

Social Development

Annual Report
2016–2017

**Social Development
Annual Report 2016–2017**

Province of New Brunswick
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Transmittal letters


From the Minister of Families and Children to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Stephen Horsman
Minister

From the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

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It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Social Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Lisa Harris
Minister

Transmittal letters

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister of Families and Children

Honourable Stephen Horsman
Minister of Families and Children

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Beaulieu
Deputy Minister

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

Honourable Lisa Harris
Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

Madame:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Social Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Beaulieu
Deputy Minister

Table of contents

Ministers' message	1
Deputy Minister's message	2
Strategic priorities	4
Highlights	5
Performance measures	7
Overview of departmental operations	14
Division overview and highlights	15
Financial information	20
Summary of staffing activity	22
Summary of legislation and legislative activity	23
Summary of Official Languages activities	24
Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General	25
Report on the <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act</i>	25

Ministers' message

Each year, the Department of Social Development works to improve the quality of life for many of New Brunswick's most vulnerable citizens while continuing to meet the challenges our province faces. The focus of our department is ensuring that families, children and seniors receive the services they require to make New Brunswick the best place to live. It is a pleasure for us to present the 2016-2017 annual report for the Department of Social Development.

We are proud of the important work accomplished by our department during the past fiscal year and the positive impact it has had on people throughout the province.

In January 2017, after almost a year of work, the Council on Aging presented its report, *We are all in this together – An Aging Strategy for New Brunswick*. The council was made up of 17 New Brunswickers appointed by the Premier and representatives from the departments of Health and Social Development.

In collaboration with the federal government, \$56 million was announced to help New Brunswickers gain access to affordable housing. This funding is in addition to the \$78 million joint five-year funding provided under the Investment in Affordable Housing initiative.

As well, in January 2017, the Community Food Resource Program was launched in partnership with the New Brunswick Association of Food Banks. This program, which provides financial support for food banks, aims to improve access to emergency food; increase the amount of healthy food in the emergency food sector; and support innovative approaches to addressing food insecurity.

The Department of Social Development continues to work together to make our province the best place to live, work and raise a family for all New Brunswickers, and we look forward to seeing the successes of the future.



Hon. Stephen Horsman
Minister of Families and Children



Hon. Lisa Harris
Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

Deputy Minister's message

I am pleased to present the Department of Social Development's annual report for 2016-2017, which highlights our results, activities and outcomes for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017. This report demonstrates our department's commitment to effective public performance reporting, transparency and accountability to the public. It also celebrates our achievements and showcases the broad range of activities that we conduct each day to promote the well-being of children, families, persons with disabilities and seniors in New Brunswick.

Our achievements throughout the last reporting period are indicative of our commitment to making life better for all citizens in need. For these reasons, I am very proud of what we have accomplished during the past year. During 2016-2017, some of our most significant accomplishments in this area included:

- Investing in children and youth. The Integrated Service Delivery model for providing mental health, addiction, intervention and social services to children and youth was expanded throughout New Brunswick. As part of the expansion, the provincial government invested in additional resources such as psychologists, social workers, coordinators and case management support.
- Offering low-cost Internet to 19,000 families. With Rogers Communications, the provincial government offered its Connected for Success program to families, seniors and individuals living in public housing.
- Building and strengthening the province's workforce. By investing in workforce readiness measures for social assistance clients, the Department of Social Development, in partnership with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, implemented the Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum. The nine-month ELE Continuum includes pre-employability services, job preparation skills and knowledge, workplace essential skills training and a 16 week work experience component.
- Reaching out to and supporting residents of the Acadian Peninsula when the area was devastated by a severe ice storm that left thousands without electricity for as long as 14 days. Regional and central office employees went above and beyond their call with their response efforts during this trying time in their community, the place they call home.

The department continued to deliver on many of the key initiatives designed to promote well-being for seniors as outlined in the *Home First Strategy*, such as:

- Launching an Age-Friendly Community Recognition Program. It encourages communities and municipalities to establish policies, services and structures that promote healthy aging and wellness.
- Providing all New Brunswick nursing homes with a computerized clinical tool known as the Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF) Resident Assessment Tool. It is used for generating data for developing resident care plans and providing quality, comprehensive data for province-wide benchmarking, policy development and risk management.

As a department, we constantly strive to be more effective and efficient – improving how we do business. This past year, we have accomplished the following milestones in support of this endeavour:

- The department launched a new five-year strategic plan – *Together we Thrive (2016-2021)*. It has four strategic goals: enhance excellence in client services; foster a culture of people excellence; foster a culture of innovation; and develop and grow partnerships.
- In collaboration with the Health and Education Research Group (HERG), the department launched a three-year positive workplace initiative. The overarching goal is to improve workplace wellness practices, team functioning and employee engagement.
- The department launched a team-based initiative, Performance Excellence and Innovation (PEI), across five of our major program areas. The initiative aims to achieve a number of comprehensive goals: sharing best practices by program areas; standardizing service delivery across regions; enhancing process improvement channels between central and regional offices; and generating new and innovative ideas that can benefit the department as a whole.

Our goal at the Department of Social Development is to promote independence, self-reliance, and security for the people we serve as they strive to build better lives for themselves. As Deputy Minister, I am honoured to be part of a team of dedicated and professional individuals. With the continued devotion and commitment of our employees, we truly make a positive difference in the lives of New Brunswick citizens.



Eric Beaulieu
Deputy Minister

Strategic priorities

Strategy management

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses a Formal Management system built on leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This process provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability and continuously drive improvement.

