

**Ministry of
Social Development**

**2016/17
Annual Service Plan Report**



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Minister's Message and Accountability Statement

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Social Development Annual Service Plan Report, which provides a summary of our performance and highlights our achievements.

Over the last year, the ministry has continued to enhance and expand its services and supports and to make investments to ensure all British Columbians have the opportunity to create a positive future and become financially independent.

Some highlights include: increasing disability assistance rates; exempting Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits and EI benefits for parents caring for critically ill children for people on income and disability assistance; and committing \$7 million for the Community Poverty Reduction Fund to develop solutions to poverty at the community level.

As of March 31, 2017, 4,670 people had taken part in the ministry's Single Parent Employment Initiative, a program that provides the supports single parents on income or disability assistance need to get back in the workforce.

In 2016/17, the ministry invested almost \$3 billion to ensure low-income British Columbians and people with disabilities had access to the supports and services to make their lives better, participate in their communities, and benefit from B.C.'s growing economy.

As the Minister of the Ministry of Social Development I look forward to leading a ministry that is dedicated to helping create a brighter future for British Columbians in need.

The *Ministry of Social Development 2016/17 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2016/17 – 2018/19 Service Plan. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Michelle Stilwell
Minister of Social Development

June 13, 2017

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Social Development¹ focuses on providing British Columbians in need with a system of supports to help them achieve their social and economic independence and secure a better tomorrow as envisioned in the 2016/17 BC Strategic Plan. In pursuit of this, the ministry's key responsibilities include:

- Providing income and disability assistance to those in need;
- Delivering employment programs and services to unemployed and underemployed individuals;
- Supporting community living services that help adults with developmental disabilities and their families develop connections and inclusion with their community;
- Supporting social innovation and social entrepreneurship to improve social outcomes for all British Columbians; and
- Leading the implementation of Accessibility 2024, BC's 10-year action plan to become the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities by 2024.

The ministry is guided by three key pieces of legislation: the [Employment and Assistance Act](#), the [Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act](#), and the [Community Living Authority Act](#). The ministry also provides funding and oversight for [Community Living BC](#). Additional information about the ministry and its services can be found at the ministry's [website](#).

Strategic Direction and Context

The ministry delivers programs and services to support government's priorities and achieve direction set out in the Minister's [Mandate Letter](#). Consistent with the [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#), this work includes support of a balanced provincial budget through prudent fiscal and performance management. The ministry leads the implementation of the [Accessibility 2024](#) Action Plan and supports the [BC Jobs Plan](#) and the [Skills for Jobs Blueprint](#) through an effective employment program. The ministry has implemented a number of policy changes for families on income and disability assistance to support the 2016/17 [BC Strategic Plan's](#) vision for a secure tomorrow, continues to enhance client service and to lead government's efforts to support social innovation across the province.

Ministry programs and services are designed to help citizens build a solid connection with communities and the labour market. They respect the needs of British Columbians, providing temporary help to those who can work, and longer-term aid to those who, through disability or other barriers, have a more difficult time working or who cannot work.

British Columbia's real GDP increased by 3.7 per cent in 2016 (according to preliminary GDP by industry data from Statistics Canada) – the strongest growth among provinces. Employment in BC grew by 3.2 per cent in 2016, its fastest annual pace since 1994. Consumer spending was strong for a third consecutive year as retail sales were supported by strong employment growth, increased tourism, interprovincial migration and low interest rates. BC's housing market saw elevated levels of activity in 2016, with the highest number of annual housing starts since 1993. BC manufacturing shipments and exports expanded in 2016 as goods exports to both the US and the rest of the world increased.

¹ Effective June 12, 2017 the ministry's name changed to the Ministry of Social Development from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation.

The BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) program provides temporary assistance for individuals who are unemployed or underemployed and disability assistance for individuals who have a disability designation. Changes to the economic environment have an impact on BCEA caseloads. For 2016/17 improvements to the economy and labour market conditions were offset by continued deterioration of the Alberta economy as unemployed workers returned to BC. The result was a modest forecasted increase to the Temporary Assistance caseload. Growth in the Disability Assistance caseload continued as the result of demographic shifts, in particular the aging of the province's population. Demand for services also grew for Community Living BC. As the primary funder, the ministry continued to work closely with Community Living BC in 2016/17 to ensure strategies were in place to manage these demands.

The ministry continued to modernize its BCEA program service delivery in 2016/17. Enhancements to digital online services through the My Self-Serve portal provided a range of self-serve options in addition to phone, face-to-face, email and fax. They also respond to citizen expectations for online service including 24/7 service and access anywhere in the province.

Accessibility 2024 is the Province's 10-year action plan to make BC the most accessible province in Canada for people with disabilities. The plan's 12 building blocks – ranging from employment to accessible service delivery – reflect themes that emerged from extensive public consultation. Throughout 2016/17 the ministry continued to lead cross-government commitments and partnerships with business and the disability communities to help improve accessibility for British Columbians living with disabilities.

An independent evaluation of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC) in March 2016 found that the program had made considerable progress in achieving its intended objectives. The evaluation continues to be used to assist with future program development. A strong labour market in 2016/17, proactive promotion of EPBC services by service providers in their communities, and increased efforts to address skills gaps through supports for successful labour market re-entry in sustainable skilled positions all contributed to improved employment outcomes of EPBC clients.

Report on Performance

In 2016/17 the ministry further advanced the priorities identified in the Minister's Mandate Letter, ensuring continuous support for a balanced provincial budget while providing increasingly effective and accessible services to our clients and improved services for Persons with Disabilities. Highlights include:

- Providing access to ministry services at 30 integrated Service BC locations across the province;
- Streamlining on-line services for income and disability assistance applicants by combining the online application tool (Self -Serve Assessment and Application) and client services portal (My Self-Serve);
- Exempting Employment Insurance (EI) maternity and parental benefits and EI benefits for parents caring for critically ill children for people on income and disability assistance;
- Streamlining access to disability assistance for people who are already eligible for a number of comparable government programs;

- Increasing disability assistance rates and eliminating the \$45 bus pass administration fee for people on disability assistance;
- Continuing to implement Accessibility 2024, and releasing the Year Two Progress update;
- Supporting the second annual Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month, third annual Registered Disability Savings Plan Awareness Month; and third annual Disability Employment Month including a variety of activities hosted at WorkBC Centres across the province;
- Supporting the ongoing work of the Presidents Group to engage the disability sector and business community in increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
- Formally evaluating the Employment Program of BC;
- Expanding the Community and Employer Partnerships program to include a Social Innovation stream that supports projects to address community needs and social challenges like improving outcomes for job-seekers who are unemployed or face barriers to employment;
- Convening Social Enterprise Month including a range of workshops and activities;
- Conducting the Social Innovation Youth Awards recognition program that recognized the important contributions youth are making to the lives of British Columbians through social innovations;
- Hosting the B.C. Summit on Social Innovation that brought together over 200 British Columbians who are champions of social innovation in their communities;
- Publishing a comprehensive inventory of social innovation activities across all sectors; and
- Implementation, with Community Living B.C., of an Accountability Framework supported by a performance framework and Strategic Engagement Strategy, incorporating the [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#) to ensure that budget targets are met and funds are being directed to meet client needs in the most effective way.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

The Ministry's goals, objectives and strategies align with the provincial [Taxpayer Accountability Principles](#) of cost consciousness (efficiency), service, integrity and respect and focus on providing positive outcomes for the citizens of British Columbia aligned with the 2016/17 [BC Strategic Plan's](#) vision for a secure tomorrow.

