

2022–2023  
**Annual Report**

**Office of Women  
and Gender Equality**







## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister Responsible for the Office of Women and Gender Equality, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the period April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. This Report has been prepared in accordance with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's **Transparency and Accountability Act** provisions. The Office of Women and Gender Equality is a Category 2 Provincial Government entity, and I am accountable for the results reported in this document.

Advancing the social, economic, cultural, legal, and political status of women and gender-diverse individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador remains a top priority. Continued engagement and collaboration with key partners and stakeholders, including government departments and agencies, community organizations, and Indigenous governments and organizations, are essential to becoming a society where the voices and contributions of women and gender-diverse individuals are respected and valued.

One of the highlights of the 2022-23 fiscal year was the passing of the **Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act** in the House of Assembly. This Act, which remains a top priority for government, outlines pay equity provisions for the public sector, and pay transparency provisions for the public and private sectors. A public consultation process was also held to help inform the development of the Regulations for the Act.

Through the consistent application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets, coupled with our efforts to identify and implement action-focused solutions to gender-based violence, I strongly believe we can, and will, advance the status of women and gender-diverse individuals in our province.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Parsons".

Hon. Pam Parsons

Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality



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## Departmental Overview

### Organizational Structure

The Office of Women and Gender Equality (WGE) provides specific resources within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador structure to advance equity for women and gender-diverse individuals. WGE is a central agency that supports the development of policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets, to advance the social, economic, cultural, legal, and political status of women and gender-diverse individuals in the province. WGE is housed within Executive Council, and staff report to the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

WGE is located in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador on the fourth floor of the Confederation Building, West Block. Further information about WGE can be found at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/wge/office/>.

### Staff and Budget

In 2022-23, WGE had a core staff compliment of seven permanent and three temporary positions. For 2022-23, WGE had a total budget of \$5,148,500 million, inclusive of the Minister's Office and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Minister's Office	3	246,800
Office of Women and Gender Equality	10	4,470,200
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women	3	431,500

## Highlights and Partnerships

### Highlights

#### Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act

The **Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act** passed during the fall 2022 sitting of the House of Assembly reflects the Provincial Government's support of equitable pay practices in the province, and builds on government's ongoing efforts to support women and gender-diverse people in Newfoundland and Labrador.

This legislation is a positive step forward for gender equality, and for populations who have experienced discrimination in the workplace such as women, gender-diverse people, members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community, Indigenous people, Black and racialized people, people with disabilities and other intersecting identities. Government will continue to progress pay equity and pay transparency measures.

The **Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act** contains pay transparency provisions that will make Newfoundland and Labrador a leader in Canada with prescriptive pay transparency requirements for the public and private sectors.

Pay equity provisions in this legislation will apply to all public sector employers with 10 or more employees; and requires public sector employers to implement compensation practices to value jobs based on skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. The provisions will also require a commissioner to be designated under the **Public Service Commission Act** to be the Pay Equity Officer.

Pay transparency provisions in the legislation will apply to employers in the public and private sectors, and require employers to include information regarding pay in publicly advertised job postings. The provisions will prohibit employers from requesting pay history information from job applicants; and from penalizing an employee or applicant for inquiring about or disclosing pay information or requesting that an employer comply with the Act. The provisions also require certain employers to prepare pay transparency reports.

Public consultations to inform the development of the Regulations for the Act began on March 13, 2023, and continued through to April 2023.



## **Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity**

The Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity was established with its inaugural meeting on December 15, 2020, as a dedicated space to identify ways to further advance gender equity in the province. It is an opportunity for participants to help shape solutions that foster inclusion and respect in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Information and knowledge captured at the Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity is used to help inform the ongoing work of the Provincial Government in achieving true gender equity in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Provincial Government is committed to working with all stakeholders on innovative solutions for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. This roundtable is an important forum to listen and learn from leaders, experts and community members that are doing important and innovative work. This kind of collaboration and understanding is vital to building a more equitable province for people of all genders. This year's Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity took place on February 6, 2023, and focused on intergenerational well-being and care work, access to health and culture, and taking action towards gender equity and well-being.

