

New Brunswick
Women's Council



Conseil des femmes
du Nouveau-Brunswick

Annual Report

2018-2019

**New Brunswick Women's Council
Annual Report 2018–2019**

Province of New Brunswick
PO 6000, Fredericton NB E3B 5H1 CANADA

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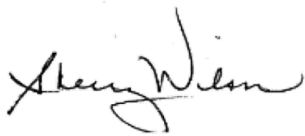
From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Brenda Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

Your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

Sincerely,



Honourable Sherry Wilson
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

From the Co-chairs to the Minister

Honourable Sherry Wilson
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

Dear Minister,

We are pleased to present to you the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

Sincerely,



Madeleine Nickerson and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs of the New Brunswick Women's Council

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2018-2019 in New Brunswick

April 2018

- Minimum wage **increases** from \$11 per hour to \$11.25. Government states that further increases will be indexed to the Consumer Price Index.
- Workers in the human services sector **receive** hourly wage increases ranging from 25 cents to \$1 per hour.
- Government **launches** New Boots, a program to support and mentor women and girls in trades in New Brunswick.
- The midwifery demonstration site **officially opens** in Fredericton (midwives had begun providing services in 2017).
- Government releases **proposed regulations** under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to address workplace violence and harassment.

May 2018

- The *Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act* is **proclaimed**. Individuals experiencing intimate partner violence can now apply for emergency intervention orders.
- Government **reports** that pay equity exercises have been completed for eight of the 10 groups in Parts I, II, and III of government that are subject to the *Pay Equity Act*. Government says that it will work to implement pay equity for the remaining groups and ensure maintenance for all groups. Government also shares that all Crown corporations subject to the act are targeted to implement pay equity by June 2018.
- Government **announces** a non-taxable monthly benefit of \$106.25 for primary informal caregivers for Social Development clients receiving in-home services through the Long Term Care or Disability Support Services programs. The benefit is retroactive to April 1st and only one caregiver per client can receive it.

June 2018

- Government releases **proposed regulations** to provide paid leave for individuals experiencing domestic, intimate partner, or sexual violence.
- Government launches **a pilot program** requiring employers applying to the One-Job Pledge (a program focused on hiring post-secondary graduates) or responding to government tenders for \$1 million or more to complete a pay equity learning module. Employers with at least 50 employees applying to the One-Job Pledge must also submit a pay equity implementation plan.

August 2018

- Government **announces** that regulatory changes on workplace violence and harassment will come into force on April 1, 2019.
- Government publishes ***Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick: A Framework for Action***.
- Government **announces** that the Family Case Management Model will expand to Moncton in September (the model was piloted in Saint John and this is its first expansion).

September 2018

- Leave for individuals experiencing domestic, intimate partner, or sexual violence in New Brunswick **is now provided** through regulations under the *Employment Standards Act*.
- The Women's Council organizes a **forum on women's equality issues** with leaders of five New Brunswick political parties to discuss women's equality issues.
- A general provincial election is held. More women run and are elected than ever before.
- The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission **releases** an updated guideline on sexual harassment.

December 2018

- Government launches a statutory review of the minimum wage.

February 2019

- The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation [launches consultations](#) on the renewal of the province's poverty reduction plan.
- The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission [releases](#) a new guideline on social condition.

March 2019

- Government [announces](#) minimum wage will increase to \$11.50 per hour on April 1, 2019.

This timeline is focused on public policy changes and historic developments in New Brunswick. It is not exhaustive and largely excludes programmatic investments (unless they are for entirely new services) as well as bills that are introduced by opposition parties that do not become law. Funding announcements made at the end of 2018-2019 for 2019-2020 are not included.

Message from the Co-chairs

The highlight of 2018-2019 for the Council was without a doubt the publication of the findings of our Resonate initiative.

In 2017-2018, the Council prioritized grassroots engagement through Resonate. We focused on hearing directly from women about the issues that were affecting their lives. We also explicitly created space to listen to trans and non-binary individuals of all genders. We ensured that we provided participants with opportunities to share their stories, priorities, and ideas in their own words. We also collected information from organizations that serve, support, and advocate for women.

