



# A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C.

*June 2023 Status Update*



Ministry of  
Public Safety and  
Solicitor General

### ***Taking Care***

*We recognize that this report may contain information that is difficult for many and that our efforts to honour survivors and families may act as an unwelcome reminder for those who have suffered hardships through generations of government policies that were and continue to be harmful to Indigenous Peoples.*

*An independent and national **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls** support line is available to provide support for anyone who requires assistance at **1-844-413-6649**. This line is available free of charge, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*

*A National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available to provide support to former residential school students, who can access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the **24-Hour National Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419**.*

*A Hope for Wellness Help Line for Indigenous Peoples is available at **1-855-242-3310** or through the online chat via the help line website at [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca).*

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## **Land Acknowledgment**

*The Government of British Columbia acknowledges with respect and gratitude that this status update to **A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C.** was produced on the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) peoples whose deep connections with this land continue to this day.*

*The Province also acknowledges with respect that the B.C. Public Service operates throughout the traditional lands of more than 200 First Nations – hosts to diverse Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit, across rural, remote and urban communities. The Province further acknowledges the 39 Chartered Métis Communities in B.C., and extends gratitude to the Indigenous Peoples, the Elders and the Knowledge Keepers, for their stewardship of these lands and waters.*

# Message from the Minister

As B.C.'s Solicitor General and Minister of Public Safety, I join you today to present this second update on the Province's response to [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls \(MMIWG Inquiry\)](#) released on June 3, 2019.

At that time, the Province committed to the development of a Path Forward to end violence and supported seventeen Indigenous-led community dialogue sessions to inform this work and identify priorities. Guided by the invaluable testimonies of family members, survivors, community leaders and Indigenous partners across British Columbia, [A Path Forward: Early Priorities and Strategies for B.C.](#) was released two years ago today, outlining early actions and commitments to prevent, protect and respond to violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples.

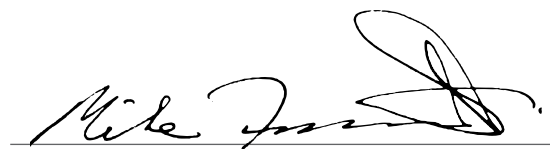
As a testament to the Province's commitment towards advancing the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, the Path Forward Community Fund was established in 2022 through an initial investment of \$5.34 million. Led by the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, this initiative actioned the number one priority identified in consultation with our Indigenous partners: the need for Indigenous-led safety planning and capacity building so that communities can create and implement their own culturally safe approaches to address violence.

A year later, the Path Forward Community Fund is fully operational and has awarded grants to 33 Indigenous communities, non-profits, service providers and First Nation governments throughout the Province to implement initiatives that range from awareness and prevention activities to emergency response teams to wellness workshops. In March 2023, the Province increased its total investment in this Fund to more than \$10.8 million, in recognition of this critical work led by survivors, advocates, and community organizations across B.C. We will continue to work alongside Indigenous partners to support the meaningful implementation of this initiative that will provide a foundation for evidence-informed decision-making on future actions and investments.

As we report on progress towards honoring B.C.'s Path Forward commitments, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the expertise and dedication of the many First Nations and Métis leaders, advocates, and communities who have worked tirelessly alongside the Province to contribute towards this update. The solutions and actions needed to support the independence and safety of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples are complex. Across every sector – from healthcare to child welfare, to justice, housing, and transportation, to name a few – our government is working hand in hand with Indigenous partners to drive transformative change in legislation, policy and practice and make communities safer.

Harmful government policies, laws, and practices have led to decades of systemic inequities and structural discrimination against Indigenous Peoples. It is this history that created the multigenerational and intergenerational trauma, social and economic inequity and racism that ultimately leads to the pervasive vulnerability of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples today. While recognizing that there is still much more to be done, I am honoured to have worked alongside so many of my fellow British Columbians throughout many of the steps taken in 2022 to implement the long-term vision of change that reconciliation requires, and that is needed to positively impact the safety of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. By ensuring that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals are safe from violence, we are making our communities stronger and safer across the province.

Let's continue to work together with care, humility, and a deep sense of accountability to make British Columbia a fundamentally safe place for all residents, and especially for Indigenous women and girls.



Honourable Mike Farnworth  
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General

# Update on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

As noted in last year's Path Forward Status Update, on March 30th, 2022 the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation introduced a [five-year Declaration Act Action Plan](#) (the Action Plan) to achieve the objectives of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UN Declaration). The Action Plan achieves one of the early actions identified in the Path Forward and is a legislative commitment in the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (Declaration Act). Together the Declaration Act and Action Plan set important context for the work related to Indigenous Peoples that is proceeding across government.

The 89 priorities of the Action Plan were identified in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples across the Province. They are aligned with many of the Path Forward early actions and updates outlined in this report and are consistent with provincially relevant Calls for Justice from the *MMIWG Inquiry*. The Action Plan articulates actions every Ministry in government is committed to undertake in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples between 2022-2027 to create a better province for Indigenous Peoples in B.C.

The [2021-22 Annual Report on the Action Plan](#) highlights efforts across government to build a better future, including some key accomplishments such as the establishment of a Declaration Act Secretariat to support the province's obligations to ensure laws, policies and practices are consistent with the Declaration Act.

The Province continues to work in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples across the province to implement the Action Plan and will provide another Annual Report in 2023.



# Progress on the Path Forward

On June 3, 2021, the second-year anniversary of the release of the final report of the *MMIWG Inquiry*, B.C. released its initial response to the Inquiry, [A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for BC](#) (the Path Forward). The Province's participation in the *MMIWG Inquiry* was foundational to the context of developing the Path Forward, along with research

and review of historic reports with more than 3,000 recommendations, and engagements with Indigenous leadership, survivors, family members and community organizations undertaken in 2019 and 2021.

The Path Forward establishes **FOUR CORE PRINCIPLES** that guide the Province's approach:



## PEOPLE CENTRED

Actions centre the people impacted by violence.



