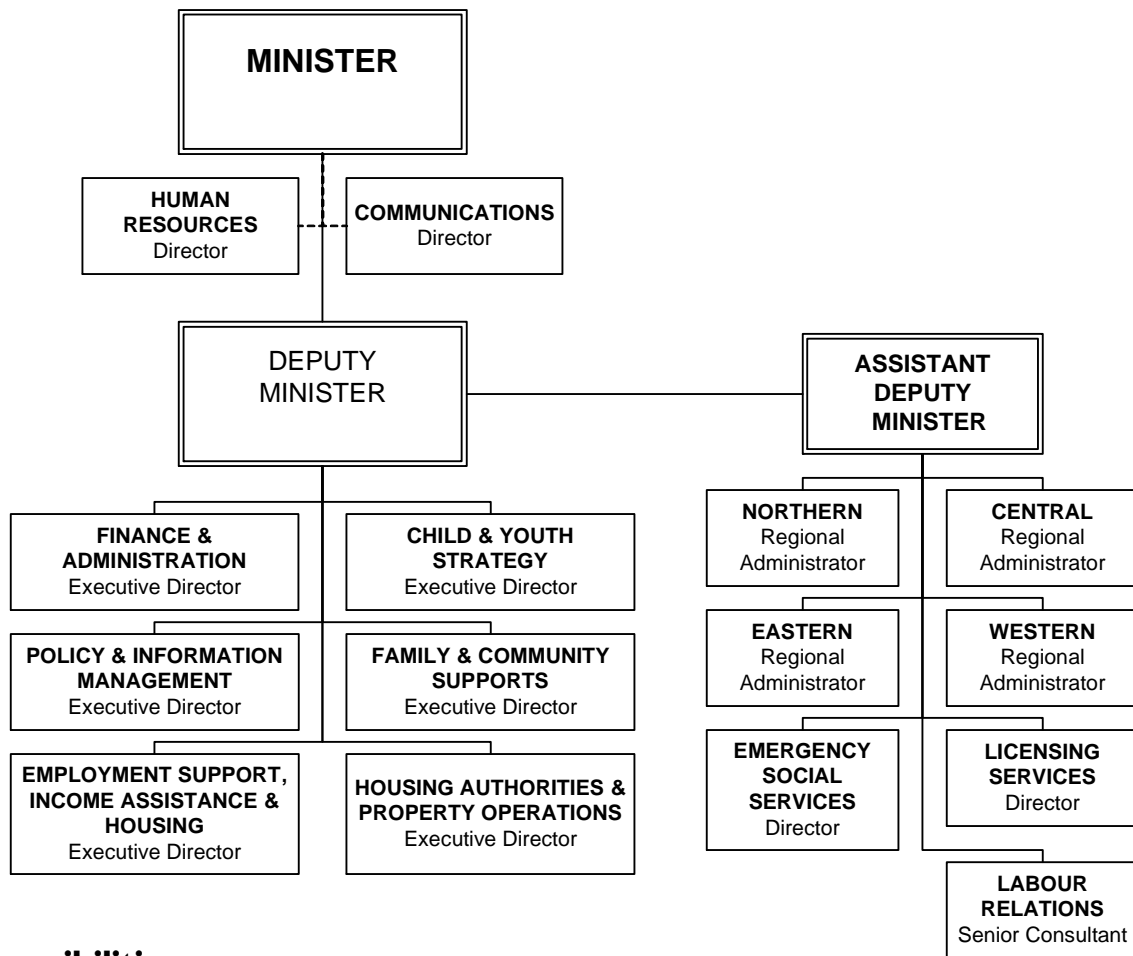


Department of Community Services



Responsibilities

The Department of Community Services delivers a wide range of social services to Nova Scotians in need and operates under a broad legislative mandate. These services contribute to better futures for our children and families, persons with disabilities, seniors and communities throughout Nova Scotia.

Services are grouped into four core business areas—child and youth strategy, family and community supports, employment supports and income assistance and housing, and housing authorities and property operations. Each year the department provides services to over 150,000 Nova Scotians, or over 15% of the provincial population. Services are delivered to clients from regional district offices across the province, housing authorities, children’s aid societies and indirectly through the provincial network of service providers.

The services provided by the department offer a social safety net for Nova Scotians in need, and play a significant role in contributing to the overall health and well-being of communities.

Office of the Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister, responsible to the Minister of Community Services, oversees the administration of the department.