Ultimately, we heard from more than 1 400 individuals and 35 organizations and initiatives. Throughout late 2017-2018 and early 2018-2019, staff and external consultants reviewed and analyzed the incredible volume of data we collected. In the fall of 2018, we began sharing the findings on a dedicated website: resonatenbresonances.ca. Our report-back focused on providing analysis of what themes emerged as well as sharing the stories and ideas submitted by participants. You can learn more in the public engagement section of this report and by visiting the Resonate website.

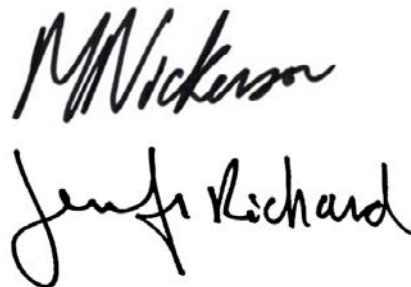
Resonate didn't end with our report-backs. When we gathered data, we committed to women and people belonging to gender minorities that we would not only listen to their stories but amplify them. We did this, starting with hosting a forum for political party leaders in advance of the General Provincial Election. The event was the first time in New Brunswick election history that party leaders participated in an event focused solely on discussing issues affecting women's equality. Party leaders were asked to listen to the stories that women shared through Resonate and then

respond—a simple format that put women's voices front and centre.

The council also continued to provide government with advice on a number of issues, which you can read about in the issues section of this report. Information from Resonate is woven throughout, reflecting how we grounded our advice to government in the voices of women. We also use the issues section to flag changes to investments in programs and services, motions and bills brought forward by opposition parties, and actions taken by other independent government agencies. Our hope is that our annual reports not only provide an account of the Council's activities and impact but help document the changing landscape of women's equality in New Brunswick from a public policy perspective. The timeline and issues section taken together provide a comprehensive (albeit not exhaustive) sense of progress—as well as stalemates and setbacks—on this important work.

Finally, the council continued to work to build its internal governance capacity and held a call for membership. You can read more about this in the governance section of this report.

We are pleased to share with you what the council accomplished in 2018-2019.



Madeleine Nickerson and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs, New Brunswick Women's Council*

*Co-chairs at the time of publication of this report.

Public engagement: Resonate

In 2018-2019, the Council began reporting back on what it heard through Resonate, the public engagement initiative it launched in 2017-2018.

The Council released its initial report-back in three stages, first reporting back on the women-focused data collection stream, then the data stream focused on individuals belonging to gender minorities, and finally the organizational data stream.

All findings were shared via a microsite, resonatenbresonances.ca. The microsite provides a full demographic breakdown of the participants in the data collection streams for women and for individuals belonging to gender minorities, including additional findings specific to different demographics. The microsite also shares information on the initiative's methodology.

Findings

Data collected from women clearly revealed five priority issues: health care; access to and provision of care; employment and economic security; safety and violence; and inequality and discrimination. Women clearly identified these as issues they'd both faced in their own lives in the preceding year and as issues that needed to be addressed to improve the lives of women in New Brunswick as a group.

Information gathered from individuals belonging to gender minorities produced four priority issues: education, awareness and acceptance; health care; economic security and employment; and discrimination based on gender identity. The first two were issues that participants both faced personally in the preceding months and that they felt needed to be addressed to improve the lives of people belonging to gender minorities in the province as a group. Discrimination was an issue they had faced in their

own lives in the preceding months while economic security and employment was identified as an issue that needed to be addressed to improve the lives of people belonging to gender minorities as a group.

Analysis of data from organizations showed that these organizations had strengths in: the passion and commitment of staff and volunteers, collaboration and partnership, being client-centred in their work, and being informed by experience and expertise. Data also clearly identified three challenges affecting their ability to serve their communities and meet their mandates: funding, inclusion, and engagement.

