

BUDGET 2021

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA | 2021-24

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# Ministry Business Plan

## Justice and Solicitor General

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## Business Plan 2021-24

### 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. It ensures that 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, the criminal justice system, and other stakeholders, the ministry has a direct or shared responsibility in all elements of the justice system in Alberta. Its programs and services help ensure Albertans' security and access to justice through efficient functioning of courts, corrections, and law enforcement.

The ministry provides the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service, 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. The ministry also provides provincial policing services through an agreement between the province and the federal government that establishes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as the provincial police. The ministry supports, educates and trains police commissions and policing committees who oversee municipal policing. The ministry supports municipal policing through policing grants. The ministry may support and work with areas experiencing unique and challenging crime situations. The ministry also supports victim services providers to help victims of crime and domestic violence. The ministry has a role to play in delivering legal aid to Albertans through an agreement with the Law Society of Alberta and Legal Aid Alberta. The ministry also facilitates the enforcement of child and spousal support, provides forensic death investigations into sudden deaths, homicides and drug deaths and supports personal and financial decision making for persons who cannot do so for themselves. The ministry works together with Community and Social Services and Children's Services to help families adjust their changing legal relationship and their lasting obligations that go along with those changes.

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 the COVID-19 pandemic and public health orders, the ministry implemented digital solutions focused on maintaining essential court services, ensuring the safety of Albertans and reducing in-person visits to courthouses through the delivery of remote and digital essential services. The Court of Queen's Bench launched the hearing of Criminal Summary Dispositions by video, and the Provincial Court of Alberta issued a digital judicial authorization protocol in Edmonton to allow for electronic submission of documents in certain *Criminal Code* matters.

Within Community Corrections, rehabilitative programming and contact with offenders was offered through a combination of video technology, telephone and in-person reporting. Over the coming year, the ministry is operationalizing the new Alberta Parole Board for offenders serving a sentence of less than two years to better hold criminals responsible and protect the safety of Albertans, rather than relying on the federal government.

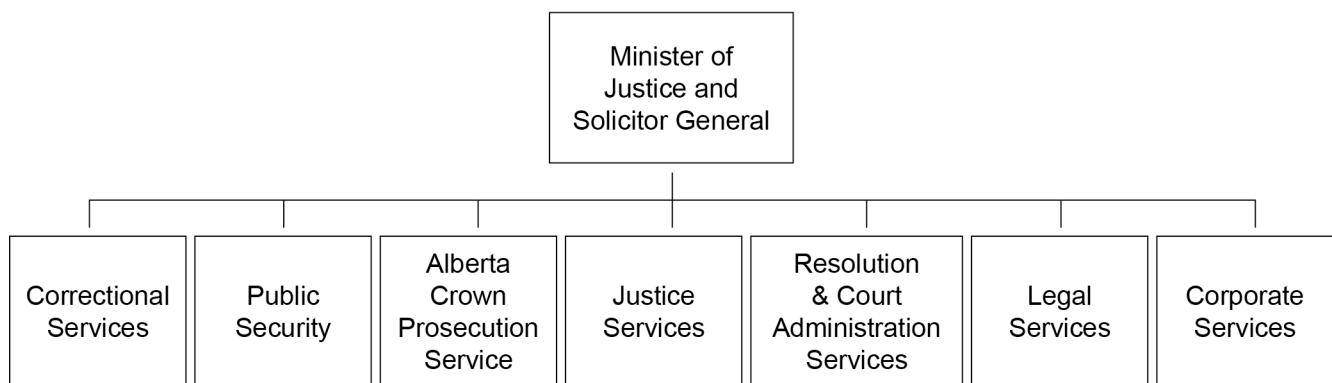
The ministry continues to work to ensure matters progress through the justice system in a timely and appropriate manner, including criminal matters that must be addressed within the timeframes established by the Supreme Court of Canada in the *R v Jordan* decision. The Supreme Court of Canada's 2016 *R v Jordan* decision requires that criminal trials within the Provincial Court must be heard within 18 months after charges are laid and trials within the Court of Queen's Bench must be heard within 30 months after charges are laid. Statistics related to *Jordan* applications are available on the ministry website. In an effort to address criminal court delays, the ministry has developed a staged strategy for the hiring of 50 new prosecutors, with 20 prosecutors hired in 2020-21, 20 hired in 2021-22 and 10 hired in 2022-23.

Justice and Solicitor General is working with partners to reduce crime in Alberta. The ministry is committed to addressing rural crime, and will work with the RCMP and municipal leaders in the Wetaskiwin area to support the creation of a Crime Reduction Unit and augmentation of Municipal police strength. Provincial crime related statistics,

including the Crime Severity Index and police resourcing, are available on the Statistics Canada website. Work is also underway to develop legislation that will publicly report on justice statistics.

The ministry is working to improve the delivery of justice services to Albertans. Continued collaboration with key stakeholders will allow the ministry to identify and action a collective approach to supporting guardianship and trusteeship clients, particularly when it comes to meeting their housing and support needs within the community. The ministry continues to assist in the identification of national trends by sharing death data with the Federal Public Health Agency of Canada, Statistics Canada and Alberta Health.

The ministry is also working to develop democratic reforms, including recall legislation, that will strengthen democracy and government accountability in Alberta. As well, the ministry is working to implement approved recommendations from Alberta’s Fair Deal Panel report to give the province a stronger role within Canada and increase control in areas of provincial jurisdiction.



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 making life easier for hard-working Albertans and job creators by reducing regulatory requirements by one-third by 2023, and eliminating administrative burden through more efficient processes. This work will improve service delivery for Albertans; foster economic growth, innovation and competitiveness; and create a strong and attractive investment climate.

