

Justice and Office of the Attorney General

Annual Report
2019–2020



**Justice and Office of the Attorney General
Annual Report 2019-2020**

Province of New Brunswick
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Transmittal letters

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Brenda L. Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Hugh J. Flemming, Q.C.
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Hugh J. Flemming, Q.C.
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General for the fiscal year April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Comeau, Q.C.
Deputy Attorney General and Deputy Minister of Justice

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Minister's message

A fair and impartial justice system is foundational in ensuring vibrant and sustainable communities. I am proud of the accomplishments of our employees during this past year, one that we will no doubt look back on for historic reasons.

Our department was among several that engaged with First Nations elders and leaders to develop protocols for the use of eagle feathers for affirmations during court proceedings – an important step on the path to reconciliation and a formal acknowledgement of Indigenous cultures in New Brunswick's justice system.

The Legislative Development branch developed two notable acts; the *Official Notices Publication Act* and the *Enduring Powers of Attorney Act*, while significant work took place on family law reform.

We also implemented an improved process for offences under the *Motor Vehicle Act* to allow a party to dispute their ticket by informing the court in writing, rather than having to appear in court to request a trial.

As a global pandemic reached the province towards the end of our fiscal year, we took swift action to protect New Brunswickers by pausing court proceedings briefly as we worked to mitigate the potential impacts of COVID-19 and develop solutions that would allow for the safe resumption of court activities.

Our commitment to ensuring impartial and timely access to justice has never been stronger. I thank the employees for their commitment to this vision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Flemming', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon. Hugh J. Flemming, Q.C.
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

Deputy Minister's message

I am pleased to present the annual report for the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

Our employees have never wavered in the face of challenge, and while the emerging pandemic created new pressures on our work towards the close of the fiscal year, we remained committed to ensuring New Brunswickers stayed connected to our justice system as needed.

The year was also notable for various accomplishments. Public Prosecution Services advanced its use of electronic disclosure in three key judicial districts. Legislative Services drafted 48 bills that received Royal Assent, and 71 regulations were filed with the Registrar of Regulations.

Employees throughout our organization served the people of New Brunswick with integrity and purpose to ensure resilient court services and timely access to justice, as they do year after year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Comeau". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J. Comeau, Q.C.
Deputy Attorney General and Deputy Minister of Justice

Top Government Priorities

Strategy and Operations Management

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses a Formal Management system built on leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This process provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability and continuously drive improvement.

The development of the strategy, using the Formal Management system, starts with our governments roadmap for the future of New Brunswick that focuses on key priorities and the importance of public accountability

Affordable and Responsive Government

Getting our financial house in order will make it possible for government to be responsive and provide sustainable high-quality public services for all New Brunswickers.

Dependable Public Health Care

New Brunswickers deserve a sustainable, high-quality health-care system where they are able to access the services they need when they need them.

World-class Education

New Brunswick's young people need access to a world-class education, so they can make the most of their lives and compete in future job markets.

Energized Private Sector

All New Brunswickers benefit from a thriving private sector. Increasing private sector investment, growing our labour force and being home to successful businesses of all sizes is good for our province.

Vibrant and Sustainable Communities

Vibrant communities are places people want to call home. More vibrant and sustainable communities make for a more resilient province.

High-performing Organization

All New Brunswickers benefit when engaged and empowered civil servants use their talents and skills to make our province a better place.

Highlights

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General focused on these strategic priorities through a variety of key activities, as outlined below.

- The department implemented a revised process for the offences under the *Motor Vehicle Act* for which tickets are issued. The new process requires a person who wishes to dispute their ticket to inform the court in writing, rather than having to appear in court to request a trial.
- The department engaged with the First Nation to develop protocols for the handling of eagle feathers in court proceedings.
- Public Prosecution Services (PPS) has made great strides in advancing its use of electronic disclosure having expanded to Saint John, Fredericton and Miramichi.
- Two new acts, the *Official Notices Publication Act* and the *Enduring Powers of Attorney Act*, were developed by the Legislative Development Group.
- 48 bills drafted by Legislative Services received Royal Assent, and 71 regulations drafted by Legislative Services were filed with the Registrar of Regulations.
- On March 19, 2020, the provincial government declared a state of emergency due to Covid-19 and reduced its operations to critical functions.

Performance measures

The department's performance measures reflect its strategic objectives which support the Government of New Brunswick's top priorities. These measures reflect the department's strategic focus; therefore, they do not measure all of the department's activities.

Affordable and responsive government	Measures
Reduce expenditures	Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures
High-performing organization	Measures
Enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity	Percentage of employee performance reviews completed

Affordable and responsive government

Objective of the measure

Reduce expenditures.