On gender diversity

Gender minorities include individuals who are trans, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, Two-Spirit, and much more. Some individuals, like trans women, are both women and gender minorities.

Individuals who belong to gender minorities face challenges that are rooted in gender-based inequality. That's why Resonate was open to—and strengthened by—the participation of all gender minorities.

To facilitate this work, the Council offered two versions of our online survey: one with women-focused language and one with language that was gender inclusive. Individuals could fill in whichever version of the survey they were comfortable with.

Background on Resonate

Data collection occurred between October 2017 and February 2018 and took place via an online survey, a limited number of focus groups, and an in-person engagement day with organizations and initiatives. Responses from more than 1 400 individuals and more than 35 organizations and initiatives were collected and analyzed.

Partners on this initiative were Erin Whitmore, Beam Diversity Consulting, Bitfox Consulting, Forté Communications, Han Martin Associates, and Polygon Graphics.



Issues

Pay equity

The Council continued to advise government that private sector pay equity legislation should be created. The Council also amplified concerns from the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity about the methodology used to determine pay equity adjustments [for the four private-sector jobs that government contributes funding to](#) (child care workers, home support workers, transition house workers, and community residence workers) as well as lack of pay equity maintenance exercises for those groups.

Government continued to focus on non-legislative approaches to pay equity in the private sector. The Pay Equity Bureau within the Women's Equality Branch was provided with an additional \$150 000 in funding to support this work.

The Official Opposition tabled a bill that would [amend the 2009 Pay Equity Act](#) to expand coverage to the private sector; it was defeated at second reading.

Minimum Wage

The Council recommended that the minimum wage be increased by \$1 per year for the next four years to arrive at \$15.25 by 2022 and that it should subsequently be adjusted annually to reflect increases in the cost of living. The council noted that in addition to improving women's economic insecurity, increasing the minimum wage would contribute to addressing the systemic undervaluing of women's labour (and labour that is perceived to be women's labour) which, in turn, would contribute to broader efforts to address gender-based discrimination. The full text of the Council's submission to the minimum wage review is available via the Council's [website](#).

Through Resonate, economic security and employment was identified by women as an issue area that affected their lives and that needs to be addressed to improve things for women in the province as a group. Many women named pay equity, wages, poverty, and meeting basic needs as specific concerns in this area.

Home Care

The Council continued to advise government that high quality homecare services must be available to those who require them and they must be provided by workers who are operating in safe conditions and for appropriate compensation. The Council reiterated that in addition to pay increases, home care workers need improved working conditions, including enhanced support for their safety and security, reimbursement for costs incurred on the job (e.g., mileage), and predictable scheduling.

Child care

Throughout 2018-2019, government continued the rollout of its early learning and child care action plan (*Everyone at their best... from the start*, first announced in January 2018 and based on a three-year federal-provincial agreement). The Council continued to advise that while it supported the action plan, it could be strengthened (especially in terms of shifting the sector toward a not-for-profit model and encouraging the creation of spaces for the youngest of infants). The Council also shared concerns that the cost of before and after school care for school age children is not taken into account in the calculations of subsidies or caps. The Council flagged that it was keen to see an equitable rollout between urban and rural communities as well as English and French curriculums.

The Council also continued to advise that wage improvements were needed for workers in the sector. The Council noted that increases and timelines promised by government in December 2017 would result in workers earning \$19 an hour by 2022-2023—a wage just above the 2017 Canadian average for this work.

Through Resonate, women identified access to and provision of care as well as employment and economic security as priority areas for action. Many women tied these areas together, noting that low wages for care work left them economically insecure or made their participation in the workforce untenable. Others worried about the low wages of those providing care for their family members—care that allowed them to participate in the workforce themselves.

LGBTQIA2S+ rights

In response to a Green Party motion, the Council advised government to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy in New Brunswick as well as the use of public funds for out-of-province conversion therapy. To be effective, legislation would need to respond to the ways in which conversion therapy may be disguised as traditional therapeutic intervention.

