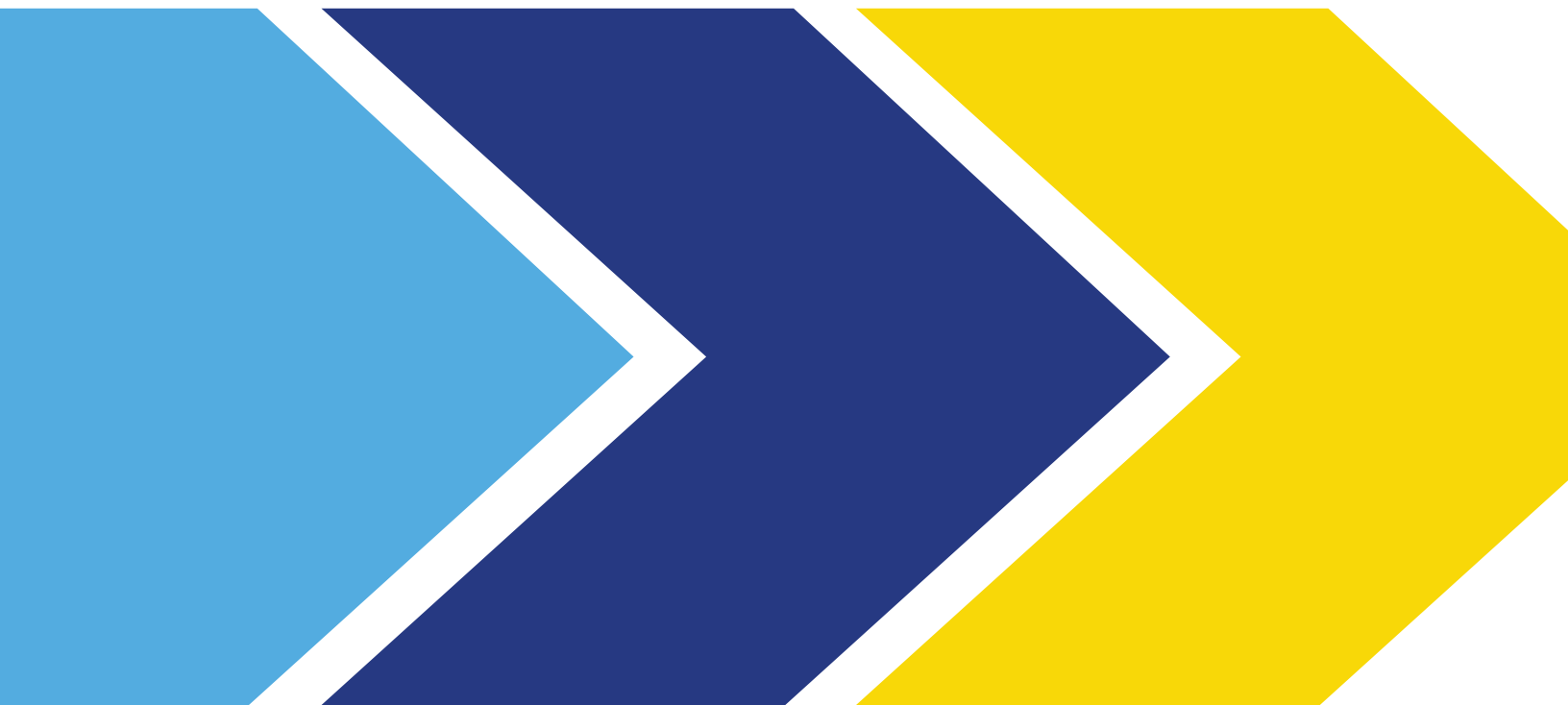


BUSINESS PLAN

2022-23



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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

We are pleased to present the 2022-23 Business Plan for the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI).

Nova Scotia now has a population of more than one million strong, and we continue to grow each day. We are experiencing rapid growth and we are working to keep up the momentum. LSI remains dedicated to ensuring Nova Scotia is a place for all to work, learn, live, and thrive.

The past two years have introduced many challenges and we are focused on efforts that can improve Nova Scotia's economic growth. This includes focus and commitment to our top priorities: immigration and population growth, skills and training, workplace health and safety, and labour services.