## **Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council**

In November 2022, the Provincial Government announced that a Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council would be established to support efforts related to missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The creation of a Reconciliation Council was proposed to government in July 2022, by the Provincial Indigenous Women's Steering Committee, as a foundational component of its report, 'Hear Our Voices: MMIWG Policy Recommendations for the First Women of Newfoundland and Labrador'.

The Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council is a mechanism through which to establish a collaborative ongoing working relationship between Indigenous women and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The goal of the Reconciliation Council is to coordinate and lead meaningful action to address existing challenges and obstacles in the areas of culture, health and wellness, justice, and human security, that impact Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. The Reconciliation Council is composed of 11 members, including five Provincial Government representatives and six Indigenous women leaders.

This action is a further commitment from the Provincial Government to work collaboratively and in partnership with Indigenous Governments and Organizations to prevent violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people experience higher levels of violence. Ending this violence requires an approach that is culturally appropriate and informed by the experiences of the Indigenous community.

## **Partnerships**

WGE works collaboratively with many stakeholder organizations to advance the status of women and gender-diverse individuals. In 2022-23, WGE provided grants and core operational funding in the amount of \$3,375,399 million to key partners, including the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Status of Women Councils, Violence Prevention NL organizations, Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador, Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network, End Sexual Violence NL, Safe Harbour Outreach Project (a project of the St. John's Status of Women Council), and Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth (a project of Thrive).

WGE maintains a close working relationship with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts, and acts as a federal-provincial liaison. This includes ongoing participation in intergovernmental working groups that address such issues as Women's Economic Participation and Prosperity, Leadership and Democratic Participation, Gender-Based Violence and Access to Justice, Gender-Based Analysis Plus, Intergovernmental Strategic Planning, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

## **Report on Performance**

WGE's 2021-23 Business Plan identified economic and social security, violence prevention, and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as strategic priorities. This year WGE is reporting on its success in achieving the objectives outlined for 2022-23.

### **Issue #1 – Economic and Social Security**

The economic and social well-being of women and gender-diverse individuals remains a top priority for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Various external and intersectional factors such as health, housing, food security, safety, cultural and political participation, race, ability, education, employment, income, social relationships, and supports, directly and indirectly impact gender equity in our province, country and world.

The Provincial Government recognizes the inequities that women and gender-diverse individuals throughout Newfoundland and Labrador face on a daily basis, and has taken concrete long-term measures to help alleviate such inequities.

Identifying, addressing, and actively working to reduce systemic economic and social barriers that hinder women and gender-diverse individuals, it is important that there be equitable participation in the economy an essential first step towards increasing labour market participation and social engagement. Designing and implementing policies, program, and initiatives that improve economic and social security, such as mandating an 'all of government' approach to the application of GBA+ on all policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets, and the implementation of Women's Employment Plans, as well as Gender Equity and Diversity Plans, are but two steps being taken by the Provincial Government to create a more equitable province for all.

## Goal

By March 31, 2023, WGE will have continued to strengthen an 'all of government' approach to address systemic barriers faced by women and gender-diverse individuals that impact economic and social security.

## 2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, through various initiatives, WGE will have further strengthened our community collaborations in advancing Provincial Government commitments to supporting women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals achieve their full potential.

## 2022-23 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by WGE in the area of economic and social security for the 2022-23 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2022-23)
Supported an 'all of government' approach to the application of GBA+ to policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets.	GBA+ is an analytical process that guides the systematic consideration of sex, gender, and other intersecting identity factors, to ensure the development of effective, equitable, and inclusive policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets.

