

2023-2026

STRATEGIC PLAN

Justice and Public Safety



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I hereby submit the Department of Justice and Public Safety's Strategic Plan for the period of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2026, and is prepared pursuant to Section 5. As the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Attorney General, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of its goals and objectives.

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, the Department is a category one Government Entity and requires the preparation of a performance-based strategic plan every three years. I am pleased to present the 2023-26 Strategic Plan, which outlines the Department's two strategic issues: Responsive Public Safety Services; and Enhanced Investments in the Justice System. In developing this plan, the strategic directions of Government were considered, as well as how best to apply them to enhance the justice system for the benefit of the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Department will report annually during 2023-26 on the progress made to address the strategic issues.

The Department is committed to working to enhance the justice system and ensuring it is responsive to the needs of our communities and our province. I look forward to working collaboratively with departmental staff, community and justice stakeholders, during the next three years. Investing in the justice system to support programs and services is the key to success and my signature below is indicative of my commitment to achieving the specific goals and the objectives in this Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Hogan', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Hon. John Hogan, K.C.

Minister of Justice and Public Safety
and Attorney General

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Departmental Overview

Organizational Structure

The Department of Justice and Public Safety (the Department) ensures the impartial administration of justice and the protection of the public interest through the dual offices of the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. The Department has four Branches, with programs and services delivered by the following:

1. Courts and Corporate Services Branch

- Court Services
- Policy and Strategic Planning and Information Management Division
- Finance and General Operations Division
- Support Enforcement Division
- Fines Administration Division

2. Public Safety and Correctional Services Branch

- Policing Services
- Corrections and Community Services
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Office of the High Sheriff

3. Emergency Services Branch

- Emergency Services Division
- Fire Services Division
- Public Safety Infrastructure Division
- 911 Division

4. Legal Services Branch

- Civil Division
- Office of the Legislative Counsel

- Office of the Public Trustee

5. Public Prosecutions Branch

- Public Prosecutions

The following entities under the Department are responsible for planning and reporting as category 3 entities, pursuant to the **Transparency and Accountability Act**:

- Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities;
- Child Death Review Committee;
- Commissioner of Lobbyists;
- Consumer Advocate;
- Criminal Code Mental Disorder Review Board;
- Human Rights Commission;
- Human Rights Commission Panel of Adjudicators;
- Newfoundland and Labrador Legal Aid Commission (Legal Aid NL);
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner;
- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission;
- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission Panel of Adjudicators, and,
- Serious Incident Response Team of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Activity plans and annual reports for the entities can be viewed on the Department's publications webpage at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/jps/publications/>. In addition, the following are entities of the Department, but do not have any reporting responsibilities under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**:

- Complaints Review Committee;
- Fitness to Practice Committee;
- Law Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Law Society Disciplinary Panel;
- Legal Appointments Board;

- Judicial Complaints Panel; and,
- Judicial Council of the Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Staff and Budget

As of April 1, 2023, the Department employed 1,439 individuals, including the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC). In addition, pursuant to the Provincial Policing Services Agreement and Community Tripartite Agreements, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) employed approximately 456 officers, and 115 civilian members and support staff to provide frontline policing services in approximately 44 locations throughout the Province. The Department employs a wide range of professionals including lawyers, police officers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, correctional officers, youth care counselors, deputy sheriffs, information management specialists, administrators, financial managers, educators and administrative support staff.

Branch	Staff Complement	2023-24 Budget
Courts and Corporate Services	227	\$39,303,900
Public Safety and Correctional Services*	916	\$194,936,100
Emergency Services	27	\$17,526,500
Legal Services**	204	\$32,366,300
Public Prosecutions	65	\$8,526,000
Total	1,439	\$292,658,800

* The staffing count for Public Safety and Correctional Services does not include the RCMP, but does include its budget.

**The staffing count for Legal Services does not include the Legal Aid Commission, but does include its budget.

Vision

A justice and public safety environment that is accessible and understood and which plays a key role in creating a fair, equitable and safe society where all people can pursue their lawful rights and freedoms.