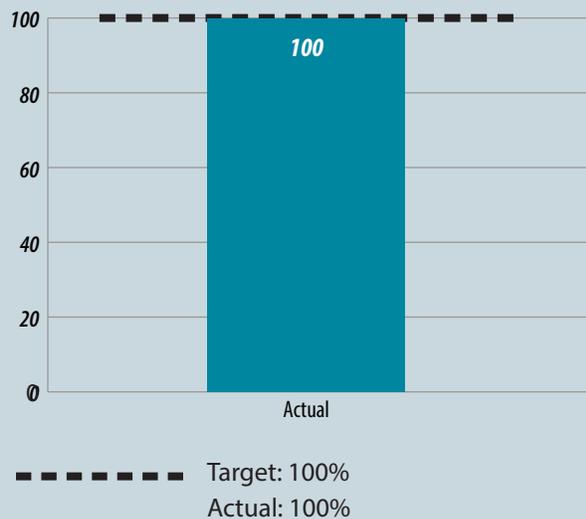
Measure

Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures.

Description of measure

Percentage of total expenditures over total budget.

Overall performance



Why do we measure this?

This indicator measures the department's ability to manage its expenses against its budget. Department staff monitor this indicator throughout the year and take corrective action when necessary.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

The Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General fully utilized its \$57.7M budget in 2019-2020. Most costs within the department stem from salaries, with the other major expenditure coming from hiring outside legal counsel. Many programs were able to maintain small surpluses, typically within their salary budgets as some positions were staffed for only part of the fiscal year. These savings helped the department offset some of its ongoing cost pressures such as complex trials requiring significant resources and increased Legal Aid spending.

High-performing organization

Objective of the measure

Enhance employee involvement, commitment and productivity.

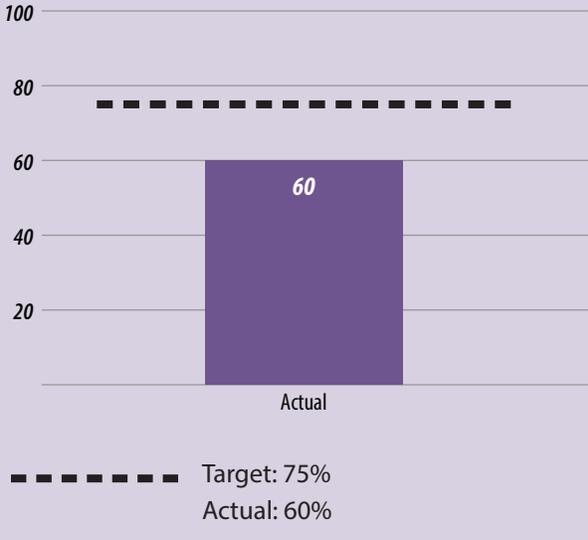
Measure

Percentage of employee performance reviews completed.

Description of measure

The completion of performance reviews will provide an opportunity for managers and employees to discuss review and assess the accomplishment of work objectives, demonstrated competencies and overall individual employee contribution against GNB's business results.

Overall performance



Why do we measure this?

Employees are entitled to receive their year-end performance reviews in a timely manner.

The completion of performance reviews provided an opportunity for managers and employees to discuss and review the accomplishment of work objectives, demonstrated competencies and overall individual employee contribution toward the overall strategy of JAG. By completing reviews, employees and their supervisors discussed strategic and organizational goals to increase organizational and individual performance.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

Progress was regularly monitored and discussed with the department's senior management throughout the year.

Overview of departmental operations

The Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General fulfills three fundamental, constitutionally significant purposes for the citizens of New Brunswick:

To provide resilient court services and court infrastructure to enable an impartial justice system.

To regulate, through legislation, social and commercial behaviours that reflect societal norms and the policies of the elected government.

To provide legal advice and legal representation to the Government of New Brunswick in accordance with the rule of law to protect the public interest.

Each of the department's five services is aligned with a departmental purpose.

Purpose 1 – resilient court services and court infrastructure

Family Crown Services – utilize judicial processes to protect the most vulnerable members of our society. It independently and objectively determines whether there is enough evidence to initiate court proceedings in adult and child protection matters.

Justice Services – provide and support access to an impartial justice system for New Brunswick residents and businesses. Its functions include the administration of the courts and delivering specialized programs for court participants.

Public Prosecution Services – ensure the protection of all residents by providing prosecutorial services in criminal matters.