The development of the strategy, using the Formal Management system, starts with a strategic vision to move New Brunswick forward. This vision is anchored in five priority areas:

- 1. Jobs** – Creating the best environment for jobs to be generated by New Brunswickers, by businesses, by their ideas, by their entrepreneurial spirit, and by their hard work. Growth efforts will be guided by the *New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan*, which focuses on strengthening the workforce; expanding innovation capacity; increasing the agility of government; fostering public and private investment in strategic infrastructure; and growing capital investment from the private sector.
- 2. Education** – Improving education as guided by two 10-year plans, *Everyone at Their Best* for the anglophone sector and *Donnons à nos enfants une longueur d’avance* for the francophone sector, that identify objectives for the early learning and education system and establish clear expectations for standards and performance. The areas of focus for the first year are: ensuring children and other learners develop the competencies they need to be successful in school and life; improving both literacy and numeracy skills for all learners; and working to make post-secondary education more accessible and affordable.
- 3. Families** – Creating a healthier and stronger New Brunswick by focusing on seven key areas: improving access to primary and acute care; promoting wellness; supporting those with mental health challenges; fostering healthy aging and support for seniors; advancing women’s equality; reducing poverty; and providing support for persons living with a disability.
- 4. Federal and Aboriginal relations** – Building stronger relationships with First Nations; strengthening action on climate change; and working with the federal government to maximize federal funding, including optimizing infrastructure funding and growing the workforce through immigration.
- 5. Smart province** – Providing taxpayers with better value for their money by transforming the culture of government by eliminating duplication; adopting new innovations in technology to improve services and savings; and ensuring GNB has a ready workforce that has the skills, training, support, leadership and working environments it needs to thrive.

Highlights

The Department of Social Development is predominantly involved in the area of Family priorities; however, the department also supports the priority areas of Jobs, Federal and Aboriginal Relations and Smart Province. **During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the department focused on the following strategic priorities:**

- ◆ On January 27, 2017, the Council on Aging presented *We are all in this together – An Aging Strategy for New Brunswick*. The council consisted of 17 New Brunswick citizens appointed by the Premier and representatives from the departments of Health and Social Development.
- ◆ Final work is being completed on the 2011-2016 *Nursing Home Renovation and Replacement Plan*. Building and system issues continue to be addressed with existing infrastructure as they arise. Focus is now on the procurement of additional nursing home services as well as the development and implementation of the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan.
- ◆ As part of the *Home First Strategy*, the *Age-Friendly Community Recognition Program* was launched. This program encourages communities and municipalities to establish policies, services and structures that promote healthy aging and wellness. In partnership with l'Association francophone des aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick, the department created a resource guide to encourage community actions that enable seniors to live in secure, healthy environments where they can contribute fully in society.
- ◆ In partnership with the New Brunswick Association of Food Banks, the department redesigned a program providing financial support for food banks. The new program (Community Food Resource Support) was launched in January 2017 and aims to improve access to emergency food; increase the amount of healthy food in the emergency food sector; and support innovative approaches to addressing food insecurity. The department also introduced a resource guide that identifies other sources of funding available to food banks. This work was carried out within the context of the Wellness Branch's ongoing collaboration with a variety of partners and stakeholders to pursue long-term, comprehensive approaches to food security.
- ◆ Provided Rapid Rehabilitation and Reablement training to more than 1,000 special care home and home support workers.
- ◆ In support of the Minister's mandate under the *Emergency Measures Act* to provide Emergency Social Services such as food and lodging to New Brunswickers, the department worked in support of provincial and regional response efforts during the January 2017 ice storm. The storm affected thousands of New Brunswickers, leaving many on the Acadian Peninsula and in southeastern New Brunswick without electricity for up to 14 days.
- ◆ Launched a new five-year strategic plan – *Together we Thrive (2016-2021)* – which outlines four strategic goals: enhance excellence in client services; foster a culture of people excellence; foster a culture of innovation; and develop and grow partnerships.
- ◆ Launched a team-based initiative, Performance Excellence and Innovation (PEI), across five major program areas. The initiative aims to achieve a number of comprehensive goals, including sharing best practices by program areas; standardizing service delivery across regions; enhancing process improvement channels between central and regional offices; and generating new and innovative ideas that can benefit the entire department.

- ◆ The department, in partnership with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, implemented the Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum. The nine-month ELE Continuum includes pre-employability services, job preparation skills and knowledge, workplace essential skills training and a 16 week-work experience component. This initiative is targeting 400 clients over three years with the goal of improving labour market outcomes of social assistance recipients. A total of 169 clients participated. Supporting this goal is also directly linked to the initiatives underway as part of the Priority Delivery Unit on Families.
- ◆ Under the Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement (SIFA), GNB has committed to deliver \$56 million in new money to fund programs that support a range of housing needs for low-income individuals, families, seniors and persons with disabilities. The new two-year funding includes: the creation of 388 new Rent Supplement units; \$6.5 million to support the construction, repair and adaption of affordable housing for seniors; \$3.8 million to support the construction and renovation of shelters and transition houses for victims of family violence; \$13.5 million to help address the increasing demand for repairs as social housing units age and to improve efficiency and reduce energy and water use; and \$32.8 million as part of the commitment to double funding under the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) initiative.
- ◆ By raising the income threshold for applicants under the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), 11,540 more low-income New Brunswickers accessed the benefit. The program was extended by five years.

Performance measures

These are some of the department's performance measures implemented as part of the performance excellence process and consistent with government's priorities.

Families	Measures
Improve client services.	Number of clients served through the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour / Department of Social Development Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum.
	Percentage of seniors receiving community based home support services.
	Percentage of new rent supplement units in place.
Reduce hospitalizations and improve client services.	Average time for completion of Long-Term Care assessments.
Smart Province	Measures
Balance the provincial budget by 2020-2021.	Ratio of actual to budgeted expenses.
	Ratio of actual to budgeted revenue.

Families

Objective of the measure

Improve client services.

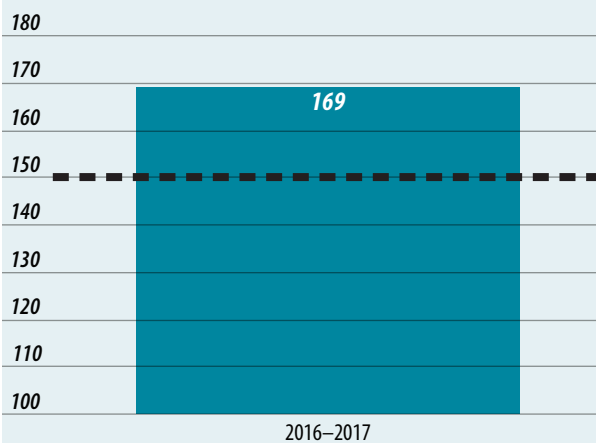
Measure

Number of clients served through the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour / Department of Social Development Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum.

Description of measure

The Department of Social Development, in partnership with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, implemented the Experiential Learning and Employment (ELE) Continuum. This investment was made to assist social assistance clients acquire classroom and on-the-job training through employment placement.