In October 2018, the Chair of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission [issued a statement](#) in response to the village of Chipman briefly raising a “straight pride” flag. She stated, “The incident serves to validate that we need considerably more education to inform citizens and organizations about what constitutes discrimination, both direct and indirect.”

Through Resonate, individuals belonging to gender minorities in New Brunswick, many of whom are also gay, lesbian, queer, etc., shared that education, awareness, and acceptance were priorities for their community. These individuals also identified discrimination as one of the top issues that had affected their lives in the 12 months before they participated in Resonate.

Transition houses and second stage housing

In April, government announced an increase of \$327 248 in funding to the Child Witnesses of Family Violence initiative to support transition houses in each hiring a child support worker. The total budget for this program was \$440 000.

In July and August, government made announcements about renovation and construction projects for three existing service providers (Accueil Sainte-Famille in Tracadie, L'Escale MadaVic in Edmundston, and the Beauséjour Family Crisis Resource Centre in Shediac). Previously, government had announced similar funding for Crossroads for Women in Moncton (March 2018). Funding for these investments came from both the provincial and federal governments.

Residential Tenancies Act

In response to a Private Member Public Bill, the Council advised government to amend the *Residential Tenancies Act* to allow tenants to terminate a lease early without financial penalty if they, a dependent, or another member of their household are experiencing interpersonal violence from another individual in the household. The option to terminate should also include situations where interpersonal violence by someone who is not a member of the household has made the home unsafe (for example, situations of stalking where the individual's home is known to a stalker or situations where violence is committed by a roommate's friend or family member who continues to frequent the household). The Council recommended that the definition of interpersonal violence should be broad and include all forms of violence (emotional, financial, spiritual, physical, sexual, harassment, etc.). The Council advised that a variety of sources should be able to provide verification of the violence in order to break the lease. The bill did not move past first reading.

Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act

In May, the *Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act* was proclaimed (it had first been introduced in the legislative assembly in February 2017). With the act in force, those affected by domestic and intimate partner violence could now apply for emergency intervention orders. These orders are short-term civil remedies that may provide victims and survivors with exclusive occupation of their residence, temporary possession of personal property, no-contact provisions, and temporary custody of children and pets. They can also enable the seizure of weapons.

Since the act was first introduced, the Council has consistently advised government and the public of the need for adequate resources to support the meaningful implementation of its provisions, with particular consideration of the intimate partner violence service sector. This included a recommendation for additional funding to the sector to meet demand for services relating to emergency intervention orders.

Violence leaves under the *Employment Standards Act*

In March 2018, the *Employment Standards Act* was updated to create a leave for individuals who had experienced or were experiencing sexual, intimate partner, or domestic violence. The government then engaged in consultation on what the leaves should look like in practice, which would be defined in regulations under the act. The Council recommended both a paid short-term and unpaid long-term leave. Government made draft regulations public for feedback in June. Regulations were finalized and leaves, including five paid days, became available beginning September 1st. At the time, five other provinces had similar leave provisions (Manitoba, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Nova Scotia). The Council's advice on this issue is available via the Council's [website](#).

Workplace violence

In April, the government released draft regulations related to violence as a workplace hazard under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (government had initially announced in October 2017 that it would update the regulations). The Council recommended revisions.

The Council was particularly concerned that violence and harassment were addressed separately and that violence was defined strictly in terms of physical force (attempted or actual) or the threat thereof. This framing, particularly in regulations that specifically recognize that intimate partner violence can happen in the workplace, was a roll-back of progress toward understanding violence as a continuum of behaviours and actions that are not necessarily physical in nature.

Additionally, the draft regulations implied that some places of work may not be at risk for violence and therefore would not require written codes of practice to mitigate the risk of violence. As intimate partner violence that occurs at the place of work is considered in risk assessments, no place of work should be able to assert that there is no risk of violence present given the prevalence of this form of violence.

The council also recommended that references to intimate partner violence be expanded to explicitly list domestic and sexual violence as well. The Council's advice on this issue is available via the Council's [website](#).

