



# Social Development

**ANNUAL REPORT**

2022-2023

## **Social Development**

### ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Province of New Brunswick  
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## TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

**From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor**  
**Her Honour The Honourable Brenda Murphy**  
**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, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Jill Green  
Minister

**From the Deputy Minister to the Minister**

**Honourable Jill Green**  
**Minister of Social Development**

Madam:

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, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,



Jim Mehan  
Deputy Minister

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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the 2022-2023 annual report for the Department of Social Development.

The staff of Social Development and the many partners of this department have a long-standing relationship of working together to help support New Brunswick's most vulnerable. The achievements shown in this report are evidence this relationship is still going strong.

We also worked together with other government departments to offer an international nursing recruitment program and offered employment to nurses who work in our long-term care facilities and across the healthcare system.

By working together, we have been able to add more nursing home beds to the long-term care network. The official opening of Cohen Hall in Saint John in early 2023 brought the total to 72 nursing homes in the province providing 5,013 beds.

The work continues with others opening in the coming years.

For children and youth in New Brunswick, we worked hard to bring forward modern child-centered legislation designed to protect the children of New Brunswick.

The unified efforts of Social Development and its partners also resulted in numerous investments in housing across the province this year. As the New Brunswick Housing Corporation continues these efforts, I have no doubt the collaboration will only get stronger.

I want to thank you all for your dedication and commitment to New Brunswickers. You are all the prime example of what it means to work together. I appreciate everything you have done and know you will continue to accomplish great things.



Honourable Jill Green

Minister of Social Development

## DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Department of Social Development, I am pleased to present the annual report for 2022-2023.

This report highlights the hard work and dedication of our staff and partners across the province. Together, we continued to ensure New Brunswickers were supported, receiving the right help at the right time, in the right place.

For the children and youth of New Brunswick, we introduced milestone legislation, the *Child and Youth Well-being Act*. This legislation will modernize protection and support for young people in the province by taking a child-centered approach.

As part of our commitment to the seniors of our province, 26 different research projects were approved through the Healthy Seniors Pilot Project this year alone. These projects were aimed at understanding gender impacts as well as a number of different challenges faced by seniors in New Brunswick.

In addition, to enhance the support available for seniors, 80 internationally educated nurses were offered employment through a recruitment program involving Health, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour and the federal department of Employment and Social Development Canada.

We would simply not be able to provide important social services to New Brunswickers without our dedicated staff and partners. I thank them all for everything they do. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished, and I am eager to see what we will achieve moving forward.



Jim Mehan  
Deputy Minister

## GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

### Delivering for New Brunswickers - One Team One GNB

*One Team One GNB* is our vision as an organization and a collaborative approach to how we operate. It is our path forward, and it represents a civil service that is working collectively across departments, professions, and sectors. Together, we are learning, growing, and adapting, and discovering new and innovative ways of doing business. It is enabling us to achieve the outcomes needed for New Brunswickers, and we are working more efficiently and effectively than ever before.

As *One Team One GNB*, we are improving the way government departments:

- communicate with one another,
- work side-by-side on important projects, and
- drive focus and accountability.

### Strategy and operations 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.

### Government priorities

Our vision for 2022-2023 is a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick. To make progress towards this vision, we must focus on our government's priorities.

- Energize private sector,
- Vibrant and sustainable communities,
- Affordable, responsive, and high-performing government,
- Dependable public health care,
- World-class education, and
- Environment.

## HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, Social Development focused on government priorities through the following initiatives:

1. Implemented the Emergency Fuel and Food Program, which provided over 145,000 benefit payments totaling almost \$42M to help eligible low-income New Brunswickers with the rising cost of living.
2. Worked collaboratively with Disability Support Program and the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour to ensure there is equal pay for equal work and a full elimination of stipends for adults with disabilities working in New Brunswick.
3. Amended the Household Income Policy to allow more individuals to share accommodations while being eligible to receive a social assistance cheque.
4. Increased Social Assistance rates by 3.8 per cent and implemented an exemption for the first \$200 of Canada Pension Plan income.
5. Increased wages to human services workers through a \$39M investment that increased hourly wages by \$2.00 per hour.
6. Expanded the Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit to include low-income working individuals.
7. Announced an investment of \$102M over four years to create 380 new public housing units.
8. Entered into contracts for the replacement of a new 190-bed nursing home in Shediac and the creation of a new 60-bed nursing home in Saint-Isidore.
9. Issued a request for proposals for four 60-bed nursing homes in Bathurst, Bouctouche, Moncton, and Oromocto.
10. Opened Cohen Hall, a new 60-bed nursing home in Saint John.
11. Increased operational funding to adult residential facilities operators by \$10 per resident per day, representing an annual investment of \$28M.
12. Visited 13 university and college campuses to recruit social workers and paraprofessional support staff.
13. Passed the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act* in the Legislative Assembly. This new act, once proclaimed, will enhance prevention and protection for children and youth, ensure all decisions are made with the best interests and rights of children and youth at the forefront, extend services to young adults who were in the Minister's care, and increase accountability.
14. Piloted a new service delivery model for on-going Child Protection Services. The pilot demonstrated success with the introduction of the Child in Temporary Care Social Worker, Human Service Counsellor and Service Requisition Administrative Support, as well as with the enhanced partnership with Public Health Nurses.
15. Transformed the interview experience for citizens in need of Child and Adult Protection through a seamless collection of video evidence that is easy to manage and that can be securely shared with partners in Public Safety.



## PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

The information below outlines some of the department's priorities and how we measured our performance.

### Outcome # 1

#### Client experience

##### Description of Priority

- Client experience is the result of each interaction a client has with the department – whether in-person, online or by telephone. Clients of Social Development include New Brunswickers receiving services, as well as our partners within the community and government. Client experience speaks to what we care about, what our organization is focused on, and what we strive to deliver daily.
- Outcome: Enhance client experience by providing personalized, timely, supportive services.

##### Why is it important?

The client remains at the centre of everything we do, and we strive to provide an environment where the people we serve can reach their full potential and have a rewarding experience.

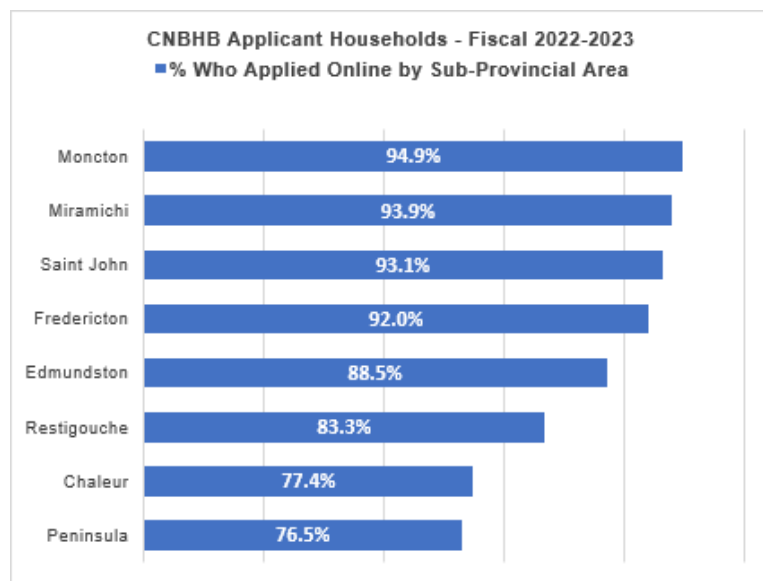
##### Overall performance

Success for client experience looks like:

- Increased opportunities to provide feedback
- Improved communications and collaboration
- Reduced burden when interacting with the department
- Expanded technological options to interact with the department
- Improved integrated, holistic supports

##### Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

To serve more tenants in need of rental assistance, the Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit was expanded to include low-income working individuals. The Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit is a short-term benefit of up to three years. It helps New Brunswickers who work part-time or at lower-paying jobs who are struggling to afford rent.



- **Healthy Seniors Pilot Project:** The total portfolio reached 67 projects last year and they are actively piloting and evaluating new approaches and interventions to support healthy aging in NB. Projects are reporting over 10,000 participants to date who have benefitted from the piloted interventions.
- **Partnering with 211:** The partnership with United Way and the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation has assisted over 38,293 callers find government and community services in New Brunswick since its launch in October 2020.
- **Nursing Home Waitlist Management System:** A new real-time electronic platform has improved overall reporting, monitoring, efficiency, and data accuracy for nursing homes in NB. Administrators can now access a client waitlist for their facility and ensure readiness to accommodate prospective residents. Assigned social workers and discharge planners within health authorities can access information in the system to ensure appropriate follow up and to enhance client experience.

## **Outcome # 2**

### **Employee experience**

#### **Description of priority**

- Our responsibility is to always focus on our interactions with work colleagues to make each day a positive experience for everyone. We strive for an employee experience that includes healthy workplace culture, opportunities to learn, grow and be involved, work-life balance, recognition, and reaching our full potential as employees of Social Development.
- Outcome: Strengthen Social Development to be an employer of choice.

#### **Why is it important?**

Employees that are equipped with the right tools, skills, training and information to do their jobs well will result in a rewarding experience for everyone and make each day a positive experience for our colleagues as well as our clients.

#### **Overall performance**

Success for employee experience looks like:

- Improved talent management approach
- Technology is leveraged to improve employee experience
- Enhanced internal information sharing
- Employee wellness and engagement is supported
- Improved access to resources and training supports

#### **Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome**

- A Work from Home Hybrid Model for Screening Services was developed to support retention efforts and created provincial standardized performance management agreements for Screeners and Supervisors to improve service delivery to clients.
- The Corporate Reporting solution was expanded to provide automated dashboards to facilitate program monitoring.
- A Learning Management System was launched and has provided supporting tools for employees to enhance their learning. The Learning Management System has modernized training, so all employees can easily access learning and development opportunities in a variety of delivery methods, including self-paced modules, instructor-led virtual webinars, and in person sessions.
- Since Fall 2022, employees have had the opportunity to participate in six people leader training modules on HR related topics, such as the hiring process, onboarding, performance management, and the remote work policy; thirty-one employees participated in the Evolving Leaders program led by the Executive Council Office; and eight employees participated in the Women's Leadership Program facilitated by the department.

## **Outcome # 3**

### **Quality services**

#### **Description of priority**

- Quality services speaks to the services and resources we offer to New Brunswickers. Our responsibility is to focus and ensure that the services we offer provide the best outcomes for New Brunswickers, ensuring we have the right tools and resources available. We hope to deliver a positive experience through quality services.
- Outcome: Improved client outcomes by monitoring and modifying services.