## HEALING CENTRED

Actions support community and family healing.



## RECIPROCAL

Engagements provide information and resources to communities rather than being information-seeking only.



## COMMUNITY DRIVEN AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Actions focus on building capacity among Indigenous communities and support self-determination.

***The key priority identified across all community engagement sessions in the development of the Path Forward was the need for increased capacity for Indigenous communities to create and implement their own culturally safe and appropriate solutions to the systemic issues resulting in violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.***

In addition, 28 mandate letter commitments were identified that align early strategies to community priorities and make up the Path Forward (see [Appendix](#)). These commitments include actions related to safe spaces and safety plans, healing supports, strengthening relationships with partners and access to resources.

# Update on the Path Forward Community Fund

The Province made a foundational investment of \$5.34 million in 2022 to create a [Path Forward Community Fund](#) that would be accessible to First Nations communities, urban/off reserve communities, Métis, Inuit citizens, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities. The Path Forward Community Fund provides grants to support community safety planning and capacity building and ensure the self-determination of Indigenous communities to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Through a provincial request for proposal process the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) was selected to develop and administer the fund, including developing the application process and performing grant distribution. A cornerstone of their work is a fully inclusive approach that honours and respects the expertise, agency, and leadership of Indigenous peoples no matter what their status and no matter where they live, throughout all stages of implementation. The distribution of grants is guided by a panel of diverse Indigenous people whose service on the adjudication committee reflects the various regions, on and off-reserve, urban and rural, disabled community members, 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities, and Elders and youth, First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and non-status communities throughout B.C.

The Path Forward funds activities such as:

- Building capacity;
- Hosting engagement and facilitation;
- Supporting the development of crisis response plans;
- Materials for communication plans;
- Information sharing and tools to navigate the justice and public safety systems;
- Culturally appropriate safety training; and
- Cultural support and healing.

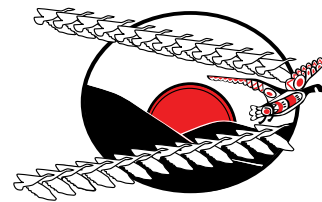


Figure 1: Logo of the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

In January 2023, BCAAFC announced the successful first round of projects funded through the Path Forward Community Fund. In the first round of funding \$2.75 million was allocated to 20 organizations to deliver Indigenous-specific anti-violence programs. In early March 2023, an additional 13 agencies were funded for \$1.9 million for a total of 33 organizations funded at \$4.67 million. In late March 2023 the Province made a further commitment of \$5.5 million to the Community Fund. Crisis response and search funds were not applied for, so BCAAFC has held funds to make them available on an individual basis, as requested by community.

**Path Forward Community Fund –  
Examples of Round 1 Funded Projects:**

Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness • AWTXW Foundation • Carrier Sekani Family Services • Dze Ł K'ant Friendship Centre • Hulitan Family and Community Services • Lake Babine Nation • Land Back Healing Society • Lii Michif Family Support Services • Malahat Nation • Nawican Friendship Centre • North Cariboo Métis Association • Okanagan Nation Alliance • Squamish Nation • Stó:lō Services Agency • Tears to Hope Foundation • Tl'azt'en Nation • Tillicum Lelum Friendship Centre • Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society • Waceyá Métis Society • Wachiy Friendship Centre

**Examples of projects funded in the  
first round include:**

**Carrier Sekani Family Services: “Highway of Tears Safety Capacity Building, Toolkit Engagement and Pilot Networking Project”** - host website-based group sessions for family members of MMIWG from rural and remote Indigenous communities along the Highway of Tears.

**Dze Ł K'ant Friendship Centre: “All Clans Patrol”** - create an emergency response team (trained in culturally safe approaches, self-defense, first-aid, mental health first-aid, and suicide prevention services) allowing Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people to feel safe while experiencing crisis after regular office hours.

**Lake Babine Nation: “Caring for the Caregivers as Crisis Prevention and Response”** - provide cultural safety training and supports for their community patrol program: Team Gooze which works closely with local RCMP and health services and provides culturally responsive and wrap around care to those in need by responding to calls for emotional support, safety planning, crisis support, accompaniments to the police or health services, and cultural connection.

**Land Back Healing Society: “Land Back Healing Society Workshop Series”** - deliver a workshop cohort of 80 to 100 urban Indigenous community members in the greater Vancouver area to promote and teach cultural healing ways, and touch on known factors of intergenerational trauma and anxiety to promote self-sufficiency and healing within themselves, and others.

A full list of funded projects is available on the BCAAFC website or through this link: [Path Forward Community Fund Projects Announced - BCAAFC](#)



# Progress on Key Path Forward Actions

The Path Forward identified 28 key commitments that align priorities identified through the 2019 and 2021 community dialogues with government's early strategies to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. These commitments are reflected in Ministers' mandate letters and cross the spectrum of government's work, in recognition of the interconnected, multi-dimensional nature of the inequities facing Indigenous peoples and the multi-layered response that is needed to address the issues identified through the *MMIWG Inquiry*, and its Calls for Justice.

Progress on three key broad cross-government actions include:

## **Anti-Racism Data Act**

The Province through the Ministry of Citizens' Support introduced the Anti-Racism Data Act in June 2022 to address systemic racism in B.C. Data on race and ethnicity will help the Province to understand and eliminate systemic racism in government programs and services. The Province is now working with Indigenous Peoples and the provincial Anti-Racism Data Committee to implement the legislation, including establishing research priorities. Under the Anti-Racism Data Act, research priorities established with Indigenous governing entities and the provincial Anti-Racism Data Committee are available as of June 1, 2023.

## **Anti-Racism Legislation**

The provincial government, through the Ministry of the Attorney General is developing anti-racism legislation that builds on the Anti-Racism Data Act by ensuring that government takes action to dismantle systemic racism and advance racial equity in British Columbia. The new anti-racism legislation will enable the Province to better address systemic racism in its programs, institutions, and policies. It will address Indigenous specific racism. Priorities for the legislation will be set in consultation and

collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and other racialized communities, and in alignment with the *UN Declaration* in relation to Indigenous involvement and governance. This new anti-racism legislation will be introduced in Spring 2024.

