



**PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION**

**Business Plan 2014-2017**

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## ***Message from Chair***

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It is with great pleasure that I present the Public Service Commission Business Plan for the three-year period 2014-17. This plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with government's *Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained therein.

This Business Plan identifies the specific goals and objectives to be accomplished during the fiscal years 2014-17. Goals and objectives have been prepared in consideration of the strategic directions of Government (Annex A) and in accordance with the mandate of the Public Service Commission.

Over the next three years, the Public Service Commission will continue its commitment to quality improvements in our services, while continuing to promote and protect the merit principle. There will be a focus on the application of merit with a goal to enhance its application within the public service. With the growth of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP), the Public Service Commission is also committed to improving the promotion of the value of psychologically safe and healthy workplaces for employees of the public service. Enhancing the application of merit and promoting psychologically safe and healthy workplaces for employees within the public service are the key priorities of this plan.

As always, I am confident that the staff of the Public Service Commission will continue to demonstrate dedication and commitment to our shared vision of "Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness and Respect."

As the Chair and Chief Executive Officer, I look forward to working with the Public Service Commission staff, the public, and other government departments and agencies implementing this plan and achieving its important goals and objectives.



Bruce Hollett  
Chair & Chief Executive Officer

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## **1.0 Plan at a Glance**

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**Vision:**

Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness and Respect.

**Mission: By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have examined, developed, implemented where appropriate and provided recommendations for quality improvement and modernization of legislation and services and will have both validated and enhanced the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.**

**Goal 1**

By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have examined best practices regarding the merit principle and will have overseen its enhanced application within the public service.

*Objective 1.1*

By March 31, 2015, the Public Service Commission will have examined the best practices and made recommendations regarding the application of merit.

*Objective 1.2*

By March 31, 2016, the Public Service Commission will have implemented outcomes and recommendations regarding the application of merit.

*Objective 1.3*

By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have evaluated the enhanced application of merit.

**Goal 2**

By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have improved promotion of the value of psychological health and safety within the public service.

*Objective 2.1*

By March 31, 2015, the Public Service Commission will have developed promotional materials.

*Objective 2.2*

By March 31, 2016, the Public Service Commission will have engaged in promotional activities.

*Objective 2.3*

By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have evaluated its promotional activities.

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## **2.0 Public Service Commission Overview**

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As an advocate for the principles of Merit, Fairness, and Respect, as well as good public administration, the Public Service Commission plays a vital leadership and support role for the broader organization. In accordance with this, the Public Service Commission administers the Employee Assistance Program and the Respectful Workplace Program. It also supports adjudication panels designed to provide third party resolution to matters pertaining to classification appeals. Support is also provided to the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee under the *Conflict of Interest Act*. The Public Service Commission maintains an investigative unit which provides a comprehensive range of administrative investigations on behalf of Government.

Governed by the *Public Service Commission Act*, the Public Service Commission is also responsible for the provision of oversight and policy for Merit-based appointments and promotions within the public service along with the certification of Selection Board Chairs.

### **Divisions and Employees**

The Public Service Commission includes Commissioners appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The Lieutenant-Governor in Council designates one Commissioner as Chairperson. The Chairperson is the Chief Executive Officer of the PSC and has Deputy Minister status. The Chairperson directs and supervises the administrative and technical activities of the Public Service Commission.

There are two divisions performing the work of the Public Service Commission: the Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Division; and, the Appeals and Investigations Division. There is also an Executive group, which consists of the Commissioners, supported by a Manager of Policy and Planning and a Manager of Accountability and Certification. The staff complement of the Public Service Commission is 18 employees, including the Executive. Of the 18, there are 13 females and 5 males.

## **Location and Areas Serviced**

The Public Service Commission is located at 50 Mundy Pond Road, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. All regions of the province are served from this location.

## **Legislative Authority**

The mandate of the Public Service Commission is provided by the *Public Service Commission Act*.