In August, government shared the finalized regulations and announced that they would come into force April 1, 2019. Sexual violence and harassment as well as domestic violence were explicitly referenced alongside intimate partner violence but no other recommendations from the Council were reflected in the final regulations.

Harassment in the legislature

Early in 2018-2019, the Council reiterated existing advice to government on the importance of the information on existing harassment policies relevant to members and staff of the legislative assembly being shared publicly. The council also advised the Clerk of the legislative assembly to ensure that formal communications were issued to staff with information on what harassment policies apply to them as well as who to contact in the event of harassment and details on the process that would be put into motion in the event of a complaint.

Later in the year, the Council provided advice and recommendations to the Legislative Administration Committee (LAC) through the Clerk on the development of a specific policy to prevent and address workplace harassment. The policy was not finalized during the 2018-2019 year.

In July, LAC released data that had previously been confidential on the number of harassment complaints received since September 2010. Information on the number of harassment complaints in other parts of the public service had already been shared earlier via a right-to-information request by media. LAC also [shared publicly](#) that a recent complaint of harassment against a previous Speaker was founded in part and sanctions had been determined.

Sexual violence

In August, government released [Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick: A Framework for Action](#) and [announced](#) multi-year funding for it (\$1.425 million over the next two years and growing to \$1.6 million annually in 2020-21). The budget that was tabled in March 2019 for 2019-2020 did not include this funding.

In advance of its release, the Council advised government that it was supportive of the framework as it was the result of years of collaborative work between government and community, including organizations with specialized knowledge and direct service experience relating to sexual violence.

The Council continued to participate in the sexual crimes working group convened by the [Department of Public Safety](#) to improve police service delivery in the investigation of and response to sexual violence.

Through Resonate, women in New Brunswick identified violence and safety as a priority area that needs to be addressed to improve things for women in the province as a group and also one of the issues they'd faced in their own lives in the 12 months preceding their participation in Resonate. Women who spoke on violence and safety also identified the need for more supports for individuals fleeing violence and systems that are more victim-centred.

Gender-based analysis

The Council continued to recommend that government expand its use of gender-based analysis in decision-making as well as share more information with the public on the use of and findings from gender-based analyses. In particular, the Council advised that gender budgeting be integrated into the 2019-2020 main estimates process and that details on how the budget is gender responsive be made public when the budget was tabled. After the budget was tabled, the Council recommended that government provide the public with details on what steps were taken to ensure the budget did not have a disproportionately negative affect on women. The Council [expressed concern](#) that the budget was not balanced in terms of its consideration of differential impacts on men and women.

The Council also advised government on how its use of the concept of “common sense” may be received by marginalized populations. Common sense has been used to defend a status quo that disenfranchises populations. Because of historical precedent and ongoing marginalization, certain demographics of society—including women, those

who are racialized, disabled, living in poverty, linguistic minorities, LGBTQIA2S+ and more—may interpret references to “common sense” as a signal that the unique challenges they face will not be taken into account or that their legitimate needs will be dismissed as frivolous requests.

Health care

The Council continued to advise government to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services—including midwifery, abortion care, and sexual assault nurse examiners—in all regions of the province. This included continuing to advise government to fund surgical abortions provided outside of hospitals. The Council also advised government to establish a specific billing code for medical abortion (non-surgical abortions completed using Mifegymiso) and ensure that the corresponding fee-for-service is adequate.

Beginning in the fall of 2018, the Council noted recurring temporary closures of obstetric units in hospitals due to staffing shortages. Late in 2018-2019, the Council noted that government had

committed to addressing the wait lists for knee replacement, hip replacement, and gynecological surgeries in its platform, but that the 2019-2020 budget speech reference to reducing surgical wait times only addressed knee and hip replacements surgeries.

Through Resonate, health care was identified by women as an issue that affected their lives and that needed to be addressed to improve things for women in our province as a group. The ability to access health care services, including sexual and reproductive health services such as midwifery, abortion services, and pap tests, without undue delay was frequently cited by participants as a challenge.