## **Gender Based Violence Action Plan**

The Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity and the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) support a mandate commitment to develop an action plan to address gender-based violence, including minimum standards for sexual assault response, more training for police and other justice personnel, and core funding for sexual assault centres. Throughout 2022, the development of this multi-year, cross-sector action plan was being informed by advice from partners, advocates and service providers across the province representing the anti-violence sector, Indigenous communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, other racialized communities, immigrants and newcomers, sex workers, and survivors with disabilities, as well as other subject matter experts. Further engagement with Indigenous leadership, partners and communities is taking place May-June 2023 to help shape the development of the plan and seek guidance on the inclusion of actions that are responsive to the *MMIWG Inquiry* and the [Thanks for Listening](#) report, and build on work underway under A Path Forward, the In Plain Sight Task Team and related Indigenous-specific initiatives.

The next sections include key themes that highlight priorities shared through engagement with Indigenous partners since 2019. The Path Forward commitments continue to reflect steps towards advancing reconciliation and safety with Indigenous peoples by addressing gaps in legislation, policy, services, programs, and practice. The Province will continue to advance this work with Indigenous partners and in alignment and coordination with the commitments included in the over-arching *Action Plan*.

## COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORTS

The Province delivers services and programs to enhance community safety, and also partners with or provides funding opportunities to Indigenous organizations for initiatives that support the safety, health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples, families, and communities. One of the most directly relevant support programs, the Family Information Liaison Unit, is highlighted below, along with several of the funding opportunities that reflect the linkages between employment and economic security, connection to culture and community, and ultimately the independence and safety of Indigenous women and girls.

### **Family Information Liaison Unit**

Since 2018, the Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU) has provided frontline victim services for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. It was created when consultation with families of MMWIG identified difficulties accessing consistent, reliable, and comprehensive information related to their missing or murdered loved one(s). FILU helps family members access information related to police investigations, coroner reports and inquests, and court proceedings. The FILU team travels across B.C. to connect with families, refers people to local services and helps them find support to heal from the trauma of losing their loved one(s) to violence.

### **Freda Ens – Recipient of the 2022 Premier’s Legacy Award**

*Freda Ens is an extraordinary woman who has been working tirelessly to fight for justice in providing the family members of missing and murdered women with emotional support, court information, and orientation in preparation for the trial proceedings. Freda has*



Figure 3: Freda Ens, 2022

*been an advocate and change-maker for over 30 years, including as an Executive Director of the non-profit Vancouver Police and Native Liaison Society working with police, Crown, and community agencies to support the most vulnerable people and participating in Project Evenhanded, the joint police taskforce investigating the disappearances of women from the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. Freda joined the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General in 2003, leading front-line supports for family members of the missing and murdered in the Pickton investigation and prosecution, which was the largest serial murder investigation in Canadian history. This important work continued in her role with FILU supporting families of missing and murdered Indigenous Peoples.*

*Her work was recognized in 2022 with the Premier’s Legacy Award and as an inductee of BC Public Service Hall of Excellence, the highest recognition that may be given to a BC Public Service employee. The Legacy award recognizes individuals who have made exceptional and lasting contributions to the BC Public Service and to the province during a public service career of at least 15 years.*

*In February 2023, the Department of Justice Canada announced renewed and ongoing supports for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through Family Information Liaison Units. With this support, FILUs will become a permanent resource for Indigenous families in search of information about their missing or murdered loved ones.*

### **First Nations Well Being Fund**

In 2022, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) provided a \$2.7 million grant to create the First Nations Well Being Fund as part of TogetherBC, B.C.'s poverty reduction strategy. The First Nations Public Service Secretariat, an initiative of the First Nations Summit, is administering the fund. In the community projects stream, funding supported local projects including food security, training, building skills and employment opportunities, cultural initiatives to strengthen community and support decolonization, among other things. Funding was also provided for communities to develop their own poverty reduction or well-being plans.

### **Recovery and Resiliency Fund**

In March 2022, SDPR announced a \$34 million Recovery and Resiliency Fund to support non-profit organizations that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with funding to support capacity building, recovery efforts, and long-term planning. \$5 million of the Fund went to New Relationship Trust, an Indigenous-led funding body to provide multi-year grants directly to Indigenous-led organizations with annual revenues of more than \$1 million. Indigenous-led organizations with annual expenses under \$1M were able to apply for multiyear funding through a stream led by the Vancouver Foundation that prioritized equity-led or equity-partnership organizations.

### **Disability Alliance BC accessibility project grants**

SDPR distributed grants to a variety of B.C. based non-profits selected by a committee of representatives from organizations that provide direct support to people with disabilities in B.C., including the Disability Alliance BC and the British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. Projects funded in 2022 include creating community for people with disabilities who face additional barriers due to their gender, cultural or sexual identity. More information

about the grants can be found here: [Province helps B.C. non-profits break down barriers in their communities | BC Gov News.](#)

### **Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention Grant Program**

*The Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention Grant Program provides one-time funding to projects that align with annually-selected funding streams. The funding streams support projects that address crime prevention, gender-based violence, restorative justice, and support healing in Indigenous communities. More information about the Civil Forfeiture Grant Program and the application process can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/crime-prevention/community-crime-prevention/grants> or by contacting: [CFOgrants@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CFOgrants@gov.bc.ca)*

### **Civil Forfeiture Grants Program: Indigenous Healing Stream**

The program funds community-led projects that promote healing from the impact of intergenerational trauma, crime, or victimization. Since 2014/15, over \$7.8 million in grant funding has been provided to community-led, culturally appropriate projects that focus on healing. In March 2022, 23 Indigenous healing projects totalling over \$650,000 were funded, including projects that have a specific focus on Indigenous women and girls.

