

House of Assembly
Newfoundland & Labrador



Colonial Building
1850-1959

Confederation Building
1960-present



2019-20 ***Annual Performance Report***

House of Assembly Service





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I am pleased to present the 2019-20 Annual Performance Report of the House of Assembly Service (HOAS). This report outlines the accomplishments of the HOAS toward the objectives for the reporting period as identified in the 2017-20 Activity Plan.

The HOAS was established by statute in the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act** to support the functioning of the House of Assembly and its Committees, the Management Commission, and Members of the House of Assembly.

This report was prepared under my direction in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for a Category 3 entity. As the Speaker, I am accountable for the actual results reported in this document.

Hon. Scott Reid, MHA
Speaker of the House of Assembly



OVERVIEW

The House of Assembly Service (HOAS) was established by statute in the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act** to support the functioning of the House of Assembly and its committees, the House of Assembly Management Commission and Members of the House of Assembly.

As of March 31, 2020, the House of Assembly Service had the following number of employees (this includes permanent, sessional and temporary employees in Office of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk, Corporate and Members' Services Division and Information Management Division):

Female:	37
Male:	11
Total:	48

The Speaker is the impartial presiding officer of the House, the guardian of its rights and privileges, and is Chair of the House of Assembly Management Commission. The Office of the Speaker provides support to the Speaker in carrying out these duties and responsibilities.

The Office of the Clerk supports the activities of the Clerk of the House of Assembly in all parliamentary and administrative matters. It provides support services to all Committees of the House of Assembly, and provides full policy and administrative support to the House of Assembly Management Commission.

The Corporate and Members' Services Division provides services in Accounts Payable; Financial Planning and Reporting; General Operations and Purchasing; and Human Resources and Payroll Administration. The Information Management Division includes the services of the Legislative Library, Broadcast Centre, Hansard and Records Management.



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HIGHLIGHTS & PARTNERSHIPS

In April 2019, the House of Assembly implemented closed captioning on routine proceedings of the House of Assembly (Members' statements, Ministerial statements, question period, and petitions) as well as for special proceedings such as the Speech from the Throne and Budget Speech. Closed captioning is available via the House of Assembly webcast (www.assembly.nl.ca) and via the House of Assembly television channel for viewers in certain locations. Work continues with service providers to implement closed captioning in locations where this feature is not currently available. As the work of the Legislature affects all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, the House of Assembly was pleased to improve accessibility by offering closed captioning for routine and special proceedings.

On May 16, 2019 a provincial general election took place. As detailed further in this report, there is always a substantial amount of work and planning required to transition between general assemblies, including orientation/training for Members and their staff, office set-up for Members and caucuses, and the provision of other resources. In addition to supporting this work during the transition, the House of Assembly Service also supports Elections NL in the financial and administrative processing required to execute a general election (setting up and paying election workers across the province; issuing payments to vendors, etc.). This work increases workload substantially leading up to and following an election.

The 2019 General Election returned a minority government for the first time in Newfoundland and Labrador since 1972 (in 1972 the House of Assembly never sat as a minority parliament and another general election was called thereafter). This circumstance also increased workload substantially for the House of Assembly Service due to the research and planning required to navigate through procedural anomalies that occur in a minority parliament. Given we had never operated as a minority parliament in Newfoundland and Labrador prior to this, there were no established precedents for many situations that occurred which required research and consultation with other jurisdictions, as well as additional analysis and planning.

In June 2019, a draft Bill entitled "Real Estate Trading Act, 2019" was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Services for review under Standing Order 79. The Committee's findings and recommendations were required to be reported to the House in the Fall 2019 sitting. The final report was tabled on November 4, 2019, providing an overview of the work undertaken by the Government Services Committee in reviewing the draft Bill. The Committee heard submissions from Digital Government and Service NL (department responsible for the related legislation); the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Realtors (NLAR); and one individual from the public who is licensed as both a real estate agent and mortgage broker. Following its review and consideration of the information provided in the various submissions,



the Committee recommended that the draft Bill be introduced in the House without amendment.

On December 2, 2019, the House of Assembly unanimously concurred in the Final Report of the Privileges and Elections Committee on the Development of a Legislature-specific Harassment-free Workplace Policy, April 2019. The work was directed to the Committee by a Private Members' Resolution passed by the House on May 2, 2018. With concurrence in the final report and its recommendations, the House of Assembly passed the **Harassment-Free Workplace Policy Applicable to Complaints Against Members of the House of Assembly** (the Policy) proposed by the Privileges and Elections Committee of the 48th General Assembly. The Policy came into effect on April 1, 2020.



REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

Maintaining the principles of accountability and openness will always be a priority for the House of Assembly Service. A review of its lines of business with a forward-looking approach has identified the following priority areas over the 2017-20 planning cycle.

ISSUE 1: SUPPORT TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The House of Assembly Management Commission establishes, implements and controls financial and administrative policies applicable to the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Service and the Statutory Offices. The Commission oversees the finances of the House of Assembly including its budget, revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities. It ensures the proper administration of allowances for Members, as well as reimbursement and payment of their expenditures.

The support of the House of Assembly Service is critical to the Commission in carrying out its mandate as established in the **House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act**. The HOAS conducts research of issues; prepares briefing notes and other materials for Commission meetings; prepares and tracks Minutes of all meetings; and ensures that all necessary work to properly action the decisions of the Commission is carried out.

Objectives:

By March 31, 2020, the House of Assembly Service will have supported the operations of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

<i>Planned Results</i>	<i>Actual Results</i>
Conducted research and prepared all briefing materials necessary for meetings of the Commission.	The House of Assembly Management Commission held a total of six meetings throughout the reporting period. Research was conducted, and briefing materials and other supporting documents were prepared as required for each meeting. All briefing materials (except for <i>in camera meetings</i>) can be viewed at: www.assembly.nl.ca/ManComm/Meetings/
Prepared and distributed Minutes of all Commission meetings.	The Minutes for all meetings of the Commission were prepared, approved,



<i>Planned Results</i>	<i>Actual Results</i>
	distributed, tabled in the House of Assembly and posted to the House of Assembly website as required under the House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act . All Minutes for the reporting period can be viewed at: www.assembly.nt.ca/ManComm/Meetings/
Tracked all Minutes of the Commission and completed the work necessary to properly action them.	A total of 38 Minutes were issued by the Management Commission during the reporting period. All Minutes of the Commission have been appropriately actioned and completed where possible.
Updated and maintained manuals and templates that support the work of the Commission, as necessary.	A review of the existing Policy and Procedures Manual of the Management Commission has been completed and a revised version will be brought forward to the Commission for approval.

Discussion of Results

The House of Assembly Service fulfilled its mandate to support the operations of the House of Assembly Management Commission throughout this reporting period and the 2017-20 reporting cycle by ensuring that briefing materials and supporting documents were prepared and distributed for all meetings; Minutes were approved, distributed and tabled; and that decisions of the Commission were appropriately actioned and completed where possible.

Briefing materials for all regular meetings of the Management Commission are posted to the House of Assembly website, as well as all approved Minutes, directives and rule amendments.



ISSUE 2: SUPPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

A main line of business for the HOAS is providing support to the forty Members of the House of Assembly. The HOAS is responsible for ensuring that all Members have the tools and resources they require to effectively carry out their role as elected officials. While supports and services are provided to Members on an ongoing basis, the volume of work required by the HOAS increases following general elections and by-elections. A general election took place on May 16, 2019.

By March 31, 2020, the House of Assembly Service will have continued to provide the necessary support to Members of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

<i>Planned Results</i>	<i>Actual Results</i>
Revised and updated Member guides, manuals and orientation materials as required.	In preparation for the transition between the 48 th and 49 th General Assemblies, significant work was undertaken in a short period of time to ensure materials were prepared and updated. The Members' Administration Guide used during the 48 th General Assembly was re-written and re-titled to the Members' Guide to Resources and Allowances, and significant updates were also completed to the Members' Parliamentary Guide. A manual was also developed respecting guidelines and accountabilities for Members' records. In addition, five new training modules were developed on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Travel and Living– Conducting Constituency Business and Office Operations– Conduct and Accountability– Parliamentary Procedures– Parliamentary Privilege
Provided training and orientation to newly elected Members and their staff, as required.	Following the election of the 49 th General Assembly, mandatory training sessions on the topics mentioned previously were delivered to the 14 first-time elected MHAs and MHAs returning from the previous general assembly. In



<i>Planned Results</i>	<i>Actual Results</i>
	addition, separate training on those topics were also delivered to constituency assistants. As turnover occurs, newly employed constituency assistants also receive the training, as required.
Provided ongoing services to Members, as required, to support them in carrying out their roles.	Non-partisan services were provided to all Members and their staff, as required. This includes support in submitting and processing expense claims; purchasing goods and services; parliamentary advice; tendering, acquiring and setting up constituency offices; and research and reference support.