Number of clients served through ELE Continuum



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

————— Baseline: N/A
- - - - - Target: 150
Actual: 169

Why do we measure this?

Improving workforce readiness of clients is done through case planning and by providing the right services at the right time. Measuring the number of cases served through the ELE Continuum is an indicator of client engagement and support provided by departments as clients prepare to enter the workforce.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The departments of Social Development and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour continue to strengthen their client-focused partnership, which supports clients engaged in the ELE Continuum of pre-employability services, job preparation skills and knowledge, workplace essential skills training and work experience.

Families

Objective of the measure

Improve client services.

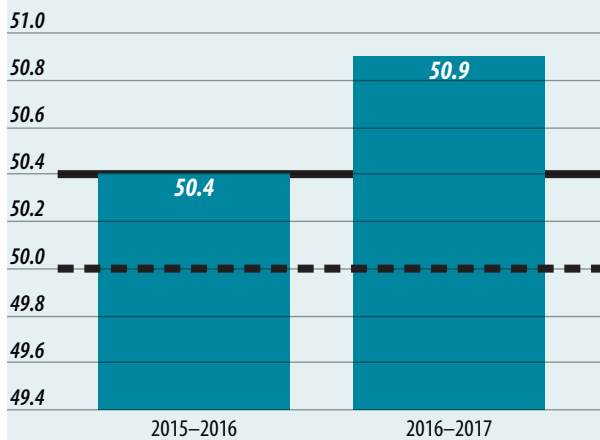
Measure

Percentage of seniors receiving community-based home support services.

Description of measure

Percentage of seniors supported by the Long-Term Care program receiving community-based home supports to the entire Long-Term Care program caseload.

Seniors receiving community-based home support services (%)



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

— Baseline: 50.4%
- - - Target: 50.0%
Actual: 50.9%

Why do we measure this?

This indicator focuses on providing Long-Term Care services to eligible seniors in their home and community as opposed to residential placements. Services at home are both preferable to clients and their families.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

As part of the *Home First Strategy*, the Alzheimer Society's First Link Program was implemented. The Rapid Rehabilitation and Reablement Program in partnership with the Department of Health and both regional health authorities (RHAs) began provincial implementation.

Families

Objective of the measure

Improve client services.

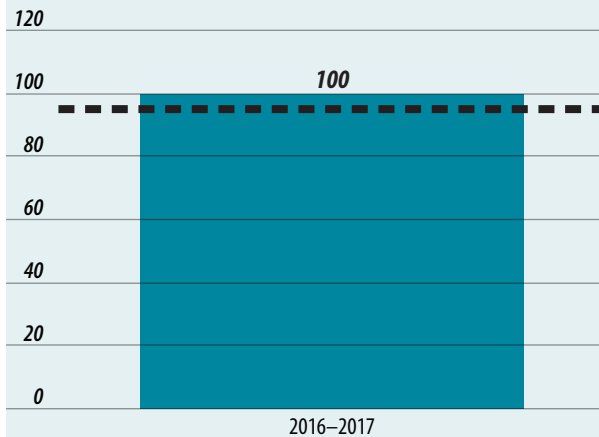
Measure

Percentage of new Rent Supplement Units in place.

Description of measure

The percentage of new Rent Supplement units in place to the targeted number of units for the year.

Percentage of new Rent Supplement Units in place



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

————— Baseline: N/A
- - - - - Target: 95%
Actual: 100%

Why do we measure this?

Under the Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement, a number of new units will be provided during the coming fiscal years. Measuring success is done by dividing the number of new units offered in the fiscal year by the fiscal year target. By measuring this, we are both accounting for the effective use of our resources, and improving client services through the establishment of new rental subsidy units.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The department executed and carefully monitored the Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement by working with regions and community partners.

Families

Objective of the measure

Reduce hospitalization and improve client services.

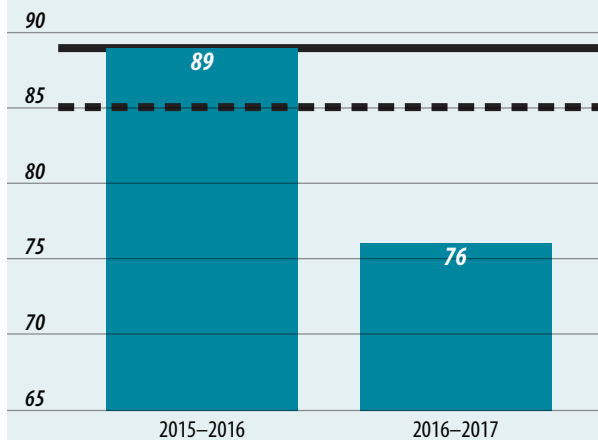
Measure

Average time for completion of Long-Term Care assessments.

Description of measure

The number of days it takes to complete the assessment for the Long-Term Care program, calculated from the point of contact to completion. This is a Families Priority Delivery Unit priority.

Average number of days for completion of LTC assessments



Overall performance

This measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

— Baseline: 89 days
- - - Target: 85 days
Actual: 76 days

Why do we measure this?

Decreasing the cycle time for a Long-Term Care assessment will provide a timely service to seniors; may reduce the time seniors remain in hospital; and will help prevent or delay admission to nursing homes or adult residential facilities.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

As part of the *Home First Strategy*, the department engaged in several projects to improve access to the Long-Term Care Program, including a Lean Six Sigma project on Long-Term Care assessment process.

Smart province

Objective of the measure

Balance the provincial budget by 2020-2021.

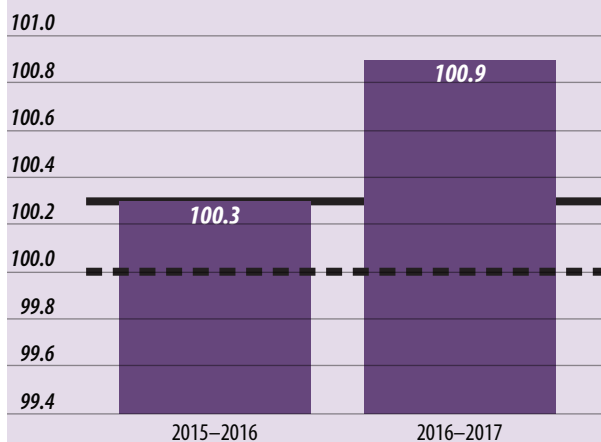
Measure

Ratio of actual to budgeted expenses.