### **Examples include:**

#### **Lower Fraser Valley Aboriginal Society – Women's Resource Centre**

*This project was funded to provide a tool for Indigenous women in the Langley area to support personal safety as well as teachings for emotional issues, developing spiritual awareness, self-confidence, self-identity, and awareness for enhancing women's gifts and strengths.*

*“Our Spirit Path Women’s Transition house has housed many Indigenous women from all walks of life. In the past year, we’ve had single mothers, grandmas and sisters come to us to find refuge and safety. We’ve been able to walk closely with each of the women and see them grow every day. We have helped them find permanent housing, employment, get connected to cultural healing or a local Elder, and given them a safe space to focus on their healing journey. Each woman that comes to us is a survivor of sexual assault or intimate partner violence and we help them walk through these traumatic experiences in a culturally safe way.”*

### **Bridges for Women Society - Indigenous Women’s Healing & Outreach Program**

*This project is a trauma-informed, culturally safe program that supports Indigenous women impacted by violence, abuse, and intergenerational trauma.*

*“... My experience with this wonderful program has been a god send. Shortly before this program I was experiencing pretty bad depression and hopelessness in my life. It has changed my life. It has been so nice to meet new people and possibly make new friends. Now, I look forward to getting out of bed in the mornings and am looking forward to my future. I feel honoured to be a part of this program for women.”*

### **Moose Hide Campaign - Update**

Since 2011, the Moose Hide Campaign has engaged men and boys to act in ending violence against women and children through activities such as fasting, participating in community events, and wearing a moose hide pin to show their commitment to honour, respect and protect the women and children in their lives. They also commit to work together with other men to



1 In Plain Sight Report

2 [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

end violence against women and children. B.C. has provided more than \$4.9 million in seed money to grow and develop the Moose Hide Campaign from an Indigenous-led provincial initiative into a national campaign, including \$2 million to support the campaign in 2023/24 through 2026/27.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Indigenous Peoples have faced disproportionate levels of stereotyping, prejudice, and racist treatment within Canada’s health care system. As a result of this treatment, Indigenous Peoples have experienced harm, poor quality of care, and even death<sup>1</sup>. *The UN Declaration*<sup>2</sup> outlines the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of Indigenous peoples, including the ability for Indigenous peoples to have full access to health care services that reflect and are responsive to Indigenous worldviews and conceptions of health, without discrimination (UN Declaration, 2007). Upholding this right to health is foundational for addressing discrimination against Indigenous peoples in B.C.’s health care system. This includes an understanding that any systemic racism contributes to the vulnerability of Indigenous women and girls, and that health is a holistic state of well-being that includes physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional elements that can be a protective in nature.

### ***In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-Specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care***

Since January 2022, the Ministry of Health’s In Plain Sight Task Team (which includes representation from the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Métis Nation BC (MNBC), provincial health authorities, and other ministries and health system partners) has continued to collaborate on advancing implementation of the 24 recommendations of the [In Plain Sight Report](#) to eliminate racism and discrimination against Indigenous people

and address systemic and structural barriers to culturally safe health care in B.C. These barriers disproportionately impact Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

In 2022 the following key actions were taken to address some of the Recommendations:

- June 2022 - passed the Anti-Racism Data Act (Rec. 2)
- Spring 2022 - extended the 2018 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Tripartite Partnership to Improve Mental Health and Wellness Services and Achieve Progress on the Determinants of Health to October 1, 2023 (Rec. 6, 17)
- June 2022 - published the BC Cultural Safety and Humility Standard, developed in partnership by FNHA and the national Health Standards Organization with input and direction from Indigenous partners and thought leaders and extensive public engagement which provides direction to organizations and institutions in eliminating Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination (Rec. 8)

In Fall 2022, the Province released the [first annual report](#) to mark the second anniversary of the *In Plain Sight Report* and to provide a progress report on steps to address Indigenous-specific racism in the health care system. The report also serves as a roadmap for future activity.

3 [Section 35 - Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, Constitution Act 1982](#)

#### **First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)**

*The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is part of the BC First Nations health governance structure, and is responsible for the planning, design, management, and delivery of First Nations health and wellness programs. FNHA works with federal and provincial partners to improve BC First Nations health outcomes by building a more effective, accessible, and culturally safe health care system.*

#### **First Nations Health Council (FNHC)**

*The First Nations Health Council (FNHC) is part of the BC First Nations health governance structure and provides political leadership and advocacy. The Council is representative of and accountable to BC First Nations and has 15 members, with three members appointed by each of the five regions in BC.*

#### **Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC)**

*Métis Nation BC (MNBC) represents the Section 35<sup>3</sup> rights of registered Métis citizens and the Métis Chartered Communities in BC, and advocates for all self-identified Métis people in BC. MNBC works to develop and increase opportunities for culturally relevant socio-economic programs and services for Métis peoples.*

### **Social Determinants of Health 10-Year Strategy**

The 2018 [MOU – Tripartite Partnership to Improve Mental Health and Wellness Services and Achieve Progress on the Determinants of Health and Wellness](#) between the Province of BC, FNHC, and Indigenous Services of Canada (ISC) included the intention to explore a collaborative [10-year tripartite strategy](#) that facilitates a whole-of-government approach for addressing the social determinants of health and wellness. A long-term priority is to build healing approaches for Indigenous peoples, including addressing violence against Indigenous women and girls. At Gathering Wisdom XII in early 2023, First Nations Chiefs and Councils approved by consensus the 10-year strategy.



### ***Métis Health and Wellness***

There has been a concerted effort by the province to build a stronger, more cohesive relationship with MNBC. MNBC receives \$825,000 in annualized funding from the Ministry of Health (MOH) to support Métis participation in the development of initiatives and activities that will impact Métis health and wellness, including the In Plain Sight Task Team, primary care, mental health and wellness, and cultural safety and humility, and hiring of regional coordinators to help Métis people access appropriate care. MNBC also receives \$375,000 from the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA) to support capacity building on partnered mental health and wellness initiatives. In March 2023, MNBC received a \$1 million grant from MoH to further build capacity, support policy/program engagement and relationship building with the province, and to develop a Métis Health and Wellness Strategy and Plan.