	<p>GBA+ must be applied consistently at every step of the policy, program, service, legislation, and budget development cycle, to ensure gender issues are addressed and differing population needs are considered.</p> <p>In 2022-23, WGE provided support to Provincial Government departments and agencies, primarily through the provision of feedback on the development of new and existing policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets.</p>
Co-chaired the Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity.	<p>The Premier's Roundtable on Gender Equity is a multi-departmental, outcome-focused collaborative comprised of Indigenous leaders, opposition parties, community stakeholders, advocates, and those with lived experiences. It is designed to address barriers to gender equity and identify priorities. Information and knowledge captured at the Premier's Roundtable is used to help inform the ongoing work towards achieving true gender equity in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p> <p>The third session of the Premier's Roundtable was held on February 6, 2023, and included numerous presentations and discussions with community partners and stakeholders. Topics of intergenerational well-being and care work; access to health and culture; and taking action towards gender equity and well-being were discussed by more than 60 participants. These topics highlight the impact of social determinants of health on overall wellness. In the spirit of reconciliation,</p>

	<p>priority was given to Indigenous-led opening and closing ceremonies, which included smudging, the lighting of the Kullik, throat singing and drum dancing.</p>
<p>Undertook initiatives to encourage, promote, support, and retain women and gender-diverse individuals in leadership roles including running for elected office.</p>	<p>The encouragement, promotion, support, and retention of women and gender-diverse individuals remains an ongoing priority for WGE.</p> <p>The under-representation of women in leadership roles, including all levels of political office, is a direct result of systemic, attitudinal, and situational barriers that women and gender-diverse individuals face in society today.</p> <p>In October 2022, WGE allocated \$30,000 in project funding to Equal Voice NL to support the execution of the Future of the Vote event. Forty young women and gender-diverse individuals participated. Formerly known as Daughters of the Vote, the event was rebranded to encourage broader participation from women and gender-diverse people.</p> <p>It provided an opportunity for future leaders to network with others, build relationships and foster mentorship roles that will assist them in exploring their paths to boardroom tables, municipal councils and provincial and federal governments. Delegates participate in a full schedule of events focused on inclusion and diversity, as well as a mock debate in the House of Assembly.</p>

<p>Worked closely with the Department of Health and Community Services and stakeholders to begin to equitably increase access to fertility treatments in the province.</p>	<p>On March 16, 2022, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced the In-vitro Subsidy Program to provide assistance to those who need to travel out of province for in-vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments. This program aligns with government's commitment to increase access to fertility treatments. To be eligible for a subsidy, the individual must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a valid MCP card;</li> <li>• Be referred for IVF services by the Newfoundland and Labrador Fertility Services (NLFS) clinic to an IVF clinic of the individual's choice within Canada.</li> <li>• Be followed by NLFS for the duration of a pregnancy achieved through IVF; and,</li> <li>• Not have previously received a provincial subsidy for more than three cycles of IVF services.</li> </ul> <p>WGE provided extensive feedback, research assistance and meeting facilitation to develop the program.</p>
<p>Worked collaboratively with partner departments and proponents to negotiate new Women's Employment Plans and Gender Equity and Diversity Plans.</p>	<p>Newfoundland and Labrador's economy is primarily resource-based and requires a skilled workforce in occupations where women and gender-diverse individuals have been traditionally under-represented. Women's Employment Plans and Gender Equity and Diversity Plans for medium and large-scale projects are concrete ways in which the Provincial Government is working to increase the number of women in</p>

	<p>traditionally male-dominated occupations, such as in the skilled trades.</p> <p>WGE continues to collaborate with relevant departments, such as Industry, Energy and Technology to identify the need for, and the development and negotiation of, Gender Equity and Diversity Plans. As a result, one Gender Equity and Diversity Plan was put in place during 2022-23.</p> <p>In addition, WGE continues to evaluate all projects that come through the environmental assessment process, to require proponents of mid-size projects with moderate employment and duration of work to develop Women's Employment Plans. As a result, three Women's Employment Plans were put in place during 2022-23.</p>
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## Issue #2 – Violence Prevention

The Provincial Government is committed to working collaboratively with community stakeholders and Indigenous partners to implement long-term, systemic solutions aimed at addressing the root causes of gender-based violence in our province. Violence is a pervasive social, economic, cultural and legal problem that is rooted in varying types of inequality that continue to exist and flourish in our society - sexism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, and other biased attitudes. Violence destroys relationships and community supports, and has devastating long-term impacts on survivors, families, and communities. Ensuring grassroots knowledge and expertise is utilized to inform policies, programs, legislation, and frontline services for survivors of violence is essential to creating a society where women and gender-diverse individuals have the opportunity to live free from the threat of violence and reach their full potential.