#### **Why is it important?**

We will deliver a positive experience through quality services. These services will be continuously monitored and assessed to ensure they generate positive outcomes for our clients and the population of New Brunswick.

#### **Overall performance**

Success for quality services looks like:

- Aligned community care and supports
- Infrastructure and partnerships are leveraged
- Improved consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness of services
- Reduced barriers and increased innovation
- Increased collaboration with service providers
- Evaluated and adapted services

#### **Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome**

- The Client Service Delivery Support Branch co-led the design and pilot phases of the new service delivery model for on-going Child Protection Services. The initiative freed up more time for social workers to spend with children, youth and families and less time on administrative tasks such as service requisitions for payment to vendors and service providers.
- Significant content and functionality improvements were made to the online applications for the Long-Term Care, Disability Support Programs and Canadian Housing Benefits based on user and key stakeholder feedback.
- In October 2022, the Province announced \$102M investment for the creation of 380 new public housing units. This important initiative will result in the building of the first government-owned housing units in 38 years.
- Continuing with efforts under SA Reform, in June 2022, the Household Income Policy (HIP) was amended. The reform to HIP will allow more individuals to share accommodations while being eligible to receive a social assistance cheque, thus providing more options to find and share accommodations.

## **Outcome # 4**

### **Financial responsibility**

#### **Description of priority**

- Financial responsibility means that we are providing the best services possible while being accountable to our budget.
- Outcome: Improved shared financial responsibility.

#### **Why is it important?**

It is important to spend wisely and to utilize and share available resources to the best of our ability. It is important for each of us to ensure that we use the tax dollars we are entrusted with to get the best results for our clients.

#### **Overall performance**

Success for financial responsibility looks like:

- Increased financial understanding and accountability;
- Available resources are leveraged;
- Re-aligned financial resources to meet outcomes;
- Increased strategic investments to support long-term outcomes; and
- Ensured accountability of partners and service providers.

#### **Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome**

- The Department continued to provide additional financial support to care providers (i.e., foster parents, group homes, family support workers) who work with children, youth, and families. Examples in 2022-2023 included a \$2.3M increase to service fees and relief services to foster families and a \$1.62M increase to wages for family support workers.
- Advancing the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan, significant investments were made to respond to increasing demand from New Brunswick's aging population. Plans were announced for a new 60-bed nursing home in the Acadian Peninsula and a 190-bed nursing home in Shediac to replace the aging Villa Providence facility. In addition, Cohen Hall, a 60-bed nursing home in Saint John opened its doors and a request for proposals for four nursing homes (240 beds) were announced for the Bathurst, Bouctouche, Moncton and Oromocto areas. The 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan aims to add 600 nursing home beds in the province.

## OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

### **Vision**

Strong partnerships for better lives.

### **Mission**

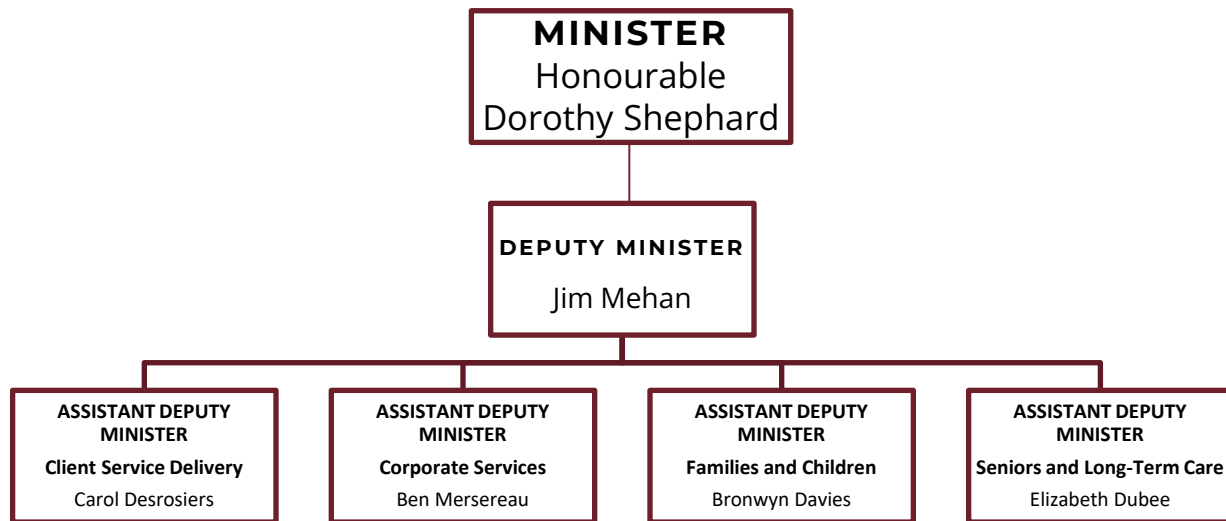
Working together with individuals, families, and community partners to improve people's lives.

Four strategic themes define how the department will achieve its vision of 'strong partnerships for better lives' and frame the department's goals and objectives. These strategic themes are client experience, employee experience, quality services and financial responsibility.