In late 2022, several ministries came together with MNBC to develop a new Health, Mental Health and Wellness, and Harm Reduction Sub-Table. This Sub-Table will bring together key system partners to explore advancement of Métis health and wellness priorities, and opportunities to develop and promote Métis-specific health and mental health and wellness programming in the BC health system.

### ***Support Network for Indigenous Women and Women of Colour***

In July 2022, SDPR announced a \$50,000 grant for the Support Network for Indigenous Women and Women of Colour (SNIWWOC) to support food security initiatives. The funding will go towards the Get Your Groceries program, which increases access to healthy food for low-income, racialized women.

### ***Engagement on Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Food Security***

As part of the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy, SDPR, the Ministry of Health, and the Climate

Action Secretariat collaborated on engagement that will inform a report on Indigenous food sovereignty and food security in a changing climate. This report will emphasize Indigenous perspectives and knowledge relating to Indigenous food sovereignty and food security, particularly at the intersection of climate change, through the exploration of ongoing challenges, project profiles and recommendations for building climate resilience. The report is informing the Province's ongoing work to strengthen Indigenous food sovereignty and food security.

### ***Period Poverty Grants***

In March 2022, SDPR announced a \$750,000 grant provided to United Way BC to support the establishment of a Period Poverty Task Force and continued product delivery to people in need. United Way is administering the funding and disbursed approximately \$220,000 to 10 organizations to explore solutions to address limited access to menstrual products and the stigma and shame around menstruation. Some examples include:

- The First Nations Wellness Outreach Society in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside is receiving a \$25,000 grant for its project to offer cultural teachings about "moon time" by Elders and knowledge keepers. Moon time honours and celebrates a person's menstrual cycle and is seen as a gift and a time to cleanse mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The grant will also be used to distribute free menstrual products to meet the diverse needs of individuals in the community.
- Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Community Services in collaboration with Tapestry Collective Co-op in Kamloops is receiving \$25,000 for its a pilot project with Elders, knowledge keepers and youth to examine Indigenous moon-time traditions as well as developing a short magazine aimed at youth.



### **Expand Access to Affordable Community Counselling**

The Community Counselling Fund (CCF) of the MMHA is the first provincial investment in community-based mental health care with an equity-focused approach to ensuring adults have access to low-barrier mental health supports. Grant funding is provided to 49 community-based non-profit and First Nations, Métis, or Urban Indigenous organizations to deliver counselling services. Since 2018/19 the province has provided a total of \$35 million to support community counselling through the CCF.

- Since the CCF began, funded organizations have supported more than 46,000 individuals and families with low-barrier, inclusive counselling services across urban and rural geographies.
- Grantees have hired more than 140 counsellors, Elders and traditional Knowledge Keepers; and trained and mentored more than 170 counselling interns and practicum students using CCF funds.
- From April 1 through December 2022, the community counselling organizations delivered at least 45,493 counselling sessions reaching 13,101 unique individuals.

### **Enhanced Substance Use Care for Youth**

In December 2022, government announced a historic investment in 33 new and expanded youth substance-use programs ranging across the continuum of care from prevention and early intervention to crisis intervention and intensive treatment. New staff includes Indigenous patient navigators, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, cultural life skills workers and liaisons, and others. Health authorities are working in partnership with the FNHA and other Indigenous partners to ensure new and enhanced services are culturally safe, relevant, and responsive to the needs of Indigenous clients and communities.

### **The Adult Substance Use System of Care Framework (Priority Action: A Pathway to Hope)**

Finalized in December 2022, the Adult Substance Use System of Care Framework (the Framework) is the vision for B.C.'s substance use system of care. Indigenous wellness, cultural safety and humility, and equity were embedded throughout the development and drafting of the Framework:

- Foundational principles included a commitment to active anti-racism and cultural safety and humility;
- Extensive consultation and engagement processes with First Nations, Métis, and urban Indigenous peoples and organizations including a focused policy spotlight session on Indigenous cultural safety that engaged Indigenous people with lived and living experience, Elders, healers, and Indigenous service providers; and
- Strategies are included to promote Indigenous peoples' self-determination when accessing the substance use system of care, enhance cultural safety, and recognize the importance and validity of Indigenous ways of knowing.

### **Expanded Access to Managed Alcohol Programs**

Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people experience disproportionate harms associated with alcohol, including stigma, discrimination, and violence. Addressing these harms requires expanding the range and availability of culturally relevant and evidence-informed services that support Indigenous people to achieve their wellness goals.

As part of Budget 2021, MMHA allocated new funding to regional health authorities to support new and expanded Managed Alcohol Programs (MAPs), an evidence-based harm reduction service that supports people struggling with severe Alcohol Use Disorder to reduce their risk of alcohol-related harms such as unmanaged withdrawal symptoms or injury. Community-led MAPs are typically 'low barrier' programs that provide a critical alternative for people who, due to systemic racism and misogyny,

may experience barriers to accessing services in more clinical settings. MAPs are designed to support safer consumption or reduce withdrawal symptoms; they have been shown to significantly decrease emergency health service utilization, improve physical health outcomes, and reduce housing instability.

*The Gwa'dzi MAP in Port Hardy is an Indigenous-led and designed program delivered by an Indigenous agency. 93% of clients are First Nations and 44% are female. Clients also benefit from access to food and cultural programming, as well as medication management, harm reduction services and mental health resources.*

## HOUSING

Lack of housing or poor-quality housing can negatively affect one's health, wellbeing, and safety. Many Indigenous people in Canada live in inadequate housing. According to the *2021 Canadian Census*<sup>4</sup>, over one in six Indigenous people (17.1%) lived in crowded housing that was considered not suitable for the number of people who resided there. Furthermore, Indigenous people were almost three times more likely to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs (16.4%) in 2021 than the non-Indigenous population (5.7%).

