



Department of Justice Strategic Plan 2006-2008

Department of Justice
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
<http://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/just/>

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Strategic Plan for the Department of Justice for 2006-2008. This provides a road map for our plan to address some of the priority issues for the Department of Justice.

In assessing government policy priorities and commitments, we have determined that our strategic directions are public protection, order and safety; access to justice; public trust and confidence; and our aboriginal responses. It is clear that we need to work even harder to protect citizens and maintain order. We need to further strengthen our efforts to prevent violence against women and vulnerable groups. We must improve access to our services in tangible ways and improve the capacity of programs such as Legal Aid. Given the strong foundation that an effective justice system provides for a democratic and civil society, we will work diligently and enhance our public presence to strengthen public trust and confidence. Finally, and significantly, we will develop specific strategies in consultation with our aboriginal communities to more effectively respond to their needs. Additional detail on these strategic directions is included in the Appendix. By focusing on these issues over the next two years, we will make meaningful and positive changes in the Province's justice system. This plan will provide clear direction for continuing the work on concrete improvements to the justice system that this government began when it assumed office in late 2003.

This Strategic Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. With its release, I am therefore assuming responsibility for achieving the goals and objectives contained in this document. As the Department of Justice is a Category I entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, I look forward to being able to report on our accomplishments.



Honourable Thomas W. Marshall, Q.C.
Minister of Justice and
Attorney General

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Table of Contents

Plan at a Glance	Page 1
Introduction	Page 2
Strategic Directions	Page 3
Departmental Overview	Page 3
Mandate	Page 4
Lines of Business	Page 5
Values	Page 6
Who We Serve	Page 7
Vision Statement	Page 7
Mission Statement	Page 7
Issues	Page 8
Goals, Objectives, Measures	Page 9
Appendix	Page 13
Strategic Directions	Page 14
Public Protection, Order and Safety	Page 14
Access to Justice	Page 15
Public Trust and Confidence	Page 16
Aboriginal Responses	Page 16

Plan At A Glance

Vision

A justice system 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

Mission

By 2011 the Department of Justice will have enhanced services and responses in the provincial justice system to improve public access to and confidence in the system.

Goal 1: By 2008, the Department of Justice will have enhanced measures to respond to family violence

Objectives

1. By 2007, the Department of Justice will have implemented the *Family Violence Protection Act*.
2. By 2008, the Department of Justice will have evaluated the implementation of the *Family Violence Protection Act*.

Goal 2: By 2008, the Department of Justice will have enhanced services to clients of the Support Enforcement Division

Objectives

1. By 2007, the Department of Justice will have increased responses to clients of the Support Enforcement Division.
2. By 2008, the Department of Justice will have more effectively facilitated client financial support services to Support Enforcement clients.

Goal 3: By 2008, the Department of Justice will have encouraged public trust and confidence in the provincial justice system

Objectives

1. By 2007, the Department of Justice will have analyzed and responded to the Lamer Inquiry Report and recommendations.
2. By 2008, the Department of Justice will have implemented the privacy provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Goal 4: By 2008, the Department of Justice will have enhanced justice services for aboriginal people and their communities.

Objectives

1. By 2007 the Department of Justice will have developed an interpretation strategy to enhance justice services for aboriginal people and their communities.
2. By 2008 the Department of Justice will be more effectively delivering interpretation services to aboriginal people involved in the justice system.

INTRODUCTION

In its commitment to enhanced transparency and accountability, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador passed the *Transparency and Accountability Act* in December 2004. This legislation requires the tabling of performance-based plans and associated annual performance reports for all government departments and designated public bodies. This Strategic Plan represents the performance planning requirement of the Department of Justice for 2006-2008. The target dates will fall within government's fiscal year calendar which is April 1 to March 31.