The Department of Social Development manages programs and services designed to provide protection and care for individuals and families, while also fostering independence and self-sufficiency. The Department works with service providers and community partners who also play an important role in contributing to a safe, secure, and healthy New Brunswick.

The department is structured in four divisions as seen on the following organizational chart that integrates in a team-based approach to support the citizens of New Brunswick.

## HIGH-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



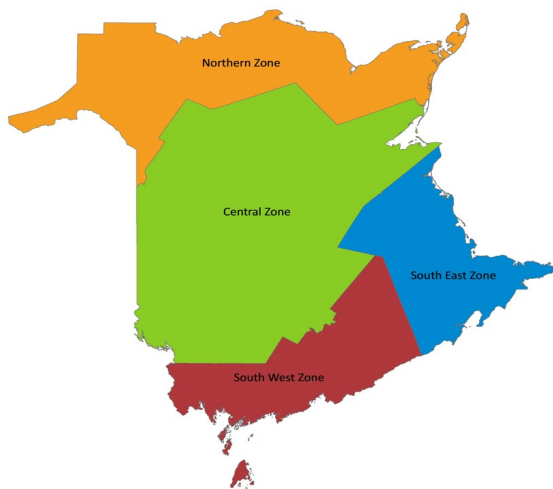
## DIVISION OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

### CLIENT SERVICE DELIVERY DIVISION

#### Overview

The **Client Service Delivery Division** is responsible for delivering Social Development's programs and services to clients of the department, managing day-to-day client relations and operations, establishing, and managing relationships with community partners, and maintaining performance excellence. The division consists of four zones and the Client Service Delivery Support Branch.

The **zones** are responsible for the delivery of programs and services in core business areas to individuals and families. The core business areas include child welfare and youth services, housing and homelessness, income support, disability support services, and long-term care.



The **Client Service Delivery Support Branch** is responsible for delivering provincial services through single entry access points and for providing a range of key executive and operational supports. Services provided include After Hours Emergency Social Services; Post-Adoption Disclosure Services; Provincial Social Development Record Checks and Exemptions; Provincial Territorial Child Welfare Protocol Coordination. Key executive and operational supports include Ministerial and Executive correspondence, liaison, and support; Social Development website responses; Medical Advisory Board coordination; Emergency Social Services, Integrated Front-End, Intelligent Computer Exchange (ICE) Telephony Platform Business Owner.



## Highlights

### **Client Service Delivery Support Branch:**

1. The branch co-led the design and pilot phases of the new service delivery model for on-going Child Protection Services. The pilot demonstrated success with the introduction of the Child in Temporary Care Social Worker, Human Service Counsellor and Service Requisition Administrative Support internal SD roles as well as the enhanced partnership with Public Health Nurses. This resulted in more time for social workers to spend with children, youth and families and less time on administrative tasks such as service requisitions for payment to vendors and service providers.
2. The branch completed significant content and functionality improvements to the online applications for the Long-Term Care and Disability Support Programs based on user and key stakeholder feedback.
3. The division developed a Work from Home Hybrid Model for Screening Services to support retention efforts and created provincial standardized performance management agreements for Screeners and Supervisors to improve service delivery to clients.

## FAMILIES AND CHILDREN DIVISION

### Overview

The **Families and Children Division** is responsible for planning, designing, and monitoring department programs related to child and youth services, including integrated service delivery, income support, health services, disability support, and housing and homelessness. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations, and legislation. The division focuses efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve people-centeredness, efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality. The division consists of the Child and Youth Well-Being Branch, the Income Support Branch and the Housing and Homelessness Branch.

The **Child and Youth Well-Being Branch** is responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring strength-based programs and services to help protect and promote the safety and well-being of children and youth. The Branch works in partnership with colleagues, other departments, and community-based services to ensure timely and culturally responsive services and resources that result in the best outcomes for children and youth. The vision of the Branch is for safety, wellbeing, a sense of belonging and lifelong connections for every child/youth in NB.

This Branch includes Child and Youth Protection, Children and Youth in Care, Children's Resource Services, Kinship, Adoption, Expectant Parent and Birth Parent Services, Youth Services, Post-Guardianship, Family Supports for Children with Disabilities, Collaborative Approaches, and services under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. The Branch is also a partner in Integrated Service Delivery, as well as the Provincial Complex Case Committee, which are multidisciplinary partnerships intended to improve services to children and youth deemed at-risk or having complex social, emotional, physical, medical and/or mental-health needs.

Programs and services under this Branch are centered on the best interests and well-being of newborns, children, and youth. Priority is given to strengthening family engagement by including family involvement strategies such as Family Group Conference and Immediate Response Conference to give voice to children, youth, and families. If a child can no longer remain living safely in the parental home, the department works closely with family to prioritize children and youth living with kin. As well, the department works in collaboration with other departments and not-for-profit organizations in developing and supporting various placement options along the continuum of care for children and youth.

The **Income Support Branch** is responsible to provide individuals and families in need with financial benefits and supports. The Branch also has the responsibility for planning, designing, and monitoring services delivered through the Disability Support Program for adults with disabilities. The goal is to support individuals and families, to help them achieve and maintain self-reliance and, where appropriate, with self-sufficiency program services to enhance their potential for employment. 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 and Family Support Orders Services.

Health Services is responsible for the day-to-day operations, planning, designing, and monitoring of the department's Health Services Program. The Health Services Program offers a number of health and medical benefits, and services to Social Development clients that have an active health card.