The [2020-2021 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C.](#) (2021) found that 39% of respondents identify as Indigenous, despite Indigenous people representing just 6% of B.C.'s total population. Overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples among those experiencing homelessness is a direct result of colonization and the resulting policies of oppression, racism, and discrimination that separated Indigenous peoples from land, culture, community, resources, spirituality, and identity. Initiatives and strategies highlighted below attempt to address homelessness and housing issues among Indigenous individuals, families, and

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization. 2018. [WHO housing and health guidelines](#). Geneva: World Health Organization

communities and contribute to the safety, security and independence of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people.

## **Preventing and Reducing Homelessness**

Budget 2022 provided \$633 million in funding for homelessness supports and services to support all citizens through the Provincial Homelessness Plan; Budget 2023 built on those investments to provide \$218 million in additional supports and resources for people sheltering in encampments. To further advance cultural safety and Indigenous partnerships, an Indigenous Homelessness Advisory Committee has been created to provide guidance, input, and advice on actions to prevent and reduce homelessness. The Committee will ensure alignment with Indigenous-led initiatives and responses, including the recommendations of the Indigenous-led, external to government, BC Indigenous Homelessness Strategy, developed by the BC Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee with support from the Province.

B.C. also invested \$35 million over three years to respond to the heightened risk of homelessness faced by former youth in care, through improved supports for these youth beyond their 19th birthday. This includes the extension of temporary housing supports introduced during the pandemic, the implementation of a Rent Supplement program for eligible young adults living in the private market and the introduction of a no-limit earnings exemption in August 2022, which makes employment income exempt when determining the level of funding a young adult will receive through Agreements with Young Adults.

## **Indigenous Housing Fund**

The 2018 Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund invested \$550 million over 10 years to support the building and operation of 1,750 new units of social housing for projects on and off-reserve in

collaboration with non-profit housing providers, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, Indigenous housing societies and First Nations. The program is aimed at Indigenous families, seniors, individuals, and persons with a disability. Prospective partners include Indigenous non-profit housing providers, First Nations, Métis Nation British Columbia, and non-profit and for-profit developers who wish to partner with Indigenous housing providers and First Nations. Indigenous organizations and First Nations can also access provincial support under all the new housing funds announced as part of Building BC. As of December 2022, 1,516 projects had been initiated and 523 were complete.

### **Women's Transition Housing Fund**

The 2018 Women's Transition Housing Fund program provides women and their children who are at risk of violence and/or who have experienced violence with access to safe, secure, and confidential services. Those services include information and support for decision-making, short-term shelter or housing, referrals to other services, and links to safe, affordable housing. New women's housing will be operated by non-profit providers who specialize in housing and supports for women and children who are experiencing or at risk of violence. The Province, through BC Housing, will select projects based on community need, with the goal of building 1,500 supportive housing units over the next decade. As of December 2022, 25 projects were funded, including 12 new projects that are either under development or operational that primarily provide safe shelter/housing and support services to Indigenous women and children.

### **Complex Care Housing**

Launched in 2022, Complex Care Housing provides low barrier housing alongside intensive health, social and cultural supports to adults with complex mental health and substance use challenges who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. In recognition of the over-representation of

Indigenous people among those who need complex care, a guiding principle of the program is cultural responsiveness to ensure settings and practices are trauma-informed, culturally safe and led by and for Indigenous people wherever possible.

- More than 30 projects planned across the province will serve over 500 people;
- Indigenous organizations and First Nations such as the Aboriginal Housing Management Association and Ktunaxa Nation are key partners for the development, delivery and evaluation of these projects;
- 12 projects were operational as of March 1, 2023, in the Vancouver Coastal, Fraser, Interior and South Island regions, with remaining projects on track to launch throughout 2023/early 2024.

### **Oomiiqsu Mother Centre**

*In November 2022, Huu-ay-aht First Nations and B.C. announced the creation of the Oomiiqsu (Aboriginal Mother Centre), a new housing, support and childcare centre that will help Indigenous women and children on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Oomiiqsu, meaning mother, is an Indigenous-led model of care developed by Huu-ay-aht in consultation with its members. The two-storey transition housing, childcare and support centre will be managed and operated by the Huu-ay-aht government's Child and Family Wellness Department. The centre will provide a safe and culturally appropriate home for as many as 48 mothers and children leaving violence or abuse, facing mental-health and addictions challenges, poverty or other trauma.*

### **Surrey Urban Indigenous Hub - t'axila**

*Community Integration Specialists provide in-person services within community to individuals who are at risk of becoming or are currently unhoused by connecting them with financial assistance and community supports. In 2021, a new channel of service delivery was piloted by SDPR in partnership with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association (FRAFCA), called the Surrey Indigenous Hub, now officially known as t'axila (making a pathway). The pilot was successful in providing culturally appropriate services to Indigenous individuals and removing barriers to accessing services. Community Integration Specialists collaborate with Indigenous partners and partner ministries to build trust and achieve better outcomes for Indigenous individuals. In 2022, a second Community Integration Specialist was hired for t'axila and the model has been used as an example of how the ministry can work with the Urban Indigenous community resulting in similar partnerships with 10 other Friendship Centres by April 2023.*

## **JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

Colonization and systemic inequities have caused Indigenous Peoples to be over-represented within the criminal justice system as accused, victims, offenders, and survivors of crime. According to self-reported data from the 2019 *General Social Survey on Canadian's Safety (Victimization)*<sup>5</sup>, about four in ten Indigenous people experienced sexual or physical violence by an adult before the age of 15. Similar results from the *Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS)*<sup>6</sup> reveal that almost six in ten Indigenous women have experienced physical or sexual assault in their lifetime. According to the *Homicide Survey*<sup>7</sup>, between 2015 and 2020, the average homicide rate involving Indigenous victims was six times higher than the homicide rate

5 [Statistics Canada, 2022](#)

6 [Statistics Canada, 2022](#)

7 [Statistics Canada, 2022](#)

involving non-Indigenous victims (8.64 versus 1.39 per 100,000 population).

