

TogetherBC:

British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy

2021 Annual Report



*TOGETHERBC: BRITISH COLUMBIA'S POVERTY
REDUCTION STRATEGY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT*

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Message from the Minister



I am pleased to present the 2021 annual report of TogetherBC, British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

2021 was a challenging year for everyone as we dealt with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

An unprecedented heat dome, severe wildfires and a series of weather events including atmospheric rivers also adversely impacted our province, disproportionately affected some more than others, especially those living in poverty. We were able to meet these challenges and work to ensure people had the support they needed.

As Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, I was particularly pleased that in April 2021, the Province introduced the largest ever permanent increase to income assistance and disability assistance rates and the first ever increase to the senior's supplement. It was the third permanent increase, raising the rates by \$175 for a single individual amounting to a total increase of \$325 per month since 2017. I was proud to introduce and pass the Accessible British Columbia Act into law. This legislation lays the foundation for a more inclusive and accessible British Columbia by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people's full participation in society.

While "poverty reduction" is in my title, we all recognize that this effort is being addressed across government, and in 2021, we continued to make strides towards making life better for all people living in B.C. We increased the minimum wage for the fourth time to over \$15 an hour, made public transit free for children 12

and under, we introduced new protections to prevent illegal renovations, increased supports to organizations addressing food insecurity, as well as expanded other programs, such as the BC Family Benefit (formerly known as the Child Opportunity Benefit) which provides families up to \$1,600 a year for their first child, to support families, increasing the number of child care spaces, capping child care fees and legislating five days paid sick leave for all workers.

While it is important to outline some of our successes throughout the pandemic, the work needs to continue.

According to Statistics Canada data, in 2020 there were 378,000 fewer people living in poverty than there were in 2016, including 104,000 fewer children. In 2020, federal and provincial COVID-19 relief benefits played a large role in lifting people out of poverty, but we know that this year global inflation will impact our progress.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act requires TogetherBC be updated every five years. Later this fall, we will begin the engagement to undertake this work so that our strategy can continue our collective work to reduce poverty.

We also know that poverty impacts people in many different ways. Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities or who face barriers, 2SLGBTQ+ people and others who may face discrimination and racism also face higher rates of poverty. While we have made considerable progress in reducing poverty, our challenges are greater now than they have been, and so there is much more work to do. We are up for the challenge, so the work will continue to build a more equitable B.C.



NICHOLAS SIMONS

MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Commentary

The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee is an independent committee in place to advise Minister Simons and his team on matters related to poverty reduction and prevention. In this third report, you will find our assessment of progress made in 2021 to reduce poverty across B.C.

OVERVIEW

From opioid epidemics, money laundering schemes, COVID-19 protocols and labour difficulties, global supply chain interruptions, and now the resulting rising inflation, B.C. residents have had a difficult year.

Despite these national and international trials, our province has become a stronger and tighter knit community by bringing together more voices to define in greater detail the root causes of poverty in B.C. We are making positive progress, but we have much more work to do.

LEGISLATED TARGETS

The legislated target for the five-year period beginning on January 1, 2019 is to reduce the poverty rate among all persons by 25 per cent from its 2016 level, and to reduce the poverty rate among persons under 18 years of age by 50 per cent from its 2016 level. This is consistent with the 2019 and 2020 report levels.

CONTINUED PROGRESS AND TARGETS MET

The Committee agrees with the results related to “BC’s Poverty Reduction Targets” as outlined in the 2021 Annual Report.

In Canada, poverty lines are based on Statistics Canada’s Market Basket Measure (MBM) of consumption needs, which is revised every 10 years based on current consumption patterns. The MBM was recently revised to a 2018 consumption base, and we therefore report on estimated poverty rates using this MBM from 2018. Here, we refer to poverty rates reported in Statistics Canada’s “Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type” released in March 2022 (Table number 11-10-0135-01), and reproduced in Appendix B.

In B.C., the poverty rate among all persons in 2016 was 16.0 per cent, so the legislated target is 75 per cent of this rate, or 12.0 per cent. By 2019, that rate had dropped to 11.9 per cent, and so the legislated target was met. In 2020, the poverty rate among all persons dropped even further, to 7.6 per cent.

The child poverty rate in B.C., that of persons aged under 18, was 17.4 per cent in 2016, so the legislated target is half this rate, or 8.7 per cent. By 2019, the child poverty rate had dropped to 7.3 per cent, and so the legislated target was met. In 2020, the child poverty rate dropped even further, to 5.0 per cent.

These changes in poverty statistics were life-changing for hundreds of thousands of people. Between 2016 and 2020, almost 400,000 British Columbians moved out of poverty, including more than 100,000 children.

We therefore report that the Province of British Columbia met its legislated targets of poverty reduction in 2019, and achieved further reductions well beyond the targets in 2020.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact communities across B.C. throughout 2021. Changing public health orders, impacts on businesses – big, small, and not-for-profit, and its effect on employment and childcare continued throughout the year.

The governments of Canada and British Columbia had robust policy responses to the income loss associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. These responses included the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), and various other programs aimed at maintaining the flow of employment income through the pandemic. These programs had a big effect on poverty. They are the key reason that poverty rates declined between 2019 and 2020. Consequently, these reductions are likely to be temporary because these pandemic responses have now mostly ended.

COMPARATIVE PROGRESS

The Government of Canada has undertaken substantial nationwide poverty reduction measures since 2015, especially through increasing benefits delivered through the Canada Child Benefit and the public pension system (mainly, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement). Additionally, BC has introduced its own supplemental child benefit, the B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit, in 2019. To put B.C. progress in context, it is helpful to consider it in comparison to the reduction in poverty seen in Canada as a whole.

In 2016, the poverty rate among all persons in Canada (MBM2018) was 12.9 per cent, and by 2020, that poverty rate had dropped to 6.4 per cent, a proportionate reduction of 50 per cent. Over the same period, the poverty rate among all persons in B.C. fell by 53 per cent. Similarly, over 2016 to 2020, the child poverty rate in Canada as a whole fell by 66 per cent. Over the same period, the child poverty rate in B.C. fell by 71 per cent. That poverty rates fell slightly further in B.C. than in Canada as a whole suggests that provincial-level policy action had

a beneficial effect that was additional to federal-level policy action.

POLICY APPROACHES IN BC

Overall, many positive strides have been made to reduce poverty in B.C. in 2021. Particularly noteworthy are:

- ➔ **Permanent increases to the income and disability assistance rates**
- ➔ **Legislation of paid sick leave**
- ➔ **First Nations Well-Being Fund**
- ➔ **Recognition of food security as a key element to poverty reduction efforts**

Poverty is a complex issue and while there are many achievements to celebrate, (as you will read about in this report), it is important that the Province focus not only on solutions to poverty as experienced by residents, but also on the alleviation of the root causes of poverty. We can celebrate that poverty reduction targets have been met AND acknowledge and express concern that the depth of poverty is increasing. We know that those who experience the most challenging circumstances are having a tougher time. Equity is an ongoing concern for people with mental health challenges, women and gender diverse people, single parents, those with barriers to education, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous communities are among other equity-seeking groups. We cannot forget this as our province needs to be a place where all people have the opportunity to not just survive, but to thrive.

Advancements have been made related to housing, but the housing crisis continues to disrupt communities across our province. Without affordable homes, too many British Columbians are a mere paycheque or two away from homelessness. This needs to change and

while change is coming, it needs to be faster. Extra consideration is required for women escaping domestic violence, undocumented workers, and seniors and persons with disabilities living on fixed incomes; even more physical housing options and associated supports are required for people who are presently experiencing homelessness. This needs to be a top priority in the years ahead until every British Columbian has access to a safe and affordable home.

Another key issue that impacts communities in every corner of the province is food security. The investment of \$9.77 million to community food programs was laudable yet more needs to be done not only to support community food programs, but also improve food supply chains and support to farming communities impacted by extreme weather, increased cost of fuel, and overall inflation. The establishment of the BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food and investment in Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty not only advanced efforts toward reconciliation but may also provide solutions to the food crisis we are experiencing locally and globally.

Child care is another area in which we are thrilled to see strides being made with the new childcare legislation, and recognition that there are serious issues with affordability, availability of qualified Early Childhood Educations (and housing for them), and access to child care spaces. We hope the Province will remain focused and committed to \$10 a day child care and continue to invest in new child care spaces in urban and non-urban areas across B.C. This will provide welcome relief to families, help reduce the 14.3 per cent poverty rate for children in female lone parent families, and ensure positive early life experiences for children, centering positive social and emotional development of future British Columbians.

We thank the Province for all of the courageous shifts that have been made over the past year and will continue to provide advice and insights

about who and what is being overlooked and the work that remains.

In 2022, the Province will embark on developing the next Poverty Reduction Strategy for B.C. This Committee looks forward to taking part in that process and ensuring that individuals with lived experience are at the table to share their thoughts, insights, recommendations and perspectives.

This Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee was shaped under the leadership of Catherine Ludgate, former Chair, who passed away in December 2021. Catherine's contributions to poverty reduction efforts and advocacy for equity have moved our province forward in important ways. She was a champion for social justice and inspired those around her. Catherine's impact will always be remembered, and this committee will continue to work hard to fulfill her vision.

Yours truly,

- » **Mebrat Beyene**
- » **Cheryl Casimer**
- » **Zahra Esmail (chair)**
- » **Murry Russel Krause**
- » **Rosanna May McGregor**
- » **Bradley (Brad) Donald Mills**
- » **Adrienne Marie Montani**
- » **Krishna Murthy Pendakur**
- » **Richard Schabler**
- » **Kirsten Sikora**
- » **Lissa Dawn Smith**
- » **Stephanie Rosina Smith**
- » **Caitlin Ashley Lind Wright**

Introduction

People living in British Columbia faced a range of new and enduring challenges in 2021. Beyond its strain on the healthcare system, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic had significant social and economic impacts. Extreme weather events caused flooding, wildfires and an extreme heat emergency. Long-standing systemic issues, including racism and discrimination, continued to impact racialized and other minority communities. Many lives were lost because of the toxic drug supply. And the whole province grieved the confirmation of unmarked burial sites on the grounds of former residential schools.

While most people have felt the impacts of these challenges, many living in poverty have carried an even greater burden. This is also the case for many Indigenous people and those living in rural and remote communities.

In the face of these challenges, people living in British Columbia continued to come together to help. The Province also worked to quickly implement new supports to help those who needed it.

People are having meaningful conversations because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is hopefully leading to a greater understanding of, and growing empathy for, each other's experiences.

There is still more work to do to reduce poverty in B.C. and the Province has continued to take action to provide additional supports that help lift people out of poverty. In 2021, it implemented key mandate commitments announced in late 2020. These include:

- » **Strengthening the social safety net by permanently increasing income and disability assistance rates**
- » **Legislating paid sick leave**
- » **Increasing supports for mental health and addictions**

- » **Supporting an inclusive economic recovery, including launching a significant, province-wide consultation on anti-racism**
- » **Focusing on solutions to food insecurity by working collaboratively across ministries**



TogetherBC: B.C.'s Poverty Reduction

Strategy set out ambitious targets to reduce the province's overall poverty rate by 25 per cent, and the child poverty rate by 50 per cent, by 2024 (from 2016 levels).

British Columbia exceeded these targets in 2020,¹ achieving a reduction of 52.5 per cent in the overall poverty rate and 71.3 per cent in the child poverty rate (from 2016 levels).

Provincial investments and a strong economy contributed to this decline between 2016 and 2019. The federal Canada Child Benefit also played a major role. The further poverty reduction seen in 2020 was in large part the result of federal and provincial COVID-19 relief benefits, such as the Canada Emergency Recovery Benefit (CERB), the BC Emergency Benefit for Workers, and the BC Recovery Benefit.

TogetherBC is still helping to steer the Province's COVID-19 response and economic recovery. Its guiding principles of inclusion, opportunity, affordability and reconciliation continue to be pivotal to this work.

The TogetherBC 2021 Annual Report clearly shows that when it comes to addressing poverty, the outcomes are better when all sectors and partners work together.

¹ *The Market Basket Measure (MBM) is reported by Statistics Canada with a 2-year lag. 2020 MBM data was made available in March 2022.*

B.C.'s poverty reduction framework

Before the development of TogetherBC, B.C. had one of the highest rates of poverty in Canada. 15.3 per cent of the population was living in poverty, many of them employed.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act (the Act), passed unanimously by the B.C. Legislature in November 2018, laid an important foundation for the strategy. The Act outlines four guiding principles, six priority action areas, and 13 key population groups, and requires a number of commitments for the strategy to uphold. The Act also confirms two important poverty reduction targets for British Columbia:

➔ **To reduce the overall poverty rate by 25 per cent by 2024 (from 2016 levels)**

➔ **To reduce the child (under 18) poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024 (from 2016 levels)**

In 2016, 760,000 people were living below the poverty line in B.C. – 147,000 of them children. At that time, B.C. was the only province without a poverty reduction strategy. In Fall 2017, the Province began work on developing the province's first strategy, TogetherBC.



TIMELINE OF POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND REPORTING

OCT 2017 – MAR 2018

Between October 2017 and March 2018, the Province completed a broad, province-wide public engagement with people living in poverty and their friends, families and advocates, as well as community organizations, service providers, local governments, Indigenous communities, businesses, industry associations and unions.

JULY 2018

Following this engagement, the Province released a "What We Heard About Poverty in BC" Report in July 2018.

NOV 2018

In November 2018, the Act passed unanimously in the legislature.

MAR 2019

The Province's poverty reduction strategy, TogetherBC, was released in March 2019.

DEC 2020

The first annual report on the strategy was released in December 2020.

OCT 2021

The second annual report was released in October 2021.

TARGETS – BASED ON THE 2016 MARKET BASKET MEASURE (MBM):

- ➔ Reduce the overall poverty rate by 25 per cent by 2024
 - ➔ Reduce the child (under 18) poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024
-

REPORTING – ANNUAL REPORT MUST BE PRODUCED BY OCTOBER 1, OF EACH YEAR, AND MUST REPORT ON:

- ➔ the actions that were taken to implement the strategy
 - ➔ the effects of the strategy on poverty reduction
 - ➔ the progress made towards the targets
-

SIX PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

- ➔ Housing
- ➔ Families, children and youth
- ➔ Education
- ➔ Employment
- ➔ Income supports
- ➔ Social supports



FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- ➔ Affordability
- ➔ Opportunity
- ➔ Social Inclusion
- ➔ Reconciliation

THE MINISTER’S POVERTY REDUCTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MUST INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOLLOWING GROUPS, OF WHICH HALF MUST BE WOMEN:

- » Indigenous Peoples
- » Persons living in poverty
- » Persons living with disabilities
- » Local governments
- » Organizations that advocate for persons living in poverty
- » The business community
- » Unions
- » Academics
- » Persons living in rural and remote communities

THE STRATEGY MUST BE UPDATED AT LEAST ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS. IN DEVELOPING AND UPDATING THE STRATEGY, 13 KEY POPULATION GROUPS MUST BE CONSIDERED:

- » Children
- » Youth
- » Women and persons of all genders
- » Indigenous Peoples
- » Persons living with disabilities
- » Persons living in rural and remote communities
- » Immigrants and refugees
- » 2SLGBTQ+ persons
- » Seniors
- » Persons and families working and earning low incomes
- » Persons living with mental illness or addiction
- » Persons living with or fleeing abuse
- » Persons of colour



Measuring our progress and the impact of COVID-19

B.C.'S POVERTY REDUCTION TARGETS

TogetherBC aims to achieve two ambitious targets: reduce B.C.'s overall poverty rate by 25 per cent and the child poverty rate by 50 per cent by 2024.

These goals were set using the Market Basket Measure (MBM), Canada's Official Poverty Line. The MBM reflects the cost of a "basket" of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living in Canada.

The MBM includes five components: costs for food, clothing, transportation, shelter and other expenses. It is updated annually to reflect changes in the prices of the goods and services in the basket.

Statistics Canada periodically updates the basket to reflect changes in what is considered necessary for a person to have a basic standard of living. Data on poverty rates take two years to become available from Statistics Canada.

When the Act was established in 2018, B.C. used 2016 as the baseline year for measuring the number of people living below the poverty line, as that was the most current data at the time. For this 2021 report, 2020 data is used. The report also uses the new MBM 2018-base data, rather than the 2008-base data that was available in 2016.²

² In 2018, Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada began a comprehensive review to update the base measure established in 2008-2010. This process resulted in changes to the MBM that better reflect current living expenses and consumption patterns. The data for the 2018-base MBM was released on Sept. 8, 2020. This report uses the 2018-base MBM and all previous years' data has been updated to reflect the 2018-base.

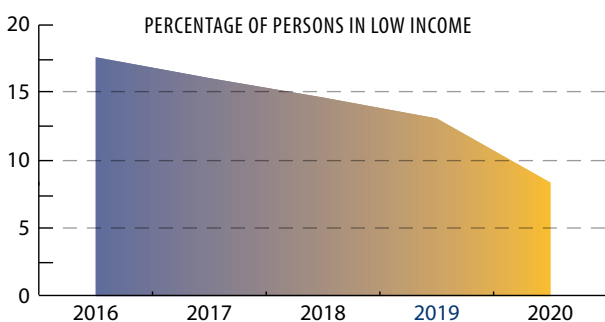
PROGRESS ON POVERTY REDUCTION

According to 2019 statistics, B.C. had already met its targets. The most recent 2020 MBM statistics (released in March 2022) show that B.C. has once more exceeded these targets and further reduced the number of people living in poverty.

Between 2019 and 2020, 214,000 fewer people were living in poverty, including 19,000 fewer children. The overall poverty rate dropped from 11.9 per cent to 7.6 per cent—a reduction of 36.1 per cent. The child poverty rate went from 7.3 per cent in 2019 to 5.0 per cent in 2020—a reduction of 31.5 per cent.

This is a total reduction of 52.5 per cent in the overall poverty rate and a reduction of 71.3 per cent in the child poverty rate since 2016. This means that from 2016 to 2020, B.C. had 378,000 fewer people living in poverty including 104,000 fewer children.

2020 MARKET BASKET MEASURE – SINCE 2016



Depth of poverty measures how far below the poverty line someone's income is. The average household income of those in poverty was 65.6 per cent of the MBM threshold in 2020, compared to 66.4 per cent in 2019. For children under the age of 18, the average household income declined to 69.1 per cent of the MBM threshold from 77.7 per cent in 2019. This means depth of poverty was more severe during this time, particularly for families with children. In other words, although fewer people were living in poverty, those who remained in poverty had incomes further below the poverty line.

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON POVERTY REDUCTION

The significant decline in poverty in 2020 was in large part the result of federal and provincial COVID-19 relief benefits which provided \$12 billion to people living in British Columbia. These trends suggest that COVID-19 benefits raised those living just below MBM thresholds above those thresholds.

While progress has been made, more work is needed to understand how B.C. can sustain its success in the coming years without COVID-19 income supports and to reduce the depth of poverty in which some people live.

The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 continue to be felt disproportionately by racialized communities, people living with disabilities, women, single parents and Indigenous people. However, in 2020 the poverty rate for unattached females of all ages declined because of the COVID-19 support benefits, narrowing the gap significantly between males and females.

At the time of writing, it is evident that inflation will play a large role in outcomes for 2022 onward. Coupled with the completion of most COVID-19 relief programs, it could have a considerable impact on the poverty rate in B.C. and the rest of Canada.