Goal 1: *Eligible British Columbians in need have access to income assistance and supports in a timely manner.*

Objective 1.1: **Basic income assistance is available to British Columbians to assist with shelter and support costs.**

Strategies

- Provide clients with timely supports for which they are eligible.
- Assist clients to access other potential income sources to improve their independence and self-reliance, including federal Employment Insurance benefits and Canada Pension Plan early retirement and disability benefits.
- Ensure administrative fairness through the provision of an effective and efficient reconsideration and appeal system.

Objective 1.2: Supplementary supports are available to meet the changing and individual needs of British Columbians.

Strategies

- Provide eligible clients with supplemental assistance such as subsidized bus passes, dental and optical assistance.
- Provide eligible low income seniors with the Senior’s Supplement.
- Provide children from eligible low and moderate income families with dental and optical assistance through the Healthy Kids Program.

Performance Measure 1: Percentage of ministry decisions confirmed on appeal

Performance Measure	Baseline	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percentage of decisions confirmed on appeal	90%*	90%	90%	92%	90%	90%

Data Source: Employment and Appeals Tribunal Annual Reports

*Average of percentages reported in the Employment and Assistance Appeals Tribunal Annual Reports 2011/12-2014/15

Discussion

This measure reflects the number of ministry reconsideration decisions that are confirmed by the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal. The ministry endeavors to ensure decisions are made accurately, carefully monitoring the outcome of the tribunal reviews. The percentage of appeal decisions that confirm ministry reconsideration decisions is an indicator of how well the ministry is performing in its decision-making. The higher than expected percentage of appeal decisions that confirm ministry decisions results in part from training and an increased emphasis on thoroughly documenting the reasons for the original eligibility decisions.

Performance Measure 2: Clients who choose to utilize My Self-Serve

Performance Measure	2014/15 Baseline	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Clients choosing My-Self Serve	9,500	28,000	28,000	39,000	40,000	45,000

Data Source: Service Delivery Division, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

The ministry’s online portal My Self-Serve (MYSS), which was implemented provincially in the fall of 2014, provides an online service delivery channel for ministry clients. This measure reflects the number of clients registered to use MYSS. The portal was enhanced in 2017 and integrated with the online application. Clients can now fully complete their applications online, including uploading their documents and using an electronic signature. The online portal modernizes ministry services by offering more flexibility in how, when and where clients access service and by increasing convenience, self-sufficiency, and independence. Clients can choose to use MYSS to access their file

information 24/7, submit their monthly report, upload documents from a mobile phone or computer, communicate with ministry employees and print confirmation of assistance.

The ministry has effectively communicated the availability of MYSS and now registers clients as part of the standard application process. As a result, 2016/17 performance exceeded target for total number of registrants and, in line with the ministry’s 2017/18 Service Plan, future year targets are adjusted higher than what were posted with the 2016/17 Service Plan. The ministry is leveraging and integrating technology into its service delivery model, leading the way for government to provide modern, convenient, reliable and secure services.

Note the description of this measure was changed in the 2017/18 - 2019/20 Service Plan to say “Clients who register for My Self-Serve”, which more accurately describes the measure. There was no change to the measure itself.

Goal 2: *Eligible British Columbians in need have access to services that support increased independence and sustainable employment.*

Objective 2.1: *The resilience of families in B.C. is enhanced so they can achieve increasingly positive economic outcomes and greater well-being.*

Strategies

- Support people to work by ensuring ministry programs and initiatives reduce unnecessary dependency on income assistance.
- Work with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to identify opportunities that will provide single parents with enhanced services and supports that secure employment and independence.
- Consider individual client needs in delivering employment programs and services.

Performance Measure 3: *Employment-obligated clients as a percentage of the population aged 19-64*

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Employment-obligated clients as a percentage of the population aged 19-64*	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

* BC Stats regularly revises their population numbers including past population numbers. For consistency and accuracy, this measure is always reported using the most current population data. As a result, there may be changes in the measure from one report to another due solely to changes in BC Stats population estimates.