Description of measure

The ratio of actual to budgeted expenses measures whether the department is over-budget or under-budget. The ratio will exceed 100 per cent when spending is over-budget and be less than 100 per cent when spending is under-budget.

Ratio of actual to budgeted expenses (%)



Overall performance

The measure did not meet the fiscal year target.

— Baseline: 100.3%
- - - Target: 100.0%
Actual: 100.9%

Why do we measure this?

This indicator measures the ability of the department to manage its overall expenses as compared to budget. GNB must ensure expenses are managed in accordance with the budget and be prepared to take corrective action if expenses are projected to be over-budget during the year.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The department achieved savings of more than \$1.8 million through Continuous Improvement projects. Working toward this target, the department completed various initiatives and Lean Six Sigma projects.

Smart province

Objective of the measure

Balance the provincial budget by 2020-2021.

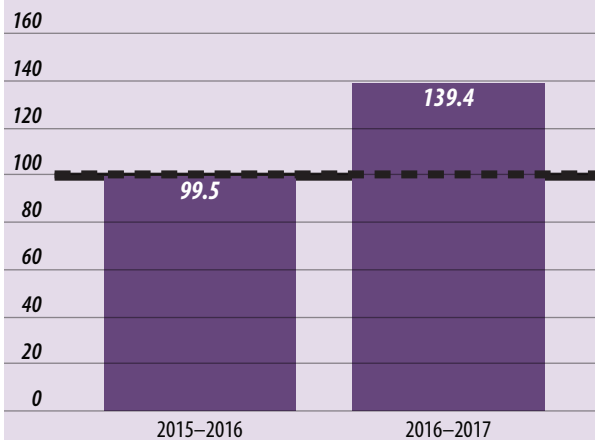
Measure

Ratio of actual to budgeted revenue.

Description of measure

The ratio of actual to budgeted revenue measures whether the department is over-budget or under-budget. The ratio will exceed 100 per cent when revenue is over-budget and be less than 100 per cent when revenue is under-budget.

Ratio of actual to budgeted revenue (%)



Overall performance

The measure exceeded the fiscal year target.

— Baseline: 99.5%
- - - Target: 100.0%
Actual: 139.4%

Why do we measure this?

This indicator measures the ability of the department to manage its overall revenue as compared to budget. GNB must ensure revenues are managed in accordance with the budget and be prepared to take corrective action if revenue is projected to be under-budget during the year.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

Higher-than-anticipated recoveries and a change in accounting policy played a role in the success of this indicator; however, successful negotiations in relation to the Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement with the federal government had the greatest impact on actual revenues to budgeted revenues.

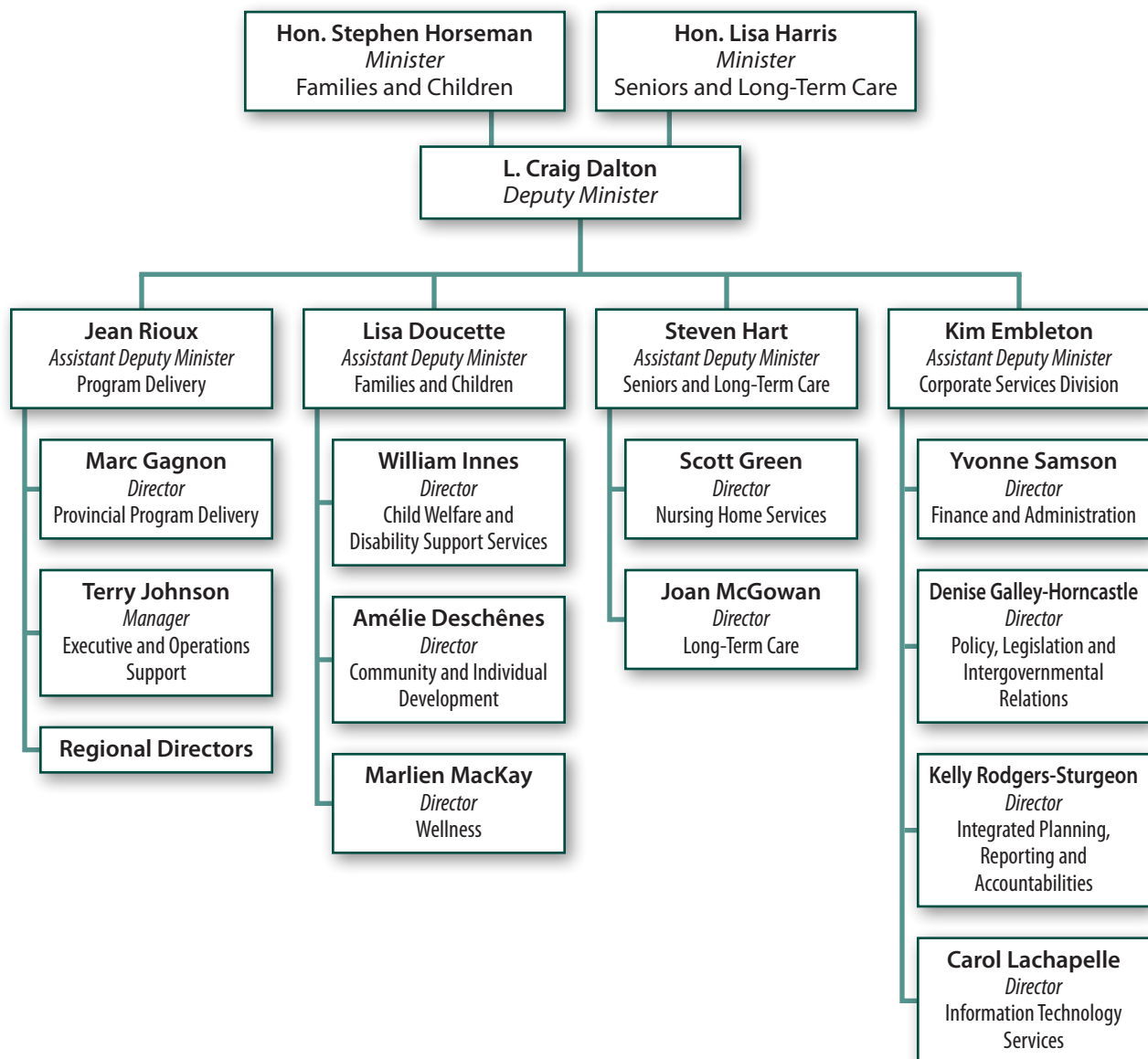
Overview of departmental operations

The Department of Social Development offers programs and services to provide greater independence, an improved quality of life and protection to New Brunswickers in need.

