

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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, 2024, to March 31, 2025. 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, and legal 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.

A key highlight of the 2024-25 fiscal year was the Purple Ribbon ceremony and flag raising, which promotes collective action against gender-based violence. The ceremony featured memorial banners honoring victims, with 11 families sharing personal stories. These banners will now be a permanent part of the annual ceremony. Banners are provided free of charge to families who wish to have a loved one remembered.

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,

Hon. Sherry Gambin-Walsh  
Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality



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## Departmental Overview

### Organizational Structure

The Office of Women and Gender Equality is a central agency within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador structure, which supports the development of policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets to advance the social, economic, cultural, and legal status of women and gender-diverse people in the province. The Office is housed within Executive Council and staff report to the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

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

### Staff and Budget

In 2024-25, the Office of Women and Gender Equality had a core staff complement of seven permanent and six temporary positions. For 2024-25, the Office of Women and Gender Equality had a total budget of \$5,500,200 inclusive of the Minister's Office and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Division	# of Employees	Budget
Minister's Office	3	\$262,300
Office of Women and Gender Equality	13	\$4,788,100
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women	4	\$449,800

## Highlights and Partnerships

### Highlights

#### National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence

In 2024-25, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador significantly advanced its commitment to ending gender-based violence by investing over \$7 million in prevention initiatives. This funding was part of a four-year, \$27.2 million bilateral agreement with the Government of Canada under the National Action Plan to End Gender-based violence.

In 2024-25, more than 30 organizations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador received approximately \$3.2 million in funding to support gender-based violence prevention efforts. These organizations play a vital role in reaching high-risk and underserved populations, including Indigenous women and girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, racialized communities, and those living in rural and remote areas.

The National Action Plan is structured around five key pillars: support for victims, survivors and their families; prevention; a responsive justice system, Indigenous-led approaches, and social infrastructure and enabling environment. These pillars guide the province's efforts to shift societal attitudes, reduce stigma, eliminate discrimination and foster long-term, systemic change to better protect and support all individuals affected by gender-based violence.

#### Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act

The **Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act**, passed in fall 2022, reflects the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's commitment to equitable pay practices and support for women and gender-diverse individuals. In 2024-25, the province released a 'What We Heard' document and announced its intention to hold additional targeted consultations on Pay Transparency regulations. The Pay Transparency consultations will be led by the Minister of Labour, with support from the Office of Women and Gender Equality, and will focus on pay transparency reporting.

The Act contains comprehensive measures that position Newfoundland and Labrador as a forerunner in pay equity and transparency. It requires public sector employers with 10 or more employees to implement compensation systems that assess jobs based on skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions, overseen by a designated Pay Equity Officer. The Act also mandates pay transparency in job postings, prohibits employers



from requesting applicants' pay history, and protects employees who discuss or inquire about pay. These provisions demand coordinated planning and engagement across government and with employers throughout the province before implementation.

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

In 2024–25, the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council continued its work to advance reconciliation and address systemic challenges facing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Building on its establishment in 2022, and initial meetings in 2023, the Reconciliation Council held three meetings during the reporting period in May and November 2024, and February 2025. These gatherings focused on collaborative planning and advancing priorities in the areas of culture, health and wellness, justice, and human security.

The Reconciliation Council is comprised of 11 members - six Indigenous women representatives and five women from the Provincial Government. The Reconciliation Council is co-chaired by one government representative and two Elders appointed by the Provincial Indigenous Women's Steering Committee. Through its ongoing work, the Reconciliation Council is fostering meaningful partnerships, guiding policy development, and contributing to a more equitable and inclusive future for Indigenous communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

A key highlight of the Reconciliation Council's work in 2024-25 was its November meeting in Stephenville, which focused on advancing reconciliation and addressing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Members discussed the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and explored community-led violence prevention strategies. A notable honor was a visit to Ne'ata'q Place, a newly opened shelter by the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network, offering a culturally safe space for Indigenous women and children affected by family violence.

The Reconciliation Council's sixth meeting in February 2025 focused on human trafficking, with presentations from Thrive, the RCMP, and Public Safety Canada, as well as discussions with legal and advocacy groups. Grounded in Indigenous ceremonies, the meeting was held immediately following the Provincial Indigenous Women's Steering Committee Gathering, hosted by First Light. This event addressed gender-based violence, housing, and environmental issues. In 2024-25, the Office of Women and Gender Equality provided \$25,000 to support the Gathering.

## **Partnerships**

The Office of Women and Gender Equality collaborates with community partners to advance the rights and well-being of women and gender-diverse people. In 2024–25, the Office provided \$6,743,572 in grants and core funding to key partners, including the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Status of Women Councils, regional violence prevention organizations throughout NL the Multicultural Women's Organization of NL, the Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network, End Sexual Violence NL, Safe Harbour Outreach Project, and the Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality works in partnership with Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers responsible for the status of women to advance gender equity in Newfoundland and Labrador and across Canada.