Discussion

This measure tracks employment obligated clients who receive temporary assistance as a percentage of B.C.’s working age population between the ages of 19 and 64. Employment obligated clients must participate in employment-related activities for the purpose of achieving financial independence. A decline in this measure suggests greater independence from temporary assistance among working age British Columbians.

The employable caseload is sensitive to the state of the labour market. The downturn in Alberta that began in late 2014 resulted in an increase in net migration to BC from Alberta. As a result, out-of-province cases starting income assistance began to rise contributing to recent increases in the employment obligated temporary assistance caseload. A prolonged downturn in the Alberta economy could result in more people moving to B.C., potentially putting further pressure on the income assistance caseload.

Performance Measure 4: Median length of time clients who have employment obligations receive Income Assistance (in months)

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Estimate*	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Median length of time clients with employment obligations receive assistance	7.5	8.2	7.5	8.2	7.5	7.5

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

* Since median durations measure the number of months it takes for half of a cohort of new employment obligated clients to stop receiving assistance, the measure looks forward in time. The reporting lag means the actual figure for 2016/17 is not available and therefore an estimate is provided.

Discussion

The ministry closely monitors the length of time clients receive assistance. Median durations measure the number of months it takes for half a cohort of new starting employment obligated clients to stop receiving assistance. High durations signify new employment-obligated cases are having difficulty becoming independent and are at greater risk of becoming a long-term client. Durations on assistance can rise if economic opportunities are limited or because new clients have more barriers to employment.

Median durations for 2016/17 were higher than originally targeted. Following five years of decline, the number of people unemployed began to rise in 2015, increasing by 4,500 followed by a further 1,400 increase in 2016 bringing the number of unemployed to 152,800. Over this period, the number of people unemployed rose at a slower rate than the number of people in the labour force. As a result, the unemployment rate declined from 6.1% in 2014 to 6% in 2016. The size of the labour force began to rise in 2015 with growth accelerating in 2016. These trends suggest that the increase in the number of people unemployed has been due to a greater number of workers entering the labour market to look

for work rather than a reduction in employment. This suggests, in turn, that there are more workers in the labour market looking for work, creating additional competition for income assistance clients.

The Ministry is monitoring the situation and anticipates that the targets may have to be adjusted in future Service Plans to reflect the changes in the labour market.

Objective 2.2: Ensure effectiveness of the Employment Program of BC.

Strategies

- Reduce barriers and provide employment service and supports to all clients including Persons with Disabilities, immigrants, Aboriginal people and other specialized populations, so they move towards independence and self-reliance.
- Work collaboratively with partner ministries through the Labour Market Priorities Board to ensure ministry employment programs and supports are aligned with the priorities of the BC Jobs Plan and the Skills for Jobs Blueprint.
- Create opportunities for partnerships and innovation at the community and employer level.

Performance Measure 5: Percentage of Employment Program of BC clients obtaining Employment

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percentage of Employment Program of BC case-managed clients who achieve employment.*	41.7%	50%	51%	55%	53%	55%

Data Source: Employment and Labour Market Services Division, Ministry of Social Development.

Employment is defined as when a client attains a full-time (30 or more hours/week) or part-time (when part-time employment is desired; less than 30 hours/week) job, or self-employment (business is implemented and considered operational), after the client has completed all EPBC services.

Discussion

This performance measure reflects the percentage of case-managed Employment Program of BC clients who achieved employment. Enhancements to program practices in recent years have continued to have a positive impact on the number of clients achieving employment which, in 2016/17, exceeded the ministry’s expectations and surpassed the 2016/17 target by 4 percentage points. Over the coming years, the Ministry expects the employment rate to stabilize and will continue to monitor program outcomes and adjust targets in future service plans as necessary.

Goal 3: Support British Columbians in need who have disabilities by providing an effective system of support to gain and maintain meaningful independence and inclusion in their communities.

Objective 3.1: Support a comprehensive and integrated system of supports and services for Persons with Disabilities.