Along with the Assistant Deputy Minister, the following divisions report directly to the Office of the Deputy Minister:

- Employment Support, Income Assistance and Housing
- Family & Community Supports
- Child & Youth Strategy
- Housing Authorities & Property Operations
- Policy & Information Management
- Finance & Administration

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER

The Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister is responsible for coordinating and overseeing all functions related to the delivery of the departments's programs and services.

The department's service delivery structure is broken down into four regions:

- Central Regional Office
- Northern Regional Office
- Eastern Regional Office
- Western Regional Office

The four regional office operations, through a network of district offices, deliver the department's programs and support the work of community-based agencies. In each region, offices report to a Regional Administrator.

In addition to regional operations, this office is also responsible for Emergency Social Services and Licensing Services. The Senior Labour Relations Consultant also reports to the Assistant Deputy Minister.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT, INCOME ASSISTANCE AND HOUSING

This division is responsible for the development of programs and services for people in need of financial assistance and support services, including housing support and employment supports. Services are provided through four regional offices and 38 district offices located throughout the province.

Housing supports include:

- provincial and federal/provincial housing assistance programs to low income Nova Scotians so they can undertake major and minor repairs to their homes.

Employment and income supports include:

- employment support services, including support for persons with disabilities
- work activity programs
- Nova Scotia Child Benefit
- Income assistance, including pharmacare programs

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

This division is responsible for the development of programs and services for vulnerable children, youth, adults and families, including services for disabled children and adults and children in need of protection. The division includes Family and Children's Services and Services for Persons with Disabilities.

Family and Children's Services

The focus of Family and Children's Services is children, youth, and their families. These programs provide community-based, protection, and prevention-oriented supports for both children and families.

Programs include:

- child welfare and residential services
- early childhood development services, including child care programs
- family and youth services

Services for Persons with Disabilities

The focus of Services for Persons with Disabilities is the development of a continuum of residential services for disabled adults, including:

- licensed homes for special care
- community-based options
- independent living support program, as well as vocational and other day program services

CHILD & YOUTH STRATEGY

This division is responsible for the development and implementation of a provincial Child and Youth Strategy. It is also responsible for the Nova Scotia Youth Secretariat, which facilitates and coordinates provincial government responses to the needs, concerns and aspirations of Nova Scotia youth and youth-serving organizations.

The Child and Youth Strategy is an initiative to improve services to children, youth, and families through greater collaboration between five key Government departments: Health, Education, Community Services, Justice, and Health Promotion and Protection. The strategy will include community-based programs, with the goal of bringing services closer to children, youth and families.

HOUSING AUTHORITIES & PROPERTY OPERATIONS

Housing Authorities & Property Operations (HAPO) provides direction and support to the department and the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation (NSHDC) in the planning and management of their properties. Together, the department and NSHDC own approximately 12,000 public housing rental units and several residential properties providing homes and support to children in care and individuals with special needs.

HAPO also supports the land, building and office space needs of the department, the Public Housing Authority and other third-party service providers. Tenant relations and property management services are provided by seven housing authorities.

As a coordinator of a risk management and insurance program, HAPO self-insures the building assets of the NSHDC and the department, valued at approximately \$500 million.

POLICY & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

This division brings together the department's strategic and business planning functions, corporate policy development and program evaluation, together with all information activities to support policy and program development and regional operations.

Functions of the division include:

- Federal/Provincial Social Initiatives
- Policy, Planning and Research
- Information Technology Services

- Information Services and FOIPOP
- Legislative Processes
- Client Services

The Appeals Unit, which coordinates appeals activities related to Employment Support & Income Assistance and Community Supports for Adults, is also located in this division.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

This division is responsible for administrative support and financial systems for the department. The main sections are:

- Accounting and Control
- Budgets and Results
- Mortgages and Loans (related to the Housing Corporation)
- Administrative Services

HUMAN RESOURCES

This division is responsible for the human resources requirements for the department, including:

- Human Resource Development
- Employee Benefits
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Human Resources Consultant Services

Acts Administered

- *Adoption Information Act*
- *Children and Family Services Act*
- *Day Care Act*
- *Disabled Persons Commission Act*
- *Employment Support and Income Assistance Act*
- *Homes for Special Care Act*
- *Housing Act*
- *Housing Development Corporation Act*
- *Senior Citizen's Financial Aid Act*
- *Social Assistance Act*
- *Social Workers Act*