## **Report on Performance**

The Office of Women and Gender Equality's 2023-26 Business Plan identifies economic and social well-being, gender-based violence, and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as strategic priorities. This year the Office is reporting on its success in achieving the objectives outlined for 2024-25.

## **Issue #1 – Economic and Social Well-Being**

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to advancing the economic and social well-being of women and gender-diverse people. Gender equity is influenced by a range of complex and intersecting factors, including health, housing, safety, education, employment, income, and access to social supports. Recognizing the daily challenges faced by many, government has taken meaningful, long-term action to address systemic barriers. Reducing these barriers is essential to enabling full participation in the economy and fostering broader inclusion in the labour market and society.

To support this work government has introduced key initiatives such as the mandatory application of GBA+ across all policies and programs, Women's Employment Plans, and Gender Equity and Diversity Plans. In addition, the Office of Women and Gender Equality worked with key partners, including Federal/Provincial and Territorial counterparts and the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council to address economic and social well-being of women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the province.

## Goal

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have strengthened an all of government approach to address systemic barriers faced by women and gender diverse individuals that impact economic and social well-being.

## 2024-25 Objective

By March 31, 2025, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have undertaken initiatives to encourage, promote, support and retain women and gender diverse people in leadership roles, including running for elected office.

## 2024-25 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by the Office, in the areas of economic and social well-being for the 2024-25 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2024-25)
Provided feedback and recommendations to government regarding economic and social well-being issues affecting women and gender-diverse individuals' participation in leadership positions.	<p>The Office of Women and Gender Equality provided feedback and recommendations related to economic and social well-being through a number of avenues within Government of Newfoundland and Labrador processes and in work with external partners.</p> <p>The Office reviewed almost 90 budget submissions during fiscal year 2024-2025. In addition, 362 Cabinet submissions were reviewed, along with 99 annual reports.</p> <p>The Office also continues to work with Federal/Provincial and Territorial partners to advance issues related to the status of women and gender equality in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p> <p>In 2024-25, staff participated in the 42nd Annual Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Ministers Responsible for</p>

	<p>the Status of Women in Winnipeg, Manitoba from July 24-25, 2024.</p> <p>The work of the Forum is advanced through five priority pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic participation and prosperity</li> <li>• education and skills development</li> <li>• leadership and democratic participation</li> <li>• gender based violence and access to justice</li> <li>• poverty reduction, health, and well-being.</li> </ul> <p>During that meeting, ministers also discussed identifying best practices and strategies to support economic equality for women, including the need to focus on opportunities that work towards closing the gender wage gap.</p>
Represented the Office of Women and Gender Equality on initiatives to collaborate on addressing women and gender-diverse economic and social well-being and leadership.	<p>Staff from the Office of Women and Gender Equality worked with government departments, community and Indigenous partners to address women and gender-diverse economic and social well-being and leadership.</p> <p>During the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council met three times - May and November 2024, and again in February 2025.</p> <p>The Provincial Indigenous Women's Reconciliation Council establishes a collaborative ongoing working relationship between Indigenous women and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Reconciliation's Council's overarching goal is to lead and coordinate meaningful action to implement 196 recommendations outlined in the 'Hear</p>

	<p>Our Voice' report. These efforts focus on advancing Indigenous culture, health, wellness, justice, and human security, with the goal of driving lasting change across government directives, policies, procedures, legislation, and regulations.</p> <p>Meetings in 2024-25 focused on a range of topics including justice, Indigenous health, access to economic supports, and human trafficking.</p>
Monitored data pertaining to policies, programs, and stakeholder initiatives.	<p>In 2024-25, staff worked to improve access and monitoring of data pertaining to policies, programs, and stakeholder initiatives through a range of avenues.</p> <p>The Office of Women and Gender Equality improved its access to data by partnering with Statistics NL to purchase new data from Statistics Canada, through funding made available from the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence. This provided access to data that was otherwise unavailable at the provincial level, improving awareness of issues related to women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ residents in Newfoundland and Labrador.</p> <p>In 2024-25, the Office also hired new staff with a strong understanding and background in data and economic analysis.</p> <p>As a result of this expansion, the Office has been able to update the available statistical information regarding economic and social well-being of women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people throughout the province, as well as throughout Canada and internationally (in select instances).</p>

## **2025-26 Objective**

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have worked with colleagues across government to support equitable access to programs and services that enhance individual social and economic well-being.

## **2025-26 Indicators**

- Support the development of programs and policies that promote social and economic well-being.
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to highlight women and gender-diverse leaders in Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly those working to advance social and economic well-being of the people of the province.