B.C.'s commitment to reconciliation and equity

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act) became law in B.C. on November 28, 2019. Through this legislation, the Province formally adopted the internationally recognized standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration).

Since the Declaration Act passed, the Province has been working with Indigenous partners to develop an action plan and to begin aligning all work—from policy and programs to legislation—with the principle of reconciliation.

The Declaration Act marked a historic shift in B.C.'s approach to reconciliation. However, its full implementation will take time. The Province and Indigenous leaders and communities are building strong relationships and new ways of working. There's still more work to be done, but progress on reconciliation and equity continues to be made.

ANTI-RACISM DATA LEGISLATION ENGAGEMENT

More than 70 community organizations throughout B.C. received funding to help them engage their members on race-based data collection as the Province moves forward with anti-racism data legislation. Funded organizations received as much as \$25,000 to hold engagement sessions about how the Province should develop and implement anti-racism data legislation. The Province also partnered with the First Nations Leadership Council, Métis Nation British Columbia and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres to support consultation with their members and communities.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS LEGISLATION

In November 2021, amendments to the B.C. Human Rights Code added Indigenous identity as a protected ground against discrimination and amendments to the Interpretation Act to make it clear that all provincial laws uphold, and do not diminish, the rights of Indigenous Peoples protected under section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

FIRST NATIONS WELL BEING FUND

First Nations throughout B.C. were able to apply for funding to promote well-being, improve the quality of life for community members on and off reserve, and find solutions to poverty in their communities. The First Nations Well Being Fund, which was created with a \$2.7-million grant from the Province, is administered by the First Nations Public Service Secretariat in partnership with the First Nations Leadership Council. Funding was offered through two streams: community projects and planning. In 2021, grants were provided to 62 First Nations communities throughout the province.

B.C. INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Indigenous leaders and subject matter experts on agriculture and food from throughout B.C. are working with the Province to increase Indigenous participation in the sector and strengthen Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty. The B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food is the first of its kind in Canada, working to advance reconciliation, respect for Indigenous rights and support self-determination goals in the agriculture and food sector. The advisory council's mandate is to enhance the equitable participation of Indigenous Peoples in the agriculture and food sector and support the realization of their food security, food sovereignty and economic development objectives. They are governed by the principles of respect, reciprocity and responsibility, which are cornerstones of the Declaration Act and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Six priority action areas

HOUSING

During the 2017/18 public consultation on poverty reduction, participants identified housing as the top issue.

Safe and stable housing is often out of reach for people living in poverty. People living with mental health challenges or addictions face unique barriers as well. This highlights the need for the continuing cross-government work to develop solutions in partnership with people who have experienced barriers to safe and stable housing.

Despite important progress made in 2021, housing remains a complex challenge for many communities.

COMPLEX CARE HOUSING

In 2021, the Province worked across the health, social and housing sectors and in collaboration with Indigenous partners and people with lived experience to develop a strategic framework to guide the implementation of complex care housing. This new model of housing is designed to address the needs of people who have overlapping mental health and substance use issues who often experience homelessness or face barriers to achieving housing stability. Many of these individuals also experience other unmet needs, have significant histories of poverty, trauma and marginalization, and were historically left behind and caught in a cycle of evictions, shelters, and often emergency rooms and jail cells.

Complex care housing will support some of B.C.'s most underserved people by providing a full suite of wraparound health, housing, social and cultural services to help establish stability, connection and break the cycle of homelessness.

PREVENTING AND REDUCING HOMELESSNESS: AN INTEGRATED DATA PROJECT

Homelessness continues to be a major challenge in B.C. for those who are living it every day, as well as for the communities in which they live. Establishing a new methodology to measure homelessness can help the province better understand, respond to, and prevent homelessness in B.C. The Integrated Data Project is a multi-ministry and multi-year initiative. By providing a comprehensive, robust and reliable dataset linking cross-ministry, national and provincial administrative datasets, the project will help the Province strengthen its response to the challenge in B.C. The Integrated Data Project, for the first time, offers an annual estimate of homelessness in the province using administrative data.

The Phase 1 findings, released in 2021, show that a total of about 23,000 people experienced homelessness for some period of time in 2019.³ On average, 9,300 unique people experienced homelessness each month, and about half of those experiencing homelessness are chronically homeless.

³ *Preventing and Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project, Province of British Columbia 2021. gov.bc.ca/homelessness-cohort*

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO PROTECT RENTERS

In Spring 2021, legislative changes were made to build on the Province's work to give renters more security by extending a rent freeze to December 31, 2021. The Province also capped future rent increases to inflation, introduced new protections to prevent illegal renovations and made the dispute resolution process better for tenants and landlords. Additionally, it is now easier for tenants to receive compensation in cases where a tenant has been evicted but the landlord does not follow through on the stated purpose for ending the tenancy.

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In B.C., job loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected single parents, particularly single mothers. Children in single-parent households are also more than three times more likely to live in poverty than children in two-parent households.

Through the ChildCare BC initiative, the Province is now funding thousands of new quality, affordable childcare spaces, building better facilities, lowering fees for families and training more people to become early learning professionals.

Having a strong healthcare system and comprehensive services to ensure the physical and mental health of all people living in British Columbia is integral to developing and supporting strong families.

British Columbia has been experiencing many challenges in this area: the COVID-19 pandemic has put significant strain on the healthcare system—there are few family physicians available; and mental health supports are often hard to access. In 2021, the B.C. government implemented several initiatives to address these challenges.

NEW CHILDCARE LEGISLATION

New early learning and child-care legislation, which became law in October 2021, helps the Province deliver on its 10-year ChildCare BC plan to build an affordable, quality and inclusive early learning and child-care system for B.C. families. The legislation came into effect as more families than ever were benefiting from the fastest creation of child-care spaces in B.C.'s history, with 26,700 new licensed spaces funded since the plan was launched in 2018. Childcare is key to addressing poverty by improving people's ability to work, study and engage with their communities. In addition, the Province is providing \$10-a-day child-care for twice as many families, saving parents up to \$1,600 a month through affordability measures, and giving early childhood educators a well-deserved raise. The Early Learning and Child Care Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act are important steps in streamlining early learning and child-care legislation to meet the diverse needs of B.C. families, early childhood educators and child-care providers.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES FOR YOUTH

Budget 2021 invested over \$97 million for integrated mental health and substance use care for children, youth and young adults. This includes adding 123 youth substance use treatment and recovery beds throughout the province. In addition, this funding also provided for Integrated Child and Youth teams to deliver wraparound supports by identifying earlier when a young person needs support and connecting them to specific mental health and substance use services, along with the expansion of Foundry Centres and Foundry Virtual to provide mental health and substance use care to people aged 12 to 24. The Province is also expanding early psychosis intervention services, increasing support for those struggling with eating disorders and implementing low barrier StepUp/Step Down bed-based services.

COMMUNITY STORY – VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL HEALTH SOCIETY – SARAH

Sarah is a Métis person of Cree ancestry from Saskatchewan who lives in Surrey, B.C. Like many people with lower incomes, Sarah struggled to find affordable dental care until she met the team at Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society.

Provincial funding to the B.C. Dental Association enabled non-profit dental clinics such as VAHS to provide increased access to dental services for people like Sarah who are financially vulnerable.

“VAHS is a dental clinic like no other,” said Sarah. “The amount of care and support, I received from such a fantastic team was amazing. So far, I have received care from four dentists, and a dental hygienist directly. Each of them has been welcoming and non-judgmental towards me and my oral condition.”

For many people with lower incomes, accessing dental care is not just difficult, it can also be intimidating for those who may have never received regular dental care. The fear of having someone examine their teeth is coupled with the fear of not knowing what dental procedures may be needed. However, in Sarah’s case, her fears quickly evaporated after meeting the VAHS team.

“I’m proud to say I don’t fear going to the dentist now,” said Sarah. “The entire team is very friendly and helpful; I truly appreciate every person who has had dedicated the time to make this clinic possible. There are so many people that come here who otherwise wouldn’t feel comfortable or in some cases would not be able to afford basic dental care. I am just so grateful that I now have routine dental cleaning that I can afford for the first time.

“Services like these are making the difference for the low-income population in the city. It is important for people that are going through the same circumstances as me to know there are dental services aimed for their needs,” Sarah added.

NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH

Ongoing efforts to make health-care systems culturally safe and accessible for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples in B.C. and across Canada were strengthened with the creation of a ground-breaking repository of resources at the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH). New funding supports NCCIH to expand the first-ever collection of cultural safety and Indigenous-specific anti-racism tools and resources. Indigenous Services Canada is providing \$520,000 over five years to support this initiative nationally, and the Province is

contributing \$550,000. This will enable B.C. health system partners to create unique tools, strategies, and resources to enhance culturally safe service delivery and practices across the health system in B.C.

FOOD SECURITY EFFORTS IN B.C.

Food insecurity, the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial or other constraints, was identified as a key issue in the 2017-18 public consultations for TogetherBC; however, the 2019 strategy acknowledged it had not yet been addressed at the time of writing. Since then, responding to food

insecurity has become a central part of poverty reduction efforts in the Province. While food security is primarily related to income or food costs, other factors like mobility and transportation issues, the lack of capacity or inability to store or prepare food, and lack of access to other social supports are all potential barriers. Climate change, unstable food supply chains, high input and transportation costs also significantly impact food security. Food insecurity is experienced most by those who live with the negative impacts of structural inequities, discrimination and colonial history.

The pandemic and major climate events have increased the need for immediate supports to food access programs, and rapid inflation continues to have an impact on everyone, but in particular individuals and families living with food insecurity. Responding effectively to food insecurity requires collaboration and coordination between governments, across ministries, and across all sectors of our communities. There are many ways of promoting food security in B.C. including income support initiatives that help people to afford and access food, building regional and community capacity for food collection, processing and distribution, enhancing capacity to promote Indigenous food sovereignty, growing our food supply and making our supply chain more resilient.

These involve short-term actions as well as longer-term strategies so while there is a need to address our communities' immediate and emergent needs we must create a longer-term approach to food security that supports lasting change.

In 2021, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction provided funding to community-based programs to specifically respond to immediate needs. Organizations providing food programs have been critical partners during times of crisis, ensuring families and communities have had access to food when they have needed it.

Food Banks BC received \$6 million—for use over three years—for the Emergency Food Purchasing program, and a further \$2.5 million to build capacity to store and distribute perishable food items. They worked with diverse partners to get food to Lytton, Spuzzum, Boothroyd, Boston Bar, Hope, Merritt, Kamloops, Kelowna and Princeton when regular access was disrupted due to wildfires. In many cases, food was flown into communities when road access was cut off.

United Way of the Lower Mainland (now United Way British Columbia) received \$1.27 million to support immediate needs through supporting regional food hubs, as well as longer-term food security planning. These regional food hubs are locally based networks of community partners working together to provide direct food distribution. These organizations provide food literacy and skills programming in addition to other wrap-around services and supports for people in need.

Other examples of actions taken by the Province in 2021 include:

- » **Launching a new Food Infrastructure Grant (FIG) Program to support rural, remote, and Indigenous communities to improve access to local food and help ensure communities are less affected by food system disruptions**
- » **Providing increased support to provincial health authorities to strengthen community capacity to improve food access and availability through the Community Food Action Initiative**
- » **Convening the B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food. Read more about this initiative on Page 29**
- » **Establishing the BC Farmers' Market Expansion program to strengthen the ability of farmers markets to expand sales and operate during emergencies**
- » **Ongoing work with the Feed BC program, which works with institutions, stakeholders and partners across the food service supply chain to increase the use of B.C. foods in B.C. government supported institutions, facilities, programs and services**

The cycle of poverty can often be linked to barriers to accessing education. That’s why the Province remains committed to helping students reach their potential by providing them the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous, sustainable economy.

K-12 ANTI-RACISM IN EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

The K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan is a comprehensive multi-year strategy to address racism and discrimination in education and create a culture and climate of belonging for all students and staff. The Ministry of Education and Child Care will support the development and implementation of this Action Plan, but the work will be guided by rightsholders, Indigenous partners, education partners, community organizations and students with lived and living experiences of racism and discrimination. The Action Plan is expected to be publicly released in fall 2022.



SKILLS TRAINING FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Skills Training for Economic Recovery Program (STE) provides skills training, education, and related employment supports – including counselling, mentoring, childcare, transportation, disability supports, work experience, wage subsidies, and equipment – to people most affected by COVID-19 so they can develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies for good job opportunities while the economy recovers. Participants include unemployed or precariously employed members of the following underrepresented populations:

- » Young adults
- » Young adults at risk
- » Older workers (55+)
- » Survivors of violence and/or abuse
- » Individuals facing multiple barriers to employment, which may include persons with disabilities
- » Refugees
- » Persons experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues



Funding for STE comes from the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement. In 2020/21, \$35 million went to support 98 STE programs, which supported over 5,600 people in B.C.

CONTACT NORTH B.C.

Contact North BC, a collaboration between Coast Mountain College and Indigenous communities in northwestern B.C., was created with the goal to expand post-secondary access for students living in remote and rural communities where there are also large numbers of Indigenous students. Since January 2021, 868 individuals have been registered and supported.

COMMUNITY STORY – IMMIGRANT LINK CENTRE SOCIETY – IGOR

Food insecurity is a major challenge, particularly for people living in poverty. The rising cost of living means that people have less and less money available to put food on the table.

In Maple Ridge, B.C., this was a stark reality for too many people in the community. Igor Bjelac, a director with Immigrant Link Centre Society, is grateful that his organization was able to provide relief for so many people with the help of government grants.

“We are committed to helping the local community as much as we can, so every donation is important to us,” said Igor. “Food insecurity affects everyone, including families who are struggling to get healthy and nutritious food even though they may be working full-time jobs.”

Immigrant Link Centre Society (ILCS) used government grants and private donations to support their free food program From Pollution to Solution, which redistributes food for people facing food insecurity while keeping good surplus food out of the landfill.

From Pollution to Solution also provided opportunities for new immigrants to volunteer with the not-for-profit sector in British Columbia. Volunteers get access to valuable work experience in their new country as well as constructive opportunities to connect with their new community.

Since 2016, Immigrant Link Centre Society has gathered good, unsold food from grocery stores and distributed thousands of meals to immigrants, refugees and people in need at no cost.

“We will continue to re-purpose food and increase food security while building up the community,” said Igor. “We are hoping to expand our operations and help more people in the future.”

EMPLOYMENT

COVID-19 caused a significant disruption to the labour market. Employment in B.C. dropped by 410,000 jobs between February and April 2020. Although this improved throughout the rest of 2020, it took until March 2021 to return to pre-pandemic levels and by later in 2021, the challenges had shifted to a labour shortage.

The pandemic had a different impact on various populations in the labour market. For example, youth (aged 15-24) experienced the largest decline in employment. The biggest job losses early in the pandemic were in accommodation and food services, and in wholesale and retail trade. These industries have high rates of part-time workers and lower wages. Women and immigrants hold a disproportionate number of jobs in these sectors.

PAID SICK LEAVE

Along with a variety of supports offered to workers to address challenges due to COVID-19, the vast majority of workers in B.C. no longer have to choose between going to work sick or losing wages. In January, B.C.'s first-ever permanent paid sick leave came into effect with five paid sick days each year. Both full- and part-time employees are eligible for this benefit.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolved, the Province ensured workers' jobs were protected if they had to take leave due to COVID-19 and could take time to get vaccinated without losing wages. Amendments made to the Employment Standards Act in April 2021, provide up to three hours of paid leave, per dose, to employees in B.C. who are receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. In May 2021, the Province established further new leave provisions under the Employment Standards Act to better protect and support workers and employers during the pandemic. Effective from May 20, 2021, to December 31, 2021, workers could take up to three days of paid sick leave for circumstances

related to COVID-19, with the Province reimbursing employers up to \$200 a day per employee.

INCREASED EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE

The Increased Employment Incentive (IEI), part of StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan, is a refundable tax credit targeted to businesses that were able to hire new workers, hire back people who were let go or increase workers' hours during the last three months of 2020. The IEI was one of several provincial supports that helped businesses recover and respond to the unprecedented economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 4,757 applications were approved, with credits paid in the amount of \$27.8 million. This program supported the creation of 16,500 net new jobs

and salary and wage increases for another 68,800 workers.

CONSERVATION ECONOMIC STIMULUS INITIATIVE

The Province allocated \$10.2 million to the Conservation Economic Stimulus Initiative (CESI). Administered by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, the program will deliver 64 species and ecosystem conservation and restoration projects over two years. Through CESI, more than 350 direct jobs have been created, which may result in long-term positions in the emerging restoration economy. A focus was placed on creating opportunities in communities most impacted by COVID-19 including women, youth, and Indigenous persons.

COMMUNITY STORY – WORKBC - NICOLE

"WorkBC changed my life for the better," said Nicole, a single mom who was unemployed for about two years.

"I was a single mom with a newborn, who went through years of recovery due to past addictions," she said. "I needed a clear career plan to get back into the workforce that would be the best for my family."

Nicole learned about the WorkBC single parent employment initiative through a friend who also had a positive experience going through the program.

The single parent employment initiative helps single parents on income and disability assistance get the supports they need to overcome barriers to employment and build a better future for their families.

"I reached out to the WorkBC office in Nanaimo and was in contact with Jenn," said Nicole. "I knew I wanted to go back to school for training in the mental health field. Jenn is an excellent listener and was so helpful in every step of my schooling and job search."

"Another big way WorkBC helped was by paying for testing to assess if I had a learning disability," said Nicole. "Through the assessments, I was diagnosed with learning disability and ADHD. The results provided answers to many questions about my past challenges with learning and helped me move forward with better understanding."

By going through the WorkBC program, Nicole was able to benefit from financial assistance for her tuition, books, childcare supports and additional certificates that she needed to enroll and complete the education assistant and community support worker mental health program.

Since completing the course, Nicole is now working as an education assistant for school district 69. She also works part-time as a mental health worker for Island Crisis Care Society.

"I really enjoy the work and I love the kids and surroundings," she said. "The work is always interesting and changing as I get to move around to different schools within the district."

INCOME SUPPORTS

COVID-19 created substantial uncertainty around employment. It became difficult for many people to predict the impact the pandemic would have on their income. This was particularly true for low-income workers, the majority of whom were women in the retail and hospitality sectors.

Both federal and provincial COVID-19 income supports were crucial to ensuring stability for low-income individuals and families. As shown by the MBM statistics, this helped reduce the overall rate of poverty in B.C.

Most of these supports have now ended. However, the largest ever increase in income and disability assistance rates along with the recently implemented Child Opportunity Benefit will continue to strengthen B.C.'s income support system on a permanent basis.

INCOME AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE RATE INCREASE

More than 300,000 people are benefitting from the largest-ever permanent increase to income assistance and disability assistance rates and the first-ever increase to the senior's supplement. In April 2021, individuals on income assistance and disability assistance received a permanent \$175 per month increase – the third increase in rates since July 2017. As well, for the first time since it was introduced in 1987, there was an increase to the senior's supplement of up to \$50 per recipient. This raised the maximum rate for a single person from \$49.30 to \$99.30 per month, benefiting up to 20,000 more low-income seniors. For people on income assistance living in special care facilities, their comforts allowance increased by \$20 to \$115 per month.