The department is composed of four divisions as seen on the following organizational chart that integrates in a team-based approach to support six core business areas.

High-level organizational chart

As of March 31, 2017



Division overview and highlights

Seniors and Long-Term Care Division

The **Seniors and Long-Term Care Division** is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of Social Development programs related to long-term care and seniors. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations and provincial legislation. The division has focused its efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality. The division consists of the Nursing Home Services Branch and the Long-Term Care Branch.

The **Nursing Home Services Branch** is responsible for the planning, designing, monitoring and delivery of all departmental services provided to the nursing home sector. The department's objectives for the nursing home sector are to improve nursing home resident's quality of life, to help safeguard their dignity and to ensure that appropriate, quality residential services are provided as efficiently as possible within available resources. The department ensures the provision of high quality services through funding and advisory support for operations, the licensing and inspection process, and advisory support and management of capital repairs, renovation and replacement projects for nursing homes. The direct provision of nursing home services to residents is the responsibility of each nursing home.

The **Long-Term Care Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services provided to seniors. This branch includes: Adult Protection Program; Long-Term Care Services; Home Support Services; Adult Residential Services; Day Activities for Adults; and the Standard Family Contribution Policy. This branch delivers training for senior services and programs throughout the province and has responsibility for the implementation of the *Home First Strategy*.

HIGHLIGHTS

Nursing Home Services Branch

- ◆ On January 27, 2017, the Council on Aging presented [We are all in this together – An Aging Strategy for New Brunswick](#). The council consisted of 17 New Brunswick citizens appointed by the Premier and representatives from the departments of Health and Social Development.
- ◆ The Person Centered Care Project continues to progress with movement on all four initiatives. The LTCF Resident Assessment Tool, a computerized clinical tool, has been fully implemented in all 62 non-profit nursing homes. Five facilities have been identified as pilot homes for the redistribution of skill mix, and baseline data are being developed for analysis purposes. The Qualifications of Resident Attendants and the Scope of Practice work for regulated staff are the two other initiatives under this project.
- ◆ Worked with the New Brunswick Association of Nursing Homes (NBAHN) and the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI) to implement the New Brunswick Appropriate Use of Antipsychotics (NB-AUA) Collaborative. All nursing homes in New Brunswick participated in this initiative to address the inappropriate use of antipsychotic drugs within the nursing home population. This is a fully bilingual program that brings together inter-professional teams from nursing homes across the province to improve appropriate prescribing; enhance the resident and family experience; and build capacity to lead health-care improvement.

Long-Term Care Branch

- ◆ Completion of a Lean Six Sigma on the Long-Term Care assessment process and roll out of the implementation of the improved assessment process.
- ◆ Provided Rapid Rehabilitation and Reablement training to more than 1,000 special care home and home support workers.
- ◆ Issued a Request for Proposal for home support agencies and awarded service contracts to 56 successful proponents.

Families and Children Division

The **Families and Children Division** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring department programs related to child welfare, disability support, social assistance, housing and wellness. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations and legislation. The division is focusing its efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality.

The division consists of the Child Welfare and Disability Support Services Branch, the Community and Individual Development Branch and the Wellness Branch.

The **Child Welfare and Disability Support Services Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring child welfare, youth and disability support programs and services. The branch is responsible for the ongoing development and monitoring of the Competency Based Child Welfare Training System as well as the delivery of training to child welfare social workers and social workers' supervisors, including First Nations staff, program delivery managers and provincial consultants. This branch includes: Family Supports for Children with Disabilities, the Adoption program, Access and Assessment, Children's Residential Services, Child Protection, Child in Care, Family Enhancement Services, Birth Parent Services, Youth Engagement Services, *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, Disability Support and Adult Development Activities program and training.

The **Community and Individual Development Branch** is responsible for planning, designing and monitoring programs and services to support individuals and families and to achieve and maintain self-reliance. This branch includes: the Transitional Assistance Program, Case Management Services for Social Assistance Clients, Career Development Options for Social Assistance Clients, the Extended Benefits program, Special Needs Benefits, Family Support Orders Services, Homelessness, Transition Houses, the Public Housing program, the Rural and Native Housing program, the Rural and Native Homeowner program, the Non-profit Social Housing program, the Portable Rent Supplement program, the Rent Supplement program, the Affordable Rental Housing program, Community Partnership Initiatives, the Rental and Rooming House program, the Rental

Conversion program, the Shelter Enhancement program, the Homeownership Assistance/Home Completion program, the Community Involvement program, the Home Orientation and Management program, the Federal/Provincial Repair program and the Emergency Repair program.

The **Wellness Branch** is responsible for promoting wellness by providing effective leadership and direction, meaningful support, target monitoring and, where appropriate, strategic intervention in partnership with provincial, regional and local organizations. The branch is committed to support action that effects positive change, both within specific settings (school, community, home and workplace) and across all settings. The branch develops strategic partnerships with other departments as well as federal and provincial governments and agencies to ensure wellness initiatives are strategically aligned with other efforts. Key actions include: Partnership and Collaboration; Asset Based Development; Promotion; Leadership, Policy and Legislation; and Evidence Informed Practice.