Truth and Reconciliation

The Council affirmed to government that First Nations, Metis, and Inuit women and Two-Spirit persons are among the most vulnerable populations in New Brunswick and that responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action is critical to remedying this.

Housing

The Council advised government that gender-based analysis must inform work on homelessness. Women's homelessness is often invisible because women are more likely to couch surf or be precariously housed in situations involving sexual exploitation than to sleep rough or stay in shelters. Efforts to address homelessness must also be gender responsive as interventions such as shelters may not be safe for women unless they are

designed to serve women exclusively. The Council also noted it was eager to see how the province's housing strategy will align with the National Housing Strategy's commitment to ensuring that at least 25 per cent of investments support projects that specifically target the unique needs of women and girls.

Homelessness and precarious housing are often linked to violence, economic insecurity, and mental health challenges that are not adequately supported. Through Resonate, women shared that these were issues that they experienced in the 12 months preceding their participation in Resonate and that need to be addressed in order to improve things for women as a group in our province.

Social assistance

In the speech from the throne for the second legislative session, government indicated it would be pursuing social assistance program reform. The Council advised that social assistance's low rates should be examined in this process and that government's plans to increase accountability for long-term social assistance recipients be client-centred and affirm the dignity of those receiving this support.

General Provincial Election

The Council held a forum for with leaders of five New Brunswick political party leaders in advance of the General Provincial Election. The forum was based on the findings of Resonate and was the first time in New Brunswick election history that party leaders participated in an event focused solely on discussing issues affecting women's equality. A [recording of the event](#) is available online.

The Council also tracked changes in the number of women running in General Provincial Elections over time. The 2018 General Provincial Election saw both the highest number of women running (38.6 per cent of candidates) and elected (22.4 per cent of members of the legislative assembly) in New Brunswick history.

Breakdown of candidates and elected members since 1982 by sex

Election	Candidates (% of total)			Elected (% of total)		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
1982	186	19 (10.2%)	167 (89.8%)	58	4 (6.9%)	54 (93.1%)
1991	224	52 (23.2%)	172 (76.8%)	58	10 (17.2%)	48 (82.8%)
1995	226	47 (20.8%)	179 (79.2%)	55	9 (16.4%)	46 (83.6%)
1999	196	46 (23.5%)	150 (76.5%)	55	10 (18.2%)	45 (81.8%)
2003	177	34 (19.2%)	143 (80.8%)	55	7 (12.7%)	48 (87.3%)
2006	162	33 (20.4%)	129 (79.6%)	55	7 (12.7%)	48 (87.3%)
2010	235	71 (30.2%)	164 (69.8%)	55	8 (14.5%)	47 (85.5%)
2014	220	71 (32.3%)	149 (67.7%)	49	8 (16.3%)	41 (83.7%)
2018	241	93 (38.6%)	148 (61.4%)	49	11 (22.4%)	38 (77.6%)

Breakdown of candidates and elected members in 2014 and 2018 by sex and party

Party and year		Candidates (% of total)			Elected (% of total)		
		Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Liberal	2014	49	13 (26.5%)	36 (73.5%)	27	4 (14.8%)	23 (85.2%)
	2018	49	19 (38.8%)	30 (61.2%)	21	5 (23.8%)	16 (76.2%)
Progressive Conservative	2014	49	14 (28.6%)	35 (71.4%)	21	4 (19%)	17 (81%)
	2018	49	14 (28.6%)	35 (71.4%)	22	4 (18.2%)	18 (81.8%)
New Democratic Party	2014	49	15 (30.6%)	34 (69.4%)	0	0	0
	2018	49	25 (51%)	24 (49%)	0	0	0
Green	2014	46	22 (47.8%)	24 (52.2%)	1	0	1 (100%)
	2018	47	23 (48.9%)	24 (51.1%)	3	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.6%)
People's Alliance	2014	18	5 (27.8%)	13 (72.2%)	0	0	0
	2018	30	9 (30%)	21 (70%)	3	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.6%)
Other/Independent	2014	9	2 (22.2%)	7 (77.8%)	0	0	0
	2018	17	3 (17.6%)	14 (82.4%)	0	0	0