CUSTOMER CRISIS FUND EXTENSION

BC Hydro's Customer Crisis Fund (CCF) program allowed eligible BC Hydro customers facing financial hardship and possible disconnection

of their service (due to a job loss, injury, illness or loss of a family member) to access grants of up to \$600 to pay their BC Hydro bill. A pilot of the CCF program ended on May 31, 2021, at the expiration of its three-year term. In June 2021, the Province extended the CCF to continue providing support for people in financial crisis and help avoid disconnections of their electricity service.

B.C. FAMILY BENEFIT

The B.C. Family Benefit (formerly B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit), which provides a tax-free monthly payment to families with children under the age of 18, was announced and enacted in Budget 2019. The program launched in October 2020 and nearly 300,000 families with children under the age of 18 are receiving the benefit. A family with two children can receive up to \$2,600 per year. The total cost of the program is approximately \$400 million per year.



SOCIAL SUPPORTS

Community well-being and sense of belonging were particularly crucial during the past two years. People had to isolate themselves due to COVID-19 or rely on others as extreme weather events created disruptions and in many cases displaced them from their homes.

Non-profit organizations are often at the forefront of community supports. The Province relies on these local and community organizations to deliver inclusive access to services across the province. These organizations also connect with people living in poverty, linking them to supports and to other people in their communities.

FREE TRANSIT FOR YOUTH UNDER 12

As of September 1, 2021, children 12 and under can “Get on Board” any BC Transit or TransLink service for free, saving many families hundreds of dollars each year. This is part of the provincial government’s commitment to efficient, reliable and affordable transit for families. Anyone who typically bought fares or monthly bus passes for children 12 and under no longer needs to do so. This helps families save money and enables them to get to school and access other community supports.

REFUGEE READINESS FUND

A new \$2 million fund helped the Province boost local services and supports for families resettling in B.C. due to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. The Refugee Readiness Fund is a one-time investment to ensure that B.C. communities are ready to welcome and respond to the needs of refugees from Afghanistan who are resettling in the province. The federal commitment is to resettle 40,000 Afghans in Canada, which means B.C. is preparing to welcome thousands of families and individuals over the coming years.

COMMUNITY STORY – CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE PEER ADVISORS

In 2021, the City of Prince George was able to create a peer advisor role for its PEER projects (Peer Employment & Encouraging Resiliency) through the Strengthening Communities Services provincial grant administered through Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM).

The City’s peer engagement and peer employment projects provided a platform for people with lived experience of homelessness to feel welcome to share their ideas. The peer advisor’s role is to listen and respond to what people with lived experience have to say.

Melanie, a peer advisor with the City of Prince George since September 2021, was recommended by a community partner to help with the planning and implementation of activities to improve the health and safety of homeless people and the community-at-large.

Melanie’s lived experience with homelessness was an asset to the advisory group. She came with great ideas and practical suggestions that the partners realized added value to the project. Melanie suggested that with the engagement sessions, people would feel more comfortable to participate if peers were the facilitators for the stations and not agency staff.

The peer facilitators received training, knew the participants and were able to engage in friendly conversation that made people feel welcome and included. The facilitators were also compensated for their work.

Melanie was also involved in other City initiatives such as assisting the city’s outreach staff with conducting an online survey with unsheltered individuals. She helped collect responses from people about their experiences and ideas around washroom access for their needs. With her knowledge and help, Melanie made people feel comfortable to share their opinions and ideas which resulted in high number of responses for the survey. She also proposed that each participant received a coffee card to reward them.

Melanie also presented to the City's Bylaw Unit on her firsthand experiences with homelessness. Her presentation gave better understanding and sensitivity for staff when interacting with unsheltered individuals.

Melanie's work importantly contributed to the City's development of its downtown strategy. Currently, Melanie is working part-time with a local social service agency, has secure housing, and is building positive social connections in the community. The City of Prince George staff greatly appreciate her participation and contributions.

Next steps

People living in poverty felt the impacts of the year's events more acutely than anyone else—from the ongoing pandemic and the reports of unmarked graves at residential schools, to extreme weather events including wildfires and flooding, drug toxicity, and systemic racism and discrimination.

Along with meeting these immediate challenges, the Province has continued to work to take action on poverty reduction. Key initiatives across all ministries in 2021 included raising income and disability assistance rates, legislating paid sick leave, expanding supports for refugees, raising the minimum wage, improving supports for those with complex mental health challenges and much more.

Over the next year, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction will begin engagement to update B.C.'s poverty reduction strategy to meet its commitment to update the strategy by 2024. The Act lays out the roadmap for this refresh. This will include initiatives to meet poverty reduction targets and to increase affordability, opportunities, and inclusion. Reconciliation and alignment with the Declaration Act will be foundational to all of this work.

In March 2022, the Province released the Declaration Act Action Plan, which calls for the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and experiences of poverty and well-being, as well as Indigenous-identified progress measures, into the updated poverty reduction strategy.

The poverty reduction targets set out in the first strategy were ambitious. But none of the thousands of people who contributed to that strategy could have anticipated the events of the last few years, or the impact of the pandemic on people living in poverty. While we have exceeded the targets set out in the first strategy, so much work remains for us to do in order to sustain this progress given that much of the success since 2020 was due to temporary COVID-19 benefits. It will also be important to assess and improve other key aspects of poverty including the depth of poverty and the cycle of poverty. The Province is looking forward to working across sectors to identify new approaches to poverty reduction that reflects the experience and priorities of people of those that it impacts the most.



Appendix A: Minister's Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee

REMEMBERING CATHERINE LUDGATE

Catherine Ludgate was the chair of the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee from its inception in 2019 until her passing in December 2021. Catherine was an anti-poverty champion and a dedicated co-operator, collaborator, and community builder. Catherine's ability to ask hard questions and her commitment to standing up for disadvantaged people throughout Canada was respected and renowned.

B.C.'s first ever poverty reduction strategy was strongly informed by Catherine's wisdom, leadership and intuition. Catherine was patient yet persistent in pushing government to rethink how we approach social services and that commitment has made a real difference in many lives.

We remain grateful to her for her work and leadership on the committee and for her dedication to the people of British Columbia. She will be missed by so many.

BACKGROUND

The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee was formed with the release of TogetherBC in March 2019. The committee follows the work of the Minister's Poverty Reduction Advisory Forum, which was in place from 2017 to 2019 to help guide the Province in the creation of the Act and TogetherBC.

MEMBERSHIP

The Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee was appointed on March 18, 2019. It advises

the Province on policy developments related to poverty reduction and prevention, as legislated in the Act. The 13-member committee includes advocates, stakeholders and people with lived experience with poverty. As of March 2022, committee members were as follows:

- » Zahra Esmail (Chair)
- » Mebrat Beyene
- » Cheryl Casimer
- » Murry Krause
- » Rosanna McGregor
- » Brad Mills
- » Adrienne Montani
- » Krishna Pendakur
- » Richard Schabler
- » Kirsten Sikora
- » Lissa Smith
- » Stephanie Smith
- » Caitlin Wright

PURPOSE

As required by the Act, the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee is an independent committee appointed by the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

Section 10 of the Act establishes the duties of the committee, which include:

A. Advising the minister on matters related to poverty reduction and prevention and assess the progress of government actions taken to meet the legislated targets;

B. Advising the minister on consultations undertaken to develop and update the strategy; and

C. Providing independent commentary on the actions taken in the previous calendar year.

This commentary is included in the annual report. The Act also addresses the composition of the Committee. It requires that at least half the committee must be women, and that it must include representatives from nine key groups. Members are appointed for one, two, or three-year terms, to a maximum of six years.

Appendix B: Market Basket Measure Rate Tables⁴

TABLE 1 - UPDATED MBM IMPACT ON THE POVERTY REDUCTION TARGETS

INCIDENCE OF POVERTY	2016 BASELINE (%)	2024 TARGET (%)	2020 ACTUAL (%)	% REDUCTION	% OF TARGET ACHIEVED
All persons	16.0	12.0	7.6	-52.5	210.0
Persons under 18 years	17.4	8.7	5.0	-71.3	142.5

TABLE 2 - POVERTY RATE TRENDS IN B.C., 2016 – 2020

INCIDENCE OF POVERTY	MARKET BASKET MEASURE, 2018 BASE (PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS IN LOW INCOME)				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
All persons	16.0	14.6	13.3	11.9	7.6
Persons under 18 years	17.4	13.4	11.1	7.3	5.0
Persons 18 to 64 years	17.4	16.3	15.2	14.8	9.5
Persons 65 years and over	9.1	9.7	8.5	6.4	3.7

⁴ Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0135-01 Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type

TABLE 3 - POVERTY RATE TRENDS IN CANADA, 2016 – 2020

	MARKET BASKET MEASURE, 2018 BASE (PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS IN LOW INCOME)				
INCIDENCE OF POVERTY	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
All persons	12.9	11.9	11.2	10.3	6.4
Persons under 18 years	13.9	11.7	10.6	9.4	4.7
Persons 18 to 64 years	14.0	13.4	12.8	11.8	7.8
Persons 65 years and over	7.1	6.1	6.0	5.7	3.1

TABLE 4 - POVERTY RATE TRENDS AND RANKINGS, BY PROVINCE (FOR ALL PERSONS)

	INCIDENCE (%)				RANKING (HIGHER IS BETTER)		
ALL PERSONS	2016	2019	2020	% CHANGE 2016-2020	2016	2019	2020
Canada	12.9	10.3	6.4	-50.4%
BC	16.0	11.9	7.6	-52.5%	2	3	2
NL	12.2	11.2	7.0	-42.6%	7	6	5
PEI	13.9	12.3	7.6	-45.3%	3	1	2
NS	16.4	12.0	7.7	-53.0%	1	2	1
NB	13.9	9.9	7.6	-45.3%	3	8	2
QC	11.0	8.9	4.8	-56.4%	9	9	10
ON	13.7	10.9	6.8	-50.4%	5	7	6
MB	12.4	11.5	6.8	-45.2%	6	5	6
SK	11.1	11.9	6.7	-39.6%	8	3	8
AB	10.1	7.7	5.5	-45.5%	10	10	9

TABLE 5 - POVERTY RATE TRENDS AND RANKINGS, BY PROVINCE (FOR CHILDREN)

CHILDREN	INCIDENCE (%)				RANKING (HIGHER IS BETTER)		
	2016	2019	2020	% CHANGE 2016-2020	2016	2019	2020
Canada	13.9	9.4	4.7	-66.2%
BC	17.4	7.3	5.0	-71.3%	3	8	8
NL	13.0	15.3	7.9	-39.2%	7	1	1
PEI	18.5	14.6	7.2	-61.1%	2	2	2
NS	19.9	10.9	5.5	-72.4%	1	7	7
NB	16.4	12.4	6.1	-62.8%	4	5	4
QC	10.9	6.3	2.3	-78.9%	9	10	10
ON	15.2	11.5	5.6	-63.2%	6	6	6
MB	15.5	13.5	6.0	-61.3%	5	3	5
SK	12.5	12.7	6.6	-47.2%	8	4	3
AB	10.8	6.9	4.2	-61.1%	10	9	9

Appendix C: Inventory of Government Initiatives on Poverty Reduction

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

Skills Training for Economic Recovery program – Started in 2021

- » This program supports people affected by COVID-19 to get access to new training opportunities for high-demand jobs. The Province's \$29 million investment provides short-term skills training to people most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic so they can develop the knowledge, skills and competencies for good job opportunities while the economy recovers. Almost 3,300 British Columbians can quickly build the skills needed to access jobs that are in demand and get back to work sooner.

Contact North BC – Started in 2021

- » Contact North BC, a collaboration between Coast Mountain College and Indigenous communities in northwestern B.C., was created with the goal of expanding post-secondary access for students living in remote and rural communities with large numbers of Indigenous students. Since January 2021, 868 individuals have been registered and supported in 3,349 actual course registrations. The Ministry has provided \$3.352 million over two years to Contact North to support online access and has an ongoing commitment to the three-year Contact North pilot through year-end funding.

Accessibility programs – Ongoing

- » Students with disabilities enrolled at public post-secondary institutions are receiving more supports to help them succeed in their studies and train for a range of in-demand careers. The Province is providing additional support to three programs that facilitate accessible education across public post-secondary institutions. The Academic Communication Equity, Centre for Accessible Post-Secondary Education Resources and Program for Institutional Loan of Adaptive Technology (PILAT).

SITÉM, Métis Nation British Columbia's training and employment program – Ongoing

- » Métis citizens will have more access to long-term employment opportunities thanks to an expansion of SITÉM, Métis Nation British Columbia's training and employment program. In addition to providing Métis citizens with vital skills training and employment readiness programs, Métis regions will receive funding to carry out skills capacity assessments. For the 2021/22 fiscal year, Métis Nation BC (MNBC) secured \$16 million for MNBC's Ministry of Employment and Skills Training from the governments of Canada and B.C. Of the total 2021/22 budget of \$16 million, \$8 million is from Indigenous Skills and Employment Training from Service Canada, \$4 million in Post-Secondary Education Strategy funding from Indigenous Services Canada and \$3.8 million in provincial funding through StrongerBC: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan.

Mental health worker training program – Started in 2021

- » A new education and training program at Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Selkirk College, Vancouver Island University and Camosun College enables people to train for high-demand jobs as community mental health workers. The Province is investing a total of \$800,000 across four public post-secondary institutions to train community mental health workers. This investment is part of StrongerBC: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan.

Mental Health and Wellness Open Educational Resources – Ongoing

- » The ministry provided \$867,000 to BCcampus to develop mental health and wellness open educational resources. The resources were created in consultation with advisory groups of students, staff and faculty across the B.C. post-secondary system under the leadership of BCcampus.

The B.C. Employer Training Grant – Ongoing

- » Provides employers throughout B.C. with skills training funding for their workforces, including prospective new hires. The grant funding helps employers respond to their changing labour needs and helps develop a skilled workforce with the right mix of skills. In turn, this helps British Columbians access the skills training needed to succeed in today's labour market, while increasing job security and supporting career advancement. In 2021/22, the B.C. Employer Training Grant provided funding to over 1,100 employers to support skills training for over 5,000 people. This includes \$338,000 to 47 Early Childhood Educator employers in the health and social assistance sector to upskill their workforce to become registered Early Childhood Educators.

Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships – Ongoing

- » The Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships (ABCTP) program provides funding to improve post-secondary education and training within Indigenous communities and creates pathways to further post-secondary education or skills training and employment. In 2021/22, there were 30 ACBTP projects serving 1,149 Indigenous people and 93 Indigenous communities. The Province invested \$12 million in 2021/22.

Indigenous Skills Training Development Fund – Ongoing

- » The Indigenous Skills Training Development Fund (ISTDF) provides funding to Indigenous communities to increase access to skills training and employment for Indigenous people, and helps them acquire the skills needed to respond to emerging labour market opportunities. In 2020/21, the ISTDF supported 95 Indigenous communities through 60 projects. The Province invested \$12 million in 2020/21.

BladeRunners– Ongoing

- » The BladeRunners program supports at-risk youth aged 15 to 30 to obtain life-skills and job readiness training, job placement, and monitoring for sustainable full-time employment in a range of industries. Over the 2021/22 fiscal year, the BladeRunners program served approximately 1,400 participants throughout B.C. The Province invested \$6.2 million in 2021/22. With \$18.6 million over three years provided through the Canada-B.C. Workforce Development Agreement, the Province is supporting 11 organizations to serve more than 50 communities throughout B.C.

Skills Training for Employment – Ongoing

- » Skills Training for Employment (STE) provides skills training, education, and related employment supports to participants - including counselling, mentoring, childcare, transportation, disability supports, work experience, wage subsidies and equipment. Participants include unemployed or precariously employed members of the following vulnerable and underrepresented populations:
 - ◇ Young adults
 - ◇ Young adults at risk
 - ◇ Older workers (55+)
 - ◇ Survivors of violence and/or abuse
 - ◇ Individuals facing multiple barriers to employment, which may include persons with disabilities

- ◇ Refugees
- ◇ Persons experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues
- ◇ Funding for STE comes from the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement. In 2020/21, \$35 million went to support 98 STE programs to support over 5,600 British Columbians.

Community Workforce Response Grant program – Completed in 2021

- » This program provided \$33 million to train 3,700 British Columbians affected by COVID-19 for in-demand work and jobs with changing skill requirements. Short-term skills training projects were prioritized for
 - ◇ low-skilled workers
 - ◇ youth
 - ◇ women
 - ◇ older workers (55+)
 - ◇ Indigenous peoples
 - ◇ recent immigrants
 - ◇ people of colour
 - ◇ those with employment history in an industry or sector impacted by the pandemic.

B.C. Employer Training Grant program – Started in 2021

- » In 2021, \$342,000 was approved for employers to train British Columbians working in sectors affected by COVID-19, and to support training for persons with disabilities.

Sector Labour Market Partnerships – Ongoing

- » The Province provides \$6 million in project-based funding each year to support sectors, regions and populations in collecting current labour market information, developing evidence-based solutions and evaluating existing approaches to support the development and testing of innovative, inclusive workforce development strategies. Current Sector Labour Market Partnerships projects that support TogetherBC include:
 - ◇ Early Childhood Educators of BC's sector-led evaluation of the Province's Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (\$3 million over seven years, 2018/19 to 2024/25).
 - ◇ BC Care Providers Association developed and launched the Home and Independent Living program, which provides free training for participants to start their careers in Elder Care (\$325,000 over three years, 2020/21 to 2022/23).
 - ◇ Inclusion Powell River Society is conducting labour market research on how employers can create inclusive workplaces for persons with disabilities (\$803,000 over three years (2020/21 to 2023/24).

Industry Training Authority pre-apprenticeship training for women and other under-represented groups – Completed in 2021

- » In 2021/22, pre-apprenticeship programs were in place to help over 700 women and members of equity-seeking groups access opportunities for pre-apprenticeship training, apprenticeship services and employment. The Province invested \$10 million in Industry Training Authority (ITA) pre-apprenticeship training in 2020/21 through funding provided under the Workforce Development Agreement.

Youth Futures Education Fund – Ongoing

- » The Province provided an additional \$250,000 to the Youth Futures Education Fund to provide wraparound financial supports for former youth in care enrolled in the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program.

Adult Upgrading Grant – Ongoing

- » This grant supports eligible low-income students in Adult Basic Education, Adult Special Education and English Language Learning to complete or upgrade their education by paying the cost of books, transportation, technology, mandatory fees and unsubsidized child care. In 2020/21, the Adult Upgrading Grant provided financial support to over 2,600 students to access applicable programs. The Province invested \$3.6 million in the Adult Upgrading Grant in 2021/22.

Community Adult Literacy Program – Ongoing

- » This program supports community-based Indigenous, adult and family literacy programs that help British Columbians gain skills in reading, writing, math and digital literacy. In 2020/21, the Community Adult Literacy Program supported more than 3,200 learners through 94 community literacy programs in over 80 communities across the province. The Province invested \$2.9 million in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Tuition-free Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning Programs – Ongoing

- » The Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English Language Learning (ELL) Programs are designed to improve learners' skills to bridge into post-secondary education and/or employment. The Province invests \$24 million annually to support student access to ABE and ELL through the tuition-free policy. In 2020/21, 17,250 students benefitted from tuition-free access to ABE and ELL programs.

Student Emergency Assistance Fund – Completed in 2021

- » Students attending public post-secondary institutions in B.C. have access to emergency assistance funding to help them cope with financial pressures caused by COVID-19 and other emergency situations. The non-repayable emergency assistance can be used to help with a broad range of costs, including living expenses, food, travel, portable computers and other supports. This emergency funding is part of \$6.5 million invested since March 2020 (\$3.5 million in March 2020; \$3 million in March 2021) to help B.C. public post-secondary students.