This section highlights initiatives intended to improve public safety and community well-being and address the systemic challenges facing Indigenous Peoples, particularly women and girls.

### **Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women (MACIW)**

*The Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation created MACIW in June 2011 to provide advice to the Government of British Columbia on how to improve the quality of life for Indigenous women across B.C. MACIW is comprised of up to 10 members and provides advice to government by: advocating for the well-being of Indigenous women, providing advice and support to the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and offering guidance and direction that is rooted in Indigenous worldviews.*

*MACIW is guided by a Terms of Reference (Updated 2022) and Standards of Ethical Conduct and reports to government through the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. MACIW meets quarterly, and additionally as determined by the chair or the minister, and at least twice a year with the minister.*

### **BC First Nations Justice Strategy**

In partnership with the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC), work is underway to advance initiatives expressed in the [BC First Nations Justice Strategy](#) (the Strategy). Achievements in 2022 include:

- Funding commitment to open 10 new Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC) in BC within the next two years. This funding will achieve Strategy 4 within the Strategy, to open a network of 15 IJCs in BC. This announcement was part of the Safer Communities Action Plan.

- BCFNJC, BC and Canada held the first Annual Tripartite Ministers' Meeting in July 2022, as described in the MOU signed by BCFNJC, BC, and Canada which commits the three parties to working collaboratively to advance the Strategy and to inform the National Indigenous Justice Strategy.
- BCFNJC through funding from both Canada and the Law Foundation, began work on the Indigenous Women's Justice Plan, work which will continue in 2023-24 in accordance with Strategy 11 within the Strategy.

## Policing

### Policing and Public Safety Modernization

The Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act released its findings in April 2022 and made 11 broad and transformative recommendations. The recommendations address topics such as an enhanced continuum of response to mental health and addictions crises, improvements to police education and training, community and Indigenous input into policing services, the transition away from the RCMP to a new provincial police service, and co-development of the new policing legislation with Indigenous Peoples and municipal governments.

Government is taking a phased approach in responding to the Special Committee recommendations to provide time to meaningfully engage and consult. Select, short-term, technical changes to the existing Police Act may be made in 2023 on issues of governance and oversight as an initial step towards broader modernization. In Spring 2023, the Branch will initiate comprehensive and broadscale engagement with all partners on policy that will form the foundation of new policing and oversight legislation. Co-development of the policies with Indigenous Peoples and municipal governments will be a key focus of this phase.

### BC Provincial Policing Standards on investigations of sexual assaults

Continuing throughout 2022, the Policing and Security Branch (PSB) developed provincial policing standards on the police response to sexual assaults based on a broad engagement process which included community-based groups, including the First Nations Justice Council, as well as representatives from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), and Métis Nation BC. The standards focuses on trauma-informed practice, victim-centered approaches, and cultural safety. Requirements include that procedures be in place to provide options and supports during the interview process, supervisory oversight throughout the investigation, and a process for reviewing concluded cases to inform policies or training, or to improve investigations. The scope includes cases involving adult survivors, and includes requirements related to intake, investigations, reports to crown counsel, documentation, audits, and other topics.

### Situation Tables

Situation Tables bring together front-line staff from the public safety, health, and social service sectors to identify high-risk individuals and collaboratively and rapidly connect them to services and supports they need, before they experience a negative or traumatic event (e.g., victimization, overdose, incarceration, eviction, etc.). Situation Tables empower agencies to work together to provide holistic supports to people, lower the risk of harm, and increase community safety and well-being. PSB (Collaborative Public Safety Programs) continues to implement Situation Tables across B.C. in line with the 2022 mandate letter commitments. Currently, there are 37 active Situation Tables across B.C.

### Intervention Circles

Intervention Circles are a modified version of Situation Tables designed in consultation with and led by Indigenous communities to deliver culturally safe interventions by, for, and within the community, band, or nation. There is one active Intervention Circle (Esket'émc) and PSB is in discussion with two other communities to pilot Intervention Circles.



## BC Prosecution Service

### Indigenous Justice Framework

In May 2022, the BC Prosecution Service announced a third set of policy changes aimed at increasing fairness and reducing overrepresentation of Indigenous persons in the criminal justice system as part of the BCPS [Indigenous Justice Framework](#). Policies revised to add guidance respecting Indigenous persons include:

- ▶ Intimate Partner Violence (IPV 1) – This revised policy provides additional guidance to Crown counsel on the very serious, prevalent, and complex problem of violence within a relationship and now includes a section dealing specifically with Indigenous persons.
- ▶ Child Victims and Witnesses (CHI 1) – This revised policy (formerly Children and Vulnerable Victims – Crimes Against) expands its application to all prosecutions under the Criminal Code and the Youth Criminal Justice Act that involve a victim or witness under the age of eighteen and adds guidance for Crown counsel when an Indigenous child is involved as a victim or witness.

*BC has eight Indigenous courts: New Westminster First Nations Court • North Vancouver Chet wa nexwniw ta Stekwí7tel Indigenous Court • Kamloops Cknucwentn First Nations Sentencing Court • Duncan First Nations Court • Nicola Valley Indigenous Court • Prince George Indigenous Court • Williams Lake Indigenous Court • Hazelton Indigenous Court*

## Corrections

### Healing Supports

Indigenous cultural programs and support services are provided in all provincial correctional centers in B.C. These programs are provided by Indigenous Cultural Liaisons (ICLs) and supported by Elders. BC Corrections has amended its intake and data collection policies and practices to ensure that distinctions-based information about all Indigenous people is accurately captured. This data is used to ensure the ICL is included in the development of case management plans and individuals are supported to safely reconnect with their communities while in custody and prior to release.

### Strengthening relationships with our partners

BC Corrections recognizes the important role First Nations have in supporting Indigenous clients to be successful and is engaged in developing a MOU for Supported Reintegration with several Indigenous communities. The goal of these MOUs is to promote communication, understanding, trust, and a strong working relationship to support the client, reduce reoffending, and increase public safety. To date, BC Corrections has signed MOUs with five Indigenous communities, most recently with Williams Lake First Nation.