## **Budget**

The 2014-15 salary and operational budget for the Public Service Commission is \$2,394,400.

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## **3.0 Mandate**

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The mandate of the Public Service Commission is provided by its governing legislation, the *Public Service Commission Act*. (<http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/p43.htm>) The core mandate is the protection of Merit. Merit is a rule of conduct that provides for the recommendation of candidates for a position on the basis of the best demonstration of bona fide levels of required qualifications, knowledge, abilities and personal suitability. The Public Service Commission is charged with the provision of oversight and policy for Merit-based appointments and promotions within those areas of the broader public sector that are scheduled to the *Public Service Commission Act*. The Public Service Commission is responsible for the certification of Selection Board Chairs.

As an advocate for the principles of Merit, Fairness, and Respect, as well as good public administration, the Public Service Commission plays a vital leadership and support role for the broader organization. In accordance with this leadership and support role, the Public Service Commission administers the Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Programs. The Public Service Commission houses an investigative unit which provides a comprehensive range of administrative investigations on behalf of Government.

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## **4.0 Lines of Business**

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The Public Service Commission provides the following services and programs to the public service and the general public:

**Executive:**

### **Executive Services**

Operational staffing within the core public service is conducted in accordance with the *Public Service Commission Act* on behalf of the Public Service Commission by the Strategic Staffing Division of the Human Resource Secretariat and through delegated staffing authority with those agencies scheduled to the Act. The Public Service Commission is responsible for the provision of oversight for Merit-based appointments and promotions conducted by the Strategic Staffing Division and within those areas of the broader public sector scheduled to the *Public Service Commission Act*.

**Employee Assistance and Respectful Workplace Division:**

### **Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Respectful Workplace Program (RWP)**

The Employee Assistance Program is a joint program of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). The Public Service Commission is responsible for providing counseling and consultation supports to employees and managers for issues that are either affecting, or have the potential to affect work performance.

The Public Service Commission established the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) recognizing that productivity and quality of work are directly related to psychological health and respect in the workplace. In supporting Government's "Harassment and Discrimination Free Workplace Policy," the RWP works from a capacity building model by providing training and information to government departments, agencies, and employees on informal and constructive approaches to workplace conflict.

Psychological health is a key part of any healthy workplace. A psychologically safe and healthy workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to employees' psychological health from negligent, reckless or intentional actions.

The growth of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) reflect efforts to promote employee psychological health and productivity in our public service. The EAP supports healthy workplaces, through counseling and educational efforts aimed at promoting good mental health in the workplace. The RWP promotes the value and accountability of respectful workplace cultures in the public service and provides coaching and training that supports positive mechanisms to manage conflict constructively.

### Appeals and Investigations Division:

#### Investigative Services; Classification Appeal Boards & Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee

The Public Service Commission houses an investigative unit which reviews and assists in the investigation of complaints of harassment, violations of policy, acts of wrong doing or other issues in those public entities scheduled to the *Public Service Commission Act*. The unit also coordinates and interfaces with other agencies and organizations regarding matters relating to administrative tribunals and administrative law.

The Classification Appeal Board was established in 1971 to review and if necessary, hear appeals resulting from the classification system in Government. Specifically, the Public Service Commission provides administrative and logistical support for the activities of the Board. The Management Classification Appeal Board was transferred to the Public Service Commission in 2013 and the Public Service Commission provides administrative and logistical support for the activities of the Board. The Classification Appeal Board and the Management Classification Appeal Board are chaired by the CEO of the Public Service Commission.

The Public Service Commission supports the *Conflict of Interest Act* by facilitating the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee. This includes response to general inquires, accumulation of jurisprudence, and preparation and distribution of educational information related to conflict of interest.

The Public Service Commission responds to inquiries from regulatory bodies such as the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Citizens' Representative.



## 5.0 Values

The Public Service Commission makes every effort to demonstrate a number of organizational values; however, it has chosen fairness, respect and professionalism as being fundamental to achieving the desired results identified for this planning period. The following action statements have been identified to foster and embrace these values throughout the public service commission.