Strategies

- Provide adults with disabilities access to responsive services to support them in participating as full citizens and in achieving improved outcomes consistent with the goals outlined in Accessibility 2024.
- Work collaboratively with other ministries and local, regional and provincial partners to continue the integration and alignment of innovative and inclusive disability supports and services to improve outcomes for Persons with Disabilities and their families.
- Monitor and support the transition process for special needs youth who are entering adulthood to ensure they access the ministry’s disability assistance program and the adult community living services offered through Community Living BC.

Objective 3.2: Engage British Columbians across sectors to enhance employment and community inclusion for people with disabilities.

Strategies

- Continue to work with business, community organizations, citizens with disabilities and their families to implement Accessibility 2024.
- Support the Minister’s Council on Employment and Accessibility, the Presidents Group and the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) Action Group to develop solutions and strategies that improve the lives of British Columbians with disabilities and their families.
- Engage stakeholders and the public to identify barriers and solutions to improving employment outcomes for Persons with Disabilities.

Performance Measure 6: Total amount of exempted earnings received by Persons with Disability cases

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Total amount of exempted earnings received by Persons with Disabilities cases.	\$84 million	\$90 million	\$92 million	\$100 million	\$94 million	\$96 million

Data Source: Research Branch, Ministry of Social Development

Discussion

The Employment Program of British Columbia provides a range of specialized services to help individuals with disabilities participate in their communities; pursue employment goals as they are able; increase their self-reliance; and, build skills and experience that may lead to further employment. The ministry also provides other support for Persons with Disabilities to work, including earnings exemptions.

In January 2015, the ministry replaced monthly earnings exemptions with the Annual Earnings Exemption (AEE) for all ministry clients receiving disability assistance. The AEE provides clients flexibility to accumulate earnings that would have exceeded the previous monthly maximum earnings exemptions toward an annual total exemption. This helps individuals receiving disability assistance to take greater advantage of employment opportunities when they are able to work and to keep more of their earnings. Total earnings increased because of the AEE and are expected to increase modestly over time.

Goal 4: Promote a culture of social innovation in British Columbia.

Objective 4.1: Support British Columbia's capacity for social innovation.

Strategies

- Develop and maintain strong, productive and sustainable relationships with partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors (including the BC Partners for Social Impact) to support the growth and sustainability of British Columbia's social innovation and social enterprise sectors.
- Support British Columbian social innovators and social entrepreneurs in the identification, implementation and enhancing innovative, community-based solutions.
- Facilitate, develop and implement social finance tools to create new opportunities for innovation.

Discussion

As can be seen in the Report on Performance above, the ministry continued in 2016/17 to demonstrate its committed to supporting and encouraging social innovation and social entrepreneurship in British Columbia.

Financial Report

Discussion of Results

For 2016/17, the ministry met the financial targets set out by the Ministry of Finance. The majority of the ministry's budget supported Income Assistance which totalled \$1.82 billion in 2016/17, in the following four categories:

- \$337 million for Temporary Assistance;
- \$1.02 billion for Disability Assistance;
- \$316 million for supplementary assistance which includes supplements for low income seniors, travel assistance and dental and optical care; and
- \$141 million for program management.

Funding for employment programs is partially provided by the federal government through the Labour Market Development Agreement. Federal contributions in 2016/17 totaled \$311 million while the province allocated \$30 million for employment programs and services. Services to adults with developmental disabilities are provided by the ministry's service delivery crown agency, Community Living BC and the Ministry's 'Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities Program', which was allocated close to \$882 million. In line with government's goal of prudent fiscal management, expenditures for executive and support services were limited to \$9 million.