B.C. Access Grant – Ongoing

- » The needs-based B.C. Access Grant targets 40,000 low-and middle-income students. Post-secondary students eligible for the grant receive up to \$4,000 per year, which complements the Canada Student Grant programs. The Province's annual investment in the grant is approximately \$41 million.

Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund – Ongoing

- » The Province gave an additional \$1.5 million to supplement the Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund, which provides financial relief for Indigenous students experiencing an unexpected financial emergency that may affect their ability to finish their studies.

People at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness – Ongoing

- » Approximately 615 British Columbians began receiving training and employment supports through 12 peer-based employment projects. Peers use their community experience to contribute to their communities while building new skills and training. The Province invested \$10 million in 2020/21 and 2021/22 through the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement.

ITA pre-apprenticeship training for Indigenous peoples in trades – Ongoing

- » Approximately 260 people in Indigenous communities throughout B.C. are gaining skills to succeed in trades careers through six agreements. ITA provided these programs with funding from the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement. Skills training that improves employment opportunities responds to the UN Declaration Article 21.1, asserting the rights of Indigenous peoples to improve their economic and social conditions, including through education and employment. It also responds to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 7, to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Aboriginal Service Plans – Ongoing

- » The Province provides funding to support Aboriginal Service Plans at public post-secondary institutions which foster partnerships between institutions and local Indigenous communities. The Province invested \$4.4 million in 2021.

Supports to Institutions without Aboriginal Service Plans – Ongoing

- » The Province supported 14 post-secondary institutions to implement new programs, activities and services for Indigenous learners. The Province invested \$1.75 million in 2021.

Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society – Completed in 2021

- » Up to 40 peers residing in the City of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside received skills training and employment programs over six months through the Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society. Peers were encouraged and supported to leverage their community experience to empower them to find employment opportunities that resonate with who they are. This funding was provided through the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement.

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program – Ongoing

- » The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP) waives tuition fees for B.C. students who are former youth-in-care (from the age of 19 until their 27th birthday) who are attending a B.C. public post-secondary institution, Native Education College and 10 union trades training providers. The provincial program was launched in 2017, and since then more than 1,600 former youth in care students have been supported on PTWP, resulting in approximately \$11.9 million in tuition waived.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program – Ongoing

- » The B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program supports Indigenous peoples' success in the food and agriculture sector. The program offers two streams. One is to help Indigenous entrepreneurs with up to \$8,000 in specialized planning and coaching services to develop and plan their food and agricultural businesses. The second stream supports Indigenous communities, governing bodies or organizations with feasibility analysis, financial and business planning and skills development for agriculture and food production and processing activities, including for community food security.

BC Farmers' Market Expansion Program

- » The BC Farmers' Market Expansion Program is a one-time, cost-shared, reimbursement-based funding program that is being delivered in partnership with the BC Association of Farmers Markets (BCAFM) between November 2021 and June 2022 to strengthen the ability of farmers markets to expand local food/beverage sales and operate during emergencies. The Program will enable individual B.C. farmers markets to access funding to cover the costs of eligible signage, equipment, and infrastructure on a first-come, first-served basis.

BC Food Hub Network – Ongoing

- » The BC Food Hub Network is growing, creating opportunities for producers and food processors while connecting more British Columbians to local food. The Province has expanded the BC Food Hub Network to 12 locations with the latest being Victoria, Bowser, Cowichan Valley, Abbotsford, Kamloops, Creston and the Kootenay-Boundary region. The BC Food Hub Network is part of the Province's Feed BC initiative, increasing the use of B.C. food and bringing more opportunities to all aspects of the province's food system. Feed BC has also partnered with 20 post-secondary schools.

Small Farm Business Acceleration Pilot Program – Completed in 2021

- » Through the Small Farm Business Acceleration Program, 64 small and new farmers representing diverse and underserved population were able to access business supports and increase business management skills. The program supported the growth of small and new farms by providing financial support for the implementation of farm business plans and growth strategies. 95 per cent of approved applications identified as being part of an underserved community in agriculture. Program evaluation found that 100 per cent of applicants were able to meet at least one goal outlined in their Growth Plan.

B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food – Started in 2021

- » Indigenous leaders and subject matter experts on agriculture and food from throughout B.C. are working with the Province to increase Indigenous participation in the sector and strengthen Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty. The provincial IACAF is the first of its kind in Canada, working to advance reconciliation, respect for Indigenous rights and support self-determination goals in the agriculture and food sector. The advisory council's mandate is to enhance the equitable participation of Indigenous peoples in the agriculture and food sector and support the realization of their food security, food sovereignty and economic development objectives.

Temporary Foreign Worker Quarantine Program – 2020 to 2022

- » The ministry coordinated a centralized, government-managed approach to ensuring a 14-day COVID-19 self-isolation period in safe accommodations for agricultural Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) - predominantly from Mexico, Guatemala and Jamaica - entering B.C. The program covered hotel accommodation, food, hotel security, and laundry services for TFWs. The program protected the province's food security and rural farmers by ensuring a stable workforce to harvest food. This contributed to British Columbia's economy through fresh groceries for

local consumption and export, while also improving social inclusion for TFWs, who are considered a vulnerable population due to language barriers and lower socio-economic status.

MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL AND RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING

Anti-Racism Restart and Recovery – Completed in 2021

- » The ministry received \$1.9 million through StrongerBC's Economic Recovery Plan in 2020 for anti-racism initiatives that jointly advanced the Province's interest in addressing issues of social and racial inequality highlighted during the pandemic. Funding was used to expand the new Resilience BC Anti Racism Network and the Multiculturalism Grants Program and to launch an anti-racism public education campaign in 2021 and an institutional change initiative aimed at addressing systemic and institutional racism.

Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network – Ongoing

- » In 2021, Resilience BC launched a new multilingual website with resources for victims and bystanders of racism. Additional one-time Anti-Racism Restart and Recovery funding of \$500,000 was provided to enhance and expand the network in response to the significant surge of incidents of racism and hate during the pandemic: \$300,000 was also granted in March 2021 to four organizations to develop initiatives to address anti-Asian racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and faith-based hate.

Multiculturalism Grants Program – Ongoing

- » The ministry significantly redesigned this program in Fall 2020 to prioritize grants for community-based projects aimed at reducing anti-Indigenous, anti-Black and anti-Asian racism, as well as supporting resilience and recovery initiatives for racialized communities that were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. \$1.2 million was granted to 192 organizations in 2021 under the new criteria and an expanded budget supported by the Anti-Racism Restart and Recovery funding. Priority for these grants was given to projects addressing anti-Indigenous, anti-Asian and anti-Black racism.

Anti-racism data legislation engagement – completed in 2021

- » More than 13,000 British Columbians participated in an engagement on how government can safely and thoughtfully use demographic data to address systemic racism and build a better, more inclusive province for everyone. Over 70 community organizations received as much as \$25,000 to hold engagement sessions about how government should develop and implement anti-racism data legislation. This was one of the most extensive public consultations the Province has ever done and informs B.C.'s first anti-racism data legislation, which was introduced in May 2022.

Justice Access Centres – Ongoing

- » Justice Access Centres (JACs) help people find early and affordable solutions by providing self-help and information services; dispute resolution and mediation options; limited legal advice; access to community resources and agencies; and courses, presentations and publications. The five JACs in the province are located in Abbotsford, Nanaimo, Surrey, Vancouver (Robson) and Victoria. Over the 2021/22 fiscal year, JACs helped approximately 16,000 people.

Indigenous rights legislation – passed into law in November 2021

- » In November 2021, Bills 18 and 29 received royal assent. Bill 18 adds Indigenous identity as a protected ground under the B.C. Human Rights Code, which will help combat anti-Indigenous racism and protect Indigenous peoples from discrimination. Bill 29 added a non-derogation clause to the Interpretation Act. This clause makes it clear that provincial laws uphold, and do not diminish, the rights of Indigenous peoples as outlined under Section 35 of the federal Constitution Act.

Development of a Métis Justice Strategy for British Columbia – Ongoing

- » The Province is working in partnership with the MNBC to develop a Métis Justice Strategy (MJS), recognizing that First Nations and Métis people have different cultures, priorities and histories with the Province.

BC First Nations Justice Strategy and Indigenous Justice Centre – Ongoing

- » In March 2020, the Province and the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) launched their First Nations Justice Strategy as part of an ongoing shared commitment to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in British Columbia's justice system. As part of this strategy, the BCFNJC works with local First Nations to provide culturally appropriate information, advice, support and representation directly to Indigenous people at the community level through Indigenous Justice Centres. Centres are operating in Merritt, Prince George and Prince Rupert and a virtual Indigenous Justice Centre opened in October 2021 with support from the Province. The Province is currently working with BCFNJC to determine locations for the other centres throughout B.C., with the council planning to develop up to 15 centres over the coming years.

Parenting After Separation – Ongoing

- » In B.C. parents must successfully complete a free, online Parenting After Separation (PAS) course before going to court on matters such as guardianship, parenting arrangements and child support. In April 2021, the course was updated to be more inclusive of 2SLGBTQQ+ families.
- » Work is underway to develop a Punjabi course.

Provincially Funded Law Foundation Legal Clinics – Ongoing

- » In 2021 the Province funded seven legal clinics, administered by the Law Foundation, including a housing law, disability law, and immigration and refugee law clinic, as well as four community law clinics. The Province also provided funding for an eighth legal clinic, a child and youth clinic, operational in 2022. The legal clinic model is achieved by adding a lawyer and support staff to existing Law Foundation advocacy programs. The clinics provide free legal information, advice and representation to low-income individuals in locations where a need for poverty law and specialized services are identified.

Representative for Children and Youth Act – Completed in 2021

- » Amendments to this law in Fall 2021 enable a greater number of vulnerable young adults to access the Representative's advocacy services for three prescribed programs. The eligibility criteria were changed to include: 1) 19–26-year-olds; and 2) young adults with developmental disabilities or young adults who had a previous connection to the child welfare system.

Civil Resolution Tribunal – Ongoing

- » The CRT Reconcili(action) Plan 2021 to 2024 sets out the Tribunal's commitment to implement specific, measurable, and timely actions toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It includes short and long-term actions to better serve Indigenous peoples through the Civil Resolution Tribunal process (<https://civilresolutionbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/CRT-Reconciliation-Plan-2021-2024.pdf>). The action plan identifies actions that the CRT

is taking to identify and eliminate systemic and procedural barriers that Indigenous participants may experience during the CRT process.

Mental Health Review Board – Ongoing

- » In January 2021, the BC Representative for Children and Youth released their report entitled, “Detained: Rights of Children and Youth Under the Mental Health Act,” which include 14 recommendations. Recommendation #14 provides: “That the Mental Health Review Board pilot a new Review Board hearing process for children and youth that centres the young person and is trauma-informed and culturally attuned after actively engaging and consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies.” The Mental Health Review Board accepted Recommendation #14 and worked to facilitate discussions with representatives of the appropriate bodies from September to October 2021. The Board is reviewing the consultation recommendations with a Community Advisory Council with the goal of implementing a new Board hearing process for children and youth.

Child Support Recalculation Service – Ongoing

- » The Child Support Recalculation Service ensures that child support orders and agreements are based on the updated income of parents. The Child Support Recalculation Service is a free service that helps families with child support orders and written agreements by administratively recalculating child support amounts each year by applying the Child Support Guidelines to updated income amounts from payors. The recalculation service adjusts the child support amount if income has gone up or down so that parents do not have to return to court to have their child support amounts reviewed.

Strengthening Enforcement – Ongoing

- » The ministry continues to strengthen its enforcement role to proactively address issues of potential contraventions of the Residential Tenancy Act. Amendments to prevent renovations and provide renters with more security and protection came into effect on Thursday, July 1, 2021. These changes address the Rental Housing Task Force’s number one recommendation – to stop renovations by shifting responsibility to the landlord to apply to the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) for pre-approval.

Affordable housing through BC Housing – Ongoing

- » New affordable housing for families, seniors, and/or people living with disabilities was announced in Creston, Vancouver, Port Alberni, Kamloops, Powell River, Nanaimo and Valemount, Clinton, Quadra and Pender Islands. Funding from BC Housing for affordable housing on Quadra and Pender Islands came from the Investment in Housing Innovation Fund and a Deepening Affordability grant.
- » Through the HousingHub, Building BC funds and other provincial investments, as of December 31, 2021, more than 31,000 new homes are complete, under construction or in development for people with a range of incomes including low to moderate.

Agreement brings better access to northern B.C.’s Indigenous Peoples – Ongoing

- » The Province and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) collaborated on a unique partnership to provide temporary housing near medical facilities for those who are travelling from remote communities. The agreement reserves temporary housing in existing BC Housing buildings that are close to medical centres in Prince George and Fort St. John for FNHA clients who need to attend medical appointments. All clients in these units will have access to FNHA’s Medical Transportation program, which assists in moving people to and from their community. Additional locations could be added in the future.

BC Rent Bank – Ongoing

- » In March 2019, the Province granted \$10 million to the Vancity Community Foundation to develop a sustainable province-wide rent bank system. Through BCRentBank.ca, the Province and Vancity are working together with municipalities to assess how best to expand services and establish rent banks that meet the unique needs of communities throughout B.C. Between April 2021 and December 31, 2021, the BC Rent Bank:
 - ◇ received 1,386 applications for financial assistance; a 133 per cent increase from the previous year-to-date (YTD).
 - ◇ issued 374 loans; a 225 per cent increase from the previous YTD,
 - ◇ issued 415 grants; a 252 per cent increase from the previous YTD,
 - ◇ issued 74 loan/grant combinations (not previously measured),
 - ◇ assisted over 2,000 people with secondary supports such as financial literacy, landlord mediation, advocacy, connection to government benefits, referral to community supports such as food banks, And
- » For this time period, 62.3 per cent of people who completed an application received financial assistance from a rent bank. In total, 1,792 residents were prevented from experiencing homelessness and remain housed because of rent banks.
- » As of November 2021, low- to moderate-income renters in every part of British Columbia now have access to rent bank services through an extended partnership between BC Rent Bank and the Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society. B.C. is the first province to provide 100 per cent Rent Bank coverage.

Homelessness Community Action Grants Updates – Ongoing

- » In 2019, the Province invested \$6 million to support strong, sustainable planning for local groups and organizations working on the front lines in B.C. communities through the Homelessness Community Action Grant program.
 - ◇ 139 projects have been approved with total funding to date totaling \$4.23 million. The average grant amount is \$30,456.
 - ◇ Grants have been awarded for projects in 42 communities across the province and seven projects with a province-wide focus.
 - ◇ Grants focusing on Indigenous peoples comprise 17 per cent of the total number of grants and 23 per cent of total grant funding. Other grants include Indigenous people without designating them as a primary focus.
 - ◇ SPARC BC used interest earnings on the fund to purchase 13,500 smartphones, distributed to homeless and other vulnerable people to provide needed support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BC Homeless Count – Ongoing

- » The second provincial point-in-time (PIT) homeless count was started in 2020, suspended due to COVID-19, and resumed in spring 2021. The Province funded counts in 16 communities. Eight counts were completed in 2020 and the remaining eight were conducted in spring 2021. Data was combined with eight federally and independently funded counts to produce a 2020/21 report.

Preventing and Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project – Ongoing

- » The Preventing and Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project is a multi-ministry initiative to better understand and measure homelessness in B.C. based on administrative data.

Maximum allowable rent increase – Started in 2021

- » B.C.'s maximum allowable rent increase amount for 2022 was set at 1.5 per cent, based on inflation. If landlords choose to increase rent, they must provide a full three months' notice to tenants using the correct notice of rent increase form.

Legislative Changes to Protect Renters – Completed in 2021

- » Legislative changes passed in Spring 2021 built on the Province's work to give British Columbians more security by extending the rent freeze to Dec. 31, 2021. The changes capped future rent increases to inflation, stopped illegal re-novictions and made the dispute resolution process better for tenants and landlords.

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Children and Youth with Support Needs Direct Funded/At Home Program Respite Funds - Flexible Use – Ongoing

- » Families that receive Children and Youth with Support Needs Direct Funding/At Home Program respite funds can use the standard amount of \$3,080 per year in a flexible manner and are not required to provide a record of respite expenses. Flexible options include household supports, caregiving supports and program support for children or youth. This change has made it easier for families to get the supports they need and has reduced the administrative burden for families.

Allocating funding for children and youth with disabilities – Started in 2021

- » The Child Disability Benefit is a monthly benefit of \$242.92 for all children and youth in Canada under the age of 18 who are eligible for federal disability status. Going forward, and retroactive to April 2019, the ministry and Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies received approval to provide court-ordered Out-of-Care care providers an amount equal to the Federal Children's Disability Benefit, where the ministry is in receipt of those benefits.

Emergency Measures for Young Adults – Ongoing (various end dates)

- » In response to COVID-19, the ministry implemented a suite of emergency measures for young adults, including:
 - ◇ Supporting them to stay in their current placements during the pandemic, through the development of Temporary Housing and Temporary Support Agreements.
 - ◇ Temporarily permitting young adults enrolled in the Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) program to continue receiving monthly financial support without a loss to their 48 month allotment if their post-secondary, vocational, life-skills or rehabilitative program was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - ◇ Amending AYA policy to increase accessibility and reduce barriers to the life-skills programming option. This includes creating flexible options for cultural, mental health, and rehabilitative programs to better meet the needs of young adults – particularly Indigenous young adults.

Meeting Digital Needs of Former Youth in Care (ages 19+) – Ongoing

- » First launched in 2017, government collaborated with TELUS to establish the Mobility for Good (M4G) program, in which eligible young adults from care can receive a free cell phone, \$0 plans and have access to digital literacy and safety workshops to help them stay connected to their communities and support networks. In 2021, M4G grew to support youth from care across Canada. Young adults participating in the M4G program are eligible to access the TELUS Internet for Good program which offers an unlimited internet plan for \$9.95 per month (plus applicable taxes) for 24 months.

No Cost Smartphones and Data Plans for Youth (ages 13-19) – Ongoing

- » Starting in October 2021, the ministry's Phones4Youth program, the first of its kind in B.C., distributed iPhones with data plans and accessory packages to approximately 1,600 youth (thus far) in government care and out of care arrangements aged 13 or older, to help keep them connected to friends and family, and provide better access to online services, resources, and opportunities.

Children and Youth Mental Health – Ongoing

- » To support children and youth mental health, Child and Youth Mental Health teams at more than 90 locations in the province provide screening, assessments and treatment for children aged 19 and under, including specialized services for trauma, acute psychiatric diagnosis and youth who need intensive bed-based treatment.

Early Intervention Services for pre-school aged children:

- » Multi-disciplinary, early intervention services are designed to support children with emerging mental health issues before they reach school age. Early intervention services provide wraparound supports to young children and their families and generally include an infant mental health clinician, a family support worker, behaviour supports and infant development support.
- » Since January 2021, early intervention services have been introduced for young children and families in Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows and Comox Valley. Services in Okanagan-Similkameen commenced in fall 2021 and services are offered in Coast Mountain and Richmond.

Integrated Child and Youth Mental Health Teams

- » Integrated Child and Youth Teams are multidisciplinary teams consisting of clinicians from Child and Youth Mental Health, Education, Health Authorities, Indigenous Support and other multicultural and peer support, providing services in schools, offices, communities and homes. Five teams were established in five school districts in 2021.