Core Value	Strategic Value Action Statements
<b>Fairness</b>	All employees conduct their work objectively and free from influence and bias and are supportive of the diversity of our clients.
<b>Respect</b>	All employees treat clients and coworkers in a just manner and accept responsibility for their work obligations and contributions.
<b>Professionalism</b>	All employees strive towards service excellence and continuing professional development, utilizing their unique competencies to advance the vision of the organization.

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## **6.0 Primary Clients**

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Primary clients are the Departments and Agencies scheduled to the *Public Service Commission Act* and the employees of those entities. The general public also has an interest, as opportunities for employment for the general population are part of the Public Service Commission's purview.

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## **7.0 Vision**

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The Public Service Commission is committed to our vision of "Public Service Excellence through Merit, Fairness, and Respect."

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## **8.0 Mission**

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The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Chair over the next planning cycle. It represents the key longer-term result that the Public Service Commission will be working towards as it moves forward on the strategic direction of Government. The statement also identifies the measures and indicators that will assist both the entity and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

The Public Service Commission continues to support Government's strategic direction of improved governance and oversight of the public service through its commitment to enhancing merit based selection processes, promoting the independent and impartial nature of assistance services offered by the Public Service Commission, promoting efficiency and innovation and improving the quality of service delivery to the public service. Focus areas such as these will help the Public Service Commission in achieving quality improvements and in validating and enhancing the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.

In 2012, the Public Service Commission underwent reorganization and the Strategic Staffing Division and the operational aspects of staffing were transferred to the Human Resource Secretariat. The Commission's role in staffing is the provision of oversight and policy for merit-based appointments and promotions. As a result, it was necessary for the Commission to adjust the mission statement and the accompanying measures and indicators accordingly and present an updated 2011-14 Business Plan.

Also in 2012, Government directed the Public Service Commission to undertake a review of the *Public Service Commission Act* with a view to modernization and in support of the principles of a progressive, merit-based public service. This review is still ongoing and will include consultation with other departments and agencies, including the Human Resource Secretariat and Department of Justice. The Public Service Commission is committed to examining its governing legislation and mandate, providing sound recommendations through review and adoption of best practices in HR governance, while continuing to promote and protect the merit principle and systems of merit.

In light of the direction received, the following mission has been identified:

**Mission: By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have examined, developed, implemented where appropriate and provided recommendations for quality improvement and modernization of legislation and services and will have both validated and enhanced the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.**

Measure 1: Examined, developed, implemented where appropriate and provided recommendations for quality improvement and modernization of services and processes.

Indicators:

- Reviewed concept of Merit principle.
- Reviewed services provided throughout all divisions.
- Reviewed certification process for Selection Board Chairs.
- Audited and reviewed the processes used to ensure merit in appointments and promotions.
- Provided recommendations for legislation and mandate reform.
- Implemented recommendations where appropriate.

Measure 2: Validated and enhanced the transparency and fairness of processes within its mandate.

Indicators:

- Defined fairness.
- Examined transparency and fairness in processes.
- Codified roles and responsibilities of administrative tribunals.
- Developed a decision reporting mechanism.
- Established priorities for corrective action.
- Implemented corrective actions.
- Reported on results.

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## **9.0 Goals and Objectives**

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In consideration of Government's strategic direction, the legislative assessment process, and the current mandate and financial resources of the Public Service Commission, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Chair for the next three years. The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected by the end of the three year time frame while the objectives provide a focus of work during each year. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the objectives to assist both the Public Service Commission and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

### Issue 1: Modernization of the Merit Principle

The requirement for well-defined strategies and legislation that promote the principles of a progressive, merit-based public service is significant. The focus on appointments and promotions must continue to be broadened to encompass all generations and reflect the diversity of our population and public service while ensuring accessibility. The oversight of these actions will assist in securing qualified individuals to provide service excellence to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Public Service Commission will examine best practices related to merit and its application to identify areas for potential enhancement. Such efforts will enhance the merit based selection processes in public service recruitment, promote efficiency and innovation and also improve the quality of service delivery which are key focus areas of the overall strategic direction of improved governance and oversight of the public service.