## Goal

By March 31, 2023, WGE will have worked with community partners and government departments and agencies to develop an intersectional, research-based, and culturally-sensitive approach to violence prevention.

## 2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, WGE will have supported Provincial Government departments and agencies, and will have worked with community partners, Indigenous groups and organizations, to enhance gender-based violence approaches with changes to policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets.

## 2022-23 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by WGE in the area of violence prevention for the 2022-23 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2022-23)
Collaborated with community stakeholders and Indigenous groups and organizations in meaningful engagement activities aimed at helping to prevent violence in Indigenous communities.	<p>WGE worked collaboratively with the Provincial Indigenous Women's Steering Committee (PIWSC), with membership from all Indigenous Governments and Organizations throughout the province, to identify and address systemic solutions to violence in Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Stemming from PIWSC's 2022 report 'Hear Our Voices: MMIWG Policy Recommendations for the First Women of Newfoundland and Labrador' (HOV), the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council, of which WGE is a member, and co-chairs, was established in November 2022.</p> <p>Throughout the reporting period, WGE engaged in the following activities to help</p>



	<p>prevent violence in Indigenous communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the Indigenous Violence Prevention Grants Program, WGE provided \$241,500 to support 16 projects to help prevent violence against Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals in Indigenous communities;</li> <li>• Funding was provided to support the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Provincial Indigenous Women's Gathering held on November 29, 2022 in North West River. The Gathering brought together Indigenous women from around the province to share their past experiences, current realities, future aspirations, and to identify measures necessary to aid in the improvement of the quality of life of Indigenous women and gender-diverse individuals in their communities. The 2022-23 Gathering focused on coordinating responses to recommendations outlined in 'Hear Our Voices' report produced from the 2021-22 Gathering.</li> <li>• Worked collaboratively with Federal-Provincial and Territorial (FPT) colleagues to advance work in response to the Calls for Justice outlined in the National Inquiry's final report on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.</li> </ul>
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<p>Collaborated with Federal-Provincial/Territorial (FPT) colleagues to identify evidence-based violence prevention best practices and effective strategies</p>	<p>Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive, deadly and deeply-rooted human rights violations. It is a significant barrier to achieving gender equality, but it is preventable. Throughout the reporting period, WGE worked closely with FPT colleagues on the development of a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (GBV-NAP).</p> <p>In November 2022, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women approved and publicly endorsed the final GBV-NAP. The plan consists of five pillars that identify existing challenges and opportunities for action where governments can advance work. Engagement sessions on Pillar 1: Support for Survivors and their Families; Pillar 2: Prevention; Pillar 3: Promotion of Responsive Legal and Justice systems; Pillar 4: Support for Indigenous-led approaches and informed Responses; and Pillar 5: Social Infrastructure and Enabling Environment, to identify opportunities for action for the provincial Implementation Plan were held at the end of this fiscal reporting cycle. Bilateral negotiations with Women and Gender Equality Canada are also underway to secure provincial funding to implement the GBV-NAP over the next four years.</p> <p>During the negotiation and bilateral agreement process, an Implementation Plan, Data Plan and Results Framework will be determined. Through this agreement we will see an increase to leadership, accountability and oversight</p>
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	of the GBV sector, including increasing leadership capacity and developing comprehensive data collection that reflects the realities of GBV in the province.
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### Issue #3 – Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

In February 2019, the Provincial Government committed to an ‘all of government’ approach to GBA+. This commitment was further strengthened in September 2020, when all departmental Ministers’ Mandate Letters noted a required GBA+ analysis on all policies approach. GBA+ is an analytical process that guides the systematic consideration of sex, gender and other intersecting identity factors to ensure the development of effective, equitable, and inclusive policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets. GBA+ aims to achieve equity, rather than equal treatment, through the examination of disaggregated data, as well as social, economic and cultural conditions.

It is essential that GBA+ be applied consistently at every step of the policy, program, service, legislation and budget development cycle, to ensure gender issues are addressed and that differing population needs are taken into consideration. Essentially, GBA+ helps to mitigate potential negative impacts on diverse individuals with various backgrounds and abilities by considering the outcomes for all, at the very earliest stages of policy, program and service development.