This Strategic Plan identifies four key strategic directions with associated goals, objectives and measures. The format will enable reporting that is a direct reflection on commitments contained within the strategic plan. The strategic directions are:

- *Public protection, order and safety*
- *Access to justice*
- *Public trust and confidence*
- *Aboriginal responses*

This is not intended to be an all-encompassing document representing the full range of important public service functions of the Department of Justice. A high volume of activity continues on a daily basis to protect the rights and freedoms of people in Newfoundland and Labrador. As a general statement, this plan does not reflect the routine programs and services on which staff focus significant energies on a daily basis.

To close the accountability loop associated with this Strategic Plan, the Minister of Justice will table annual performance reports in the House of Assembly which will summarize departmental progress and achievements.

It should be noted from the outset that this plan does not function as a planning directive for Provincial and Supreme Courts. Where court references are made, it is in reference to administrative or infrastructure matters only. The Department recognizes the need for the courts to have real independence and to be perceived by the people of the province as being independent. This serves as a cornerstone of a true democracy.

Strategic Directions

A strategic direction is the articulation of a desired physical, social or economic outcome that would normally require action by, or involvement of, more than one government entity. Government's strategic directions originate in many sources. They are articulated in platform documents, Throne Speeches, Budget speeches, policy documents and other communications. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take these into account in the preparation of performance-based plans. This will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The strategic directions contained in this plan identify the desired outcomes that the Minister of Justice wishes to achieve. These directions will also be communicated to other entities reporting to the Minister of Justice for their consideration. In due course and within defined timeframes under the accountability legislation, these entities will fulfill their own planning and reporting responsibilities. All public entities reporting to the Minister of Justice include:

- Department of Justice
- Human Rights Commission
- Human Rights Commission Adjudicative Panel
- RNC Public Complaints Commission
- RNC Public Complaints Commission Panel of Adjudicators
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Legal Aid Commission
- Criminal Code Mental Disorder Review Board
- Electoral Boundaries Commission
- Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities
- Commissioner of Lobbyists

Departmental Overview

With approximately 2000 employees (including the RCMP) working from over 50 locations throughout the Province, the Department of Justice significantly contributes to the well being of the people of the province. This reflects direct public protection and safety responsibilities, but also extends beyond this definition. In addition to its focus on criminal law, the Department focuses significant energies on its civil law and public policy functions. These combined functions ensure a stable and democratic society where all citizens can pursue their lawful rights and freedoms.

The range of services provided by the Department of Justice to direct client groups as well as to other departments and to central agencies of government reflect the nature of government as an entity for which laws serve both as an instrument and as a restraint.

The dedicated and diverse workforce at the Department of Justice includes lawyers, police officers, social workers, criminologists, psychologists, correctional officers, youth counselors, information management and technology specialists, administrators, financial managers, nurses and educators. With a relatively low degree of staff turnover, the Department of Justice offers its services through a stable and knowledgeable group of professionals with a strong corporate history.

The overall gender breakdown for staffing in the Department of Justice is approximately 48% female and 52% male. Some sectors are still comprised of disproportionate numbers of males or females. For its part and to create a more gender-balanced complement of police officers, the RNC has begun a process of proactive recruitment to increase the number of female applicants. To date, this approach has proven very successful. It is also interesting to note that Civil Law and Public Prosecutions now have a majority of solicitor positions filled by women and the majority of Probation officers in the province are also female.

As in previous years, Newfoundland and Labrador remains proud of the fact that the Province was one of the safest in which to live, work and raise a family in 2005-06.

In the 2006-07 Budget, the combined current and capital expenditure for the Department of Justice is \$159,190,600. The projected related revenue is \$11,833,100.

Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Justice rests primarily on the *Executive Council Act*. This mandate reflects the dual responsibilities of its Minister as both Minister of Justice and the Attorney General for Newfoundland and Labrador. While several other Canadian jurisdictions have separate ministries for Justice and Attorney General, the structure is consolidated in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Department of Justice includes responsibility for administering the Province's legal system. The principal components include administration of the courts, policing, adult corrections, secure youth justice services and victim services.