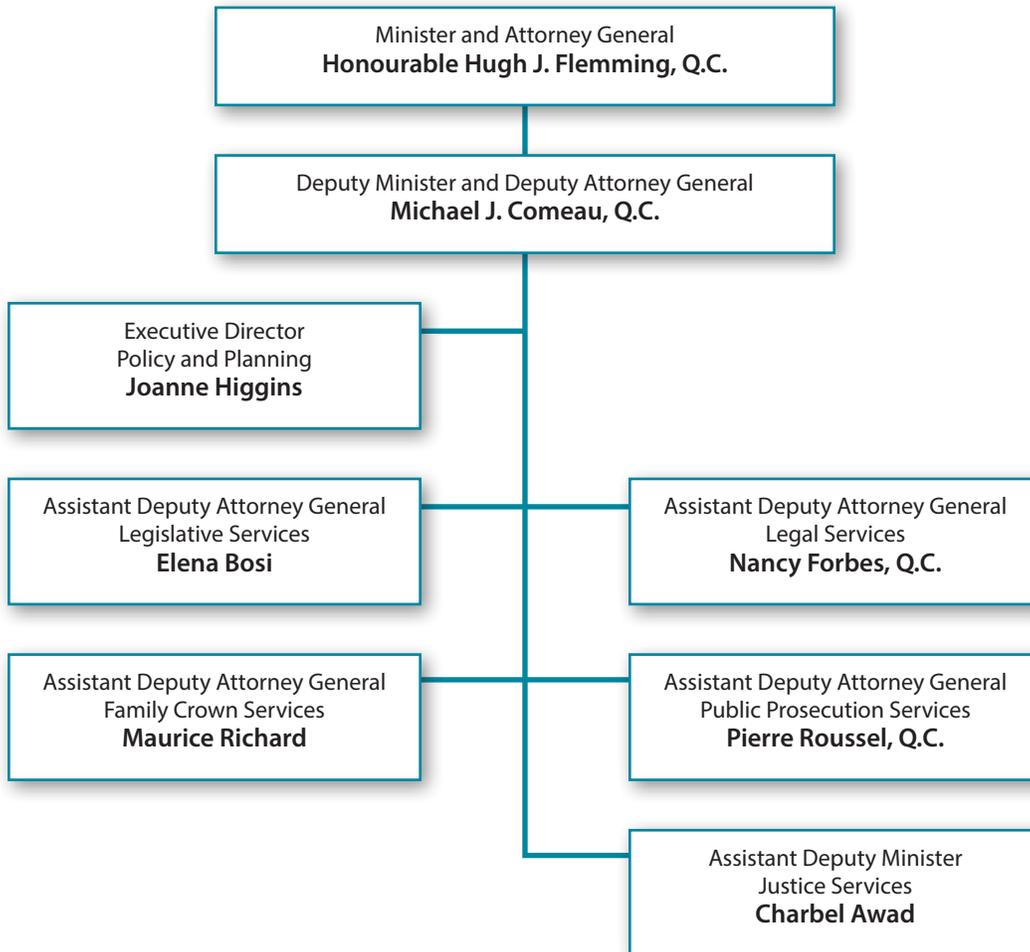
Purpose 2 – legislation for government departments to regulate social and commercial behaviours

Legislative Services – provide legislative drafting service for new or modified acts and regulations to all provincial departments and agencies. This service, often with participation from residents, businesses and agencies, also identifies and modernizes outdated legislation.

Purpose 3 – legal advice and legal representation for government departments and agencies

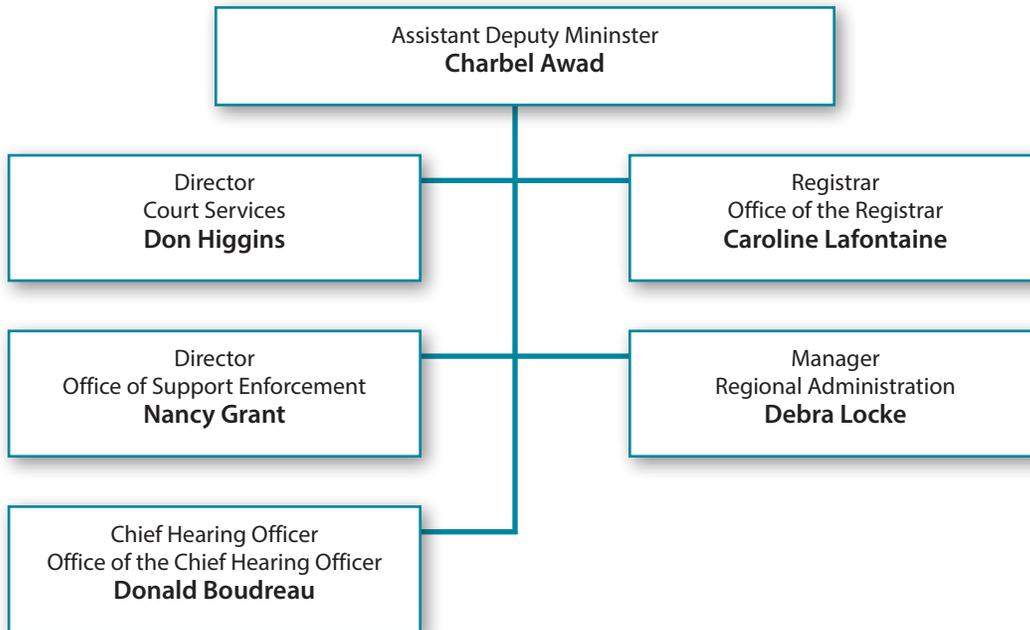
Legal Services – deliver legal advice and provide legal representation to all provincial government departments and some of its agencies.