In collaboration across government, with businesses, communities and other invested parties, we are working to attract and retain more young people, entrepreneurs and skilled workers who deliver essential services such as healthcare, education, and construction.

To increase opportunities and aid in our province's growth, the Department continues to work with stakeholders to find innovative ways to attract newcomers, respond to current and emerging needs, and provide solutions to help streamline the immigration process.

We will continue to build on our growth and success in the coming year. We focus on creating and supporting a diverse and innovative workforce, ensuring safe and fair workplaces, attracting and retaining newcomers to fill our labour needs, and creating equal opportunities for all Nova Scotians. We will also collaborate with the private sector to stimulate job growth, enhance skill development, and connect more Nova Scotians to the workforce.

Over the next year, we will focus on our mandate to provide a fair, equitable, safe, productive, and inclusive Nova Scotia.

By aligning our Department's initiatives with the government's key priorities, we will:

- Maintain our commitment to ensuring all Nova Scotians have access to fair, safe, and healthy workplaces. This includes continued work on labour standards, labour relations, workers' compensation, occupational health and safety, and technical safety.
- Provide presumptive coverage for 13 additional types of cancer and heart attacks through the amended Firefighters' Compensation Regulations under the Workers' Compensation Act. The amended regulations will take effect on July 1, 2022.

- Fill labour gaps and strengthen our workforce by attracting a mix of entrepreneurs and youth to all parts of our province through a combination of immigration and migration from other parts of Canada.
- Work with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency to modernize the apprenticeship system to better meet the needs of apprentices, those interested in working in the skilled trades sector, employers and the industry. This will aid to fill the demand for skilled trades and apprenticeship jobs in Nova Scotia.
- Continue to develop and invest in programs that help retain youth and those from underrepresented communities and help them attach to the workforce to build meaningful careers in Nova Scotia.
- Promote economic growth by supporting skills development and lifelong learning initiatives and helping Nova Scotians prepare, train, and connect to a productive workforce.

We encourage you to visit <https://beta.novascotia.ca/government/labour-skills-and-immigration> to learn more about who we are and what we do.

DEPARTMENT VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI / department) works to create a thriving province that welcomes and retains greater numbers of people and contributes to a competitive workforce by making strategic investments in people, programs, services, and partnerships.

Vision

Everyone has an opportunity to thrive in Nova Scotia.

Mission

We work as a trusted partner to help people live, learn and work to their highest potential in vibrant businesses and communities across Nova Scotia.

Strategic Directions

LSI continues to align our efforts to grow the population and develop our current and future workforce, with clear and measurable investments in youth, career and employment services, immigration and population growth, adult learning, apprenticeship training, skills development, and safe and fair workplaces. These investments will directly support the prosperity of the province, where people will find welcoming communities, have access to sustainable jobs and are empowered to contribute to a stronger Nova Scotia.

We are committed to working collaboratively across government, with our federal, provincial, and municipal partners, as well as with our stakeholders in the private sector. In 2022-23, LSI will advance the following strategic directions:

Advance inclusion, learning and employability for all

LSI will demonstrate a commitment to advancing inclusion, learning and employability for all by enabling Nova Scotians, including immigrants and interprovincial migrants, to access adult learning, apprenticeship training and skill development programs and successfully manage career transitions. Through a continuum of programs and supports, we will work to remove barriers to employment and grow inclusive learning and workplace practices to maximize participation in the labour market. We will continue to help Nova Scotians prepare for, (re)enter and succeed at work in a rapidly changing labour market, while developing essential skills and modernizing the apprenticeship system to be more inclusive, accessible, and responsive to meet current and future demand with a focus on attraction and retention.

Enable safe, fair, diverse, welcoming and productive workplaces

LSI will continue to support healthy and safe environments in Nova Scotia workplaces and public spaces by developing the conditions to foster a culture of equity, safety and fairness that reflects the changing nature of these places. We will also work to develop labour, employment and safety rules that reflect the changing nature of work, protect vulnerable workers, and set expectations for Nova Scotia's employers to create more inclusive and productive workplaces and providing responsive dispute resolution.

Create opportunities for sustainable population and economic growth

LSI will continue to promote Nova Scotia as a location of choice, work to increase net population levels, and advance a climate of economic prosperity through connecting people to jobs and jobs to people. We will advance partnerships with industry leaders, educators, and the private sector to build sustainable, green, welcoming, and growing industries and communities. LSI will focus on supporting labour mobility, increasing employer engagement in training and growing recruitment and retention in key sectors that address the changing nature of work.