## **Issue #2 – Gender-based Violence**

Gender-based violence is a deeply rooted issue that affects individuals across all areas of society: socially, economically, culturally, and legally. It is driven by systemic inequalities such as sexism, ageism, classism, and heterosexism. Raising awareness of these intersecting forms of discrimination is essential to understanding the full impact of violence, which can fracture relationships, weaken communities, and cause lasting harm. The Provincial Government is committed to long-term, systemic change by working with Indigenous partners and community stakeholders. Grounding policies, programs, and services in grassroots knowledge and frontline experience while promoting education and awareness is key to building a safer, more equitable future for women and gender-diverse people.

On November 25, 2024, the Office of Women and Gender Equality hosted a solemn public awareness event at Confederation Building to mark the start of the Purple Ribbon Campaign, which coincides with the national 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The campaign runs from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (International Human Rights Day). The event included a flag raising, proclamation signing and display of memorial banners of missing and murdered women and girls.

The banners brought special meaning to the event, and each one serves as a powerful visual tribute, reminding attendees of the real people behind the statistics, and reinforcing the importance of continued advocacy, remembrance and collective action towards a safer, more just society. In partnership with the Victim Services Division of the Department of Justice and Public Safety, the Office of Women and Gender Equality identified 11 families who consented to having banners created. These banners are of

no cost to families. Requests for four more banners came in following the ceremony. These will be included with the others at the 2025 ceremony. The event received a Pinnacle Award of Excellence from the International Association of Business Communicators Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter.

In January 2025, the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality announced the establishment of a ministerial committee to end gender-based violence.

Establishing the committee demonstrates government's strong commitment to ensuring that the issue of gender-based violence is treated with the seriousness and attention it demands. The committee is comprised of ministers from Children, Seniors and Social Development; Education; Health and Community Services; Housing; Immigration, Population Growth and Skills; Justice and Public Safety; and the Office of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation. It is chaired by the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality.

The ministerial committee to end gender-based violence will be creating multiple avenues for community involvement in its work, including regular presentations, focus groups, and other consultation opportunities, to share insights, concerns and ideas. Change will require shared learning, mutual support, and honest conversations.

## **Goal**

By March 31, 2026, in collaboration with Federal Government counterparts, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have worked with community partners and Provincial Government departments and agencies to implement an intersectional, research-based, culturally sensitive approach to the prevention of gender-based violence and corresponding results framework.

## **2024-25 Objective**

By March 31, 2025, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have reported on and monitored the provincial gender-based violence action plan.

## 2024-25 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by the Office of Women and Gender Equality around violence prevention for the 2024-25 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2024-25)
<p>Responded to gender-based violence issues and needs on a regional and provincial level, through the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.</p>	<p>In 2024-25, The Office administered over \$7 million in funding towards gender-based violence initiatives, primarily led by community partners and organizations through its own funding, and with support from the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.</p> <p>This includes the launch of a new Community Violence Prevention Grants Program. In 2024-25, \$523,165 was awarded for 14 projects.</p> <p>The program's objectives support targeted and community-driven efforts led by community partners within Newfoundland and Labrador. Projects address the complex root causes of gender-based violence, including violence against women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, particularly those living in rural areas. Projects also help reduce underlying risk factors that lead to harm and victimization.</p> <p>Proposals for funding were considered based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting survivors, their families, and their communities.</li> <li>• Engaging men and boys in gender-based violence prevention.</li> <li>• Ending the normalization of violence within communities.</li> <li>• Addressing stigma against gender-based violence.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting healing and mental well-being of those impacted by gender-based violence.</li> <li>• Building community support networks, particularly at the regional and municipal levels.</li> </ul>
Effectively reported to Women and Gender Equality Canada for the first-year reporting cycle for the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.	<p>In 2024-25, the Office contributed to the 2023-24 Annual Progress Report on the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence. This report highlights actions taken by jurisdictions in the first year of implementation of their respective bilateral agreements. The National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence was launched in November 2022 by Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women. Since that time, substantial progress has been made.</p> <p>The 2023-24 report outlines the achievement of developing and signing 13 bilateral agreements with all provinces and territories. The signing of these agreements demonstrates a united commitment to continue to listen and to respond to the needs of victims, survivors, their families, and the organizations that serve them. The report highlights the actions taken by the jurisdictions until March 31, 2024. It can be found online on the Federal Women and Gender Equality website.</p>
Set a baseline monitoring threshold for data collection and reporting for the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.	As part of the reporting process, provinces and territories were required to submit implementation plans demonstrating how investments would be directed. This determined the baseline data for the National Action Plan.

	Year 1 started at different levels of capacity, with various baselines of data available across the jurisdictions. As implementation has progressed, the number and type of initiatives has increased. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador continues to work with federal, provincial, and territorial governments as part of the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, to monitor the results and impacts of actions through an expected results framework.
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### 2025-26 Objective

By March 31, 2026, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have evaluated the impact of the provincial gender-based violence action plan and identified best practices to inform provincial gender-based violence prevention efforts moving forward.