Reflecting the role and authority of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice provides legal services to the Crown including legal advice to departments, litigation, prosecution and legislative drafting services. Within this role, the Department's central agency function requires providing ongoing policy advice and direction. This occurs within the Department as well as throughout government and its agencies on matters on public interest and concern.

While the *Executive Council Act* is the primary legislative authority for the Department of Justice mandate, the policies, services and programs are also governed by 97 pieces of legislation which the Department of Justice is responsible for administering.

Lines of Business

In fulfilling its mandate, the Department of Justice operates in several overall broad capacities:

- as a central agency of government
- as a direct provider of critical and diverse public services
- as an administrator of major societal institutions

The Department of Justice responsibilities are represented throughout the following distinct lines of business:

- ***The Office of the Legislative Counsel*** is responsible for the provision of legislative drafting services to government and, in conjunction with the Office of the Queen's Printer and the House of Assembly, the publication and dissemination of the legislation of the province.
- ***Policing Services*** are delivered through the Province's two policing agencies: the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Both police forces are responsible for fostering and maintaining peaceful and safe communities through a full range of policing responses. The RNC's largest jurisdiction is the predominately urban northeast Avalon region; additionally there are detachments in Corner Brook, Labrador City and Churchill Falls. The RCMP is responsible for the remainder, approximately 60% of the Province's population, many of whom reside in rural and remote areas.
- ***Court Services*** is responsible for providing infrastructure and administrative support to the Supreme and Provincial Courts.
- ***Corrections and Community Services*** has a dual client focus in having responsibility for offenders as well as for victims of crime. It is responsible for the safe and secure custody of young and adult offenders through existing correctional centres and secure custody facilities; for providing adult community corrections in the form of probation services; and for providing services to victims of crime involved in the criminal justice system through a regional network of 11 Victim Services Offices.
- ***Public Prosecutions*** is responsible for prosecuting all Criminal Code and provincial statute matters in the province. Prosecutors appear in every level of court in the province and in the Supreme Court of Canada. There are nine Crown Attorney offices in the province.
- ***Civil Law*** is responsible for providing legal services to government departments and government's agencies. This takes the form of providing legal opinions, drafting commercial and financial documents and representing government and its agencies in negotiations and civil actions before administrative tribunals, all levels of court and judicial inquiries.

Values

The core values of the Department of Justice offer principles and a guiding framework for all employees as they work in their various capacities to protect the rights and freedoms of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. These core values and the related action statements are:

Integrity
Impartiality and Fairness
Excellence
Collaboration
Accessibility

- **Integrity**

Each person maintains the highest professional and ethical standards in dealings with clients and each other.

- **Impartiality and Fairness**

Each person deals fairly, respectfully and equitably with individuals and organizations to protect the rights and interests of all parties involved in criminal and civil matters.

- **Excellence**

Each person excels through continuous learning, strong partnerships and personal initiative to deliver valued services for the good of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

- **Collaboration**

Each person works to create a working environment where resources and energies are shared within the Justice system, with our partners, and with the public that we serve in order to achieve enhanced responses.

- **Accessibility**

Each person provides understandable, available and affordable Justice services to the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Who We Serve

At the broadest level, the general public is the largest client group for the Department of Justice. The general public relies on the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system to protect people's fundamental rights, liberties and freedoms. This occurs through the full range of services and interventions available through all lines of business. Sometimes this may involve direct interventions and services to particular individuals or groups of individuals, while at other times it may mean broad ranging legal protections that serve to support a free, stable and democratic society.

Government itself is a significant Justice client. 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.

At the individual level, those who are accused or convicted of criminal offences are clearly identified recipients of Justice services and interventions. Victims of criminal offences are also receiving increased attention and expanded service within the justice system. Victims and/or offenders may require the intervention of police, court services, prosecutions, Legal Aid, victim services or corrections at various times throughout the justice process. Clients of Support Enforcement rely on this program to enforce court support orders and to ensure timely disbursement of amounts owing to them through these orders.