HIGHLIGHTS

Child Welfare and Disability Support Services Branch

- ◆ *Children and youth can benefit from a variety of services provided by professionals working as a team. At the heart of this framework lies a child-centred approach known as the Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) model. This model ties together services from the departments of Education and Early Childhood Development, Social Development, Health and Justice and Public Safety to provide support to children and youth with identified needs. This year, the ISD model was expanded to another 112 schools. As part of the expansion, GNB invested \$2.9 million in additional resources such as psychologists, social workers, coordinators and case management support, making it easier for at-risk children and youth as well as their families to obtain assessment, intervention and community-based supports.*
- ◆ *GNB recognizes that attitudes among New Brunswickers about adoption are changing. To modernize and streamline adoption services in the province, amendments to the Family Services Act and the Vital Statistics Act were introduced. Under the proposed amendments, records for future adoption will be made available to both birth parents and adoptees, once the adoptee has reached the age of majority (19). For past adoptions, records will now be opened once the adoptee has reached 19*

unless a birth parent or an adult adoptee has filed what is known as a disclosure veto. This step is in line with the direction toward which most North American jurisdictions have been moving, and it will allow birth parents and adopted adults to access their ancestry information and even meet each other, if they both wish to do so.

- ◆ The Disability Support Program introduced a two-pronged service delivery model that allows individuals to self-manage their case plan or request the support of a social worker. Individuals who opt for the self-managed model will initially meet with the department to determine their strengths and unmet needs to develop a case plan. The individuals manage the services to address their needs themselves thereafter. Individuals who request the ongoing support of a social worker will meet with the social worker to determine their strengths and needs to develop a case plan and then will receive regular contact, advocacy and support from the social worker.

Community and Individual Development Branch

- ◆ The department partnered with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour to implement the ELE Continuum. The nine-month ELE Continuum includes pre-employability services, job preparation skills and knowledge, workplace essential skills training and a 16 week work experience component. This initiative is targeting 400 clients over three years with the goal of improving labour market outcomes of social assistance recipients. In 2016-2017, 169 clients participated.
- ◆ The department continued delivery of its innovative two-part program for social assistance recipients assessed as having pre-employability needs. The program, *In Motion and Momentum*, engaged more than 700 clients.
- ◆ To assist low-income seniors, the department continued its delivery of the New Brunswick Low Income Seniors Benefit. This program provided a \$400 yearly benefit to qualifying seniors who had been a resident of New Brunswick on December 31, 2015, and were either in receipt of Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or a senior aged 60 to 64 in receipt of the Federal Allowance for the Survivor or the Federal Allowance. In 2016-2017, 42,843 seniors benefited from this program.
- ◆ The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), designed to help families in need, was extended by five years. Legislation was introduced to raise the income threshold for applicants, giving more families access to the program. The increase in the threshold allowed for 11,540 more low-income New Brunswickers to access the benefit.

Wellness Branch

- ◆ As part of the Home First Strategy, the Age-Friendly Community Recognition Program was launched. This program encourages communities and municipalities to establish policies, services and structures that promote healthy aging and wellness. In partnership with l'Association francophone des aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick, the department created a resource guide to encourage community actions that enable seniors to live in secure, healthy environments where they can contribute fully in society
- ◆ In partnership with the New Brunswick Association of Food Banks, the department redesigned a program providing financial support for food banks. The new program (Community Food Resource Support) was launched in January 2017 and aims to improve access to emergency food; increase the amount of healthy food in the emergency food sector; and support innovative approaches to addressing food insecurity. The branch introduced a resource guide that identifies other sources of funding available to food banks. This work was carried out within the context of the branch's ongoing collaboration with a variety of partners and stakeholders to pursue long-term, comprehensive approaches to food security.

Program Delivery Division

The **Program Delivery Division** is responsible for delivering programs and services to clients of the department. The division consists of eight regional offices, one branch and one unit.

The **Regional Offices** are responsible for the delivery of programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families. The core business areas include Community and Individual Development, Child Welfare and Disability Support Services, Long-Term Care and Nursing Home services and Wellness services.

The **Provincial Program Delivery Branch** is responsible for delivering programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families through single entry province-wide service delivery models. Programs and services include: Centralized Intake for Child and Adult Protection; Birth Parent Services and Youth Enhancement Services referrals; After Hours Emergency Social Services; Family Group Conference; Immediate Response Conference;

Child Protection Mediation Services; Post-Adoption Disclosure Services; and Centralized Social Development Record Checks and Exemptions.

The **Executive and Operations Support Unit** is responsible for providing a range of key supports and direct services, in collaboration with the department's management team and other departments, to achieve effective program delivery service in core business areas to individuals and families. This includes service delivery support for Integrated Front End, Ministerial Correspondence, Medical Advisory Board and Emergency Social Services.

HIGHLIGHTS

Provincial Program Delivery Branch

- ◆ *Completed a Request for Proposal process for a child protection mediation services provincial contract.*

Executive and Operations Support Unit

- ◆ *In support of the Minister's mandate under the Emergency Measures Act to provide Emergency Social Services such as food and lodging to New Brunswickers, the unit worked in support of provincial and regional response efforts during the January 2017 ice storm. The storm affected thousands of New Brunswickers, leaving many on the Acadian Peninsula and in southeastern New Brunswick without electricity for as long as 14 days.*
- ◆ *Integrated Front End managed and led centrally the department's response to a threatened postal strike in the summer of 2016. Efforts included: sorting and redirecting of paper cheques to regional offices; co-ordinating regional cheque pick-up times and locations; co-ordinating communications to staff and clients; and liaising with Service New Brunswick in advance of and during a possible strike.*

Corporate Services Division

The **Corporate Services Division** is responsible for providing a range of key supports and direct services to the department's employees. It works in partnership with other divisions of the department to assist in the success of the organization's finances, staffing, information management and technology, research, evaluation, planning as well as legislation and policy initiatives.

The division consists of the Finance and Administration Branch, the Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, the Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch, the Information Technology Services Branch and the Human Resource Services Branch.

The **Finance and Administration Branch** is responsible for working with management to ensure the department's financial resources are spent within GNB's fiscal framework. The branch provides information and advice to ensure consistency in budgeting, contract administration, financial reporting and administration. It performs internal audits for the department's programs and services. It provides Records Management for central office and Facilities Management services for the department. The branch also administers the Health Services Program.

The **Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch** is responsible for developing departmental policy and legislative proposals and providing ongoing support and advice on the interpretation of departmental legislation. The branch is the departmental lead on a number of interdepartmental tables, and it represents GNB on intergovernmental forums related to seniors, housing and social services. The branch is the departmental lead on legal and litigation matters and on the department's response to inquiries and investigations by the Ombudsman, the Access to Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Child and Youth Advocate and the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. The branch is the departmental lead for discussions and consultation with the provincial Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat and with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) on issues related to child and family services in First Nations communities.