NOVA SCOTIA APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA / Agency) is responsible for stewarding and operating a relevant, accessible, and responsive industry-led trades training and certification system. It is an agent of the Crown and has developed its own Business Plan for 2022-23. While the Agency is separate, its actions that align with the mandate for LSI are reflected in the department's Business Plan.

KEY INITIATIVES FOR 2022-23

The following key initiatives will be undertaken by LSI in 2022-23 to further advance the identified strategic directions.

Advance inclusion, learning and employability for all

- Partner with the Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute to lead an engagement approach that will bring together members of African and Caribbean Nova Scotian / Black communities and stakeholders in the cosmetology industry to collectively explore opportunities and develop solutions to address challenges in accessing textured / Black hair services in licensed hair salons.
- Partner with the Department of Advanced Education, Education and Early Childhood Development, the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents, and the

Nova Scotia Community College to develop a framework for post-secondary recruitment and retention that supports racial equity and equal opportunities for students of African descent.

- Develop and implement an *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework* for recruitment of the department's Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs).
- Lead and support the recruitment process for the department to ensure equitable and inclusive hiring practices in line with government's *All Together* strategy.
- Conduct a review of Settlement Services that will focus on understanding the socio-economic profile and whether settlement needs are being met for recent immigrants, as well as those moving to Nova Scotia from other parts of Canada.
- Support the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in promoting skilled trades with youth through awareness and experiential opportunities and increasing the diversity of those who participate.
- Implement identified priorities in *Building More Equitable Pathways II* to improve and advance inclusion in the apprenticeship system for women, Indigenous Peoples, African Nova Scotians, newcomers, Persons with Disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.
- Offer new adult learning financial supports for interventions, such as targeted skill development and academic upgrading, that support employment attachment and skill building for further education or training.
- Partner with the Association of Nova Scotia Community Business Development Corporations to assess business training needs across the province, which will assist in determining what business training will be delivered through the Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) and funded through the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI).
- Assist Nova Scotia public school students to understand and prepare for the needs of the province's labour market through collaboration between Education Centres / Conseil scolaire acadien provincial and Nova Scotia Works by expanding the number of Nova Scotia Works School Liaisons working in and with educators, students, and their families.

Enable safe, fair, diverse, welcoming and productive workplaces

- Conduct a review and engagement to explore options for amendments to the *Labour Standards Code* in relation to Truth and Reconciliation Day, and its observance by all employers in the province.

- Conduct a broad stakeholder consultation in relation to pregnancy loss, identifying options for amendments to the *Labour Standards Code*, to ensure employees have protected leave when dealing with this difficult situation.
- Appoint an Arbitration Advisory Committee and work with the committee members to develop training and recruitment strategies that support the appointment of new and diverse arbitrators to the Minister's List of Arbitrators.
- Implement the Labour Board Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Framework to support the appointment of Labour Board members from equity-seeking communities in Nova Scotia.
- Continue to support and positively impact technical and occupational health and safety throughout Nova Scotia by setting, promoting, verifying, and enforcing requirements.
- Continue to collaborate with the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) and working with employers and workplaces to support them in mitigating emerging and existing health hazards and focusing on implementing directed support for the healthcare sector.
- Engage with technical safety clients and industry to determine recommendations on how best to support the sector, increase safety in Nova Scotia and re-establish the Technical Safety Advisory Board.
- Continue to explore psychological health so that supports for workers and workplaces in Nova Scotia consider psychological injury, in addition to physical injury.
- Implement amendments to the Firefighters' Compensation Regulations that expand presumptive cancer coverage from 6 to 19 types of cancer covered and include heart attacks within 24 hours of an emergency call.
- Explore options to strengthen the language in the government sustainable policy and apprenticeship procurement policy where public entities must consider trades certification and/or apprenticeship in all skilled trades sectors where appropriate.
- Through the implementation of the Atlantic Immigration Program (AIP), ensure that employers receive the required cultural competency training needed to become eligible (designated) to participate in the program.
- Work with national and regional partners, and the Association of Industry Sector Councils (AISC) through the Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) to develop and deliver cultural intelligence and inclusive leadership training for employers. As part of this EDI work, online practical tools will be developed and enhanced through the Welcoming Workplaces toolkit.