These charts use the language of sex (e.g., male, female) instead of gender (e.g., men, women) because they are based on Elections New Brunswick (ENB) data. ENB's candidate nomination form provides a blank space for sex and, based on what is submitted, ENB records sex as male, female, or other (as in: other than male or female). At the conclusion of the 2018 election, ENB had not recorded any candidates as other so this option it is not included in the chart. There may be non-binary candidates who did not know this option was available or who are uncomfortable with "other" as their marker. The Council refers to female candidates as women given that most women are female and no candidates publicly identified as non-binary in the 2018 election or previous General Provincial Elections.

Members and staff

Members

The Council's work is directed by its volunteer membership, which includes organizations (represented by a woman staff member or volunteer) and individual women committed to women's equality.

Members shape the Council's issue-based work by collaborating with staff to identify and analyze priority issues and propose solutions. Members also ensure that the voices of women from diverse identities, communities, and experiences are represented within the council. The members also have a governance role that includes developing policies to direct the Council's operations at a high level.

2018–2019 membership

Organizations

- CBDC New Brunswick (represented by Line Doiron)
- Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre (represented by Jennifer Richard)
- New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council (represented by Wendy Wetteland and Amanda LeBlanc)
- New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity (represented by Jody Dallaire)
- New Brunswick Multicultural Council (represented by Madhu Verma)
- Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick (represented by Lyne Chantal Boudreau and Nelly Dennene)
- Saint John Women's Empowerment Network (represented by Joanne Britton)
- YWCA Moncton (represented by Jewell Mitchell and Michèle Nadeau)

Individuals

- Darlene Doiron
- Mayme Lefurgey
- Martine Marchand
- Patricia Morris
- Madeleine Nickerson
- Noëlla Richard
- Louisa Seales
- Constance Sewell
- Paulette Sonier Rioux

Ex officio members

- Jocelyne Mills, assistant deputy minister, Women's Equality Branch
- Beth Lyons, executive director, New Brunswick Women's Council

Notes on membership

Co-chairs

The 2018-2019 year began with Jewell Mitchell and Jody Dallaire continuing as co-chairs from the previous year. In July, Ms. Mitchell stepped down as the representative for YWCA Moncton and as a co-chair. In August 2018, Jennifer Richard was selected as interim co-chair for a term extending until April 2019. In November 2018, Ms. Dallaire was selected for a second term as co-chair (extending until spring 2020). Insofar as their co-chairing responsibilities are concerned, Ms. Dallaire, Ms. Mitchell, and Ms. Richard held the positions as individuals and not on behalf of the organizations they represented.

Changes in membership

During 2018-2019, the terms of CBDC New Brunswick and Paulette Sonier Rioux came to an end. The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity and Noëlla Richard were reappointed as members. The Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick was also reappointed and their representative changed from Lyne Chantal Boudreau to Nelly Dennene. Darlene Doiron and Mayme Lefurgey were appointed for the first time. These changes came into effect in August 2018.

In September 2018, Amanda LeBlanc began acting as the representative for the New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council (replacing Wendy Wetteland) and Michèle Nadeau began acting as the representative for YWCA Moncton. These changes would not be formalized by an Order in Council until September 2019.

Staff

- **Beth Lyons** – executive director
- **Linda Landry-Guimond** – office manager
- **Jennifer Dickison** – director of research and policy (beginning in July)
- **Melissa Wah** – public affairs strategist (beginning in July)
- **Maryse Nadeau** – community engagement officer (September to February)
- **Kylie Bergfalk** – research assistant (beginning in May)

Governance

Members are engaged year-round in the work of the Council via regular email communications and committee work. They also meet multiple times a year in-person and via teleconference. In-person meetings allow members to discuss issues and develop policy positions in real-time, as well as provide opportunities to connect with communities in the province.