The **Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch** is responsible for leading the strategic planning process and the department's annual planning and reporting cycle. The branch provides advice and guidance to the department by undertaking research and evaluation of programs and services and by providing statistical analysis for policy and program development. It is responsible for corporate data analytics, monitoring and reporting on the performance of departmental programs and services. It is responsible for Initiative Management of departmental priorities as well as internal communications and represents the department in interdepartmental initiatives

in support of overall government goals. The branch is responsible for developing, facilitating and implementing Performance Excellence, including Continuous Improvement, Innovation and Daily Management.

The **Information Technology Services Branch** supports all departmental program areas in achieving their business objectives through partnering with the department's divisions and working collaboratively with Service New Brunswick to provide appropriate Information Technology (IT) tools and solutions. The branch's services include client systems business support, the provision of subject matter expertise and end-user application support services for the department's line of business applications. The branch also provides information security services, and is responsible for IT strategy and planning, IT service coordination and department Information Management.

The **Human Resources Services Branch** is responsible for providing support and consulting services to management and staff to increase organizational effectiveness and performance. The branch tries to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, safe and high-performing workforce that provides excellent service to New Brunswickers. It works collaboratively to meet its mandate and objectives while supporting the strategic goals of the department and GNB. The branch consists of two business units: Employee Relations Services and Employee and Organizational Development. As of October 1, 2016, the delivery of operational and transactional human resources services were transferred to Service New Brunswick from Part 1 departments and agencies.

HIGHLIGHTS

Policy, Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Branch

- ◆ *The Family Services Act, Family Income Security Act and the New Brunswick Housing Act were amended to allow the department to use an electronic income-verification with the Canada Revenue Agency on behalf of clients applying for certain programs. The information is collected through a paper-based process where clients provide copies of their income tax assessment. The new method will use a secure, encrypted server to obtain information on the client's behalf, with their consent.*
- ◆ *The CMHC – New Brunswick 2016 Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement under the Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement was negotiated. The*

agreement includes new investments of more than \$56 million from the provincial and federal governments that will help New Brunswickers in need gain access to affordable housing.

- ◆ *The Family Services Act was amended to include a specific reference to grandparents and other immediate family members in the provisions related to applications for access to a grandchild; and to add a provision so the courts can set out the manner in which access may be exercised.*

Integrated Planning, Reporting and Accountabilities Branch

- ◆ *Developed and implemented an accountabilities framework to support the senior executive team in operational, financial and initiative management accountability.*
- ◆ *Launched a new five-year strategic plan – **Together we Thrive (2016-2021)**, which contains four strategic goals of enhancing excellence in client services, fostering a culture of people excellence, fostering a culture of innovation and developing and growing partnerships*

Information Technology Services Branch

- ◆ *Implemented system changes to administer the Day Care Top-Up benefit for Social Assistance clients.*
- ◆ *Continued to implement organizational changes to support the delivery of Information technology services under Service New Brunswick.*

Human Resources Services Branch

- ◆ *At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Senior Executive Team and the Human Resources Branch launched the Social Development Award of Excellence. The award recognizes an employee or a team whose contributions have had significant impact on client service, innovation, leadership, continuous quality improvement or community involvement. The award demonstrates the department's commitment to promoting a work environment that recognizes employees for their accomplishments and contributions in providing quality services to New Brunswickers.*
- ◆ *The department, in collaboration with the Health and Education Research Group (HERG) at the University of New Brunswick, launched a three-year initiative to enhance workplace wellness practices, team functioning and employee engagement.*

Financial information

This financial overview was prepared based on the best available information at the time of publication, and therefore, may not correspond exactly with the figures that were subsequently published in the public accounts.

Expenditures	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Corporate and Other Services	11,697.1	13,924.5	2,227.4	19.0	1
Income Security – Service Delivery Costs	22,089.2	21,772.6	(316.6)	(1.4)	
Income Security – Benefits	219,356.0	219,426.9	70.9	0	
Wellness	7,311.6	6,126.7	(1,184.9)	(16.2)	2
*Child Welfare and Youth Services	125,109.5	130,213.9	5,104.4	4.1	3
* Long-Term Care	658,605.8	650,751.5	(7,854.3)	(1.2)	4
Housing	88,338.9	101,686.3	13,347.4	15.1	5
Other Benefits	35,700.0	34,880.8	(819.2)	(2.3)	6
Total	\$1,168,208.1	\$1,178,783.2	\$10,575.1	0.9	

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

* On June 7, 2016, with the appointment of Honourable Stephen Horsman as Minister of Families and Children for the Department of Social Development, responsibility for the Disability Support Program, and the Adult Developmental Activities, Programs, and Training (ADAPT) Program were transferred from the Long-Term Care Branch to the Child Welfare and Disability Support Services Branch. For 2016-2017, the expenses for these programs are shown with Long-Term Care.

Special Purpose Account Expenditure	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
CMHC Funding Account	\$14,489.0	\$6,103.9	\$(8,385.1)	(57.9)	7

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Revenues	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Return on Investment	2,200.0	1,519.3	(680.7)	(30.9)	8
Licences and Permits	33.0	26.9	(6.1)	(18.5)	
Sale of Goods and Services	17,390.0	17,845.8	455.8	2.6	
Miscellaneous	9,375.0	9,615.1	240.1	2.6	
Conditional Grants – Canada	24,343.0	45,375.7	21,032.7	86.4	9
Total	\$53,341.0	\$74,382.8	\$21,041.8	39.4	

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Special Purpose Account Revenue	Budget	Actual	Variance Over (Under)	% Over (Under)	Note
Return on Investment	\$8,467.0	\$4,175.8	\$(4,291.2)	(50.7)	10

Numbers are expressed in thousands.