High-level organizational chart



Service overview and highlights

Justice Services



Overview

Justice Services supports the operation of New Brunswick's courts including the Court of Appeal, the Court of Queen's Bench Family Division, the Court of Queen's Bench Trial Division, Small Claims Court, Probate Court, Provincial Court and Youth Justice Court. The Service is also responsible for the delivery of specialized court programs including the Healing to Wellness Court, Domestic Violence Court, Family Case Management, Family Law Information Center, Mental Health Docket and Emergency Intervention Orders.

Justice Services contains five branches:

Court Service Branch provides court attendance scheduling, order production, case file management, registry services and other administrative services in support of the judiciary and the public. The branch also serves as the liaison to other agencies and departments for court-related issues and initiatives.

Regional Administration Branch supports all programs and services administered by Justice Services including invoice management, central payment processing, tran-

scription management, translation request processing, interpretation services booking, court technology support and judiciary special expenses support.

Office of the Registrar Branch supports the Court of Appeal and its Judiciary. The branch provides guidance to the public and lawyers regarding the Rules of Court, order/judgement production, case file management and other administrative services including conducting hearings as authorized by legislation and the Rules of Court. The branch also serves as the New Brunswick registry for all bankruptcies and divorces, processes interjurisdictional applications for the establishment or variation of family support orders and processes all New Brunswick adoptions.

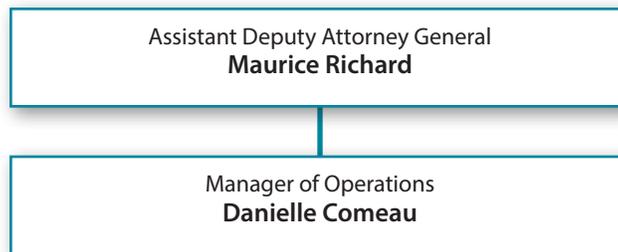
Office of Support Enforcement Branch is responsible for enforcing family support provisions (Child Support Payment and Spousal Support) in court orders and agreements in accordance with the *Support Enforcement Act*. The branch uses progressive enforcement actions to ensure compliance that can include garnishing wages, reporting the defaulting payer to credit reporting agencies, passport revocation or denial, and in some cases, suspension of the payer's driver's licence.

Innovation and Support Services is responsible to ensure court appearances and Justice Services operational and service delivery functions have access to and are supported with optimized technology tools and infrastructure that ensures reliable, easy to use, professional quality engagement with the judicial process. The function is three part in that it: 1) engages with the Judiciary, service partners and other user groups/clients, 2) supports the proactive adoption of technology solutions and 3) supports the recruiting, retention and development of the human resource component across Justice Services to ensure the appropriate skill sets are in place to promote optimal service delivery to our clients and partners.

Highlights

- ♦ Justice Services implemented the new *Provincial Offences Procedure Act (POPA)* Alternate Dispute Mechanism for E-Ticketing
- ♦ It coordinated implementation of Federal Bill C-75 and Bill C-78
- ♦ Hosted the Heads of Court Administration of Canada (HOCA) annual meeting in St. Andrews, NB
- ♦ It engaged with First Nations to develop protocols for the handling of eagle feathers in court proceedings. The work will continue in 2020-2021.

Family Crown Services



Overview

Family Crown Services' quasi-judicial function is achieved by independently and objectively determining whether evidence exists to initiate court proceedings in adult and child protection matters under Section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. To that end, the service:

- Represents the Department of Social Development in subrogated support and private custody, access and support matters involving a government interest.
- Represents the Director of Support Enforcement in judicial support enforcement matters.
- Acts as the agent of the Attorney General in the civil aspects of international child abduction under the *International Child Abduction Act*.
- Acts in interjurisdictional matters under the *Divorce Act* and under the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*.

Family Crown Services provides services under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. It manages incoming requests from foreign states for the return of children wrongfully removed from or wrongfully retained in Canada. It also processes outgoing requests for the return of New Brunswick

children wrongfully removed from New Brunswick or wrongfully retained in a foreign state. Additionally, Family Crown Counsel responds to inquiries from New Brunswick residents or their lawyers seeking to prevent international child abduction.