Step Up/Step Down Outreach and Bed-Based Services – Started in 2021

- » Step Up/Step Down (SUSD) high intensity outreach services are specialized community-based services for children and youth with severe mental health and/or substance use needs. Services support young people who require higher intensity care than is available at the community level, and help to prevent or reduce the length of hospital stays. Building on the earlier investments into high- intensity outreach supports, budget 2021, provides \$13.4 million over three years to support bed-based SUSD services.

Delivering services and supports virtually during COVID-19 – Ongoing

- » Recognizing the potential impact of COVID-19 on the wellness of children, youth, families and caregivers, the ministry shifted to supporting virtual service delivery for all program areas through the adoption of cloud tools and virtual collaboration platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams and Zoom). Moving forward, the ministry will continue to prioritize the provision of in-person supports and services while continuing to incorporate virtual service options for children, youth, and families where appropriate and when it enhances services and supports. By

expanding options to connect with children, youth, and families throughout the province, the ministry is better equipped to deliver on the poverty reduction strategy.

Supporting service delivery during COVID-19 – Ongoing

- » Ministry offices remained open, with measures in place to ensure the safety of staff, children, youth, families, and community partners. The Ministry partnered with Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies and met on a regular basis to ensure critical practice support information was developed, implemented, and communicated. Supportive services for vulnerable families were maintained throughout the pandemic by MCFD/ICFS Agency offices remaining open. ICFS Agencies were able to support families and help them stay connected to community. They are the service arm for the most vulnerable and most impacted by poverty due to multi-generational traumas.

Services for Indigenous Communities – Ongoing

- » From 2018 to 2021, the ministry has offered \$30,000 to each of the 204 First Nations and seven Métis organizations in B.C. for the delivery of community-based, family support and prevention services. This enables communities to address a variety of unmet needs for children, youth and families as often these communities lack the access to resources and services. These programs and services are often delivered in a culturally inclusive way and center on community participation, health and wellness and connection to the land.

Health and safety grants to licensed child care centres – Completed in 2021

- » The Child Care Health and Safety Grants were first offered in 2020 as one-time payments to licensed child care centres funded by Child Care Operating Funding, and to \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres to help child care operators cover additional costs associated with adhering to the BC Centre for Disease Control and Provincial Health Officer COVID-19 requirements. Since 2019/20, three rounds of Child Care Health and Safety Grants totalling \$53.3 million have been issued to licensed child care operators.

Cap on fees for Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative – Started in 2021

- » A cap on fees for new child care facilities receiving the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative effective April 1, 2021 is helping to keep new child care spaces affordable for B.C. families. A fee cap for newly established facilities helps to keep monthly fees in line with those charged by other local providers delivering the same type of care. Prior to this change, a new child care facility could set their initial monthly fees at any level and qualify for the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative.

Affordable Child Care Benefit – Ongoing

- » The Affordable Child Care Benefit is income tested and can save families up to \$1,250 per month per child. This initiative supports families and works in tandem with the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative to reduce the costs for licensed child care. From April to December 2021, an average of 29,100 children received the Affordable Child Care Benefit every month.

Child Care Rapid Renovation Fund – Completed in 2021

- » Many families across British Columbia are benefiting from more licensed child care spaces. Across the province, more parents are now able to pursue work and education opportunities knowing that their children are getting a great start in life. The new spaces were funded through the Province's Child Care Rapid Renovation Fund, which provided approximately \$10.3 million to non-profit groups, schools and other public-sector organizations to quickly create new child care spaces. The fund supported the creation of 900 new licensed child care spaces in 19 communities throughout the province.

ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund – Ongoing

- » The ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund supports the development of new licensed child care spaces. In 2019, the maximum funding amount available to non-profit and public sector organizations through the program increased from \$1.5 million to \$3 million, resulting in a marked increase in the volume of applicants. In 2021, the New Spaces Fund focused funding eligibility on long-term community investments run by public and non-profit organizations, in line with the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the Government of Canada. During the 2021/22 fiscal year, the program had one call for applications.
- » The Start-Up Grants program provides \$500 up front to applicants to assist with the cost of becoming licensed for child care provided in a personal residence, then an additional \$500 per licensed child care space they create to help with on-site and operational costs. As of December 2021, nearly 600 providers have received grants.
- » More than 26,000 new licensed child care spaces have been funded across ChildCareBC's space-creation initiatives, with more to come.

New child care legislation – Started in 2021

- » New early learning and child care legislation, which became law in October 2021, is helping the Province deliver on its 10-year ChildCareBC plan to build an affordable, quality and inclusive early learning and child care system for B.C. families. The legislation comes into effect as more families than ever are benefiting from the fastest creation of child care spaces in B.C.'s history, with 26,700 new licensed spaces funded since the plan was launched in 2018.

Aboriginal Head Start programs – Ongoing

- » Aboriginal Head Start programs offer high-quality, culturally based early learning and child care programs that are designed for and with Indigenous families and communities. Approximately 90 Indigenous early childhood development programs received up to \$100,000 each to improve wellness for over 1,700 children through land-based cultural programming. Currently, 12 Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities sites (off-reserve) and 78 Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve sites have received support to create safe, outdoor early learning and play spaces for children.

Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development – Ongoing

- » Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs provide services that assess children with support needs, create individual plans, provide guidance to child care centres and, where needed, fund extra staffing within the child care centre. The programs have a base provincial budget of \$70 million and annual federal funding of \$10 million from the Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. This funding enables more families to access services and where needed, increase the hours of support for some children who were already receiving services. In 2021/22, the Province expanded the programs to enable access to inclusive services for an estimated 2,000 additional families.

Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy – Ongoing

- » 1,150 new student spaces were created in full-time, part-time, rural, remote, certificate and diploma programs in Early Childhood Education (ECE) since the launch of ChildCareBC in 2018. A further \$2.3 million was invested to expand Work-Integrated Learning opportunities for 140 students through post-secondary institutions recognized to deliver ECE programs.
- » Recognizing that wages and benefits are important for ensuring a sufficient supply of ECE professionals, an ECE wage grid will be developed and implemented to standardize compensation across the sector.
- » In the meantime, ECE Wage Enhancement provides supports to early care and learning professionals. The Province

increased the wage enhancement to \$4 an hour in September 2021. The latest lift to the ECE Wage Enhancement increased the median wage for ECEs to about \$25 an hour.

Federal-Provincial Early Learning and Child Care Agreement – Ongoing

- » The federal government is providing \$272 million over four years to improve access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care programs and services. The Government of Canada made a one-time investment of \$48.8 million in 2021/22 to support B.C.'s early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts.
- » Under the 2021/22 to 2024/25 Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, B.C. will make child care more affordable, giving priority to facilities that offer care to infants and toddlers, and enhancing equity in child care through targeted investments to support Indigenous families and families with children with support needs. This four-year agreement ensures that funding will continue to be available to support child care programs and services for British Columbian families until March 2025. The governments of Canada and British Columbia recently signed a new Canada – British Columbia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, which will provide B.C. with an additional \$3.2 billion in federal funding over the next five years, with a focus on supporting children under six years old. Over the next three years (2021/22 to 2023/24), the Province will invest an additional \$2.5 billion in ChildcareBC, its 10-year plan to deliver inclusive, universal child care to B.C. families.

MINISTRY OF CITIZENS' SERVICES

Housing and Homelessness – Completed in 2021

- » Real Property Division (RPD) worked with BC Housing to identify and provide surplus land and buildings for temporary housing during the COVID-19 pandemic. RPD identified the vacant Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) Mount Tolmie Hospital. RPD then coordinated discussions between BC Housing and VIHA that led to a lease and temporary shelter with supportive services for those displaced from the temporary shelter at the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre arena.

Housing and Homelessness – Ongoing

- » RPD transferred an approximately 240-acre parcel of land in Coquitlam to BC Housing and is in the process of transferring an adjacent parcel. The site is being used to provide healing services and will be used to open safe and affordable housing. The Province, through BC Housing, and the Kwikwetlem First Nation are working in partnership to launch the master planning phase for the site's redevelopment.
- » RPD's Surplus Properties Program provides ministries and agencies with an opportunity to review details of surplus properties. As a result of this process, RPD has facilitated five internal transfers within government, three of which supported affordable and supportive housing and accessibility.

Service BC Centres – Ongoing

- » Over the past five years, Service BC and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) have implemented an integrated service model in 48 different communities around the Province, helping to break down the stigma for vulnerable people needing to access income assistance services, and provide a best-in-class service experience. Service BC deployed their Queue Management System to SDPR offices to enhance service delivery through service metrics.

Engagements on poverty and accessibility – Ongoing

- » The Citizen Engagement Team worked with ministries to deliver nine public engagements related to the development of equitable supports and recognition of all people in B.C. These engagement projects included:
- » The Draft Declaration Act Action Plan
- » Housing Policy - Supportive Housing
- » Race-based data and Anti-racism data legislation
- » Inclusive Childcare: Professional Learning Needs

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The BC Tripartite Education Agreement – Ongoing

- » The BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) promotes systemic shifts and collective efforts to support improved educational outcomes of First Nation students living on reserve and attending public school in British Columbia. In 2021/22, approximately 4,500 First Nations learners living on-reserve were supported by up to \$3.8 million in funding from Canada to enable safe and effective transportation to and from school and to extracurricular activities. In 2020/21, 7,135 First Nations learners living on-reserve were supported by \$3.8 million in transportation funding through BCTEA to access British Columbia public schools. The Government of Canada invested \$100 million over five years (2018 to 2023).

Equity in Action Project – Ongoing

- » Provides equitable opportunities for Indigenous students to attend safe learning environments free from discrimination and racism. Thirteen additional school districts joined the Equity in Action Project over the 2021/22 fiscal year for a total of 59 school districts participating, representing 99 per cent of the Indigenous students in the province. The remaining school district will be onboarding in 2022/23.

Legislative changes to support First Nations jurisdiction over education – Ongoing

- » On November 25, 2021, legislative changes made it possible for the Province to provide operational support for a new certification and regulation process for First Nations participating in jurisdiction over education. The legislative changes were brought forward and co-developed with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, acting under the direction of Negotiating First Nations. The changes allow for a system specific teaching certification issued by the First Nations Education Authority. First Nations in B.C. have been working to advance jurisdiction over education for more than 20 years. Teacher certification and regulation is one of the key components of jurisdiction. Supporting First Nations control over First Nations education, including greater control over teacher certification and regulation, is likely to lead to improved outcomes for students.

CommunityLINK – Ongoing

- » Provides funding to school districts for programs and services focused on vulnerable students. Annually, about 25 per cent of CommunityLINK funding is spent on food programs. The Province invested \$55.2 million in the 2021/22 school year.

StrongStart BC – Ongoing

- » StrongStart BC (SSBC) centres and outreach programs reduce young children's vulnerability and increase success in school throughout the early years as well as later in life. In 2020/21, there were a total of 329 SSBC programs, serving approximately 13,500 children in all 60 school districts. The Province invested over \$10.5 million in the 2021/22 school year.

Child care pilots on school grounds – Ongoing

- » Starting in 2019/20, the now-Ministry of Education and Child Care encouraged selected school districts to develop capacity in directly operating various models of child care where the board of education is the licensee. Budget 2021/22 provided funding to expand these pilot programs such as the “Seamless Day Kindergarten” program which integrates before and after school care into the classroom with instructional support from certified Early Childhood Educators and the JUST B4 program, a half-day early childhood education program in schools for four-year-olds.

The First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol – Ongoing

- » The First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, signed May 26, 2020, commits the Province and First Nations to work together to engage in dialogue and joint action on specific issues and initiatives, seeking to improve the educational outcomes and well-being of First Nations children and youth in care, and former youth in care through legislative, policy and practice reform.

A Pathway to Hope – Ongoing

- » The Province is boosting funds for school-based wellness programs and supports by \$2 million, topping up the \$8.8-million investment over three years that was announced September 2019. This means that for the 2020/21 school year, school districts and independent school authorities received a total of \$3.75 million to promote mental wellness and provide additional supports for students, families and educators.

Equity of Opportunity Supplement – Ongoing

- » The Equity of Opportunity Supplement provides funding to school districts to support additional services for students by recognizing children and youth in care, children and youth receiving non-clinical mental health supports and low-income families. The Supplement was set at \$24 million for the 2021/22 school year.

K-12 Anti-Racism in Education Action Plan – Started in 2021

- » The K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan is a comprehensive multi-year strategy to address racism and discrimination in education and create a culture and climate of belonging for all students and staff. The ministry is supporting the development and implementation of this action plan, but the work will be guided by rightsholders, Indigenous partners, education partners, community organizations and students with lived and living experiences of racism. The Action Plan is in early stages of implementation and is not yet publicly released.

MINISTRY OF ENERGY, MINES AND LOW CARBON INITIATIVES

Economic and Community Development Agreements – Ongoing

- » The Province engaged with First Nations throughout B.C. on agreements in the sharing of direct mineral tax revenues on new mines and major mine expansions. These agreements are known as Economic and Community Development Agreements (ECDAs). There are 48 signed ECDAs with 48 First Nations for 24 mines. Up to 37.5 per cent of incremental mineral tax is shared with First Nations for new mines and expansions with \$28 million shared in 2020/21.

The CleanBC Better Homes and Better Building Program – Ongoing

- » Offers rebates for high-efficiency natural gas furnaces and water heaters for low-income families. 896 rebates were provided for natural gas furnaces and water heaters for low-income families from 2019 to 2021. The Province invested \$1.3 million from 2019 to 2022.
- » Offers energy coaching and high-value rebates for heat pumps in Indigenous communities, with \$2.3 million in incentives budgeted from 2020 to 2022.
- » A new \$10.9 million income-qualified program for low- and middle-income British Columbians was developed in 2021. This program is providing up to 1,600 high-value incentives for energy efficiency, fuel switching, and health and safety upgrades from 2021 to 2023.

CleanBC Social Housing Incentives Program – Ongoing

- » Offers energy study funding, project implementation support, and greenhouse gas reduction incentives for social housing providers, which reduces energy costs for tenants. From 2018 to 2021, 28 projects were in progress or completed, with \$1.56 million committed in incentives.

Comprehensive BC Hydro Review – Completed in 2021

- » Results from Phase 1 of the Review identified cost savings, efficiencies, new revenue streams and other changes to keep electricity rates low, while ensuring sound regulatory and financial oversight of BC Hydro and enabling implementation of government policy priorities.
- » BC Hydro applied for rate increases for fiscal years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 that, if approved by the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC), will be lower than the rate of inflation. The Province has also directed the BCUC not to increase BC Hydro's allowed net income - i.e., profit - further limiting pressure on ratepayers' bills.
- » Phase 2 of the comprehensive BC Hydro review in 2021 examined ways to position BC Hydro for long-term success, while meeting the Province's climate goals, keeping rates affordable for British Columbians, furthering reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and supporting quality economic development. Recommendations from Phase 2 include keeping rates affordable, getting more electric vehicles on the road and encouraging greater use of clean, renewable electricity to reduce emissions and achieve climate targets.

CleanBC Remote Community Energy Strategy – Ongoing

- » The CleanBC Remote Community Energy Strategy includes three streams of action:
 - ◇ Build remote community capacity to lead energy efficiency and clean energy projects.
 - ◇ Support remote community efforts to improve energy efficiency and minimize greenhouse gas emissions in new and existing buildings.
 - ◇ Implement renewable energy generation projects to displace diesel generation.

Centre for Training Excellence in Mining: Skills Roadmap Project for Mining – Ongoing (final report anticipated in 2022)

- » To advance a Mining Jobs Task Force Recommendation, the Province contracted Centre for Training Excellence in Mining (CTEM) through the Sector Labour Market Plan program to develop a cohesive roadmap for enhanced mine sector training. The goals of this project are to support economic recovery; address the impacts of automation, technology and advances in environmental and social governance; support innovation in skills recognition and training delivery in rural and remote locations; and identify equity supports for recruiting and retaining women and Indigenous people in the workforce.

Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative – Started in 2021

- » Ten First Nations throughout the province are receiving funding to develop alternative energy projects and advance energy efficiency in their communities through the British Columbia Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative (BCICEI), with provincial support through CleanBC. Funding assists these communities in developing projects to help achieve energy independence and support economic development. The \$3 million in funding is from a clean-energy funding partnership between the Province, Federal Government and New Relationship Trust. The BCICEI has funded 67 projects totalling almost \$12 million, including the 2021 intake.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy – Ongoing

- » CleanBC, government's climate plan, is working to address the impact climate change has on poverty through the development of the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy. The implementation of this strategy will include a GBA+ analysis. As part of the work to better understand the social impacts of climate change, the Province released two reports in 2021: Climate Change, Intersectionality and GBA+ in British Columbia: Summary Report and Social Impacts of the Grand Forks Flood: A GBA+ Analysis of Climate Risk. Building on this, the Province conducted a series of equity engagements to inform the development of future products and approaches, starting with the B.C. Extreme Heat Response Framework being developed by Emergency Management BC.

CleanBC 2030 Roadmap – Ongoing

- » The CleanBC 2030 Roadmap lays out the measures that B.C. will take to meet the Province's legislated 2030 climate target. Household affordability will continue to be a key focus of the Roadmap, especially for those who need it the most. Household affordability is supported by the B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit (\$193.50 per adult and \$56.50 per child) and Northern and Rural Homeowner Benefit (up to \$200 per household), and options to increase or complement these supports will be explored through the carbon tax review. The Province is also working to ensure the affordability and accessibility of CleanBC programs (e.g., evolving incentives for zero emissions vehicles and home energy improvements so that they provide greater support for lower and moderate income households, making heat pumps, used electric vehicles, and electric bikes PST exempt, and investing in active transportation and transit projects.

Public Housing – Ongoing

- » The Province is working to improve the comfort and efficiency of public housing through energy efficient retrofits. \$400 million of the 10-year Capital Renewal Fund, which supports the improvement and preservation of public housing stock in B.C., is targeted to energy performance improvements. This helps to reduce energy costs and offer increased health benefits to those living in public housing.

Energy Self-Sufficiency Affordable Housing Development – Ongoing

- » Kanaka Bar Indian Band received \$390,000 towards the Energy Self-Sufficiency Affordable Housing Development from the CleanBC Communities Fund. The project is providing solar and wind power technology to support the development of 20 affordable housing units in Lower Kanaka. The Crossing Place project aims to demonstrate a replicable, sustainable, resilient development where the foundations of clean air, water, food, shelter and energy meet to address public concern around climate change.

Love Food Hate Waste – Completed in 2021

- » Since joining Love Food Hate Waste Canada in 2018, B.C. has developed the only provincial partnership model in the country and has contributed \$150,000 to the program. There are 29 local governments (representing approximately 90 per cent of the B.C. population) that have joined the provincial partnership model over the past three years. This program saved households up to \$1,400 per year through guidance and education on how to reduce food waste.

Woodstove Exchange Program – Ongoing

- » The Provincial Woodstove Exchange Program encourages British Columbians to switch to cleaner sources of heat. Rebates are provided to transition from old, high polluting wood stoves to cleaner heat sources such as heat pumps, pellet stoves or newer emission certified stoves. Funding in 2021 was \$300,000. Where applicable, program incentives can be combined with CleanBC incentives, further contributing to the affordability of clean, efficient heating options. Rebate incentives to Indigenous communities are higher to encourage participation.

Affordable and Accessible Park User Fees – Ongoing

- » BC Parks offers a variety of reduced park user fees and opportunities for low-income earners and persons with disabilities. As of June 2021, BC Parks is expanding accessibility through new projects in campgrounds, day-use areas, playgrounds and new welcome signs.