Notes on significant variances:

1. Over budget due to salaries and overhead.
2. Under budget due to lower than anticipated overhead costs.
3. Over budget due to higher than anticipated costs for Complex Cases, Child Protection, Youth Engagement Services Program, and recurring overhead pressures.
4. Under budget due to savings in construction.
5. Over budget due to the additional cost associated with the Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement, rent supplement costs for Syrian Refugees, and a change in accounting policy.
6. Under budget due to lower participation than anticipated in New Brunswick Seniors' Home Renovation Tax Credit program.
7. Under budget due to a change in accounting policy.
8. Under budget due to decreases in the number of loans outstanding.
9. Over budget due to Social Infrastructure Fund Agreement revenues, higher than anticipated recoveries, and a change in accounting policy.
10. Under budget due to a change in accounting policy.

Summary of staffing activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2016-2017 for the Department of Social Development.

Number of permanent and temporary employees, as of December 31 of each year		
Employee type	2016	2015
Permanent	1,226	1,251
Temporary	283	243
TOTAL	1,509	1,494

The department advertised 61 competitions, including 22 open (public) competitions and 39 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to section 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes other than the competitive process to establish merit:

Appointment type	Appointment description	Section of the <i>Civil Service Act</i>	Number
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a high degree of expertise and training – a high degree of technical skill – recognized experts in their field 	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	0
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school boards) and 3 (hospital corporations) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	5
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	3
Regular appointment of students/ apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Department of Social Development and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

Summary of legislation and legislative activity

Bill #	Name of legislation	Date of Royal Assent	Summary of changes
12	<i>An Act Respecting Agreements with the Canada Revenue Agency</i> http://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/58/3/Bill-12.pdf	Dec. 16, 2016	Amendments were made to the <i>Family Income Security Act</i> , <i>Family Services Act</i> , <i>Nursing Homes Act</i> and the <i>New Brunswick Housing Act</i> to provide the authority to sign an agreement with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to obtain tax information on behalf of clients using an electronic transfer rather than the current paper-based process. The department would continue to obtain consent from applicants and clients before requesting the information from CRA.
39	<i>An Act Respecting the Opening of Sealed Adoption Records</i> http://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/58/3/Bill-39.pdf	May 5, 2017	<i>An Act Respecting the Opening of Sealed Adoption Records</i> amended the <i>Family Services Act</i> and the <i>Vital Statistics Act</i> to change how GNB deals with adoption records. Records for future adoption will be made available to both birth parents and adoptees, once the adoptee has reached the age of majority (19). For past adoptions, records will be opened once the adoptee has reached the age of majority, unless a birth parent or an adult adoptee has filed a veto. The new Act also provides for contact preference notices where a birth parent or an adult adoptee can choose if and how they want to be contacted by the other party. The amendments to the <i>Vital Statistics Act</i> allow for the creation of an original registration of birth, which will include the names of the birth parents and the adoptee's name at birth.
49	<i>An Act to Amend the Family Services Act</i> http://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/58/3/Bill-49.pdf	May 5, 2017	The amendment includes a specific reference to grandparents and other immediate family members in the provision dealing with access applications, and a provision was added so the courts can set out the manner in which access may be exercised. The amendments fall under Part VII of the Act and apply only to private access applications. The amendments do not change the process for grandparents or other family members seeking access to child. They do, however, highlight the role and importance of grandparents and other immediate family members in the life of a child while maintaining the primary criteria around the best interests of the child.

The acts and regulations for which the Department of Social Development is responsible in 2016-2017 may be found at the following:

- For the Minister of Families and Children: <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/deplinks?subjectnumber=52>
- For the Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care: <http://laws.gnb.ca/en/deplinks?subjectnumber=53>

Summary of Official Languages activities

Introduction

The department has developed a new action plan for 2015-2020 that includes strategic activities for each of the four sectors of activity found in GNB's *Plan on Official Languages – Official Bilingualism: A Fundamental Value*.

Focus 1

Equality of Service. To ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province, the following activities were completed:

- The annual review and update of linguistic profiles. Human Resource Services consults with senior management to discuss team linguistic capacity and address any gaps; and ensures a short-term plan for “cover off” and long-term plan for improving the linguistic team capacity (i.e., hiring, second-language training).
- New employees were informed of the mandatory iLearn modules on Official Languages modules as part of orientation.

Focus 2

Use of Official Languages in the workplace. To ensure an environment and climate that encourages the employee's use of the Official Language of choice in the workplace, the following activities were completed:

- The Employee Performance Management template was revised and posted on the department's Intranet site. This topic was featured in the department's December newsletter.
- Human Resource Services communicated with Corporate Services managers and Corporate Services coordinators regularly to reiterate that management is to make an Active Offer to conduct performance reviews in the employees' Official Language of choice.
- Human Resource Services consults with senior management to discuss team linguistic capacity and address any gaps; and ensures a short-term plan for “cover off” and long-term plan for improving the linguistic team capacity (i.e., hiring, second-language training).
- There is a section on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practise their second Official Language.

Focus 3

Official bilingualism remains a fundamental value conveyed by GNB and its employees. The following activities were completed:

- The department gathered information and compiled status updates through its established accountability and monitoring mechanisms to complete the section in the department's annual report dealing with Official Languages.
- The department continued to use the Memorandum to Executive Council (MEC) writing guide for discussing the impact of program or policy on the linguistic communities.
- New employees were informed of the mandatory modules as part of orientation.

Focus 4

Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations and GNB's obligations. With respect to Official Languages, the following activity was completed:

- An Official Languages newsletter was posted on the department's employee Intranet site.

Conclusion

The Language of Work policy and guidelines were updated in November 2016 by the Treasury Board. The department continues to promote the Language of Work policy through its newsletter.

Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations	
	Total	Adopted
Nursing Homes – 2016 Vol. 1 http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2016V1/Chap2e.pdf	3	2*
Foster Homes – 2013 Vol. 2 http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/agnb-vgnb/en/publications/reports/year/2013.html#2013v1=Page1&2013v2=Page5	11	9**
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. (CMHC) Social Housing Agreement – 2011 Vol. 3 http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/agnb-vgnb/en/publications/reports/year/2011.html#2011v1=Page1&2011v2=Page4&2011v3=Page8	2	2***

* *The departments of Health and Social Development continue to work on the remaining recommendation to ensure short-term sustainability and long-term transformational change.*

** *The remaining two are being finalized in stakeholder consultation.*

*** *The federal government and GNB are developing a federal housing strategy that will address the other recommendation for a comprehensive long-term plan for social housing.*

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the Public Service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Social Development did not receive any disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2016-2017 fiscal year.