While WGE has delivered substantive training to Provincial Government departments and agencies since 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily slowed GBA+ government-wide training, with WGE exploring innovative approaches that extend beyond in-person training sessions. For example, WGE is working with the Public Service Commission’s Centre for Learning and Development to develop online training modules specific to Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Goal

By March 31, 2023, WGE will have strengthened the capacity of departments and agencies to fully understand and apply GBA+ to policies, programs, services, legislation and budgets in order to ensure equitable outcomes for women, girls, and gender diverse populations.

## 2022-23 Objective

By March 31, 2023, WGE will have expanded GBA+ training to all government departments, as well as agencies, boards and commissions.

## 2022-23 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by WGE in the area of GBA+ for the 2022-23 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2022-23)
Enhanced GBA+ training opportunities through in-person, virtual and online training options.	<p>Through collaboration with the Public Service Commission's Centre for Learning and Development (CLD), GBA+ training is now available to all public service employees through the PSAccess learning platform.</p> <p>WGE hosts regular GBA+ training sessions for public service employees.</p> <p>There were five training sessions scheduled for spring 2023, and an additional six sessions have been added for summer 2023. Training sessions will continue into the fall of 2023.</p> <p>WGE is collaborating with the CLD to create an online training module on GBA+, to include with mandatory training for onboarding new public servants.</p> <p>WGE also provides in-person and virtual training sessions to departments and teams when requested.</p> <p>Some 850 members of the public service have received training.</p>
Developed guidelines and feedback mechanisms for policy analysis	WGE developed a GBA+ checklist that can be used by departments and

	<p>agencies as they complete GBA+ analysis on new or existing policies, programs, services, legislation or budgets.</p> <p>WGE continues to provide support to Provincial Government departments and agencies as they undertake the GBA+ process.</p>
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## Opportunities and Challenges

Far too often, women and gender-diverse individuals experience systemic challenges that require long-term systemic solutions. This is especially true when coupled with intersecting identity factors such as socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity. Barriers grounded in stereotypes, discrimination, organizational culture, and a lack of support at institutional and individual levels, can impact all facets of life.

In order to achieve true gender equity, it is vital that the Provincial Government works collectively and collaboratively with community, Indigenous and organizational partners to address societal, cultural and institutional barriers, with targeted solutions for inclusion. The advancement and inclusion of women and gender-diverse individuals is crucial to ensuring the future success of the province.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have significant impacts on individuals and the economy. It has also provided opportunities for collaboration that have not existed before now.

The ability to design and implement the systemic interdisciplinary measures necessary to address the root causes of historical inequalities and improve the status and well-being of women and gender-diverse individuals in our province is achievable.

## Financial Information

<b>Office of the Executive Council - Women and Gender Equality</b>	<b>Original (\$)</b>	<b>Actual (\$)</b>
<b>Minister's Office</b>		
Salaries	200,100	227,612
Transportation and Communications	41,900	22,354
Supplies	2,500	532
Purchased Services	1,800	22
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	500	-
<b>Total: Minister's Office</b>	<b>246,800</b>	<b>250,520</b>
<b>WGE</b>		
Salaries	961,800	800,353
Transportation and Communications	60,800	36,652
Supplies	4,700	2,579
Professional Services	270,000	158,470
Purchased services	337,000	255,457
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	1,000	3,950
Grants and Subsidies	2,834,900	2,943,899
Revenue	-	(4,920)
<b>Total: WGE</b>	<b>4,470,200</b>	<b>4,196,440</b>
<b>Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women (PACSW)</b>		
Grants and Subsidies	431,500	431,500
<b>Total: PACSW</b>	<b>431,500</b>	<b>431,500</b>
<b>TOTAL: WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY</b>	<b>5,148,500</b>	<b>4,878,460</b>

\*This financial information is unaudited

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2023. Audited financial statements are a requirement at the Provincial Government level and are made public through the Public Accounts process. WGE is not required to provide a separate financial statement.