Pertaining to adult and child protection matters, Family Crown Services:

Provides legal representation to government departments and agencies;

Provides legal advice to government departments and agencies;

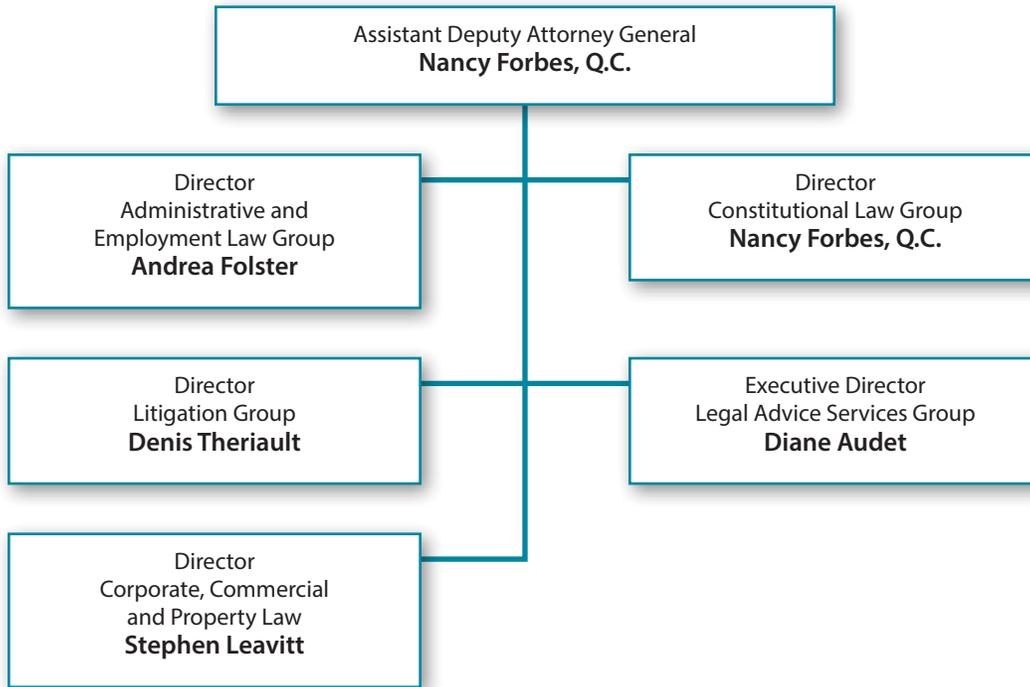
Represents the Director of Support Enforcement in legal matters; and

Acts as the agent of the Attorney General in intra-jurisdictional matters

Highlights

- ♦ Family Crown Services litigated approximately one thousand cases within its mandate.
- ♦ The branch introduced the Family Crown Services Operations Manual detailing all applicable branch policies and directives
- ♦ Family Crown Services staff provided specialized training to social workers and support staff.