Mandate

The Department is responsible for the provision of legal services to Government through the Office of the Attorney General and is responsible for the protection and safety of people in the province in respect of their persons and property. These responsibilities are met through: provision of legal advice to Government departments, police protection, prosecution of accused persons, administration of the courts, including family justice services, operation of the province's correctional systems, provision of services to victims of crime, protection of human rights and legal aid services. The Department also provides legislative drafting services through the Office of the Legislative Counsel, and is also responsible for the Support Enforcement Program, Fines Administration, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and the Serious Incident Response Team. The Department also has responsibility for the Divisions of Fire Services, Emergency Services, Public Safety Infrastructure, and 911. This mandate reflects the dual responsibilities of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Attorney General of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Lines of Business

- **Court Services** is responsible for providing infrastructure and administrative support to the Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador. Family Justice Services, which falls under the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador, is responsible for promoting dispute resolution outside the court process. The program assists parties in resolving

parenting and support issues and offers parent information sessions, mediation, and counselling.

- **Support Enforcement** performs a number of services related to the collection and distribution of court-ordered funds for support, maintenance or alimony. This includes registering and transmitting Support Orders, issuing Notices of Garnishment, tracing delinquent payers, and receiving and transmitting Interjurisdictional Support Orders applications.
- **Fines Administration** is responsible for the processing, billing and collection of fines penalties and surcharges imposed on individuals by Provincial Court, summary offence tickets, or other legislation. Ticket processing, billing and collection services are also provided to third parties such as municipalities, hospitals, and post-secondary institutions.
- **Policing Services** are delivered through the province's two policing agencies: the RNC and the RCMP. Through a broad range of policing services, both police forces are responsible for enforcing the law to protect public safety.
- **Corrections and Community Services** is responsible for the safe and secure custody of youth and adult offenders, for providing adult community corrections in the form of probation services, and for providing services to victims of crime.
- **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner** is an independent entity that is responsible for reporting, investigating and recording deaths pursuant to the **Fatalities Investigation Act**. The Chief Medical Examiner is also responsible for appointing physicians to act as medical examiners and appointing medical investigators.
- **Office of the High Sheriff** is responsible for providing services to the Supreme and Provincial Courts. The Office of the High Sheriff administers the jury system, provides court security, judgement enforcement and trust account services, and executes orders and decisions of the Court.
- **Emergency Services** develops and maintains the emergency management system in Newfoundland and Labrador to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. Services and programs include the Provincial Emergency Management Plan, Emergency Management Training Program, the Disaster Financial Assistance Programs, the Provincial Emergency Operations

Centre, 24/7 on-call system, and Regional Emergency Management Planning officers.

- **Fire Services** provides oversight to local governments, fire departments and other stakeholders on matters related to fire protection services, including firefighter training and certification, fire department assessments, and education. The division is also responsible for the Office of the Fire Commissioner in fulfilling the duties outlined in the **Fire Protection Services Act**.
- **Public Safety Infrastructure Division** is responsible for the implementation and operation of the province-wide radio system, a single communications system for police, firefighters, paramedics and other public service providers.
- **911 Division** is responsible for administering 911 as the primary emergency telephone number for use throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the development and implementation of any enhancements to the 911 emergency telephone number service.
- **Civil Division** is responsible for providing legal services to Provincial Government departments and agencies. These services include providing legal opinions, drafting commercial and financial documents, and representing the Provincial Government and its agencies in negotiations and civil actions before administrative tribunals, all levels of court and judicial inquiries.
- **Office of the Legislative Counsel** provides legislative drafting services to Government. Additionally, in conjunction with the King's Printer and the House of Assembly, the office ensures the publication and dissemination of provincial legislation.
- **Public Prosecutions** is responsible for prosecuting all offences pursuant to the **Criminal Code of Canada** and provincial statutes. Prosecutors appear in every level of court in the province and in the Supreme Court of Canada. Public Prosecutions also provides legal opinions and advice on criminal and criminal-related matters to policing agencies and other Government departments that enforce provincial statutes.
- **Serious Incident Response Team** is an independent civilian-led police oversight agency responsible for conducting independent investigations into serious incidents

involving death, serious injury, sexual offence, domestic violence or any matter of significant public interest that may have arisen from the actions of a police officer in the province.

Primary Clients

The Department primarily serves the general public and Government departments and agencies. The Department provides a range of services to individuals or groups of individuals through the courts, public prosecutions, family justice services, support enforcement, victims' services, correctional services, fines administration, policing, 911, the public safety radio system, and emergency services. Government itself is also a significant client of the Department. Civil law services are provided to Government departments and agencies in the form of legal advice, as well as representation in litigation. Legislative drafting services are provided by the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

More information on the Department of Justice and Public Safety can be found on the Department's website which can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/jps/>.