Health Services programs include Mobility & Adaptive Equipment Loan Program; Dental Program; Hearing Aid Program; Medical Supplies/Services Program; Orthopedic Program; Ostomy/Incontinence Program; Prosthetic Program; Respiratory Program; Therapeutic Nutrients Program; and the Vision Program. Health Services is also responsible for Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision, and the NB Cleft Palate Program. Specific client groups eligible through health services include Social Assistance recipients and their dependents, Health Card-Only clients (individuals with extensive health needs who are unable to cover the cost of services), clients served within the Child and Youth Services Program, Long Term Care clients residing in Adult Residential Facilities, Nursing Home clients, and Mental Health clients residing in facilities.

The **Housing and Homelessness Branch** is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of all departmental housing and homelessness programs and services. These include the following: Public Housing, Rent Supplement and Rural and Native Housing Programs; Non-Profit and Cooperative Housing Programs; Homelessness and Transition Houses; Homeowner and Emergency Repair Programs; Affordable Rental Housing Program; Rental Rehabilitation Assistance Program; Home Completion and Home Ownership Assistance Programs; Property Management and Loans Administration. The Branch is also responsible for the development of new housing programs to address systemic gaps and identify opportunities for improvements related to existing policy and program delivery.

## Highlights

### Child and Youth Well-Being Branch:

1. In June 2022, the *Child and Youth Well-Being Act* received royal assent and is expected to be proclaimed in the spring of 2024. This important legislation focuses on the best interests, protection, participation, and earlier intervention and well-being of children and youth. Programs and services are currently being redesigned to ensure alignment with the new act and philosophy. Since the fall of 2022, over 100 engagement sessions were held with youth, families, staff, service providers and stakeholders. Their feedback is directly influencing regulation, policy, and program redesign.

### Income Support Branch:

1. In June 2022, the Household Income Policy (HIP) was amended. The reform to HIP will allow more individuals to share accommodations while being eligible to receive a social assistance cheque, thus providing more options to find and share accommodations.
2. The Disability Support Program worked collaboratively with the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour to ensure there is equal pay for equal work and a full elimination of stipends for adults with disabilities working in New Brunswick. This work occurred within the parameters of the Employment and Support Services Program (ESSP).

### Housing and Homelessness Branch:

1. In an effort to serve more tenants in need of rental assistance, the Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit was expanded to include low-income working individuals. The Canada-New Brunswick Housing Benefit is a short-term benefit of up to three years. It helps New Brunswickers who work part-time or at lower-paying jobs who are struggling to afford rent.
2. In October 2022, the province announced \$102M investment for the creation of 380 new public housing units. This important initiative will result in the building of the first government-owned housing units in 38 years.

## SENIORS AND LONG-TERM CARE DIVISION

### Overview

The **Seniors and Long-Term Care Division** is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of Social Development programs related to seniors and adult protection. This includes the interpretation of program guidelines, procedures, policies, standards, regulations, and provincial legislation. The division focuses efforts on changing how it delivers services to improve efficiency and sustainability while maintaining quality. The division consists of the Adult Community Resources Branch and the Adult Client Services Support Branch.

The **Adult Community Resources Branch** is responsible for monitoring quality and compliance of licensed adult residential facilities and nursing homes throughout the province who provide care across the continuum. Adult residential facilities include special care, community residences, memory care and generalist care. The department's objectives are to improve residents' quality of life, help safeguard their dignity, and ensure that appropriate, quality residential services are provided as efficiently as possible within available resources. This is accomplished by ensuring compliance with all relevant acts, regulations under the acts, and departmental standards and policies. The purpose of this monitoring is to enhance accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the planning and delivery of these services to adults and seniors. The branch is also responsible for providing operational support to licensed nursing homes through funding, advisory services, and management of capital repairs, renovation, and replacement projects. The direct provision of nursing home services to residents is the responsibility of each nursing home.

The **Adult Client Services Support Branch** is responsible for planning, designing, and monitoring programs and services provided to seniors at home and in the community. The Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat falls within this branch and functions as the point of contact to facilitate the central alignment, coordination, planning and liaison for matters and issues related to seniors and healthy aging within government. The programs and services under the branch include Adult Protection Program; Long Term Care Program; Home Support Services; Adult Day Centres; Home First initiatives; Healthy Seniors Pilot Project; Age-Friendly Communities Recognition Program; and The Healthy Aging Champions Program. This branch also delivers training to SD staff in the adult and senior services and programs throughout the province.

### Highlights

#### **Adult Community Resources Branch:**

1. Advancing the 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan, significant investments were made to respond to increasing demand from New Brunswick's aging population. Plans were announced for a new 60-bed nursing home in the Acadian Peninsula and a 190-bed nursing home in Shediac to replace the aging Villa Providence facility. In addition, Cohen Hall, a 60-bed nursing home in Saint John opened its doors and a request for proposals for four nursing homes (240 beds) were announced for the Bathurst, Bouctouche, Moncton and Oromocto areas. The 2018-2023 Nursing Home Plan aims to add 600 nursing home beds in the province.
2. The department implemented a \$10 per resident day increase in funding to adult residential facilities operators across New Brunswick on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This \$28M annual investment solidifies the continuum of support to people who can no longer live safely in their own homes by helping the sector respond to various pressures including inflationary costs.