Legal Services



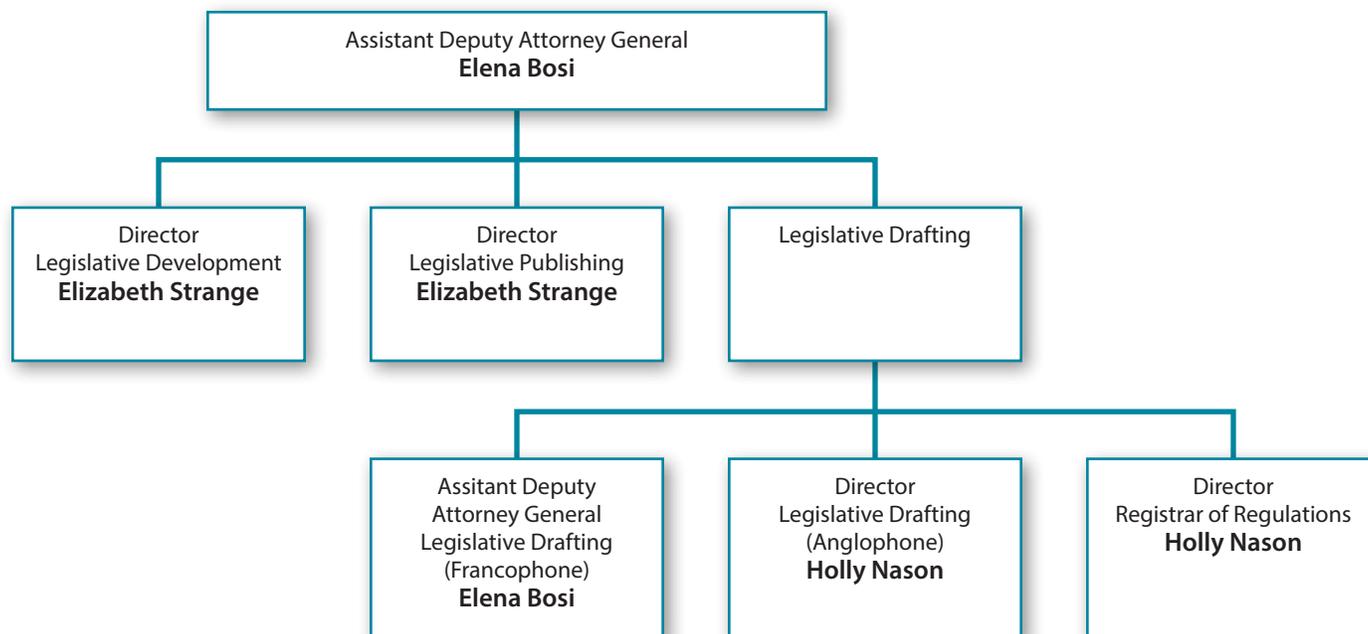
Overview

Legal Services provides legal advice and legal representation to Government of New Brunswick departments and agencies in all matters except those pertaining to public prosecution, protection of vulnerable persons, and legislative drafting. Its professional staff assists the Attorney General of New Brunswick in the fulfilment of their constitutionally mandated role as Chief Law Officer of the Crown and legal advisor to government.

The increasing complexity of legal matters requires specialization. Therefore, the branch's lawyers are organized into five practice groups:

- Constitutional Law Group
- Litigation Group
- Administrative and Employment Law Group
- Legal Advice Services Group
- Corporate, Commercial and Property Law Group

Legislative Services



Overview

Legislative Services is the central legislative drafting service for the government. It produces acts and regulations in both English and French for all departments.

The service provides advice to the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, the Executive Council Office and the Cabinet on all legislative matters. It also carries out law reform projects for the Office of the Attorney General.

The Registrar of Regulations is located within the service and discharges the responsibilities of that office as provided by the *Regulations Act*.

The Legislative Publishing Unit discharges the responsibilities of the Queen's Printer as provided by the *Queen's Printer Act*, including the publication and distribution of all public acts and regulations.

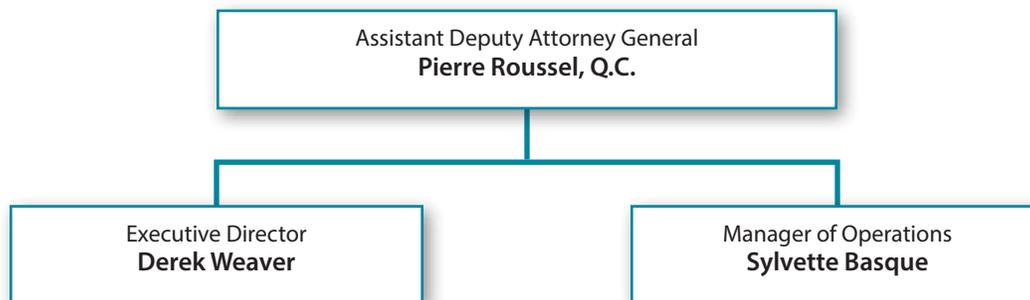
Legislative Services consists of three groups:

- Legislative Drafting
- Legislation Development
- Legislative Publishing

Highlights

- Between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2020, 48 bills drafted by the office received Royal Assent, and 71 regulations drafted by the office were filed with the Registrar of Regulations.
- Two new Acts, the *Official Notices Publication Act* and the *Enduring Powers of Attorney Act*, were developed by the Legislative Development Group.
- On December 31, 2019, acts were repealed under the *Statute Repeal Act*, administered by the branch under the authority of the Attorney General. This resulted in six more outdated, unproclaimed acts or portions of acts being removed from the statute books.

Public Prosecution Services



Overview

Public Prosecutions Services is mandated to protect all citizens by providing prosecutorial services in criminal and quasi-criminal matters on behalf of the Attorney General. As agents of the Attorney General Crown Prosecutors carry out prosecution responsibilities independent of any partisan political influences. In the 12 months between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020, the division prosecuted more than 23,000 criminal and quasi-criminal prosecutions of adults and young persons.

Public Prosecution Services efficiency is driven by its use of the Pre-charge Screening Policy. The Pre-charge Screening Policy allows Crown prosecutors to independently and objectively review cases prior to charge. As a result, a charge is only laid where there is a reasonable prospect of conviction. The result is saved court time and resources as well as reduced delays in court—all to the benefit of the people of the province.

When a prosecution is justified, the service makes every effort to obtain a fair and impartial outcome while protecting the rights of the accused as well as obtaining the participation of victims and other vulnerable persons without exposing them to undue hardship or abuse.

The main activities of Public Prosecution Services include:

- Providing criminal legal advice to the various police and law enforcement agencies in New Brunswick;
- Performing pre-charge screening on investigative files advanced for prosecution;
- Conducting criminal and quasi-criminal prosecutions.

