 1.1 Continue to work with policing partners and municipal leaders to address drivers of crime, including focused work on rural crime, organized crime, drug trafficking and proceeds of crime.
- 1.2 Collaborate with partners to protect vulnerable Albertans, including those at risk of human trafficking or hate-motivated crime.
- 1.3 Review the delivery of policing services in the province, including further examination of a provincial police service, to ensure Albertans feel safe and confident in their communities.

### Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- With a budget of up to \$10 million each fiscal year, RAPID Response will expand the authorities of Fish and Wildlife and Traffic Sheriffs to respond to calls and assist the RCMP in emergency situations.
- In 2022-23, up to \$49.1 million will be dedicated to deal with and investigate child pornography, gang violence, drug trafficking, stalking, human trafficking and domestic violence primarily through the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams.

## Performance Metrics

1.a Performance Indicator: Violent and property crime rates per 100,000 population

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alberta Violent Crime Rate	1,282	1,312	1,338	1,461	1,428
Rural	2,178	1,982	1,947	2,275	2,405
Urban	1,088	1,167	1,208	1,291	1,225
Alberta Property Crime Rate	5,335	5,534	5,470	5,886	5,032
Rural	6,676	7,128	6,863	7,491	6,815
Urban	5,032	5,181	5,164	5,543	4,654

## Outcome 2

Alberta’s justice system is fair and effective

### Key Objectives

- 2.1 Streamline processes and reduce red tape to ensure a sustainable justice system that utilizes court, policing and prosecution resources efficiently and effectively.
- 2.2 Continue to implement key democratic reforms to strengthen government accountability, including drafting and proclaiming regulations under the *Recall Act* and the *Citizen Initiative Act*.
- 2.3 Implement approved Fair Deal Panel recommendations to ensure Alberta has a strong voice in Confederation.

## Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- The ministry is working to hire a total of 50 new Crown prosecutors, additional support staff, and is expanding its articling program to 20 law students. To date, 40 new prosecutors have been hired and 20 articling students have been accepted. Once complete, this will be an investment of approximately \$10 million each fiscal year.

## Performance Metrics

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

This is a direct measure of the Provincial Court’s availability to process these types of criminal cases. In 2020-21, the Provincial Court of Alberta lead time to trial for serious and violent matters was 23.9 weeks. The current target has been increased from 22 to 24 weeks to account for the impact of COVID-19 on the justice system.

Targets	2022-23	24 weeks	2023-24	24 weeks	2024-25	24 weeks
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### 2.b Performance Indicator: Indigenous over-representation in correctional centres

Indigenous people are overrepresented in the justice system as victims and people accused or convicted of crime.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Percentage of adults in Alberta correctional centres self identified as Indigenous	39.2%	40.3%	41.9%	41.2%	43.6%

## Outcome 3

Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system

### Key Objectives

- Introduce a new model of victim service delivery to ensure victims have the help they need, when they need it.
- Continue to implement digital transformation to improve Albertans’ access to services, promote system sustainability and reduce red tape.
- Work with the courts and other stakeholders to develop options for individuals and families interacting with the justice system who could benefit from targeted services, interventions and supports, where appropriate.

## Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2022-23, the ministry will invest \$11 million to deliver new or enhanced online services and digital platforms that will better meet the needs of citizens, court users, and the judiciary, reducing red tape for Albertans.
- The ministry will invest up to \$5 million annually to expand Drug Treatment Court capacity and work with partner ministries to expand opportunities for individuals with substance abuse concerns to access supports.

## Performance Metrics

### 3.a Performance Measure: Number of court and justice services available online through Justice Digital

This measures the availability of new online court and justice services for Albertans and stakeholders. Services developed through Justice Digital and the Justice Transformation Initiative such as electronic filing and adjournments, and online payment and dispute for impaired charges and traffic tickets allow Albertans to manage their own interactions from any device and location. This reflects the ministry’s commitment to increasing online services, improving efficiencies of courts, and reducing red tape for Albertans.

To date, five court and justice services have been made available online to improve services to Albertans.

Targets	2022-23	7	2023-24	8	2024-25	9
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## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable			2022-23 Estimate	2023-24 Target	2024-25 Target
	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Budget	2021-22 Forecast			
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Transfers of Assets or Liabilities from Related Parties	1,816	4,000	4,000	<b>4,000</b>	4,000	4,000
Transfers from Government of Canada	46,351	48,852	55,076	<b>58,102</b>	42,685	42,331
Investment Income	730	2,155	2,155	<b>2,125</b>	2,095	2,095
Other Premiums, Fees and Licences	26,483	33,640	25,211	<b>33,760</b>	33,880	33,880
Fines and Penalties	174,972	262,399	231,326	<b>271,554</b>	274,854	274,854
Maintenance Enforcement	22,510	16,482	16,482	<b>16,593</b>	16,593	16,593
Other Revenue	36,840	51,489	52,406	<b>64,275</b>	88,147	88,147
Ministry Total	309,702	419,017	386,656	<b>450,409</b>	462,254	461,900
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(3,046)	(4,000)	(4,000)	<b>(4,000)</b>	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	306,656	415,017	382,656	<b>446,409</b>	458,254	457,900
<b>EXPENSE</b>						
Ministry Support Services	15,954	14,092	15,292	<b>15,217</b>	15,217	15,217
Court and Justice Services	196,214	191,785	206,063	<b>216,695</b>	216,222	216,323
Legal Services	43,526	40,152	40,152	<b>45,613</b>	45,613	45,613
Alberta Crown Prosecution Services	101,951	98,651	98,651	<b>98,817</b>	98,975	98,975
Strategy, Support and Integrated Initiatives	153,509	146,875	150,575	<b>152,845</b>	171,245	177,445
Alberta Human Rights	6,189	6,918	6,918	<b>6,918</b>	6,918	6,918
Public Security	535,437	523,005	570,805	<b>597,118</b>	612,380	611,836
Correctional Services	293,191	267,184	292,184	<b>289,770</b>	289,870	289,960
Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund	56,279	62,887	69,887	<b>62,887</b>	62,887	62,879
Ministry Total	1,402,250	1,351,549	1,450,527	<b>1,485,880</b>	1,519,327	1,525,166
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(384)	-	-	<b>(5,300)</b>	(5,300)	(5,300)
Consolidated Total	1,401,866	1,351,549	1,450,527	<b>1,480,580</b>	1,514,027	1,519,866
Net Operating Result	(1,095,210)	(936,532)	(1,067,871)	<b>(1,034,171)</b>	(1,055,773)	(1,061,966)
<b>CAPITAL INVESTMENT</b>						
Court and Justice Services	8,867	5,380	5,380	<b>7,975</b>	8,197	7,800
Alberta Crown Prosecution Services	762	130	130	<b>2,380</b>	1,000	500
Strategy, Support and Integrated Initiatives	484	12,619	16,219	<b>15,619</b>	11,119	1,119
Public Security	6,899	695	695	<b>695</b>	695	695
Correctional Services	3,063	3,434	3,748	<b>538</b>	538	538
Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund	-	15	15	<b>15</b>	25	25
Ministry Total	20,075	22,273	26,187	<b>27,222</b>	21,574	10,677
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(1,816)	(4,000)	(4,000)	<b>(4,000)</b>	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	18,259	18,273	22,187	<b>23,222</b>	17,574	6,677