**Adult Client Services Support Branch:**

1. **Healthy Seniors Pilot Project:** The total portfolio reached 67 projects last year and they are actively piloting and evaluating new approaches and interventions to support healthy aging in NB. Projects are reporting over 10,000 participants to date who have benefitted from the piloted interventions.
2. **Nursing Home Waitlist Management System:** A new real time electronic platform has improved overall reporting, monitoring, efficiency, and data accuracy for nursing homes in NB. Administrators can now access a client waitlist for their facility and ensure readiness to accommodate prospective residents. Assigned social workers and discharge planners within health authorities can access information in the system to ensure appropriate follow up and to enhance client experience.

**CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION****Overview**

The **Corporate Services Division** provides advice, resources, and support services to enable the department to deliver programs and services to clients. The division consists of Analytics and Organizational Support, Digital Transformation, Finance and Administration, Human Resources, Organizational Development, Policy and Legislative Affairs, and Strategic Planning and Accountability.

The **Analytics and Organizational Support Branch** provides evidence-based reporting, project management and process improvement services to the department. It is responsible for corporate reporting, research, evaluation and coordination of project management and process improvement resources to enable effective delivery of departmental priority projects, programs, and services.

The **Digital Transformation Branch** provides strategic leadership intended to transform how we deliver value to citizens by improving end-to-end processes that benefit the business while offering better citizen experiences through innovative products and services. Aligning to the GNB vision “One Team, One GNB”, the Digital Transformation team works on enterprise change both across GNB and within Social Development to improve experiences for all NB citizens. The Chief Experience Officer is responsible for improving the outcomes and experiences of Social Development’s clients in New Brunswick. The Experience Office supports timely access to information that is easy to understand and use. In collaboration with our partners, systems and services are changed or developed to minimize administrative burden, deliver quality experiences, and effectively serve our clients.

The **Finance and Administration Branch** is responsible for working with management to ensure the department’s financial resources are spent within government’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. The Branch is made up of four units: Budget and Financial Reporting, Audit Services, Accounting and Administrative Services, and Contract Administration.

The **Human Resource Services (HRS) Branch** provides support and consulting services to management and staff to increase organizational effectiveness and to maximize performance through our people. HRS endeavors to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, safe, and high performing workforce that provides excellent service to the citizens of New Brunswick. The HRS team members

work collaboratively to meet its mandate and objectives, while supporting the strategic goals of both the department and the Government of New Brunswick.

The Human Resource Strategy and Programs (HRSP) unit supports and reinforces the strategic goals and vision of the Department of Social Development through the provision of a broad range of results-focused, organizational, and human performance interventions and services designed to create departmental and employee excellence. The HRSP unit is responsible for strategic workforce planning and succession management, performance management, HR-related training, and the development and implementation of health, safety, and workplace wellness programs. In addition, the unit coordinates the reporting of departmental workforce information.

The Employee Relations Services unit serves as the primary vehicle for the delivery of HR services to the department. The consultants and staff in this unit have the lead role and responsibility for employee recruitment, selection, job classification, evaluation, and the establishment of linguistic profiles. As well, members of the team are directly involved in labour relations including, but not limited to, grievance handling, labour-management committees, contract negotiations, collective agreement and legislative interpretation, conflict resolution and mediation, employee discipline, and performance management.

The **Organizational Development Branch** is responsible for the learning and development framework which is inclusive and aimed at increasing organizational effectiveness. The branch leads the expansion and continuous improvement of learning and development opportunities to enhance employee, partner, and client experience and engagement. Additionally, the branch provides advice, support, and communication functions across the department in all program areas.

The **Policy and Legislative Affairs Branch** is responsible for developing policy and legislative proposals for the department and for the coordination of legislative activities. The branch provides ongoing support and advice in the interpretation and application of departmental legislation and is the departmental lead in working with Office of the Attorney General on legal matters. The branch supports departmental responses to inquiries and investigations by Legislative Officers. The Policy and Legislative Affairs Branch is also responsible for providing advice on all privacy related issues and preparing responses to all Access to Information requests. In addition, the Branch facilitates the appointment process for Agencies, Boards and Commissions related to Social Development. The branch is the departmental lead on several interdepartmental and Federal Provincial, Territorial committees, including the Seniors Forum and the Ministers Responsible for Social Services Forum.

The **Strategic Planning & Accountability Branch** is responsible for leading and implementing the department's strategic planning process and reporting cycle, including the strategic framework and the annual report. The Branch supports all areas of the department by facilitating key planning and reporting activities, and the alignment of key departmental initiatives as drivers of performance. It leads initiative management efforts of departmental priorities and acts as a liaison with the Executive Council Office to coordinate alignment with GNB's strategy. Other key responsibilities include conducting environmental scans, supporting the development of corporate strategies, guiding work related to return on investment, and ensuring the organization is aligned with partners who share a common vision.

## Highlights

### **Analytics and Organizational Support Branch:**

1. Expanded the Corporate Reporting solution to provide automated dashboards to facilitate program monitoring.
2. Provided facilitation services to support working groups on complex issues impacting the department, resulting in executable action plans.