Highlights

- The service has made great strides in advancing its use of electronic disclosure having expanded to Saint John, Fredericton and Miramichi. This expansion will continue with the goal of having the entire province using e-disclosure.

Financial information

Table 1: Ordinary Expenditure status report by branch

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2020 (\$000)

Branch	Main Estimates	Appropriation Transfers	Final Budget	Actual	Variance over (under)
Administration	618	5	623	605	(18)
Policy & Planning	683	7	690	603	(87)
Family Crown	2,705	39	2,744	2,690	(54)
Prosecutions	9,991	142	10,133	10,186	53
Legislative Services	2,846	13	2,859	2,757	(102)
Legal Services	4,910	18	4,928	4,819	(109)
Regional Court Services	8,537	327	8,864	8,611	(254)
Judiciary	8,359	1,231	9,590	9,687	97
Registrar	1,473	15	1,488	1,596	108
Justice Head Office	3,936	8	3,944	3,905	(40)
Office of Support Enforcement	1,999	25	2,024	2,090	66
Hearing Officers	1,128	9	1,137	966	(171)
Legal Aid	8,552	80	8,632	9,140	508
Total	55,737	1,918	57,655	57,654	(1)

Table 2: Ordinary Expenditure status report

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2020 (\$000)

Sales of Goods and Services	Budget	Actual	Variance over (under)
General			
1863 Queen's Printer	140	124	(16)
1817 Administration Fees (Provincial Offences Procedure Act)	6	2	(4)
1833 Certified Copies of Documents - Fees	4	4	0
1836 Divorce - Fees	175	165	(10)
1837 Probate Court	1,500	1,974	474
1838 Court Transcripts - Fees	80	98	18
1873 Appeal Court Fees	11	14	3
1875 Court of Queen's Bench - Filing Fees	520	485	(35)
1892 Small Claims Fees	181	182	1
1895 Office of Support Enforcement	35	82	47
1898 Certificates of Conviction	21		(21)
Fines and Penalties			
2112 Provincial Courts - Fines - Criminal Code	900	1,691	791
2113 Prov. Courts - Fines - Provincial & Municipal Statutes	250	201	(49)
2115 Court of Queen's Bench - Fines	5	5	(0)
2117 Contraventions Act - Fines	2	6	4
2122 Bail Forfeitures	5	2	(4)
2121 Court cost recoveries	10	2	(8)
Miscellaneous			
2299 Other Miscellaneous Revenue	272	224	(48)
Conditional Grants - Canada			
Central Government Services			
2417 Criminal Legal Aid	2,626	2,644	18
Total	6,743	7,904	1,161

Summary of staffing activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Deputy Minister of the Department Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2019-2020 for the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General.

Number of permanent and temporary employees as of Dec. 31 of each year		
Employee type	2019	2018
Permanent	392	174
Temporary	56	15
Total	448	189

The department advertised 44 competitions, including 32 open (public) competitions and 12 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

Appointment type	Appointment description	Section of the Civil Service Act	Number
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a high degree of expertise and training – a high degree of technical skill – recognized experts in their field 	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	0
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school boards) and 3 (hospital corporations) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	8
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	0
Regular appointment of students/ apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Department of Justice and Attorney General and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

Summary of legislation and legislative activity

Bill #	Name of legislation	Date of Royal Assent	Summary of changes
20	<i>Statute Law Amendment Act 2019.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/2/Bill-20.pdf	June 14, 2019	<i>Statute Law Amendment Act 2019.</i> is a part of the regular updates to the Acts and Regulations of New Brunswick, to avoid misinterpretations of certain provisions.
31	<i>Official Notices Publications Act.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/2/Bill-31.pdf	June 14, 2019	<i>Official Notices Publications Act</i> allows for flexibility in the administration of the <i>Queen's Printer Act</i> and for future consideration of publication options. It also removes the requirement to publish regulations in <i>The Royal Gazette</i> and eliminates the redundancy of publishing the regulations officially on two separate pages of the same website. <i>The Royal Gazette</i> will continue to publish legally required notices with the exception of regulations.
32	<i>An Act to Amend the Enforcement of Money Judgments Act.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/2/Bill-32.pdf	June 14, 2019	<i>Enforcement of Money Judgments Act</i> creates a complete exemption for retirement funds. Under the new provisions, a sheriff will not be allowed to seize any portion of a retirement fund.
4	<i>An Act to Amend the Provincial Offences Procedure Act.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/3/Bill-4.pdf	December 20, 2019	<i>An Act to Amend the Provincial Offences Procedure Act</i> updates the grounds under which bail may be denied. The focus on these provisions has been raised in the context of domestic and intimate partner violence. The amendments were made to ensure that judges have the authority to detain an accused pending trial where warranted.
6	<i>Enduring Powers of Attorney Act.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/3/Bill-6.pdf	December 20, 2019	<i>Enduring Powers of Attorney Act</i> is a comprehensive Act that modernizes and consolidates the law regarding enduring powers of attorney and health care directives into one act. It governs all aspects of enduring powers of attorney and health care directives, provides that all the existing ones remain valid, and includes several measures that are designed to improve accountability and decrease the likelihood of financial abuse.
23	<i>An Act to Amend the Property Act.</i> https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/pdf/59/3/Bill-23.pdf	December 20, 2019	<i>An Act to Amend the Property Act</i> decreases the number of times a mortgage sale is required to be published in a newspaper from four times to twice and removes the requirements to post notices at a registry office and a courthouse.
15	<i>An Act to Amend the Proceeding Against the Crown Act</i>	June 14, 2019	<i>An Act to Amend the Proceedings Against the Crown Act</i> includes the Canadian Free Trade Agreement to ensure enforceability of orders under the Dispute Resolution provisions of the agreement.