Financial Report Summary Table







	Estimated	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance ¹
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Income Assistance^{2,3}	1,815,138		1,815,138	1,817,448	2,310
Employment⁴	30,000		30,000	29,656	-344
Community Living Services⁵	881,818		881,818	881,819	1
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	1,796		1,796	1,295	-501
Executive and Support Services	10,487		10,487	9,021	-1,466
Sub-Total	2,739,239	0	2,739,239	2,739,239	0
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual				-102	-102
Total	2,739,239	0	2,739,239	2,739,137	-102
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Executive and Support Services⁶	4,034		4,034	516	-3,518
Total	4,034	0	4,034	516	-3,518

1. Variance represents "Actual" minus "Total Estimates". If "Actual" is greater than "Total Estimates" the variance will be positive.
2. In addition to the \$1.8 billion spent on Income Assistance, the Ministry accessed \$88.2 million from Housing Priority Initiatives Special Accounts in 2016/17 for eligible expenditures related to housing and shelter programs under Income Assistance.
3. Variance in Income Assistance is due to caseload related pressures.
4. Reflects BC Employment Program costs, net of federal recoveries. Total spending was \$341 million, which included \$30 million provincial and \$311 million recovered federally.
5. Includes direct transfers to Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) and the Ministry's program 'Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities' (\$3.1M).
6. Variance in Ministry Capital Expenditures is due to \$2.9M in IT investments deferred to 17/18 and 18/19 related to Employment and Labour Market Services.

Appendix A – Contact Information and Hyperlinks

Contact Information

Service BC refers members of the public to the appropriate ministry office and transfers calls and forwards emails free of charge. Hours of operation for Service BC are 7:30 AM to 5 PM, Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays.

-  In Victoria, call: 250-387-6121
-  In the Lower Mainland, call: 604-660-2421
-  Elsewhere in British Columbia, call: 1-800-663-7867
-  Outside British Columbia, call: 1-604-660-2421
-  Email address: ServiceBC@gov.bc.ca
-  Telephone device for the deaf and hearing impaired (TDD):
 - In the lower Mainland, call: 604-775-0303
 - Elsewhere in British Columbia, call: 1-800-661-8773

Employment and Income Assistance

The ministry has 48 Employment and Income Assistance Offices and 35 partnerships with Services BC locations throughout British Columbia. To find the office that provides services for a specific community go to: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/access-services or contact the ministry toll free by telephone anywhere in the province at 1-866-866-0800. To apply for income assistance or if you are a client wanting to know about your file status, you can visit myselfserve.gov.bc.ca/ online.

Employment and Labour Market Services

The Employment Program of BC helps people find work through a wide range of integrated employment services and supports. For more information on services provided for each community, go to: www.workbc.ca/Work-BC-Centres/Pages/Work-BC-Centres.aspx

Hyperlinks to Additional Information

-  Advocate for Service Quality: www.eia.gov.bc.ca/advocate/
-  Accessibility 2024: www.gov.bc.ca/accessibility
-  BC Partners for Social Impact: www.hubcapbc.ca/
-  Community Contribution Companies: www.fin.gov.bc.ca/prs/ccc/
-  Community Living British Columbia: www.communitylivingbc.ca/home/
-  Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal: www.gov.bc.ca/eaat/
-  Online Resource (Employment and Assistance Policies and Procedures): www.gov.bc.ca/meia/online
-  Self-Serve Assessment and Application Tool: www.iaseffserve.gov.bc.ca/

Appendix B – List of Crowns, Agencies, Boards, and Commissions

The ministry is responsible for Community Living BC, a provincial Crown agency that delivers supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families in the province, providing oversight on the agencies operational and financial accountability frameworks. Information on CLBC programs and services can be found [here](#).