Public Transit – Ongoing

- » In partnership with the federal government, the Province is working to expand and improve public transit in B.C. Over the next 10 years, the federal, provincial and local governments will invest in the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund and the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program to expand and improve public transit in B.C. with new rapid transit lines, new SkyTrain cars in Metro Vancouver, and new buses across the rest of British Columbia.

Clean Coast Clean Waters – Ongoing

- » The Clean Coast Clean Waters (CCCW) initiative is a \$24.83 million funding program supporting job creation, including youth employment and jobs in Indigenous communities. CCCW also supports coastal communities as they recover from the COVID-19 economic downturn and loss of tourism by funding work that addresses marine debris and derelict vessels. The fund is directed toward B.C.'s coastal First Nations, local governments and non-profit organizations. To date, CCCW has removed over 1,000 tonnes of debris along nearly 4,000 km of B.C.'s coast – with 65 per cent of materials from shoreline projects recycled/upcycled.

Conservation Economic Stimulus Initiative – Started in 2021

- » The Province allocated \$10.2 million to the Conservation Economic Stimulus Initiative. The program is being administered by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, to deliver 64 species and ecosystem conservation and restoration projects over two years.
- » More than 350 direct jobs have been created which may result in long-term positions in the emerging restoration economy. A focus was placed on creating opportunities in vulnerable communities most impacted by COVID-19 including women, youth, and Indigenous persons.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit (renamed B.C. Family Benefit in 2022) – Ongoing

- » This benefit, which provides a tax-free monthly payment to families with children under the age of 18, was announced and enacted in Budget 2019. The program launched in October 2020 and nearly 300,000 families with

children under the age of 18 are receiving the benefit. The total cost of the program is approximately \$400 million per year.

BC Recovery Benefit Program – Completed in 2021

- » In response to economic hardship experienced by British Columbians because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the BC Recovery Benefit Program (BCRB) was announced on December 8, 2020. The BCRB provided a one-time payment of up to \$500 to an individual and \$1,000 to a family.
- » From the application intake date to the end of 2021, a total of \$1.4 billion was paid. Provisions were put in place to ensure that individuals on income assistance and disability assistance were able to receive the benefit. This included a direct (no application required) payment option for recipients of income assistance and removed income test and income tax filing requirement for individuals on assistance.

Gender Equity – Completed in 2021

- » Gender Equity Office collaborated with ministries across government to support initiatives and reduce barriers experienced by women and gender-diverse people, including:
- » the release of the National Action Plan, a path towards ending violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQA+ peoples in response to the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;
- » undertook consultations on possible legislation to address the non-consensual distribution of intimate images in collaboration with the Ministry of Attorney General;
- » launched a sexual violence prevention campaign for post-secondary students led by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST);
- » supported the Ministry of Attorney General to introduce a new, online service to file family law case applications as part of B.C.'s plan to modernize access to court services.

Increased Employment Incentive – Started in 2021

- » Applications for the Increased Employment Incentive (IEI), which was announced as a part of StrongerBC: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan, opened online March 20 and closed December 31, 2021. This refundable tax credit targeted businesses that were able to hire new workers, hire back people who were let go or increase workers' hours during the last three months of 2020. The IEI was one of several provincial supports to help businesses recover and respond to the unprecedented economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 4,763 applications were approved, with credits paid in the amount of \$28.6 million. This program supported the creation of 35,667 new net jobs and increase in salaries and wages for another 81,091 workers.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Doulas for Aboriginal Families Grant Program – Ongoing

- » Since 2013, an average of 270 families per year are funded by the DAFGP. These supports are provided by 389 registered doulas (of which 306 are active and 94 identify as Indigenous). Since April 2021, 87 new doulas (of which 33 identify as Indigenous) have registered with DAFGP. The DAFGP approved 427 families for the grant in 2021 indicating a continued and increasing demand for services.

Provincial Perinatal Substance Use Project– Ongoing

- » The Provincial Perinatal Substance Use Project is a multi-year project to advance provincial capacity and services to improve health outcomes for pregnant and early parenting women who use substances and their infants. It is federally funded through the Canada-British Columbia Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement, and provincially administered through BC Women’s Hospital and the Provincial Health Services Authority, in partnership with the ministry and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA).
- » The Canada-British Columbia Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement provides \$270.02 million over five years (2017/18 to 2021/22) to enhance mental health and addictions services in British Columbia. This includes approximately \$24.15 million allocated for Provincial Health Services Authority to expand best practice community-based mother/ baby care for pregnant women who use substances and management of withdrawal in newborns.

Standards development for supportive recovery homes – Ongoing

- » The ministry and MMHA released the Standards for Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services (“the Standards”), on September 1, 2021 which focus on best practices in the areas of health and safety, program/ service delivery, and capacity building, and were created in collaboration with Indigenous partners, people with lived and living experience, operators, health authorities, and an expert advisory panel. They can be found publicly on the Assisted Living Registry’s Tools and Resources page.
- » The ministry and MMHA are also working in partnership to develop supports for operators to understand and implement the standards in their services. In addition to the publicly available supports (informational presentations, tools, templates) available on the Assisted Living Registry’s Tools and Resources page, online training for operators and staff is also being developed. The ministry and MMHA are also developing a monitoring and evaluation framework in collaboration with health authorities to support health authorities in demonstrating compliance with standards of all operated and/or funded supportive recovery services by March 31, 2023.

Nurse-Family Partnership – Ongoing

- » Since 2012, the Nurse-Family Partnership program (part of a \$23 million Healthy Start Initiative) has provided an intensive, home visiting program offered by specialized public health nurses aimed at supporting young, first-time mothers vulnerable to structural and systemic inequities from early pregnancy, continuing until their children reach two years of age. The program has played a vital role in the lives of more than 1,900 families to date. In 2021, the program served 612 families across four health authorities.

In-province Lower Gender Affirming Surgery – Ongoing

- » Starting in 2019, transgender residents of British Columbia can access publicly funded LGAS through Vancouver Coastal Health Gender Surgery Program BC. Bringing Lower Gender Affirming Surgery (LGAS) to B.C. improves care for transgender British Columbian residents by providing high-quality gender-affirming procedures closer to home and alleviates travel expenses not covered by the Medical Services Plan, making it easier and more affordable for the patient and caregivers to assist in post-operative support. Since the 2019/20 fiscal year, annual funding of \$2.6 million has been provided for LGAS.

Covering the cost of hair removal for lower Gender Affirming Surgery – Ongoing

- » As of October 4, 2019, medically necessary hair removal is publicly funded for patients accessing gender-affirming lower surgeries (phalloplasty or vaginoplasty) at the Vancouver Coastal Health Gender Surgery Program (GSP) BC. To be eligible for funding, a patient must receive a written recommendation (letter) from a GSP BC surgeon. Once the letter is received patients can access hair removal services provided by a pre-approved electrologist or laser

technician. Since the 2019/20 fiscal year, annual funding of up to \$430,000 has been provided for hair removal services.

Partnership with First Nations Health Authority – Ongoing

- » The Joint Project Board (JPB) is a partnership between the First Nations Health Authority and the Ministry of Health. Through this partnership, annual funding of up to \$15.33 million supports 27 community-driven, Nation-based primary care projects in First Nations across the province. This investment focuses on enhanced service delivery and access to mental health and substance use supports, primary care, maternal and child health, and oral health.
- » The Ministry of Health also partners with the First Nations Health Council, provincial partner ministries, and the Government of Canada, and supported by the First Nations Health Authority, to advance community-driven, Nation-based approaches supporting the social determinants of mental health and wellness, per the 2018 Memorandum of Understanding: Tripartite Partnership to Improve Mental Health and Wellness and Achieve Progress on the Determinants of Health and Wellness. The timeframe for implementation of the Memorandum has been extended to October 1, 2023.

Partnership with Métis Nation BC – Ongoing

- » Since 2016/17 the Ministry of Health has provided \$200,000 in annual funding to Métis Nation BC to support the improved health and wellness for all Métis peoples in B.C.

Partnership with BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres – Ongoing

- » The Ministry of Health has supported the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres with funding to assist them in developing and delivering health and wellness programming that primarily supports urban Indigenous people.

Removal of the requirement for a physician or psychologist to sign off on a change of gender for BC Services Card – Started in 2021

- » The BC Services Card Partners (the ministry, Insurance Corporation of BC and Ministry of Citizens' Services) removed the requirement for individuals to obtain physician or psychologist confirmation to change their gender designation on their BC Services Card, BC Driver's License or BCID. As many physicians or psychologists may require a fee to fill out a form, this allows more individuals to change their gender designation to match what they know their correct gender to be without financial or medical barriers.

BC Association of Community Response Networks – 2021

- » In 2021, the ministry provided \$1.166 million to BC Association of Community Response Networks to continue its operations and activities, including distribution of materials related to abuse, neglect and self-neglect, issues around safety and isolation for seniors and vulnerable adults as well as other community projects and support for the Council to Reduce Elder Abuse.

Centre for Seniors Information BC Interior Society – 2021

- » In 2021, the Ministry of Health provided \$100,000 to the Centre for Seniors Information BC Interior Society to continue providing a range of outreach and support services primarily for those 55 plus. These include providing "take and bake" frozen meals to those in need, providing supports for those needing assistance preparing tax returns, offering supports to those suffering from isolation/stress, providing assistance to those submitting applications for provincial or federal funding, etc.

Council to Reduce Elder Abuse

- » The multi-sector Council to Reduce Elder Abuse. (CREA) is a province-wide group created in 2013 by the BC Government's Ministry of Health in response to the "Together to Reduce Elder Abuse- BC' Strategy". CREA fosters collaboration and coordination to advance the prevention of elder abuse including recognition, prevention, and response by sharing information, raising public awareness, and supporting professional development and capacity-building across BC. CREA is made up of representatives from various sectors including Indigenous and ethnocultural communities, finance, policing, health, and law, we well as senior-serving organizations. It sustains its work thanks to the financial support provided by the BC Ministry of Health.

Vernon Seniors Services Resource Program – 2021

- » In 2021, the ministry provided \$195,000 to Nexus BC's Vernon Seniors Services Resource Program to provide services, reduce homelessness, mental health episodes, and hospitalizations.

Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice – 2021

- » In 2021, the ministry provided \$50,000 to Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice to help support their medical accompaniment service for isolated low-income Chinese seniors who live in or frequent the Downtown Eastside and Chinatown in Vancouver; and multi-pronged approach to language accessibility for seniors related to health care services and supports.

Health Career Access Program – Ongoing

- » As part of the StrongerBC economic recovery plan, Health Career Access Program (HCAP) is a fully funded work-integrated learning program designed to increase the supply of health care assistants in B.C. and provide experience to access high demand careers in the health sector for British Columbians without prior healthcare education Participants receive salary and work experience, free tuition and educational stipend while training to become a health care assistant.
- » More than 3,400 Health Career Access Program participants have been hired in long-term and assisted living facilities or home support service locations across the province.

Community Food Action Initiative – Ongoing

- » The Community Food Action Initiative supports health authorities to improve food security in their regions. In 2021 the ministry provided a permanent \$1.0 million uplift to funds, strengthening community capacity to improve food access and availability in the province with a focus on remote and Indigenous communities. This will reduce the need for short-term, unsustainable responses to food insecurity.

Food Infrastructure Grant Program – Started in 2021

- » The ministry initiated a new Food Infrastructure Grant (FIG) program supporting rural, remote, and Indigenous communities in B.C. to invest in food infrastructure that will build regional capacity to improve food access and availability, with a focus on fruits and vegetables. Communities impacted by recent climate related events were prioritized to receive grants in 2021. The FIG Program is administered by United Way BC.

Pilot projects for expanding access to Opioid Agonist Treatment medications – Ongoing

- » Tablet injectable opioid agonist treatment (TiOAT) is an innovative model using supervised consumption of hydromorphone tablets via oral intake and/or injection and offers greater clinical flexibility and patient autonomy than iOAT. As of March 2021, MySafe was supporting 15 clients with hydromorphone tablets with one site in Victoria and an additional site in Vancouver (for a total of three machines in B.C.). Also, in March 2021, Health Canada announced it was providing \$3.5 million of federal funding support over three years to run and evaluate

the MySafe pilot in B.C., Ontario, and Nova Scotia.

In Plain Sight Task Team – Started in 2021

- » The new In Plain Sight Task Team has been established in response to Recommendation # 24 of the In Plain Sight report to help eradicate Indigenous-specific racism in health care, making the system culturally safe for all Indigenous people. The group is comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts and leaders within the health care system and will be in place for a minimum of a 24-month term. The Task Team is accountable to the Minister of Health through the Deputy Minister and Associate Deputy Minister, Indigenous Health and Reconciliation, and is mandated to drive forward the implementation of all the In Plain Sight report recommendations. Task team members have been meeting regularly since they first came together in May 2021, and have created several working groups focussed on supporting systemic improvements in the areas of legislation, complaints, point of care, and cultural safety and humility.

National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health – Started in 2021

- » Ongoing efforts to make health-care systems culturally safe and accessible for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in B.C. and across Canada are being strengthened with the creation of a ground-breaking repository of resources at the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH). New public funding is supporting the NCCIH to grow the first-ever collection of cultural safety and Indigenous-specific anti-racism tools and resources. Indigenous Services Canada is providing \$520,000 over five years to support this initiative nationally and the Province is contributing \$550,000 to enable B.C. health system partners to create tools, strategies, and resources to enhance culturally safe service delivery and practices across the health system.

Adjustment to Home and Community Client Rates – Alignment with New and Changed Benefits during the Pandemic – Ongoing until 2024

- » During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal and provincial governments introduced targeted financial assistance to individuals, including home and community care (HCC) clients, financially impacted by COVID-19. In some cases, the benefits would have led to unanticipated increases to HCC client rates for home support, assisted living and long-term care services.
- » Mitigation strategies were developed to address affordability concerns by ensuring that the new or changed benefits do not artificially increase assessed rates for HCC clients. Many clients are low-income and vulnerable, including persons living with disabilities and seniors.
- » The initiative will remain in place for two years after the end of the last set of pandemic benefits and changes, as client rates are calculated based on income from two years prior to the year of service.

MINISTRY OF INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION

Community Well-being initiative – Ongoing

- » Community well-being initiatives are community-based, socio-cultural reconciliation processes where Indigenous communities and the Province work in partnership to identify priorities and implementation measures that advance self-determining, thriving Indigenous communities. These partnerships invest in areas such as economic development, cultural restoration, human resource capacity building, education, health and family services, and institutional and infrastructure development. Cost: \$8.63 million.

BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres – Ongoing

- » The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) is a key provincial partner providing supports and services to Indigenous people living off-reserve and in urban areas. The BCAAFC represents 25-member Friendship Centres with more than 1,200 employees, making it the largest Indigenous service provider in British Columbia and the longest standing Indigenous service delivery network. Friendship Centres deliver programs and services that support health, education, employment, children and families, Elders and youth.

MINISTRY OF JOBS, ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND INNOVATION

Digital Marketing Bootcamp – Ongoing

- » E-commerce grew by more than 70 per cent in Canada in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. The ministry supported the shift to e-commerce through the Digital Marketing Bootcamp program. The program was made available for small and medium sized BC-businesses either through virtual 8-week course with instructors, or a self-directed online course. Up to 30 per cent of funds were reserved for black, Indigenous and people of colour owned businesses and businesses operating outside of the lower mainland and greater Victoria.

Launch Online Grant Program – Completed in 2021

- » The Launch Online Grant program provided funds to B.C.'s small and medium sized businesses that needed to build or improve their e-commerce tools and supports. The program first launched February 3, 2021 and began by supporting B.C. businesses selling tangible goods. It was expanded on March 17, 2021, to include service-based businesses. The program provided up to \$7,500 in grant funding to eligible businesses. Businesses had to fund 25 per cent of the project costs. 30 per cent of the funding was ear-marked for regional and Indigenous businesses as well as Indigenous, Black, people of colour (IBPOC)-owned businesses.
- » 5,669 businesses received \$41 million in funding, an average of \$7,184 per business. 51 per cent of grant payments were issued to regional and IBPOC businesses. This includes:
 - ◇ 1,867 grants issued to regional businesses (outside Metro Vancouver and Capital Regional District)
 - ◇ 150 grants issued to Indigenous businesses
 - ◇ 1,221 grants issued to Black and people of colour businesses

Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator Program – Started in 2021

- » As many as 2,000 young British Columbians have a chance to improve their tech skills and knowledge through the expansion of the Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator program aimed at bringing more people into the province's booming tech sector. The initiative, which gives priority to IBPOC, women, 2SLGBTQ+ people, immigrants and people living with disabilities, provides under-represented people access to first-rate training through NPower Canada's junior IT analyst program and the new junior data analyst program. Initiative is part of the StrongerBC Future Leaders Program.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Improving Access to Employment Standards Branch Services – Ongoing

- » The Employment Standards Branch in the ministry is involved with managing complaints and issues brought forward by workers concerning employment standards. A \$14 million investment over three years is modernizing services and has improved access to services for workers and employers. Improvements include:

- ◇ Eliminating barriers to services
- ◇ Streamlining the complaint process
- ◇ Undertaking proactive enforcement activities
- ◇ Improved data collection
- ◇ Protecting vulnerable temporary foreign workers working in B.C.

Minimum wage increase – Ongoing

- » On June 1, 2021, the general hourly minimum wage increased to \$15.20. The minimum wage rates for resident caretakers and live-in camp leaders also increased. This increase for low-wage workers was the fourth since 2018. Nearly 300,000 workers received a pay boost
- » At the same time, B.C. liquor servers also received a pay increase, replacing the lower liquor server minimum wage with the general minimum wage of \$15.20 an hour. This move delivered on a commitment made in 2018 to bring an end to the alternative liquor server minimum wage in B.C., 80 per cent of whom are women. The increases act on recommendations from the independent Fair Wages Commission, established in 2017 to advise government on an approach to raising provincial minimum wages.
- » The Province has committed to tying future annual increases to the rate of inflation. A further increase to \$15.65 per hour took effect on June 1, 2022.

Paid sick leave – Started in 2021

- » To better support workers and employers during the pandemic, and to support healthy and safe workplaces, the Province ensured workers' jobs were protected if they had to take leave due to COVID-19 and could take time to get vaccinated without losing wages.
- » Then in the Spring of 2021, amendments were made to the Employment Standards Act and regulations to establish three new paid leaves:
 - ◇ Up to three hours of paid leave for employees to get each dose of their COVID-19 vaccine, retroactive to April 29, 2021.
 - ◇ Effective from May 20, 2021 until December 31, 2021,, up to three days of paid leave for circumstances related to COVID-19, with the Province reimbursing employers up to \$200 a day per employee; and
 - ◇ Effective January 1, 2022, a permanent minimum entitlement to five days per year of employer-paid sick leave. This new workplace protection applies to all workers covered by the Employment Standards Act, including part-time workers.

New Rules to Protect Young Workers – Completed in 2021

- » New changes to employment standards better protect young people at work by raising the general working age in British Columbia from 12 to 16 and defining the types of jobs appropriate for those under 16. These new rules bring British Columbia in line with international standards for children’s employment. They came into force October 15, 2021.
- » The next step, in 2022, is to define what types of work are too hazardous for people under the age of 19.
- » The regulations have also narrowed the employment standards exclusion for home-care workers and babysitters who provide care to an adult or a child in a private residence to ensure those who are providing care more than an average of 15 hours a week in any four-week period are protected under the Employment Standards Act.