### 2025-26 Indicators

- Work with Federal/Provincial and Territorial stakeholders to provide input on the next phase of the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence.
- Provide support to community and departmental partners to address forms of gender-based violence throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Issue #3 – Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

Since February 2019, the Provincial Government has committed to applying Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) across all areas of government. This commitment was reinforced in September 2020, when Ministers' Mandate Letters included a directive to incorporate GBA+ into all policy development. GBA+ is a structured analytical tool that helps identify how sex, gender, and other intersecting identity factors influence how individuals experience government initiatives. It supports the development of inclusive, equitable, and responsive policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets.

The Office of Women and Gender Equality has played a key role in delivering GBA+ training across government departments and agencies and this effort has continued in

2024-25. In partnership with the Public Service Commission's Centre for Learning and Development, the Office continues to work towards the development of an E-tool.

## Goal

By March 31, 2026, Office of Women and Gender Equality will have strengthened the capacity of departments and agencies to fully understand, apply, and integrate GBA+ into all departmental accountability mechanisms.

## 2024-25 Objective

By March 31, 2025, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have enhanced GBA+ training to better meet the needs of government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions.

## 2024-25 Work Accomplished

The following chart highlights the successful work accomplished by the Office of Women and Gender Equality around violence prevention for the 2024-25 reporting cycle.

Indicators	Results (2024-25)
In conjunction with the Centre for Learning and Development, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have launched GBA+ online training on PSAccess.	<p>In 2024-25, the Office worked with the Public Service Commission on the development of a new online training component.</p> <p>Throughout 2024-25, the Office met with the Centre for Learning and Development to discuss how our current approach to training can be improved. This work is ongoing.</p>
The Office of Women and Gender Equality continued to evaluate the GBA+ training presentation to ensure it reflects the most up-to-date date approaches.	All government departments and agencies are mandated to perform GBA+ analysis on all work, which includes policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets. Through collaboration with the Centre for Learning and Development and the Public Service Commission,

	<p>GBA+ training has been provided to members of the Public Service through the PSAccess learning platform.</p> <p>With support of staff from the Centre for Learning and Development - the Office of Women and Gender Equality continued to monitor the effectiveness of the current training and have developed materials to support the new online training tool.</p>
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## 2025-26 Objective

By March 31, 2026, through enriched GBA+ training of public service employees, the Office of Women and Gender Equality will have supported government departments and agencies to strengthen their intersectional scope of GBA+ in programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets in order to better meet the diverse needs of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the province.

## 2025-26 Indicators

- Improve tools and processes for public service employees to be better able to conduct GBA+ on programs, services, policies, legislation, and budgets.
- Work with Public Service Commission on the provision of GBA+ training with the view to improve processes and outcomes.

## Opportunities and Challenges

Women and gender-diverse individuals continue to face persistent, systemic barriers that demand long-term, coordinated solutions. These challenges are often intensified by overlapping identity factors such as socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Discrimination, harmful stereotypes, and institutional cultures that lack inclusivity can create obstacles in nearly every aspect of life, from education and employment to healthcare and community participation.

To move toward genuine gender equity, it is essential for the Provincial Government to maintain strong partnerships with Indigenous Government and Organizations, grassroots organizations, and other stakeholders. By working together to dismantle

societal, cultural, and institutional barriers, we can develop targeted, inclusive strategies that uplift women and gender-diverse people. Advancing equity is not only a matter of justice, but also key to building a stronger, more resilient province where everyone can thrive.

## 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	215,600	215,600
Transportation and Communications	42,800	22,800
Supplies	2,400	900
Purchased Services	1,000	1,000
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	500	500
<b>Total: Minister's Office</b>	<b>262,300</b>	<b>240,800</b>
<b>WGE</b>		
Salaries	1,407,000	1,106,900
Employee Benefits	0	0
Transportation and Communications	62,700	46,700
Supplies	4,400	20,100
Professional Services	345,000	359,200
Purchased Services	361,500	469,500
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	1,000	6,000
Grants and Subsidies	6,503,500	6,029,800
Revenue	(3,897,000)	(3,897,000)
<b>Total: WGE</b>	<b>4,788,100</b>	<b>4,141,200</b>
<b>Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women (PACSW)</b>		
Grants and Subsidies	449,800	449,800
<b>Total: PACSW</b>	<b>449,800</b>	<b>449,800</b>
<b>TOTAL: WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY</b>	<b>5,500,200</b>	<b>4,831,800</b>

\*This financial information is unaudited.

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2025. Audited financial statements are a requirement at the Provincial Government level and are made public through the Public Accounts process. The Office of Women and Gender Equality is not required to provide a separate financial statement.