### **Digital Transformation Branch:**

1. Transforming interview experience for citizens in need of Child and Adult Protection - Seamless collection of video evidence, easy to manage and securely share with partners in public safety. No more corrupted or poor-quality videos that lead to citizens being interviewed about traumatic incidents more than once.
2. Nursing Home Waitlist Management System: An IT solution was developed by Social Development and launched with seventy-two nursing homes in NB. The system ensures equity in client placement and efficiency in the admission process within the NH sector.
3. Learning from the people we support. For example, over 200 adoptive and foster parents shared how their shared experiences could be improved. They have described the cost of administrative burden. Solutions built are assessed by the very people who may use the tools.

### **Finance and Administration Branch:**

1. Led two major nursing home procurements and completed signed contracts during the fiscal year.
2. Launched a Request for Proposal for four more nursing homes across various locations, likely to be the largest single procurement in the department's history.

### **Human Resource Services Branch:**

1. Recruitment: Since Fall 2022, the department has visited 13 university and college campuses to recruit social workers, and paraprofessional support staff. During these visits, department representatives shared their rewarding experiences from working at SD.
2. HR Fundamentals: Since Fall 2022, the Branch has delivered six people leader training modules on HR related topics such as, the hiring process, onboarding, performance management, and the remote work policy.

### **Organizational Development Branch:**

1. Fully implemented a Learning Management System within the department and provided supporting tools for employees to enhance their learning. The Learning Management System has modernized training so all employees can easily access learning and development opportunities in a variety of delivery methods, including self-paced modules, instructor-led virtual webinars, and in person sessions.

### **Policy and Legislative Affairs Branch:**

1. The new *Child and Youth Well-Being Act* received Royal Assent on June 10, 2022, with unanimous support in the Legislature. This new act will enhance prevention and protection and for children and youth, ensure all decisions are made with the best interest and rights of children

and youth at the forefront, extend services to young adults who were in the minister's care and increase accountability.

2. Supported all areas of the department with timely, evidence-based policy development and support to enable new initiatives and legislative amendments that benefit New Brunswickers in need. This enabled continuous improvement in programs and services provided by Social Development to New Brunswickers accessing social assistance, housing supports, child and adult protection services, disability support services, and long-term care.
3. Partnering with 211: This partnership with United Way and the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation has assisted over 38,293 callers find government and community services in New Brunswick since its launch in October 2020.

**Strategic Planning & Accountability Branch:**

1. Led the development and implementation of the quarterly strategic alignment meetings with a focus on strategic planning, accountability and leading through intent for priority projects over the upcoming fiscal year.
2. Aligned strategic priorities with its departmental strategic framework, performance measures and worked with business leads to complete priorities.



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the fiscal period ending March 31, 2023 (\$000's)

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	11,618.2	15,028.6	3,410.4	29.4	1
Income Security	247,794.7	256,181.2	8,386.5	3.4	2
Child Welfare	157,201.8	174,442.3	17,240.5	11.0	3
Seniors and Long-Term Care	876,339.0	865,610.9	(10,728.1)	(1.2)	4
Housing	120,688.2	135,687.2	14,999.0	12.4	5
Other Benefits	73,443.0	71,550.0	(1,893.0)	(2.6)	6
Total	\$1,487,084.9	\$1,518,500.1	\$31,415.2	2.1	

*Numbers are expressed in thousands*

SPECIAL PURPOSE ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE OVER (UNDER)	% OVER (UNDER)	NOTE
CMHC Funding Account	\$2,700.0	\$2,050.6	(\$649.4)	(24.1)	7

*Numbers are expressed in thousands*

CAPITAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE OVER (UNDER)	% OVER (UNDER)	NOTE
Nursing Home – Capital Program	\$12,000.0	\$12,142.7	\$142.7	1.2	

*Numbers are expressed in thousands*

REVENUES	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE OVER (UNDER)	% OVER (UNDER)	NOTE
Return on Investment	1,800.0	2,795.6	995.6	55.3	8
Licences and Permits	33.0	28.1	(4.9)	(19.4)	
Sale of Goods and Services	17,890.0	16,792.2	(1,097.8)	(6.1)	9
Miscellaneous	4,375.0	4,809.8	434.8	9.9	
Conditional Grants – Canada	79,594.0	43,169.4	(36,424.6)	(45.8)	10
Total	\$103,692.0	\$67,594.6	\$(36,097.4)	(34.8)	

*Numbers are expressed in thousands*

SPECIAL PURPOSE ACCOUNT REVENUE	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE OVER (UNDER)	% OVER (UNDER)	NOTE
CMHC Funding Account	\$210.0	\$109.8	\$(100.2)	(47.7)	

*Numbers are expressed in thousands*

**NOTES ON SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES:**

1. Over budget due to salaries and overhead, as well as additional payments to Homeless Shelters and Out of the Cold Shelters.
2. Over budget due to benefits paid under the Emergency Fuel and Food program.
3. Over budget due to increasing caseloads and cost per case for Child Protection and Children In Care, as well as increases to the kilometric allowance for agencies.
4. Under budget due to savings in Adult Residential Facilities.
5. Over budget due to pressures related to Public Housing - Property Management, Modernization and Improvement, increased expenses related to rent supplements, emergency shelters & out of the cold shelters, as well as payments under the Emergency Fuel and Food program.
6. Under budget due to lower than expected expenditures in Healthy Seniors Pilot Project, Child Tax Benefit, and NB Seniors Home Renovation Tax Credit, partially offset by expenses under the Emergency Fuel and Food program.
7. Under budget due to project timing delays.
8. Over budget due to a revenue was overstated. Corrected in 2023/24 fiscal
9. Under budget mainly due to tenant revenues, less client turnover and delays filling vacant units.
10. Under budget mainly due to extension of the Healthy Seniors Pilot Project for an additional year led to fewer projects completed in fiscal 2022/23.