As a result, the following goal has been identified:

**Goal One:** By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have examined best practices regarding the merit principle and will have overseen its enhanced application within the public service.

**Measure:** Examined best practices regarding the merit principle and will have overseen its enhanced application.

**Indicators:**

- Reviewed existing policies and processes related to merit and its application.
- Completed a jurisdictional scan of the application of merit.
- Reviewed literature and research of the application of merit.
- Improved the merit audit process beyond its application to appointment and promotion.
- Continued enhancement of quality improvement culture through evaluations of services provided.
- Implemented a more proactive and professional development approach to the certification of Selection Board Chairs.

- Conducted stakeholder consultations regarding the relevance and the application of merit.
- Enhanced Selection Board Chair complaint protocols.

Objectives:

1.1 By March 31, 2015, the Public Service Commission will have examined the best practices and made recommendations regarding the application of merit.

Measure: Best practices will have been examined and recommendations made regarding the application of merit.

Indicators:

- Reviewed existing policies and processes related to merit and its application.
- Completed a jurisdictional scan of the application of merit.
- Reviewed literary research of the application of merit.
- Conducted stakeholder consultations regarding the relevance and the application of merit.

1.2 By March 31, 2016, the Public Service Commission will have implemented outcomes and recommendations regarding the application of merit.

1.3 By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have evaluated the enhanced application of merit.

## Issue 2: Psychological Health of Public Service

Psychological health is a key part of any healthy workplace. A psychologically safe and healthy workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to employees' psychological health from negligent, reckless or intentional actions. The growth of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Respectful Workplace Program (RWP) reflect efforts to promote employee psychological health and productivity in our public service. The Public Service Commission, being an independent entity, provides these programs and services in an environment consistent with neutrality and impartiality and where client confidentiality is protected. The Public Service Commission is committed to improving promotion of the value of these programs within the public service. The Public Service Commission will continue to focus on promoting the independent and impartial nature of these assistance services as well as continuing to improve the quality of service delivery to the public service which are key focus areas of the overall strategic direction of improved governance and oversight of the public service.

As a result, the following goal has been identified:

Goal two: By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have improved promotion of the value of psychological health and safety within the public service.

Measure: Improved promotion of the value of psychological health and safety within the public service.

Indicators:

- Development of promotional materials.
- Promoted awareness of national standards.
- Coordinated messaging to promote national initiatives.
- Supported national campaigns.
- Coordinated communications.

Objectives:

2.1 By March 31, 2015, the Public Service Commission will have developed promotional materials.

Measure: Promotional materials will have been developed.

Indicators:

- Reviewed current promotional materials.
- Developed new promotional materials.
- Revised applicable sections of Public Service Commission website to reflect new promotional materials.

2.2 By March 31, 2016, the Public Service Commission will have engaged in promotional activities.

2.3 By March 31, 2017, the Public Service Commission will have evaluated its promotional activities.

## Annex A - Strategic Direction

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one Government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The Public Service Commission supports the strategic direction of improved governance and oversight of the public service and will contribute to the areas defined by our mandate and all areas of this business plan.

**Title: Improved Governance and Oversight of the Public Service.**

**Outcome Statement: A Professional, Competent and Progressive Public Service.**

Strategic Direction	Focus Areas of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:		
		addressed in the Minister/Board plan	addressed in the operational plan	addressed in the branch/division work plans within the entity
Improved Governance and Oversight of the Public Service	Enhance merit-based selection processes in public service recruitment.	✓		
	Promote the independent and impartial nature of assistance services offered by the Public Service Commission.	✓		
	Promote efficiency and innovation in the public service.	✓		
	Improve the quality of service delivery to the public service.	✓		