Create opportunities for sustainable population and economic growth

- Develop a strategic immigration plan and policy that is bold, decentralized and focused on immigration and population growth as an economic development tool by:
 - attracting a mix of entrepreneurs and youth to all parts of our province;
 - encouraging moves to areas outside of Halifax that have been experiencing a decline; and
 - attracting key groups to rural areas of our province.
- Deliver marketing campaigns that showcase lifestyle and employment opportunities in Nova Scotia to attract immigrants and interprovincial migrants to live in the province (including a focus on attracting healthcare and skilled trades workers). Campaigns will also build awareness of apprenticeship as a post-secondary option, the full range of employment and workforce development programs and services, and supports for workplace and safety equipment reporting.
- Work with the Federal government to establish a provincial immigration program that is fair, flexible, responsive to labour needs, and allows Nova Scotia to grow at an equitable rate as compared to other provinces.
- Promote the new Atlantic Immigration Program, which launched January 1, 2022, to help employers find the skilled workers they need to address their labour market needs.
- Explore opportunities to establish and grow regional immigration / in-migration navigator presence and continue to build inclusive and welcoming communities to support the retention of newcomers.
- Continue with a blend of in-person and virtual international immigration recruitment events that focus on attracting individuals in key sectors such as health care, construction, P-12 education, and early childhood education.
- Work with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie and key stakeholders on the development of a new Nova Scotia Francophone Population Growth Action Plan.
- Continue to adapt and create innovative immigration program streams that target the persistent and emerging labour needs of employers, sectors, and regions in the province and work with the Federal government to establish a regional nominee program for Nova Scotia.

- Invest additional supports to assist Service Provider Organizations so they can meet the growing need for services for immigrants and expand services to support interprovincial migrants.
- Engage with the Department of Health and Wellness and the Office of Health Care Professionals Recruitment on physician recruitment and healthcare worker recruitment, so that immigration programs target labour needs in essential services, including the health sector (e.g., Physicians, Continuing Care Assistants, and Nurses).
- Continue to identify opportunities to decrease undue regulatory and administrative burden for businesses and individuals, such as harmonizing registration requirements across Canada and mutual recognition initiatives to identify trades and professions where one certification and/or license would enable an individual to work in all four Atlantic Provinces.
- Fund community-based, custom employment interventions across the province that help unemployed or underemployed Nova Scotians build skills and attach to in-demand jobs, including an emphasis on those who are underrepresented in the labour market.
- Support more quality work experiences and jobs for post-secondary students, graduates, and other youth through programs, such as, Co-op Education Incentive, Student Summer Skills Incentive, Graduate to Opportunity and Innovate to Opportunity, as well as projects and initiatives delivered by partner organizations, such as, COVE, Clean Foundation, and NPower Canada.
- Continue to expand and develop new online employment services for job seekers and employers through Nova Scotia Works Online, such as implementing Occupational Profiles and Job Matching services.
- Continue to develop the employer-focused service within the Nova Scotia Works system, by providing direct human resources support to employers, and information on local labour market trends.
- Expand criteria for the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI) to include strategic workforce planning, including succession planning for organizations.
- Work in partnership with the Association of Industry Sector Councils (AISC) to continue to support the successful implementation and renewal of the *AISC 2.0 Strategic Plan and Sustainability Strategy*.
- Work with regional and industry partners to build an understanding of regional employer challenges to inform workforce development initiatives.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES SUMMARY

Departmental Expenses Summary			
(\$ thousands)			
	2021-2022	2021-2022	2022-2023
Programs and Services	Estimate	Forecast	Estimate
Administration	837	766	866
Engagement, Equity and Belonging	0	118	437
Corporate Policy and Services	4,162	72,333	8,312
Safety	17,085	16,458	18,017
Labour Services	8,150	6,919	8,294
Skills and Learning	145,686	155,137	142,056
Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency	17,621	18,395	16,542
NS Immigration and Population Growth	9,905	12,710	12,969
Total - Departmental Expenses	203,446	282,836	207,493
Ordinary Recoveries	136,148	144,518	132,223
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	237.7	221.9	246.6
Note:			
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2			
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1			