MINISTRY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Integrated Child and Youth Teams – Ongoing

- » Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) teams are community-based multidisciplinary teams that deliver wraparound mental health and substance use services and supports for children and youth aged 0 to 19. ICY teams provide outbound services (that meet the unique needs of children, youth and families where they live) and work closely with schools, early years services, and primary care, and connect children and youth to specialized and higher intensity services when needed. Investments of \$55 million have been committed since Budget 2019 to support planned expansion over the next three years for a total of 20 teams across the province.

Mental Health and Substance Use Research Agenda – Ongoing

- » Began consultation to create a mental health and substance use research agenda for B.C. This would include the priority research themes to support evidence-based system improvements for mental health and substance use, particularly for those vulnerable to the social and structural determinants of health such as poverty.

Provincial Peer Support: Curriculum – Complete

- » The Province launched “Where We Are At: provincial peer support worker training curriculum” in July 2021. Created by peers for peers, the Curriculum offers free educational resources that are accessible, evidence-based, and consistent with the emerging trends in the field of mental health and addictions. With 16 modules, an employers’ guide and links to complementary resources, the curriculum covers a wide range of topics, including cultural humility, family peer support, substance use and others. The Province provided \$1.5 million over three years (2019 to 2022) to develop this initiative.

FNHA land-based healing services – Ongoing

- » \$38 million was provided by the Province to FNHA for land-based and culturally safe treatment services (2018/19 to 2021/22).

More funding for life-saving overdose prevention, treatment and supports – Ongoing

- » Overdose prevention services including inhalation services and inhalation supplies, expanded access to safe prescription alternatives, and hiring of new outreach teams were supported as part of \$10.5 million to respond to the overdose crisis in August 2020. Budget 2021 extended this funding through committing \$45 million to ensure the stability of overdose prevention services around the province, support integrated interdisciplinary teams, and increase nursing care. Expanding overdose prevention services and connecting people to treatment and supports is an integral part of A Pathway to Hope, B.C.’s roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people in British Columbia.

- » The Province is investing \$22.6 million over the next three years to support health authorities in implementing prescribed safer supply. Funding will support expansion of existing and creation of new programs, increasing staffing capacity through hiring new full-time-equivalent positions, and robust monitoring and evaluation of this policy.
- » As of September 2021, more than half of the items in the Pathway to Hope's three-year plan have been achieved and remaining actions implemented.
- » The Province is supporting expanded scope of nursing practice – enabling nurses to prescribe medications for opioid-use disorder – particularly in rural and remote parts of British Columbia – registered nurses (RNs) and registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs) can now complete training to begin prescribing opioid agonist treatment. In November 2021, the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU) launched education and training to enable RN/RPN prescribers to offer methadone and slow-release-oral-morphine (Kadian), in a phased approach, in addition to existing education and training focused on buprenorphine/naloxone.

Rural, Remote, and Indigenous Overdose grants – Ongoing

- » In 2021, \$1.3 million for one-time grants was provided to community groups, service providers and Indigenous-led organizations to support rural, remote and Indigenous communities in responding to the overdose crisis. This funding supports 23 communities and organizations throughout B.C. Through the grants, actions such as connecting people to lifesaving supports, reducing stigma, developing harm reduction policies, relationship building and knowledge sharing will be funded.

New wellness centre at Royal Columbian Hospital – Ongoing

- » Located at the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, the nearly 37,000 square-metre (393,000 square-foot) centre includes 75 inpatient beds, 45 of which are new. It also offers outpatient services including a mood disorder clinic, expanded clinics for adolescent psychiatry, reproductive psychiatry and psychiatric urgent referral, as well as group therapy and neuropsychology clinics and addictions services. Fraser Health is taking a phased approach to opening the new centre, which began with the opening to outpatients on July 13, 2020.

Foundry Centres – Ongoing

- » Youth around British Columbia and their families have faster, easier access to mental health and substance use services and supports with eight new Foundry centres announced in 2020, in addition to the 11 centres that are already operational. The new Foundry centres will be operated by local community-based agencies in Burns Lake, Comox Valley, Cranbrook, Langley, Squamish, Surrey, Port Hardy and Williams Lake. Through Budget 2021, Government announced an expansion of four additional Foundry centres starting in 2023/24.

New youth treatment and withdrawal management beds – Ongoing

- » More youth have access to treatment in their communities, thanks to an investment in 123 new youth substance use treatment and withdrawal management beds and enhancements to existing provincially accessible beds across the province. These new youth beds are part of the full continuum of care government is building for young people and will be connected to culturally safe, youth-specific services in the community.

New and expanded youth substance use services – Started in 2021

- » As part of Budget 2021, government made an historic investment over three years in new and expanded youth substance use services across the continuum of care and across all health authority regions, including:
 - ◇ School- and community-based prevention and early intervention resources.
 - ◇ Community-based youth substance use and concurrent disorder services.
 - ◇ Crisis intervention services.
 - ◇ Wraparound youth substance use services to support the ongoing expansion of youth substance use bed-based services.
 - ◇ System enablers, which will help create a more seamless system of care for youth substance use.

Bed-Based Expansion Grants – Ongoing

- » The Province invested \$13.5 million over three years to improve access to quality and evidence-informed treatment and recovery services by increasing the number of publicly funded beds for people struggling with substance use challenges. The grant funding is being directed through the Canadian Mental Health Association – BC Division, and has ultimately resulted in the addition of 105 new publicly funded beds across 14 organizations.

Enhanced mental health programs for schools – Ongoing

- » The Province boosted funds immediately for school-based wellness programs and supports by \$2 million during the pandemic, topping up the \$8.8-million investment over three years that was announced September 2019.

Dan’s Legacy Foundation – Ongoing

- » Youth at risk in Metro Vancouver who are living with mental health and addictions challenges will get the counselling support they need and deserve, thanks to continued funding for Dan’s Legacy Foundation. In March 2021, the Province allocated \$1.35 million in grant funding to the foundation to continue providing counselling services and to support emergency on-call, trauma-informed therapists for youth following overdose. Dan’s Legacy provided services to 450 at-risk youth in 2021.

Expanded suicide prevention programs support Indigenous youth and post-secondary students – Started and completed in 2021

- » More young people in B.C. have expanded access to life-saving interventions and mental health care through suicide prevention programs for First Nations and Métis youth, and post-secondary students through a \$2.3-million investment. To support the wellness of Indigenous youth, who are disproportionately impacted by suicide, FNHA received \$800,000. An additional \$200,000 supports MNBC to promote youth wellness. The remaining \$1.3 million supports the Canadian Mental Health Association – BC Division (CMHA-BC) to expand and enhance suicide prevention programs available, including a series of grants administered to post-secondary institutions.

Developing a new framework to improve the substance use system of care – Ongoing

- » The Province is developing a substance use framework that will guide future action and long-term transformation and will have a meaningful impact on service delivery and care experiences. This framework is being developed with key partners across diverse sectors, including health authorities, people with lived and living experience of substance use, service providers, cross-sector partners, and experts.

Bridges for Women Society – Ongoing

- » Women affected by trauma and their loved ones are benefitting from expanded mental health supports to help more families in B.C. thrive. The ministry invested \$50,000 in 2021 for the Bridges for Women Society to provide women and families and non-binary people throughout B.C. with expanded trauma counselling, recovery and referral supports to help build resilience. The society offers healing, education and employment programs for people in B.C. who identify as a part of the women's community and who have been affected by violence or trauma at any time in their lives. It also offers programs that are trauma informed and aim to meet each woman where they are, without judgment or expectation.

Grant for Seniors at risk of homelessness – Started in 2021

- » The Province has provided the Seniors Services Society of BC with a \$500,000 grant in 2021 for its Seniors Housing Information and Navigation Ease (SHINE) program to connect seniors at risk of homelessness with housing, financial assistance, mental-health, and addictions services.

Complex Care Housing – Ongoing

- » In 2021, MMHA completed consultations and worked across the health, social and housing sectors to develop a strategic framework to guide the implementation of complex care housing (CCH).

Partnership with Métis Nation BC – Ongoing

- » MMHA provided \$375,000 to MNBC to advance Métis-specific priorities and to support their participation in the planning, design and implementation of MMHA-led initiatives. MMHA and MNBC continue to explore a long-term health and wellness partnership with a shared interest to improve mental health and wellness outcomes for Métis people in B.C.

BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres – Ongoing

- » MMHA has provided \$375,000 funding to the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) to build capacity and support implementation of recommendations outlined in the Urban Indigenous Wellness Report (2020) to address priorities and support needs for urban Indigenous peoples in B.C.

MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Community Gaming Grants – Ongoing

- » Community Gaming Grants (CGG) provide approximately \$140 million each year to support nearly 5,000 non-profit organizations that deliver services to people throughout British Columbia. Over 1,500 non-profit organizations in the human and social services sector received approximately \$60 million in grants to programs delivered in communities provincewide. Funding is distributed under the human and social services sector to food banks, shelters, domestic violence supports, hospice, counselling services and others. Over \$837,000 of this funding was provided to 20 non-profit organizations to deliver mental health and substance use programming to youth. To address food security, 96 community organizations received more than \$4.8 million to help deliver food security programs in 2021. In 2021/22, 123 non-profit organizations providing emergency and lifesaving services are receiving approximately \$5.8 million to deliver their programs provincewide.
- » In 2021, 96 non-profit organizations received capital project grants through the CGG program. Of these, 20 organizations received over \$2.5 million to specifically help them deliver mental health, childcare and well-being programs for young people in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to reduce barriers felt by low-income and vulnerable populations.

Public Library Technology and Digital Initiatives Grants (targeted, one-time) – Ongoing

- » B.C.'s 71 public libraries used \$1.2 million in targeted funding to enhance digital and connectivity services. This was accomplished by expanding Wi-Fi capabilities (outside), offering community digital literacy training, enhancing virtual library programs, and purchasing lendable technology. In 2021, three province-wide resources were launched: Tumblebooks (for young readers), such as scanners, tablets, microphones, and cameras for people to use and borrow for free. These programs and services ensure people have access to technology and the Internet to apply for jobs, government programs, and new skills. This is particularly important for people without stable connectivity or limited digital literacy skills.

Community Literacy: Literacy Outreach Coordination – Ongoing

- » The ministry awards \$2.185 million annually to Decoda's Literacy Outreach Program. Decoda supports 101 literacy outreach coordinators who provide literacy programming support to 400 communities in B.C. This coordinated network of literacy practitioners and community partners brings together individuals, organizations and agencies to identify, collaborate and deliver community-based literacy programs and services. Many of these programs are offered outside of the formal education systems - as one way to reduce the barrier to learning and obtaining a job (e.g. tutoring, job skills training, childcare/parent times). In 2021, 441 new community literacy initiatives were developed despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person program delivery.

Strengthening Communities' Services Program – Started in 2021

- » Building on the Province's commitment to help people and communities through the pandemic, local governments and modern Treaty First Nations were able to apply for \$100 million in grants to address the impacts of homelessness, support people and strengthen communities' health and safety through the Strengthening Communities' Services funding program. This program is administered by the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM). In 2021, the program's first intake saw more than \$76 million invested in 64 communities. This funding supports initiatives such as outreach, mental health supports, and expanded temporary shelters.

Local Government Development Approvals Program – Started in 2021

- » The Province is working closely with local governments and stakeholders to increase housing supply and affordability. The Local Government Development Approvals Program is part of that effort. The program provided nearly \$15 million to help local governments implement best practices and develop innovative ways to support non-profit housing organizations, developers, and other stakeholders to build essential housing for people throughout British Columbia as the economy recovers from the pandemic. Forty-three local governments throughout British Columbia received grants to create more efficient development approvals processes that will help people get the homes they need built faster and support economic recovery.

Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program – Started in 2021

- » The Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP) provided \$100 million in one-time provincial infrastructure grants for projects that are ready to go throughout the province. The funding supports economic resilience, tourism, heritage, and rural economic recovery. Project recipients are local governments, Indigenous recipients and non-profit organizations. CERIP funding is distributed across five different streams managed by separate partner ministries: Municipal Affairs; Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport; Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; and Children and Family Development. CERIP is part of StrongerBC: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan. There are 328 projects approved across the five CERIP streams, 63 of which are through the Community Economic Resilience stream administered by the ministry. The CERIP projects were required to have a mandatory start date in 2021 and all must be completed by March 31, 2023.

Refugee Readiness Fund – Started in 2021

- » A new \$2 million fund is helping the Province boost local services and supports for families resettling in British Columbia due to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. The Refugee Readiness Fund is a one-time investment to ensure that B.C. communities are ready to welcome and respond to the needs of refugees from Afghanistan who are resettling in British Columbia. The federal commitment is to resettle 40,000 Afghans to Canada, which means B.C. is preparing to welcome thousands of families and individuals over the coming years.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

Victim Service and Violence Against Women Programs – Ongoing

- » PSSG provides over \$42 million annually to support over 400 victim service and violence against women programs across the province, who in turn provide counselling, court support programs, outreach and crisis support for women and children who experience domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes. In 2021, 49,921 new clients were supported/served across 160 contracted police- and community-based victim service programs.

Ending Violence Association of BC – Ongoing

- » In alignment with other work to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ community members, the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) received \$10 million in 2021 – in addition to the \$10 million received in 2020 – to enhance the Emergency Sexual Assault Services grant program supporting the delivery of coordinated, community-based, trauma-informed, and culturally-appropriate services throughout B.C. This allowed EVA BC to fund more programs under the multi-year grant program launched in 2020. As of the end of 2021, a total of 49 organizations throughout the province received funding under this initiative.

ICBC Income Supports – Completed in 2021

- » ICBC issued a second COVID-19 rebate in the summer of 2021, returning approximately \$350 million in additional rebates to 2.94 million customers. This builds on the first COVID-19 rebate of \$600 million in 2020 for a total of \$950 million returned to ICBC customers.
- » As of Dec. 31, 2021, ICBC processed about 3.6 million Enhanced Care refunds averaging \$150 per customer, for a total of approximately \$594 million.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BRITISH COLUMBIA

Supporting Vulnerable Populations Displaced by Disasters – Ongoing

- » In 2021, the Province provided supports to vulnerable populations displaced by emergencies through the Emergency Support Services (ESS) program. The Province partnered with the Canadian Red Cross to provide up to \$2,000 to help people whose primary residences had been placed on evacuation orders due to 2021 wildfires and floods, to assist with their immediate needs associated with being evacuated. This financial assistance was in addition to support provided to evacuees through the ESS program.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

WorkBC Employment Services – Ongoing

- » WorkBC Employment Services are available to unemployed or precariously employed B.C. residents. In April 2019, the program introduced a range of new streamlined, flexible, and accessible services to help British Columbians get good, lasting jobs. On an annual basis, WorkBC Employment Services provides services to about 82,000 people and 38,000 clients are supported through their first year of employment.
- » WorkBC also provides services to about 15,000 people with disabilities each year and about 750 clients receive assistive technology supports at work through WorkBC Assistive Technology Services contracts.
- » The ministry is working with provincial colleagues, the federal government, and Indigenous governing bodies as well as service providers, including WorkBC Centres, to build relationships and enhance services to Indigenous peoples.

Service Parity in WorkBC – Ongoing

- » In 2021, changes were made in WorkBC to allow all unemployed British Columbians access to skills training and personal counselling for employment readiness. Skills training supports unemployed British Columbian's complete Adult Basic Education, Academic Upgrading, or diploma/certificate training. Changes were made to allow Income Assistance and Disability Assistance clients to participate in skills training as well as have any financial supports provided during their training to be exempt from BCEA. Training can occur for a maximum of two years. This change supports individuals to gain skills with the goal of finding sustainable employment.

Preventing and Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project – Ongoing

- » This project involves integrating key datasets across multiple ministries to better understand, analyze and predict demand on services in order to improve homelessness policy and program decisions. This project helps to better understand the homeless and low-income populations in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood, residing in what has become known as "the poorest postal code in Canada". Using integrated data, the project will determine in unprecedented detail how these populations use government services, and how their service use has changed over time. The project gained access to the data and was supported by the Ministry of Citizens' Services' Data Innovation Program.

Partnership with Indigenous Services Canada – Ongoing

- » The ministry works with Indigenous Services Canada to ensure that First Nations people in British Columbia who live on reserve lands have access to similar poverty reduction benefits. Information sharing prevents inequities based on geographic location (on or off reserve lands) and supports the Poverty Reduction Strategy Act's commitment to Indigenous peoples.

Work Experience Opportunities Grants – Completed in 2021

- » As part of StrongerBC, Work Experience Opportunity Grants were made available through an application process for eligible organizations to provide 12-week work experience opportunities for vulnerable individuals impacted by COVID-19. At the end of the work placement, participants could receive help from WorkBC centres to leverage their work experience into other employment opportunities. The amount of the grant was \$5,000 per placement (the majority flowing through to the participant and the remainder for administration and supports) to a maximum of \$50,000 per organization. The stipend for work experience participants has been exempted as income for income and disability assistance. During 2021, two intakes were completed (after the pilot intake in late 2020).

WorkBC Community and Employer Partnerships – Ongoing

- » The Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) investment target for 2021/22 was \$15 million. Over the 2021/22 fiscal year, CEP surpassed the investment target.
- » CEP is prioritizing projects that create work experience and training opportunities to prepare job seekers for available jobs and support an inclusive economic recovery in B.C. communities.
- » As of March 31, 2022, over \$17 million had been committed to fund 95 projects throughout the province including:
 - ◇ 75 training and work experience projects
 - ◇ 14 labour market studies
 - ◇ 6 research projects

UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program – Ongoing

- » As part of TogetherBC, British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Province provided \$5 million to UBCM for the Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program. Since the program began in 2019, 75 local governments have received a total of more than \$2 million for 44 poverty reduction plans and projects.

Tax AID program – Ongoing

- » People with disabilities and other barriers will continue to receive free help filing their income tax and accessing tax credits and benefits, thanks to \$1.18 million in provincial funding. Disability Alliance B.C. (DABC) has been operating the Tax Assistance and Information program (Tax AID) since 2015, providing free community-based income tax filing services for persons with disabilities and persons with persistent multiple barriers throughout British Columbia.

Foundry Works! – Started in 2021

- » Young people with persistent and multiple barriers to employment or education, including youth directly affected by COVID-19, have better access to services through a new employment program. The Province provided Foundry with a one-time grant of \$5.1 million to administer Foundry Works! over the next three years.

Emergency Food Purchasing Program – Started in 2021

- » In 2021, Food Banks BC (FBBC) received \$6 million for the Emergency Food Purchasing program to provide nutritious, culturally appropriate food during the pandemic and economic recovery. FBBC also received \$2.5 million for the Perishable Food Recovery program, which supports capacity to store and distribute perishable food items under refrigeration.

United Way Food Hubs – Started in 2021

- » In 2021, United Way of the Lower Mainland received \$1.27 million to support province-wide work that addresses immediate needs as well as longer-term food security planning and research. This includes the development of regional food hubs which are operating on a "Hub and Spoke" model including organizations providing food support, as well as those providing wrap around service support. Partnerships include community partners such as non-profits, local businesses, local agriculture, the private sector, school districts, municipalities and more, all working together to strengthen the vital connections needed to put food on the tables of all residents of B.C.