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

The ministry is committed to ensuring all Albertans feel safe, secure, and protected in their communities no matter where they live within the province.

#### Key Objectives

- 1.1 Continue to work with policing partners and municipal leaders to address drivers of crime, such as establishing crime reduction units in rural Alberta, focused work on organized crime, drug trafficking and proceeds of crime.
- 1.2 Collaborate with partners to protect vulnerable Albertans, including those at risk of human trafficking.
- 1.3 Review the delivery of policing services in the province, including a feasibility study 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, the Rural Alberta Provincial Integrated Defence Response will expand the authorities of peace officers to respond to calls and assist police services in emergency situations.
- In 2021-22, \$43.7 million will be dedicated to deal with and investigate child pornography, gang violence, drug trafficking, stalking 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

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Alberta Violent Crime Rate	1,316	1,282	1,311	1,337	1,448
Rural	2,166	2,178	1,981	1,947	2,248
Urban	1,130	1,088	1,167	1,207	1,282
Alberta Property Crime Rate	5,247	5,335	5,530	5,466	5,861
Rural	6,844	6,676	7,126	6,863	7,438
Urban	4,887	5,032	5,178	5,161	5,523

## Outcome 2

### Alberta’s justice system is fair and effective

#### Key Objectives

- 2.1 Streamline processes and reduce red tape to increase sustainability and ensure effective use of resources.
- 2.2 Introduce key democratic reforms, including recall legislation, to strengthen government accountability.
- 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, 20 new prosecutors have been hired and 16 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. A stretch target is set to reflect the ministry’s commitment to move matters through the courts more quickly.

In 2019-20, the Provincial Court of Alberta lead time to trial for serious and violent matters was 24.4 weeks; therefore, targets have been adjusted to be more achievable.

Targets	2021-22	22 weeks	2022-23	22 weeks	2023-24	22 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.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Percentage of adults in Alberta correctional centres self identified as Indigenous	38.9%	39.2%	40.3%	41.9%	41.2%

## Outcome 3

### Albertans are supported in their interactions with the justice system

The ministry is committed to providing accessible, innovative, citizen-focused justice services to Albertans, including enhancing the use of technology to deliver services, reducing red tape and increasing access to justice for Albertans.

#### Key Objectives

- 3.1 Introduce a new model of victim service delivery.
- 3.2 Continue to implement digital transformation to improve Albertans’ access to services in response to the current pandemic, promote system sustainability and reduce red tape.
- 3.3 Work with the courts and other stakeholders to develop options for Albertans accused of a crime who could benefit from targeted services, interventions and supports, where feasible and appropriate.

#### Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2021-22, the ministry will invest \$8 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. Online services allow Albertans to manage their own interactions with the justice system from any device and location, rather than having to visit a courthouse during set business hours. This reflects the ministry’s commitment to increase online services and reduce red tape for Albertans.

To date, two court and justice services have been made available online to Albertans through Justice Digital.

Targets	2021-22	5	2022-23	6	2023-24	7
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## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable			2021-22 Estimate	2022-23 Target	2023-24 Target
	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Forecast			
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Transfers of Assets or Liabilities from Related Parties	9,877	-	9,474	4,000	4,000	4,000
Transfers from Government of Canada	46,068	50,434	50,434	48,852	50,743	38,070
Investment Income	2,796	1,385	2,185	2,155	2,125	2,095
Other Premiums, Fees and Licences	33,333	33,300	33,300	33,640	33,760	33,880
Fines and Penalties	198,297	267,350	239,909	262,399	279,254	283,454
Maintenance Enforcement	17,602	16,377	16,377	16,482	16,593	16,593
Other Revenue	22,600	42,681	42,751	51,489	64,179	87,710
Ministry Total	330,573	411,527	394,430	419,017	450,654	465,802
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(10,084)	-	(9,474)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	320,489	411,527	384,956	415,017	446,654	461,802
<b>EXPENSE</b>						
Ministry Support Services	24,003	25,188	25,188	24,254	24,106	24,106
Resolution and Court Administration Services	198,599	196,945	196,945	176,286	171,647	171,647
Legal Services	56,169	48,788	48,788	40,252	36,928	36,928
Alberta Crown Prosecution Service	104,330	101,581	101,581	98,751	100,698	100,856
Justice Services	159,329	162,282	162,282	154,508	153,004	153,004
Public Security	524,147	526,550	526,550	524,486	545,413	557,045
Correctional Services	295,187	287,361	287,361	263,207	260,870	260,583
Alberta Human Rights	6,904	7,027	7,027	6,918	6,890	6,890
Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund	43,347	60,858	60,858	62,887	62,887	62,887
Ministry Total	1,412,015	1,416,580	1,416,580	1,351,549	1,362,443	1,373,946
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(1,672)	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Total	1,410,343	1,416,580	1,416,580	1,351,549	1,362,443	1,373,946
Net Operating Result	(1,089,854)	(1,005,053)	(1,031,624)	(936,532)	(915,789)	(912,144)
<b>CAPITAL INVESTMENT</b>						
Ministry Support Services	32	20	20	20	20	549
Resolution and Court Administration Services	10,332	6,630	19,379	13,330	16,330	16,000
Alberta Crown Prosecution Service	178	380	380	380	380	-
Justice Services	505	449	849	4,649	4,649	620
Public Security	2,593	1,695	9,702	695	695	533
Correctional Services	943	288	1,052	3,184	288	150
Victims of Crime and Public Safety Fund	-	15	15	15	15	25
Ministry Total	14,583	9,477	31,397	22,273	22,377	17,877
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(9,877)	-	(9,474)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Consolidated Total	4,706	9,477	21,923	18,273	18,377	13,877