In 2018–2019, the Council held four meetings:

- May in Fredericton;
- August via conference call;
- November in Saint John; and
- February in Fredericton.

Minutes for all meetings (excepting those portions or entire meetings that are in camera) are available on the council's website at nbwomenscouncil.ca or by contacting the Council.

The Council uses standing and ad hoc committees to advance various pieces of work between meetings and ensure accountability. Staff and members sit on committees; special contributors may be invited to join as well. In 2018–2019, the following committees were active:

- Finance (standing);
- Governance (standing);
- Issues advisory (standing); and
- Membership recommendation (ad hoc).

During 2018-2019, the council:

- updated the French-language version of its vision statement;
- adopted updates to its internal policies on per diem and reimbursement claims for members;
- adopted a policy to offer financial support to members to attend events and access trainings;

- adopted updates to its guiding document on membership (specifically the section on co-chairs and the call for membership strategy); and
- conducted a membership self-evaluation for the first time.

Due to the timing of Council meetings, the Council's review of its compliance with its internal operating standards in 2018-2019 was completed in the 2019-2020 fiscal year (May 2019).

Call for membership

In April 2018, the Council launched a call for membership. The Council prepared and executed the call with the support of Executive Council Office. The Council received all expressions of interest directly and delegated their review to a committee comprised of three Council members: Jewell Mitchell (co-chair), Madeleine Nickerson, and Martine Marchand. The executive director served as an ex officio member. In addition to the strength of applications, the committee considered the following when reviewing submissions:

- that the Council's membership is intended to be primarily composed of organizations; and
- the current composition of the Council's membership and whether an applicant's addition to it would contribute to linguistic and regional balance and/or enhance representation of voices from marginalized identities, experiences, and communities.

The committee provided its recommendations to the Women's Equality Branch in June and appointments were made in August. In November, the Council's call for membership strategy was updated based on learnings from the call and the Council decided to test out a practice of holding calls for membership every other year with the next call to occur in 2020.

Mission, vision and strategic directions

Mission: To further gender equity in New Brunswick by strategically addressing ongoing and emerging issues through research, informed and committed membership, and engagement with government and the public.

Vision: A diverse and inclusive New Brunswick of real and deeply-rooted gender equity.

Strategic directions:

Become a leading voice on issues of importance to women and relating to gender equality in New Brunswick.

- Establish clear positions and, where appropriate, recommendations on key issues.
- Become a leading resource for research, analysis, commentary, and recommendations.
- Be able to identify and respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities.

Be engaged with and informed by the women of New Brunswick in their full diversity.

- Membership and analysis reflect the diversity of women's identities, experiences, and communities.
- Provide opportunities for women to identify and share priorities, needs, and solutions.
- Build connections with equality-seeking and women-focused groups throughout all regions.

Develop robust membership and internal processes centred on consensus-building, inclusion, and anti-oppression.

- Foster a committed membership in which members experience solidarity, trust, and respect with one another.
- Develop policies and processes that are sound, equitable, and reduce barriers to participation.

Advocate, educate, and partner strategically.

- Focus on systems-level change.
- Take a collective impact approach.
- Identify strategic roles for the council given its unique mandate, resources, and relationship to government.

These strategic directions were renewed late in the 2017-2018 fiscal year and set to extend until 2020.

Finances

The 2018-2019 budget significantly increased the Council's funding (from \$423 000 in 2017-2018 to \$821 000). While the Council immediately sought to operationalize this funding, it was largely unable to due to administrative constraints. In March, the 2019-2020 budget was tabled; it reduced the Council's funding to the previous level. The Council advised government that the reduced amount was a minimum viable funding amount.

Expenditure status report by primary fiscal year ending March 31, 2019

	Budget	Actuals
Personnel services	424 500	332 800
Other services	359 500	144 100
Materials and supplies	8 000	8 400
Property and equipment	29 000	4 300
Contributions and grants	0	300
Total	821 000	489 900