Vision Statement

A justice system 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

Mission Statement

The mission statement identifies the priority focus areas of the Minister over the next two planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term results that the Minister and the Department will be looking towards in moving forward on the strategic directions of Government. The statement also identifies the measures and indicators that will assist the Department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

Key aspects of the current mission statement include improving public access and confidence in the justice system. These are arguably long standing issues for the justice system. However, recent circumstances such as the Lamer Commission of Inquiry as well as Government's stated commitments towards improvements in these areas create a valuable opportunity to define these in a mission focus. Therefore, the mission statement is:

By 2011, the Department of Justice will have enhanced services and responses in the provincial justice system to improve public access to and confidence in the system.

Measure: Enhanced services and responses related to public access and confidence

- Indicators:
- Respond to Inquiry findings
 - Introduce family violence legislation
 - Plan and implement government decisions with respect to:
 - Criminal and civil legal aid
 - Aboriginal issues
 - Policing and correction services
 - Court system

Issues

In consideration of Government's strategic directions and the mandate and financial resources of the Department, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Minister for the next two years. The goals identified for each issue reflect the expected results in the two year timeframe while the objectives provide an annual focus. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and for the first year's objective to assist both the Department and the public in monitoring and evaluating programs.

While some of the issues have goals and indicators that identify specific targets and outcomes, this is more problematic for other issues for a variety of reasons. Nonetheless they still must be identified as strategic issues for the Department of Justice. For example, while the Minister has received and accepted the Lamer Inquiry Report and recommendations have been received at the time this plan is being prepared, a full response and plan of action will require additional resources to meaningfully encourage public trust and confidence. Funds are being sought through the 07/08 Budget process to advance specific needs and issues.

Another factor that can sometimes limit the Department's ability to define specific targets and outcomes is the partnership role played with the federal government in areas such as aboriginal negotiations, corrections, policing and legal aid. The federal government often operates in the role of criminal law-maker and funder or as co-negotiator with the Province. Outcomes in these situations depend partially on the federal position and the Province therefore establishes its defined outcomes as the joint federal-provincial initiative unfolds.

Goals, Objectives and Measures

Issue 1: Public Protection, Order and Safety

From a public perspective, a key accountability for the Department of Justice involves protecting the public, maintaining order and responding to community safety needs. Significant resources are dedicated to this issue and therefore selecting a single goal is a challenging exercise. The identification of a goal focused on enhancing justice responses to family violence is consistent with Government’s commitments, the Minister’s interests, the Department’s priorities and community need.

GOAL 1	
By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have enhanced measures to respond to family violence.	
Measure	Indicators
Enhanced family violence responses	Implementation of family violence legislation

Objectives:

1. By the end of fiscal year 2006/2007, the Department of Justice will have implemented the <i>Family Violence Protection Act</i>.	
Measure	Indicators
Implementation of Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policies and protocols developed with internal and external stakeholders • Training program developed in conjunction with stakeholders • 30 training sessions will have been held • A minimum of 600 departmental staff and community stakeholders will have enhanced skill and knowledge through training in implementing the legislation • Number of Protection Orders sought, including gender breakdown • Geographical location of applicants
2. By the end of Fiscal Year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have evaluated the implementation of the <i>Family Violence Protection Act</i>.	

Issue 2: Access to Justice

Access to justice is a broad issue with many facets that hold the direct interest of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. One such component is the enforcement of court ordered child and spousal support payments. The focus on improving responses and access to the many clients who require assistance from Support Enforcement shows how the Department is committed to directing energies to assist the vulnerable, many of whom are women and children depending on enforcement of court-ordered support.

GOAL 2	
By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have enhanced services to clients of the Support Enforcement Division.	
Measure	Indicators
Enhanced services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative amendments • New compliance tools • Public awareness

Objectives:

1. By the end of fiscal year 2006/2007, the Department of Justice will have enhanced services to clients of the Support Enforcement Division.	
Measure	Indicators
Enhanced support to clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed legislative amendments • Development of enhanced collections process • Improved Web-based client access • Increased number of clients accessing website • Improved client and public awareness through printed resources, media awareness and website educational materials
2. By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have more effectively facilitated client financial support services.	