First Nations Well-Being Fund – Ongoing

- » First Nations throughout B.C. were able to apply for funding to promote well-being, improve quality of life for community members on and off reserve, and find solutions to poverty in their communities. The First Nations Public Service Secretariat, an initiative of the First Nations Summit, administered the fund, which was created with a \$2.7-million grant from the Province. Funding was offered through two streams: community projects and planning. The community projects stream provides up to \$35,000 for a single First Nation, \$70,000 for two First Nations and \$105,000 for regional applications of three or more partnering First Nations. Grants have been provided to 62 First Nations communities throughout British Columbia.

Permanent rate increase – Completed in 2021

- » In April 2021, individuals on income assistance and disability assistance received a permanent \$175 per month increase – the third increase in rates since July 2017. As well, for the first time since it was introduced in 1987, there was an increase to the senior’s supplement of \$50 per recipient. This raised the maximum rate for a single person from \$49.30 to \$99.30 per month, benefiting up to 20,000 more low-income seniors. For people on income assistance living in special care facilities, their comforts allowance increased by \$20 to \$115 per month.

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS, CULTURE AND SPORT

KidSport BC – Ongoing

- » Sport BC’s (a non-profit organization) KidSport BC program provides grants to lower income families to help cover the costs of a season of sport. The Province provides \$400,000 annually to KidSport BC which helps it provide support to more than 7,300 children annually.
- » The Province provided a one-time investment of \$2.5 million (over three years) in 2019 to expand the program’s reach – particularly for those children from population groups under-represented in sport (e.g. Indigenous, disability, girls, immigrants and/or racialized). This investment also supports KidSport community chapters to address COVID-19 pandemic impacts (i.e. lost fund-raising and other revenue and increased demand) thus helping to reduce financial barriers to sport associated with the pandemic.

B.C. Sport Participation Program – Ongoing

- » In 2021, the Province continued its partnership with the federal government on the B.C. Sport Participation Program to provide a joint \$1.2 million to fund sports and physical activity opportunities for under-represented populations (e.g. low income, Indigenous, new Canadians, females, disability and older adult populations). This investment includes annual support to the Urban Native Youth Association (in the City of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside) to deliver sport and recreation programs for youth.

After-School Sport and Arts Initiative – Ongoing

- » The Province supports After-School Sport and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) through \$1.4 million in annual funding. The initiative brings free sport, physical activity and creative arts programming to 22 school districts across British Columbia with a focus on children and youth (Grades K-8) who face barriers to sport or arts participation. In 2021 ASSAI continued to provide in-person programs, ensuring over 1,600 Indigenous students and 830 students with disabilities and diverse abilities had opportunities to participate in sport and the arts.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

U-Pass BC – Ongoing

- » Following student support from 10 public universities and colleges in Metro Vancouver, the U-Pass BC program has been extended for five years, providing better access to transit for as many as 140,000 students. The U-Pass BC program, which began in 2010, is a partnership between the Province, TransLink, participating public post-secondary institutions and their student associations. Students holding a U-Pass BC card have access to bus, SeaBus and SkyTrain services within Metro Vancouver, as well as discounts on West Coast Express.

“Get on Board” – Started in 2021

- » As of September 1, 2021, children 12 and under are able to “Get on Board” any BC Transit or TransLink service for free as part of the provincial government’s commitment to efficient, reliable and affordable transit for families. Anyone who typically buys fares or monthly bus passes for children 12 and under no longer needs to do so.

Northern community shuttle funding program – Started in 2021

- » A new northern community shuttle funding program will sustain and enhance access to services and amenities, friends and family, and other transportation services in B.C.’s North. The program is administered by the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT). Eighteen communities received grants that will allow for service for up to 3 years. Each community designs the service to meet the needs of their residents.

BC HOUSING

Building BC: Community Housing Fund – Ongoing

- » The Building BC: Community Housing Fund (CHF) is part of the Province’s 10-year, \$7 billion housing plan. This program will provide close to \$1.9 billion over 10 years to build and operate 14,350 affordable new rental homes for seniors, families, low-income and middle-income earners. The fund will provide rental homes for individuals, families, seniors, people living with disabilities and Indigenous peoples throughout the province. New affordable homes projects may also provide access to mental health care, substance-use services, primary care, social services, childcare spaces, and peer support. As of December 31, 2021, more than 8,870 homes were open, under construction or in development.

Women’s Transition Housing Fund – Ongoing

- » This program will provide \$734 million over 10 years to build 1,500 new supportive homes for women and children fleeing violence, including transition houses, safe homes, second-stage and long-term housing. As of December 31, 2021, 757 units were in progress. Of these, 89 units were completed and the remainder were underway.

Supportive Housing Fund – Ongoing

- » This program will provide \$1.2 billion over 10 years to build and operate 2,500 units of supportive housing for those who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. As of December 31, 2021, 3,524 units were in progress. Supportive Housing Fund over delivery is due in large part to increasing homelessness, increasing demand for supportive housing, and hotel acquisitions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of these, 1,420 units were completed and the remainder were underway.

Indigenous Housing Fund – Ongoing

- » This Indigenous Housing Fund (IHF) program will provide \$550 million over 10 years to build and operate 1,750 units of social housing for projects, both on and off reserve, in First Nations communities. As of December 31, 2021, 1,200 IHF homes were completed or underway in 26 communities.

Rapid Response to Homelessness Initiative – Ongoing

- » As part of the Budget 2017 update, the provincial government announced an investment of \$291 million to build 2,000 modular housing units for those who are experiencing homelessness. In addition, \$170 million will be invested over three years to operate the housing and provide support services. As of December 31, 2021, 1,894 units were completed.

Emergency Shelter Program – Ongoing

- » Emergency shelters are temporary but immediate places to stay for anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. As of December 31, 2021, the program funded approximately 2,189 permanent, year-round emergency beds in approximately 35 communities across the province.

Homeless Outreach Program and Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program – Ongoing

- » BC Housing partners with community-based agencies serving more than 70 communities throughout the province. The Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program provides support to 18 of these communities. Outreach workers undertake a wide range of support activities to address immediate physical and safety needs including connecting people with housing and income supports, providing links to other support services and acting as a landlord liaison.

Homeless Prevention Program – Ongoing

- » This program assists at-risk groups facing homelessness by providing rent supplements and support services to help them access rental housing in the private market. BC Housing provides funding for the program which is administered by community-based agencies and homeless outreach providers. As of December 31, 2021, over 1,700 individuals received monthly support under the Homeless Prevention Program.

Rental Assistance Program – Ongoing

- » The Rental Assistance Program is aimed at helping working families earning less than \$40,000 a year with cash assistance to help with their monthly rent payments in the private market. As of December 31, 2021, there were 6,800 households receiving RAP with an average monthly subsidy of \$352.

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters – Ongoing

- » The Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program provides rent supplements in the private housing market to low-income seniors (aged 60+) including singles, couples and individuals sharing accommodation. As of December 31, 2021, there were 24,500 households receiving SAFER with an average monthly subsidy of \$194.

Extreme Weather Response – Ongoing

- » The Extreme Weather Response (EWR) program funds temporary shelter spaces for individuals who are experiencing homelessness that are made available only when the community has issued an extreme weather alert. The EWR program operates during the winter season, generally from November 1 to March 31.
- » In winter 2021, the Province provided more than 1,900 temporary shelter spaces and nearly 360 extreme weather response shelter spaces to ensure people experiencing homelessness had a warm place to sleep and can get out of the cold and rain. These emergency shelters supplement more than 2,250 permanent year-round shelter spaces open throughout B.C.

SAFERhome Certification Program – Started in 2021

- » The Province, through BC Housing, has partnered with the SAFERhome Standards Society to create a new certification program that will improve liveability and accessibility in existing and future public-housing buildings. The SAFERhome Certification Program will support a review of all BC Housing units built since 2019 to ensure they are either accessible or can be renovated easily to improve accessibility with minimal costs. Approximately 2,000 existing units and 8,000 new units soon to be completed will be inspected and potentially certified. Certified homes will be added to a public registry managed by the SAFERhomes Standards Society.

Indoor spaces for people experiencing homelessness in Victoria – Started and completed in 2021

- » Through a partnership between the City of Victoria, the Province and BC Housing, spaces were secured to support moving Victoria's encampment residents inside. Two of the sites secured by BC Housing required significant additional retrofitting to prepare them for use as emergency shelters. All locations were fully operational, with non-profit service providers identified to provide wraparound supports. Since January 2021, the Province, the City of Victoria and outreach workers have partnered to move 116 people experiencing homelessness throughout Victoria into supportive housing units and shelter spaces.

Indoor spaces for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver – Completed in 2021

- » New shelter spaces opened for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver. The Province, in partnership with the City of Vancouver, opened two new temporary shelters offering a total of 120 beds. Securing, preparing and staffing these facilities is a significant step toward meeting the Province and City of Vancouver's goal of having enough indoor spaces available to decamp Strathcona Park. The Province also funded 30 new rental supplements for people who require fewer support services and can move from supportive housing into private rental properties.

- ♦ 875 Terminal Ave. – 60-bed shelter

- ♦ 15-27 West Hastings St. – 60-bed shelter

- » The property on Terminal Avenue is owned by the City of Vancouver. A \$1.8-million grant provided by the federal government through Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy funded renovations of the property. The West Hastings site is being co-leased by BC Housing and the city.

Bridgeport temporary supportive housing – Ongoing

- » Bridgeport, a new temporary supportive housing building with 40 safe and secure homes will soon be available for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness in Richmond. Bridgeport will replace Richmond's temporary Emergency Response Centre, which has provided safe accommodation for vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic and is closing in 2022. The Province, through BC Housing, is providing approximately \$8.6 million through the Homelessness Action Plan. The City of Richmond is providing a \$250,000 grant and the land for the project.

New Shelter Proposals – Started in 2021

- » The Province, through BC Housing, is proceeding with a proposal for a new temporary shelter that would provide a safe place to sleep for people staying in Penticton's Victory Church shelter after it closes in spring 2022.

Hotels revitalized into affordable homes – Started in 2021

- » The Province, through BC Housing, has purchased motels, inns and suites to provide affordable homes for people with moderate to low incomes for people in the communities of Penticton, Maple Ridge and Victoria. The Province invested approximately \$7.9 million for the purchase of three motels in Penticton. The Province, through BC Housing, has purchased the Capital City Center Hotel, which will provide nearly 100 temporary supportive homes for people experiencing homelessness in Victoria. The Province is investing approximately \$25 million to purchase the hotel and adjacent lot.

Homes for Vulnerable Youth – Completed in 2021

- » The Province, through BC Housing, is providing ongoing annual operating subsidy for 20 youth units at Cornerstone Landing for vulnerable youth in need of support in Maple Ridge. The funding provides increased affordability and support services for youth between the ages of 18 and 25 who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, are precariously housed or transitioning to independence. The Province has provided approximately \$13 million in grant funding to the Cornerstone Landing project.

BC HYDRO

Customer Crisis Fund Pilot Project – Completed in 2021

- » The Customer Crisis Fund (CCF) Pilot, a three-year pilot project launched in June 2018, offered support of up to \$600 for BC Hydro residential customers who are facing disconnection of their electricity service, due to a temporary financial crisis. During the 2021 calendar year, 4,467 grants totalling \$931,000 were distributed to eligible customers. About 94 per cent of recipients indicated that they would have had to go without some necessities of living without support from the grant. The pilot program ended on May 31, 2021. To the end of the CCF pilot program, BC Hydro provided approximately 11,396 grants totalling \$4.289 million to customers in need.

Customer Crisis Fund – Ongoing

- » On June 22, 2021, the Province continued BC Hydro's CCF to provide support for people in financial crisis and help avoid disconnections of their electricity service while potential alternatives for a permanent crisis program are evaluated. BC Hydro provided support to an additional 1,100 customers, providing \$377,844 in grants as of December 31, 2021.

Changes to Customer Disconnection Policy – Ongoing

- » BC Hydro does not disconnect residential customers for non-payment during periods of extreme temperature. This includes a complete moratorium on non-payment disconnections in the North Interior and South Interior from November to March. In response to extreme temperatures in summer 2021, BC Hydro implemented a high temperature disconnection policy when temperatures were expected to reach 35 degrees Celsius. In response to increasing wildfire and flooding events, BC Hydro implemented tariff changes to allow electricity charges to be waived for residential and small business customers under an Evacuation Order that has been in place for at least five days. BC Hydro also waives the customer's last bill, as well as the charge to establish a new electric service when they rebuild, if not covered by their insurance.
- » BC Hydro has also established processes with SDPR to avoid security deposits and postpone disconnections for customers awaiting decisions on applications for support. BC Hydro also implemented tariff changes to allow another customer to act as a guarantor for a residential customer account as an alternative to providing a security deposit.
- » BC Hydro has implemented changes that will delay disconnections where customers demonstrate a medical reason for requiring power.

BC Hydro's Indigenous Scholarships and Bursary Program – Ongoing

- » Through the Indigenous scholarships and bursaries program in 2021, BC Hydro awarded 27 scholarships valued at \$5,000; seven bursaries valued at \$2,000; and one scholarship valued at \$8,000. The awards support students to attend post-secondary education programs. The total value of the scholarships and bursaries program for 2021 was \$155,000.

Indigenous Communities Conservation Program – Ongoing

- » The BC Hydro and FortisBC Indigenous Communities Conservation Program (ICCP) supports Indigenous communities looking to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of their homes. Through the two program streams, Indigenous communities can receive training, free energy-saving products and rebates to implement home energy upgrades for their community members.
- » In 2021/22:
- » 13 communities installed energy-saving products and completed home assessments in 670 homes with support from ICCP Stream 1.
- » Five communities completed energy efficiency upgrades/retrofits in 97 homes with support from ICCP Stream 2.

Low-Income Conservation Programs – Ongoing

- » BC Hydro, in partnership with FortisBC, has two offers for eligible low-income households – the Energy Conservation Assistance Program and Energy Saving Kits.
- » In 2021/22, BC Hydro spent over \$5 million on Low-Income Conservation Programs to help low-income customers save approximately five gigawatt hours of electricity. As a result, participating customers saved a total of \$465,000 on their annual electricity bills.
- » In 2021/22, over 2,800 households went through the Energy Conservation Assistance Program and approximately 9,000 households received an energy saving kit.

BC OIL AND GAS COMMISSION

Indigenous Training Opportunities – Started in 2020 (two-year initiative)

- » The Commission, in partnership with AEST, provided an additional \$155,000 in funding for 2021 that supported 56 Indigenous students from over 15 unique Indigenous communities from across the province in graduating from two specialized training programs:
- » Northern Lights College: Environmental Site Assessment Technician
- » Natural Resource Training Group: Environmental Monitoring Technician Program – offered twice

Indigenous Scholarships and Bursaries – Completed in 2021

- » Additional and renewed grants and bursaries for Indigenous students were established at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), Vancouver Island University, the College of New Caledonia, and the University of Northern BC (UNBC). These donations totalled \$112,000 and were completed in March 2021.

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST

Training Fee Support Program – Ongoing

- » Provides funding towards short-term training or certification to increase the chances of securing gainful employment. There were 308 unemployed or underemployed people who received grants in 2021 to complete short-term training or certification to increase their chances of securing jobs. The Province's investment in 2021 was \$203,000.

Food Recovery Projects – Completed in 2021

- » Helping make nutritious food more affordable and accessible throughout the Basin, the Trust made a multi-year (2019 to 2021) investment of \$440,000 towards 10 projects that are reducing waste and helping families meet their basic needs.

Basin Farmers' Market Co-operative Nutrition Coupon Program – Ongoing

- » In partnership with the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, the Trust committed \$520,000 over four years (2018 to 2022) towards the program, which enables lower-income families, seniors and pregnant women to buy fresh, locally grown food from Basin farmers. In addition to the funds above, the Trust has committed \$420,000 for 2022 to 2025.

Affordable Housing program – Ongoing

- » The Trust's Affordable Housing program supports the development of housing that is affordable and meets the specific needs of Basin communities. The Trust helps ensure that existing affordable housing units are maintained and are energy-efficient and comfortable for residents. The Trust has invested \$40 million in affordable housing since 2016. In 2021, the Trust provided capital and development support towards the creation of 314 new units with a \$11.4 million investment.

Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy – Ongoing

- » The Trust has partnered with Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL) since 2001. CBAL works with community partners to help identify and address local literacy priorities and key activities include literacy programming for children, youth, adults, seniors and newcomers to Canada. In 2021, the Trust provided \$500,000. CBAL delivered more than 50 literacy programs and workshops, totalling nearly 4,000 sessions and reaching 2,538 children and youth and 1,225 adults.

First Nations Housing Sustainability Initiative – Ongoing

- » The Trust's First Nations Housing Sustainability Initiative supports First Nations communities in the Basin to enhance and increase their local affordable housing. Since 2017, the Initiative has invested \$8.1 million to support local First Nations' housing needs. With \$1.9 million in funding committed in 2021, the Trust is helping create 25 new units and support renewable energy generation, energy retrofits and repairs to improve 32 existing units.

Food Access and Recovery Grants – Ongoing

- » Since 2019, the Trust has been supporting community-led food recovery and access projects that create or enhance access to communal growing/processing spaces and divert food which would otherwise be wasted to people experiencing vulnerabilities. The Trust has invested \$2.2 million to date towards 53 projects.

Seniors and Elders Activity Grants – Complete

- » Launched in 2021, the Seniors and Elders Activity Grants program committed \$1 million towards building repairs, energy improvements and outdoor activity spaces and towards projects that pilot or expand services and/or activities for seniors and elders.

Social Grants – Complete

- » The Social Grants program supports the well-being of Basin residents living in poverty and facing significant barriers. Since 2012, Social Grants have provided over \$9 million towards projects that support people experiencing vulnerabilities. In 2021, 24 projects were supported with \$990,000.

Social Connections Grants – Complete

- » Social Connections Grants supported six multi-year (2019 to 2021) projects that reduced social isolation for Basin residents experiencing poverty through an investment of \$203,040.

Student Wage Subsidy – Ongoing

- » Student Wage Subsidy Programs are focused on addressing the needs of small businesses, building a stronger local economy, and creating a skilled workforce. Since 2010, \$11.5 million has helped employers hire full-time students on a part-time basis throughout the school year and hire full-time students over the summer. In 2021, the Trust provided \$1.4 million in wage subsidies to support 265 organizations hire 265 students.

COMMUNITY LIVING BRITISH COLUMBIA

CLBC-funded employment support services/COVID Recovery – Ongoing since 2020

- » People with developmental disabilities who are eligible for Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) services received support to return to the workforce and increase their digital literacy.
- » Funding of \$10 million allows employment services to hire additional employment support staff to help people find or reconnect to employment, support with job searching, assist individuals to understand and adhere to COVID-19 workplace requirements and help people reconnect with former employers to find out if an individual can be rehired.
- » Across the province, digital literacy tutors were trained to assist individuals to develop their computer and online skills.

CLBC-funded employment support services/COVID Recovery – Ongoing

- » CLBC expended \$20.6 million on employment services in 2020/21.
- » 2020 and 2021 were challenging years due to COVID-19. Some individuals withdrew from employment due to health vulnerabilities; others lost employment as businesses struggled to pivot; others learned the new skills and procedures necessary in their workplaces; and in 2021 some returned to work.
- » CLBC's commitment to employment has been consistent since the Community Action Employment Plan launched in 2012/13. Since then, employment has grown from 14 per cent to nearly 25 per cent of working aged individuals accessing CLBC services. COVID-19 caused a dip in employment, but it is now recovering.



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