## 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 2022-2023 for Social Development.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2023	2022
Permanent	1322	1318
Temporary	153	163
<b>TOTAL</b>	1475	1481

The department advertised 83 competitions, including 56 open (public) competitions and 27 closed (internal) competitions.

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

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a high degree of expertise and training,</li> <li>a high degree of technical skill,</li> <li>recognized experts in their field.</li> </ul>	15(1)	3
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)	5
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)	2
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	28

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
	Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.		
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)	33
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)	1

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head 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
#22	<i>An Act to Amend the Family Services Act,</i>  <a href="https://www.legnb.ca/content/house_business/60/2/bills/Bill-22.pdf">https://www.legnb.ca/content/house_business/60/2/bills/Bill-22.pdf</a>	December 16, 2022	Amendments to the <i>Family Services Act</i> and Rule 73 - Family Division of the Rules of Court of New Brunswick to extend legislated timeline to process supervisory, custody and guardianship orders.
#144	<i>Child and Youth Well-Being Act,</i>  <a href="https://www.legnb.ca/en/legislation/bills/60/1/114/child-and-youth-well-being-act">https://www.legnb.ca/en/legislation/bills/60/1/114/child-and-youth-well-being-act</a>	June 10, 2022	New stand-alone child and youth well-being legislation to replace provisions of the <i>Family Services Act</i> that pertain to child and youth well-being.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<i>Nursing Homes Act,</i>  Amendment to N.B. Regulation 85-187	April 1, 2022	Amend N.B. Regulation 85-187 under the <i>Nursing Homes Act</i> to reflect proper names of professional designations, to specify the allowable circumstances for discharge of residents, to allow for a medical officer of health to determine when and if it is safe for employees who are carriers or are sick from a notifiable disease to be employed in nursing homes and to replace some nouns and pronouns with gender silent language to be more inclusive.
<i>Family Services Act,</i>  Amendment to Community Placement Residential Facilities Regulation (83-77)	April 1, 2022	Amend N.B. Regulation 83-77, the Community Residential Facilities Regulation, under the <i>Family Services Act</i> to include new provisions to specify the allowable circumstances for discharge and the length of notification prior to the discharge of residents and to replace some nouns and pronouns with gender silent language to be more inclusive.

<i>Family Income Security Act</i> , Amendments to Regulation 95-61	April 1, 2022	Amendment to Regulation 95-61 of the <i>Family Income Security Act</i> to reflect updated social assistance rates that align with the annual change in the New Brunswick Consumer Price Index.
<i>Family Income Security Act</i> , Amendments to General Regulation	June 1, 2022	Amendments to General Regulation under <i>Family Income Security Act</i> to reform the household income policy and update labels and definitions.
<i>Family Income Security Act</i> , Amendments to General Regulation	October 1, 2022	Amendments to General Regulation under <i>Family Income Security Act</i> to add exemption related to Canada Pension Plan benefits.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2022-2023 may be found at:  
<https://laws.gnb.ca/en/deplinks?subjectnumber=21>

# SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACTIVITIES

## Introduction

The department has developed an action plan 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

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:

- There is continuous management of the department's linguistic profiles to ensure there is enough capacity in guaranteeing that clients are being served in their language of choice. We also strive to improve linguistic team capacity through the hiring process and second-language training.
- As part of the onboarding process, new employees are required to complete the mandatory e-learning modules for Language of Service and Language of Work offered through the GNB Knowledge Center.

### Focus 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the Official Language of their choice in their workplace:

- All communications and training to all staff is offered in both Official Languages.
- There is a section on the Intranet including information on second-language training and links to tools and resources to help employees practice their second Official Language.

### Focus 3

Official bilingualism is a fundamental value conveyed by GNB and its employees.

- The department gathered information through a monitoring mechanism to complete the section in the department's annual report dealing with Official Languages.

### Focus 4

Ensure Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to Official Languages:

- The department emphasizes an employee's obligations under the *Official Languages Act* and provided them with the links for the e-learning modules Language of Work and Language of Service found on the GNB Knowledge Center.

## Conclusion

The department continues to bring employee awareness of the responsibilities of the *Official Languages Act* in day-to-day work, and in the quality of programs and services provided to the public.



The department also continues to promote both the Language of Service and Language of Work policies through its intranet site and onboarding process.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

### Section 1

Social Development did not receive any recommendations from the 2022 Auditor General's report.

### Section 2

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
Risk of Contamination in Public Housing Units – 2020 Vol. III <a href="https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V3/Chap8e.pdf">https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V3/Chap8e.pdf</a>	2	2
Update on Nursing Home Planning and Aging Strategy – 2020 Vol. II <a href="https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V2/Chap4e.pdf">https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V2/Chap4e.pdf</a>	5	1
Group Homes and Specialized Placements – 2019 Vol. II <a href="https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2019V2/Chap3e.pdf">https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2019V2/Chap3e.pdf</a>	16	9

## 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 received disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.