Issue 3: Public Trust and Confidence

Public trust and confidence in the justice system is important so that people and institutions can have faith in the fairness of its processes and participate meaningfully when required to do so. The Department has received the final report and recommendations of the Lamer Commission of Inquiry. This report presents significant issues that have broad implications for the administration of justice in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Department will be committed to a thorough analysis and response, a public release of the Report and the development of a plan of action to respond to the recommendations. The response to the Lamer Commission and the implementation of the privacy provisions in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act are critical areas of focus for the Department in building public trust and confidence and reflect government's commitments to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

GOAL 3	
By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have encouraged public trust and confidence in the provincial justice system.	
Measure	Indicators
Encourage confidence and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Lamer Inquiry Report • Implement the privacy provisions of the <i>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>

Objectives:

1. By the end of fiscal year 2006/2007, the Department of Justice will have analyzed and responded to the Lamer Inquiry Report and recommendations.	
Measure	Indicators
Response to Lamer Inquiry Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and response to Report • Public release of Report • Development and public release of action plan in response to recommendations
2. By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have implemented the privacy provisions in the <i>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>.	

Issue 4: Aboriginal Issues

There are real challenges and complexities in delivering justice services to aboriginal communities. Federal-provincial lines of authority and responsibility, language barriers, cultural sensitivity and self-government issues, for example, mean that an extra level of attention is required in making justice services more meaningful for aboriginal people. The determined efforts of aboriginal communities and their representatives to raise justice issues on the public agenda combined with Government’s stated intentions to improve its response define the fourth key strategic issue for the Department of Justice in this plan.

GOAL 4: By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will have contributed to enhanced justice services for aboriginal people and their communities.	
Measure	Indicators
Enhanced justice services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective interpretation services

Objectives:

1. By the end of fiscal year 2006/2007, the Department of Justice will have developed an interpretation strategy to enhance justice services for aboriginal people and their communities.	
Measure	Indicators
The development of an interpretation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research existing Canadian programs • Identify and engage relevant stakeholders • Number and location of consultation sessions • Preparation and release of interpretation document
2. By the end of fiscal year 2007/2008, the Department of Justice will be more effectively delivering interpretation services to aboriginal people involved in the justice system.	

APPENDIX

Strategic Directions

The strategic directions related to the Department of Justice are provided below. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of components or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed through various planning processes of the Department. As indicated in the Table below, some have been addressed in this year's strategic plan while others are addressed in operational or work planning processes.

1. Public Protection, Order and Safety

Outcome Statement: Improved public protection, order and safety for the people in Newfoundland and Labrador. This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require systematic intervention in the following areas:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is addressed:		
		in the department's strategic plan	in the department's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Police deployment, recruitment and training			√	√
Police equipment			√	
Court Security				√
Responses to family violence		√		

2. Access to Justice

Outcome Statement: Improved access to the justice system. This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require systematic intervention in the following areas:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is addressed:		
		in the department's strategic plan	in the department's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Court facilities			√	
Court-related family law support services			√	
Support services for vulnerable people requiring justice services		√		
Legal Aid	√		√	
Use of technology				√
Access to information		√		
Improved efficiencies (administrative)			√	

3. Public Trust and Confidence

Outcome Statement: Improved public trust and confidence in the justice system. This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require systematic intervention in the following areas:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is addressed:		
		in the department's strategic plan	in the department's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Inquiry findings		√		
Protection of privacy		√		

4. Aboriginal Responses

Outcome Statement: Enhanced culturally sensitive justice services to aboriginal people and communities. This outcome supports the policy direction of government and will require systematic intervention in the following areas:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting	This Direction is addressed in:		
		In the department's strategic plan	In the department's operational plan	In the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Interpretation strategy		√		



Department of Justice
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

<http://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/just/>