Appendix C – Minister’s Mandate and Actions Summary

In the Premier’s July 2015 Mandate Letter to the Minister, the Minister of Social Development received direction on strategic priorities for the 2016/17 fiscal year. These priorities and the ministry’s resulting actions are summarized below:

Mandate Letter Direction	Ministry’s Action
1. Balance your ministerial budget in order to control spending and ensure an overall balanced budget for the province of British Columbia.	The Ministry is on track to meet its budget targets.
2. Continue to grow and support the Social Innovation Sector in our Province.	<p>The Ministry continued to build and maintain relationships and partnerships with other levels of government, businesses and community organizations to support the development and implementation of innovative solutions to social problems. The ministry also worked with other B.C. Government ministries/agencies to promote social innovation as a means to improve social outcomes, and to showcase government innovation to the broader social innovation sector.</p> <p>Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported a series of social innovation events, workshops and activities for Social Enterprise Month (2016) • Social Innovation Youth Awards Recognition Program • Hosted BC Summit on Social Innovation in February 2017 • Social Innovation in BC – Completed full inventory of social innovation activities across all sectors.
3. Manage the budget of Community Living BC to ensure both fiscal discipline and maximum service delivery to individuals.	CLBC is on track to meet its budget targets and Cabinet was regularly updated on how funds were being managed.
4. Work with partner ministries and the disability community to implement Accessibility 2024 and report out annually on the progress made in moving B.C. forward as an accessible province.	<p>The ministry continued to work across government, and with the disability and business community to implement Accessibility 2024.</p> <p>Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third annual Disability Employment month in September 2016

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third annual RDSP Awareness month in October 2016 • Second annual Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month in November, 2016 • Published the year two progress report on Accessibility 2024 in June 2016.
5. Work with Parliamentary Secretary Linda Larson and continue broad outreach in the business and not-for-profit community to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.	The Ministry continued to support Parliamentary Secretary Plecas and engage with the disability sector and business community through the Presidents Group to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities and raise awareness around Accessibility 2024.
6. Launch the following in September 2015 and provide Cabinet with an update on these important initiatives by March 31, 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Family Maintenance Exemption • Policy changes for families with children on income assistance • Single Parent Employment Initiative 	Child support exemption, policy changes and the Single Parent Employment Initiative were all launched and effective September 1, 2015.
7. Continue to look for opportunities to modernize and improve income and disability assistance policies and programs	Effective December 1, 2015, clients with disabilities can hold higher asset levels and retain gifts. Implemented legislation in September 2016 to streamline the PWD (Person with Disabilities) application process. Implemented rate increases in September 2016 and for April 2017 for people with the PWD designation and broadened the provision of transportation supports. Introduced exemptions for government child benefits so that, effective April 1, 2017 BC would have the most comprehensive government child benefit exemptions in Canada.
8. Work with the Labour Market Priorities Board to identify opportunities to support BC Employment and Assistance clients in developing their skills and securing long-term employment.	The ministry was an active participant in the creation of a concept paper outlining the labour needs throughout the province with the goal of maximizing BC's potential workforce, including in industries experiencing skills shortage.
9. Conduct an evaluation of the Employment Program of BC to ensure it continues to support BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint and identify improvements that will better assist unemployed and underemployed British Columbians in gaining long-term employment.	In 2016/17, the number of EPBC clients achieving employment averaged 55%, a significant increase from the 42% average in 2014/15. Completed: Formal evaluation was completed by Ference & Company in March 2016 and the full evaluation report was made public.

<p>10. Work with the federal government to renew the Canada/B.C. Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) so that improvements can be made to expand eligibility and access to skills training.</p>	<p>The federal government made a commitment to initiate bi-lateral discussions with BC on the renewed framework for the labour market transfer agreements.</p> <p>BC remained committed to working with the federal government on the labour market transfer agreement framework that allows for expanded access to labour market services and more flexibility in program delivery.</p>
<p>11. Work with the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services to continue to identify opportunities to implement integrated service counters with Service BC, in order to provide improved, unified government service to clients and citizens.</p>	<p>The ministry continuously worked with partner ministries and our stakeholders on ways to ensure that our services and programs were operating as efficiently and effectively as possible. The ministry and Service BC were collaborating on opportunities to consolidate service counters and call centers with a goal to create one-stop access for citizens. Ministry clients can access ministry services at over half of the 61 Service BC locations across the province.</p>