Strategic Issues

Issue One – Responsive Public Safety Services

The Department of Justice and Public is responsible for protecting public safety and offering services that improve public safety. Services are improved not only when the Department recognizes the needs of the residents of the Province but also when the Department endeavors to deliver them in a manner that is both responsive and understanding of those needs. Initiatives provided by the Department include work in the areas of fire services, emergency services, search and rescue, policing, as well as in the areas of probation and correctional services. Through these programs and services, residents, families, and businesses throughout Newfoundland and Labrador can feel safe in their communities and confident that public safety services will be available when needed the most. During 2023-26, the Department will focus on collaborating with public safety partners and stakeholders throughout the planning period to achieve progress. The anticipated positive outcomes of responsive public safety services is consistent with the strategic directions of Government.

Goal:

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have delivered public safety programs and services that are responsive to the public safety needs of the province.

Indicators:

- Provided financial assistance and select services to residents affected by adverse weather events through the Newfoundland and Labrador Disaster Financial Assistance Agreement Program.
- Implemented new initiatives under the Guns and Gangs Violence Action Fund in collaboration with police and communities to enhance community safety.
- Increased investments in search and rescue and equipment for firefighting.

Objective 1.1:

By March 31, 2024, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have identified services that are responsive to the public's safety needs and initiated delivery of select programs.

Indicators:

- Provided financial support of \$1 million annually to assist recruitment efforts of up to 10 officers for the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.
- Supported the work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue Association through a \$1 million investment.
- Proclaimed the **Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act** and implemented the Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol.
- Increased funding for the provision of fire protection vehicles and firefighting equipment to \$3.8 million.

Objective 1.2:

By March 31, 2025, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued to deliver programs and services that promote public safety.

Objective 1.3:

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have delivered select programs and services to enhance public safety in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the province

Issue Two – Enhanced Investments in the Justice System

The Department of Justice and Public Safety recognizes that investments in developing and improving infrastructure are essential components to ensuring programs and services are provided in a safe and effective manner. The Department will focus on investing in infrastructure and digital information technology improvements during 2023-26. This includes investments to enhance the Department's ability to deliver programs and services across its mandate, in areas such as corrections, communications in emergencies, provision of therapeutic programming, and processes at the law courts. In a modern working environment, it is also important that the Department enhance access to technological and digital tools, in addition to investing in building infrastructure. This will not only provide justice system staff with the technological equipment they need to perform well in their roles, it will also ultimately ensure the public has better access to the services offered by the Department. This will enhance the justice system overall. Focusing on these areas is consistent with Government's strategic direction of enhanced services by investing in the justice system.

Goal:

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have enhanced investments in the justice system to develop infrastructure and improve the capacity to deliver services.

Indicators:

- Completed work on select correctional infrastructure projects and new court facilities.
- Implemented modern technology and improved digital equipment options to enhance operations and services at the law courts.
- Implemented the Province-Wide Radio System throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 2.1:

By March 31, 2024, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have invested in infrastructure and technology.

Indicators:

- Invested up to \$13 million to continue work on a new correctional facility in St. John's and renovate the Labrador Correctional Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.
- Provided the Province-Wide Radio System to first responders on the Avalon Peninsula through an investment of \$21 million.
- Implemented the Task Force on Digital Transformation to initiate the development of a digital transformation strategy for the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal.

Objective 2.2:

By March 31, 2025, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have continued to invest in the justice system in order to improve the capacity to deliver services.

Objective 2.3:

By March 31, 2026, the Department of Justice and Public Safety will have enhanced the capacity of the justice system to deliver services through improved infrastructure.

Annex A Strategic Directions

Strategic directions represent significant desired outcomes that the Department will work towards that may require a combined effort. These major directions usually come from such sources as platform documents, Speeches from the Throne, Budget speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués as well as public commitments. The Department is required by legislation to incorporate these directions into the strategic planning process to ensure key commitments are being advanced and met. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified the following strategic directions for the 2023-26 planning cycle. Outcomes will support the policy direction of Government and require focus in the following areas:

Strategic Direction #1: Safer Communities through Responsive Public Safety Services

Outcome: Services are enhanced by being delivered in a manner that is responsive to the public safety needs of the province.

This outcome supports the policy direction of Government and will require focus in the following areas:

- Delivered programs and services responsive to public safety.
- Addressed the needs of residents and communities.

Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Services by Investing in the Justice System

Outcome: Investing in the justice system's infrastructure will facilitate better accessibility to programs and services for internal and external stakeholders.

This outcome supports the policy direction of Government and will require focus in the following areas:

- Invested in improved physical infrastructure and updated digital equipment.
- Increased capacity, access to justice, and availability of services for justice system users and the public as facilitated by improved infrastructure and enhanced technology.