Name of regulation	Effective date	Summary of changes
Regulation 2019-24 under the <i>Official Notice Publication Act</i>	September 1, 2019	Regulation made to establish the fees for the publication in <i>The Royal Gazette</i> of the document set out in the schedule.
Regulation 2019-32 under the <i>Enforcement of Money Judgments</i>	December 1, 2019	Regulation made to govern procedures related to the amendment of the <i>Enforcement of Money Judgments Act</i> .
Regulation 2019-25 under the <i>Queen's Printer Act</i>	November 21, 2019	Regulation made to remove obsolete references.
Regulation 91-50 under the <i>Provincial Offences Procedure Act</i>	June 11, 2020	Regulation prescribing violation ticket form and related process.

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2019-2020 may be found at:
<http://laws.gnb.ca/en/BrowseRegChapter>

Summary of Official Languages activities

Introduction

The Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General continued to ensure its obligations under the *Official Languages Act* were met throughout the organization. Below are associated activities that were carried out throughout the year to support the four sectors of activity (focus) in GNB's *Plan on Official Languages Official Bilingualism: A Fundamental Value*.

Focus 1

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:
Objectives for 2019-2020:

- Ensure a bilingual offer of service is extended at first point of contact;
- Ensure a balance of linguistic capabilities to provide service in both Official Languages;
- Ensure bilingual signage is properly displayed at first point of contact;
- Ensure staff understand the requirement for bilingual voice mail messages;
- Ensure correspondence is provided in the client's Official Language of choice;
- Generic correspondence is sent in both Official Languages.

Activities to meet objectives:

- As part of the employee orientation package, new hires are required to complete the training module on Language of Service;
- Review and update linguistic profiles as required;
- The Language of Service policy is reviewed yearly with employees during their annual work planning meeting;
- Correspondence is provided in the client's official language of choice; and
- Employees are reminded periodically of their obligations.

Focus 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the Official Language of their choice in their workplace:
Objectives for 2019-2020:

- Ensure performance reviews are conducted in the employee's Official Language of choice;
- Ensure an employee's computer is set up in their preferred language; and
- Ensure employees are given the opportunity to use their language of choice at meetings.

Activities to meet objectives:

- New hires are required to identify their preferred language for oral and written communications at point of hire;
- As part of the employee orientation package, new hires are required to complete the training module on Language of Work;
- The Language of Work policy is reviewed yearly with employees during their annual work planning meeting;
- Managers conduct performance reviews in their employee's official language of choice;
- During orientation, new employees are asked for their preferred language for computer set-up;
- Training is offered in both Official Languages;
- Departmental communication is provided in both Official Languages;

Focus 3

Strategic means taken to ensure the department considered the realities of the province's official linguistic communities:
The impact on either official linguistic community and/or Official Languages requirements are factors that are considered in the design/development of policy.

Focus 4

Ensure Civil Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations and GNB's Official Languages obligations:

Objectives for 2019-2020:

- Raise new employees' awareness of the Language of Work and Language of Service policies and remind current employees of their obligations through their yearly work planning meetings.

Activities to meet objectives:

- The department required all new employees to complete the GNB I-Learn modules on Language of Work and Language of Service;
- Current employees who had not yet completed the GNB I-Learn modules on Language of Service and Language of Work were asked to do so;
- All employees are informed of their obligations as part of their orientation program and/or through their work planning meetings.

Conclusion:

The department strives to provide quality service to all its clients in both Official Languages and supports the use of both Official Languages in the workplace. Only one complaint was received and promptly addressed. Ongoing efforts continue to raise individual and departmental awareness about our obligations regarding Official Languages. As well, four employees received second language training offered by GNB.

Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

The Office of the Auditor General has not issued any recommendations to the Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General.

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Justice and Office of the Attorney General received no disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.