Discussion of Results

The core mandate of the House of Assembly Service is to provide non-partisan support, services and advice to all forty Members to assist them in carrying out their role as elected officials. A wide variety of services are provided to Members on a daily basis, ranging from expense-claims processing, purchasing of goods and services, library reference and research, acquiring and setting up constituency offices, managing records and providing parliamentary and procedural advice.

The transition from one general assembly to another (following a general election) requires significant preparation, planning and execution of the House of Assembly Service to ensure readiness for the period following (swearing-in of Members; orientation/training for Members and development of related materials; office set-up and provision of other resources). The 48th General Assembly was dissolved on April 17, 2019 (a provincial general election took place on May 16, 2019), and the 49th General Assembly was formally constituted on June 10, 2019 with the swearing-in of Members.

While some of the work related to the transition between general assemblies did not commence until the general election had concluded, substantial preparation was required to ensure readiness. As the provincial general election was initially scheduled to take place during Fall 2019, the change in date resulted in a shorter time frame to complete necessary preparation. The Legislature reconvening shortly after the provincial election also presented challenges for transitioning Members to a new general assembly, while also supporting a sitting of the House and the budget process.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

During the Spring 2020 sitting (on March 12), with the threat of COVID-19 just starting to ramp up, the House of Assembly passed a motion that would allow extension of the adjournment following the regularly scheduled constituency week break by the Speaker if advised by Government it was in the public interest. Effective March 18, the Minister of Health and Community Services declared COVID-19 a public health emergency under the **Public Health Protection and Promotion Act**. As a result, the House did not resume as scheduled for the resumption of the Spring 2020 sitting on March 23, 2020. The House convened for special one-day sittings of the House on March 26 and May 5, and from June 6 to 18 to deal with business of urgent public importance in the unprecedented situation. A significant amount of planning and coordination was undertaken by the Legislature and its staff to ensure the House could resume and operate in a manner that protected the health and safety of Members and employees who were required to attend in person.

When the House met on May 5, 2020, it passed a resolution to establish a Select Committee of Rules and Procedures Governing Virtual Proceedings. The Committee was tasked with determining the manner in which the House may conduct virtual proceedings such that Members can continue to fulfill their parliamentary duties as legislators and provide for accountability at a time when it is difficult to regularly attend the House in person due to travel restrictions, health vulnerabilities and physical distancing requirements. The resolution required the Committee's final report to be tabled by July 1, 2020. In developing its final report and recommendations, the Select Committee held seven meetings, all of which were conducted virtually, which marked the first time any proceeding of the House of Assembly was conducted in this manner.

The Select Committee recommended the use of videoconferencing technology to enable all Members to participate in proceedings of the House of Assembly and its Committees in order to exercise the full scope of their parliamentary duties during the COVID-19 pandemic should in-person sittings not be possible. A significant amount of research, work and planning was required by House of Assembly Service employees to support the Committee in completing its work within the short time frame stipulated in the order of reference from the House. Work is continuing since the Select Committee has tabled its final report to ensure that the appropriate technology, infrastructure and parliamentary procedural guidance is in place to support Member's participating in House of Assembly proceedings virtually should it be required due to circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The House of Assembly also established a Select Committee on Democratic Reform by resolutions passed on December 2, 2019 and March 5, 2020. In accordance with the resolution of March 5, the Committee must report its progress to the House before the end of the 2021 winter-spring sitting. The Select Committee on



Democratic Reform held its first meeting on July 30, 2020 where discussions began respecting priorities for its work over the coming months. As the Committee moves forward with its work, significant research and analysis will be required by the House of Assembly Service to support this Committee.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Audited financial information will be included in the Annual Report of the House of Assembly Management Commission

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REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND

LEGISLATURE
Statement of Expenditure and Related Revenue
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
1.1.01. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT			
01. Salaries	1,806,340	1,820,600	1,932,600
Operating Accounts:			
Employee Benefits	5,316	5,500	4,500
Transportation and Communications	49,850	67,400	68,800
Supplies	25,560	36,200	36,200
Professional Services	46,272	61,100	61,100
Purchased Services	63,854	67,400	62,000
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	39,225	87,100	92,500
02. Operating Accounts	230,077	324,700	325,100
	2,036,417	2,145,300	2,257,700
02. Revenue - Provincial	(2,507)	-	-
Total: Administrative Support	2,033,910	2,145,300	2,257,700
1.1.02. LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT			
01. Salaries	653,607	660,500	660,500
Operating Accounts:			
Employee Benefits	254	700	900
Transportation and Communications	4,620	7,600	10,200
Supplies	47,393	49,600	47,000
Purchased Services	7,402	8,500	8,500
02. Operating Accounts	59,669	66,400	66,600
Total: Legislative Library and Records Management	713,276	726,900	727,100



REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND

LEGISLATURE (CONTINUED)

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
1.1.03. HANSARD AND THE BROADCAST CENTRE			
01. Salaries	628,040	638,000	638,000
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	710	800	600
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	11,571	13,300	13,300
<i>Supplies</i>	32,229	45,400	26,600
<i>Professional Services</i>	-	1,200	20,000
<i>Purchased Services</i>	157,732	211,400	213,700
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	236,247	237,300	235,000
02. Operating Accounts	438,489	509,400	509,200
Total: Hansard and the Broadcast Centre	1,066,529	1,147,400	1,147,200
1.1.04. MEMBERS' RESOURCES			
01. Salaries	6,562,055	6,573,200	6,532,600
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	37,677	37,700	5,200
<i>Professional Services</i>	3,480	3,500	-
<i>Purchased Services</i>	20,277	21,200	10,000
02. Operating Accounts	61,434	62,400	15,200
09. Allowances and Assistance	1,225,393	2,351,800	2,362,800
10. Grants and Subsidies	2,972	4,500	4,500
	7,851,854	8,991,900	8,915,100
02. Revenue - Provincial	(68,854)	-	-
Total: Members' Resources	7,783,000	8,991,900	8,915,100



REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND

LEGISLATURE (CONTINUED)

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
1.1.05. HOUSE OPERATIONS			
01. Salaries	152,963	153,800	193,700
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	6,150	6,200	5,900
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	57,548	99,000	125,700
<i>Supplies</i>	5,491	14,500	14,500
<i>Professional Services</i>	720	3,900	3,900
<i>Purchased Services</i>	65,327	70,300	41,500
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	221	1,700	1,700
02. Operating Accounts	135,457	195,600	193,200
10. Grants and Subsidies	8,241	11,500	11,500
Total: House Operations	296,661	360,900	398,400
1.1.06. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS CAUCUS			
01. Salaries	344,336	345,100	475,300
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	-	1,700	1,700
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	12,440	23,000	23,000
<i>Supplies</i>	10,145	13,200	13,200
<i>Purchased Services</i>	1,817	10,000	10,000
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	155	3,200	3,200
02. Operating Accounts	24,557	51,100	51,100
10. Grants and Subsidies	27,921	29,500	38,600
Total: Government Members Caucus	396,814	425,700	565,000



REPORT ON THE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND

LEGISLATURE (CONTINUED)

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY			
<i>CURRENT</i>			
1.1.07. OFFICIAL OPPOSITION CAUCUS			
01. Salaries	1,062,701	1,091,700	950,600
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	232	2,500	2,500
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	35,807	71,700	75,900
<i>Supplies</i>	15,832	19,900	19,900
<i>Purchased Services</i>	16,256	18,700	18,700
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	8,547	8,900	4,700
02. Operating Accounts	76,674	121,700	121,700
10. Grants and Subsidies	20,494	21,000	11,900
Total: Official Opposition Caucus	1,159,869	1,234,400	1,084,200
1.1.08. THIRD PARTY CAUCUS			
01. Salaries	386,938	412,000	391,800
Operating Accounts:			
<i>Employee Benefits</i>	-	1,000	1,000
<i>Transportation and Communications</i>	12,081	20,300	21,100
<i>Supplies</i>	6,472	7,800	7,800
<i>Purchased Services</i>	3,407	8,100	8,400
<i>Property, Furnishings and Equipment</i>	2,925	3,000	1,900
02. Operating Accounts	24,885	40,200	40,200
10. Grants and Subsidies	11,392	11,900	11,900
Total: Third Party Caucus	423,215	464,100	443,900
TOTAL: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY	13,873,274	15,496,600	15,538,600
TOTAL: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY	13,873,274	15,496,600	15,538,600