### Training

All BC Corrections staff providing direct service to women in custody are trained to understand the significance of gender, including the experience and perception of authority by women and the dynamics of cross-gender supervision. A comprehensive approach is taken to meeting the distinct social, cultural, and spiritual needs of Indigenous women. Training related to Indigenous considerations is being updated. In 2022, BC Corrections drafted a Guide to Working Effectively with Indigenous Clients and Communities. The objective is to provide staff with a resource they can refer to on a regular basis as they build relationships with their clients and enhance



their cultural competency. This guide was developed in consultation with ICLs, Indigenous Justice Workers, and BC Corrections staff.

### Youth Justice Service Framework

Work is underway, in partnership with the BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) and Métis Nation BC, to co-develop an Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan. To advance this work, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) met with representatives from the BCFNJC and Métis Nation BC on 12 separate occasions in 2022. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the Ministry's vision to modernize the province's youth justice system alongside a distinctions-based approach that respects the priorities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation.

### Victim Services

#### Core Funding for Sexual Assault Services

Between March 2020 and March 2023, \$20 million was provided for a multi-year grant program to support the delivery of emergency sexual assault response services throughout the province. In recognition of the substantial need for locally relevant and culturally safe supports for Indigenous survivors of sexual assault, 19 Indigenous emergency sexual assault programs received grant funding to provide services (representing more than 40% of the total funding provided through this grant program). Budget 2022 further provided \$10 million starting in 2023 for on-going community-based sexual assault response services to provide trauma-informed and coordinated sexual assault response programs to support survivors throughout the province.

#### Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs)

Wrap around services like CYACs are critical to providing culturally appropriate, trauma informed services, and a coordinated approach to child

abuse investigations. Through the coordination (and sometimes co-location) of police, child protection workers and victim services, CYACs seek to minimize system-induced trauma by providing a single, child-friendly setting for victims, witnesses, and their non-offending family members. CYACs offer a range of services (including victim services) aimed at supporting children to navigate complex investigation processes, while reducing the number of meetings/interviews and coordinating effective referrals to services such as health (i.e., SCAN clinics<sup>8</sup>) and mental health. CYACs in BC operate under different models, including staffing and governance arrangements, the range of services offered, their sources/levels of funding, and whether agencies are co-located. Three CYACs are operated through Indigenous host agencies.

*There are 10 operational CYACs in B.C. including: Sophie's Place (Surrey) • Alisa's Wish (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows) • Treehouse CYAC (Vancouver) • Victoria CYAC (Victoria) • Raven's Nest CYAC (Duncan/Cowichan Valley) • Kelowna CAC (Kelowna) • Oak Centre (Vernon) • Big Bear CYAC (Kamloops) • SKY Coordinated Response (West Kootenay Boundary) • First Nations CYAC (Prince George)*

### Focus Project

Starting in 2021, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG) undertook a multi-year initiative called the Focus Project, engaging 62 victim service (VS) and violence against women (VAW) programs to better understand and document impacts of the LNG-Coastal GasLink pipeline project on service utilization in 16 communities located along the 670-kilometre pipeline route from Dawson Creek to Kitimat, BC. Through bi-annual engagements, the project considers the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people at all stages of large resource extractive project development.

**8** Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Units. Primarily, SCAN teams provide specialized medical assessment for cases of suspected child abuse and neglect.

## CHILD WELFARE, EDUCATION, SKILLS TRAINING

Harmful colonial policies and practices such as the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop have culminated in an over-representation of Indigenous children and youth in government care. Although we are seeing results with the lowest number of Indigenous children and youth in care since September 1999, we know we need to do much more to support Indigenous children, youth, and families. The legacy of government policies detrimentally impacted and marginalized generations of Indigenous peoples, resulting in inter generational trauma and depriving them of the ability to learn their distinct language(s), practice traditions, pass along cultural knowledge, and be part of a strong and healthy family and community.

Initiatives and strategies illustrated in this section aim to keep Indigenous children and youth connected to their families, culture and communities while harmonizing service delivery to reduce the risk of gaps in care. Improving education outcomes further supports economic independence and opportunity, and ultimately the safety and security of individuals and families.

### **Early Learning and Child Care**

#### **ChildCareBC Plan**

Government's [ChildCareBC Plan](#) is building affordable, accessible, quality, inclusive child care as a core service that families can depend on. This plan includes a commitment to ensure Indigenous children and families have full access to child care enhancements in B.C., and to partnering with Indigenous Peoples to build culturally relevant child care. The Action Plan commits the Province to *"work[ing] in collaboration with B.C. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples to implement a distinctions-based approach to support and move forward jurisdiction over child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples who want and need it in B.C."* (Action 4.19).

The Province's two bilateral agreements with the Government of Canada for early learning and child care also include commitments to "develop a collaborative plan with relevant First Nations and Métis Nation organizations in B.C. In partnership with the Government of Canada, the Province is supporting a distinctions-based approach to increasing access to Indigenous-led child care. Under the direction of the First Nations Leadership Council, the Province worked with the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society and First Nations Education Steering Committee to co-develop an interim approach to distribute \$35 million in one-time only funding directly to First Nations in FY 2022/23. Moving forward, the Province is committed to working towards a First Nations-led tripartite approach with First Nations, First Nations Leadership and the Government of Canada for early learning and child care.

Work is also underway to support Government-to-Government dialogue with First Nations regarding future priorities and approaches for funding, with future planned engagements to focus on the approach to co-development of regulations to bring new child care legislation into force – the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#), and the [Early Childhood Educators Act](#).

In addition, the Ministry will continue to work in partnership with Métis Nation BC and other Indigenous organizations to advance distinctions-based approaches in urban Indigenous communities. In 2022/23, federal investments supported the creation of a Métis Child Care Resource and Referral program and the creation of Métis-led child care spaces to increase supports for Métis families.

Ongoing engagements with First Nations, as well as Métis Nation BC and urban Indigenous organizations have confirmed the need for the Provincial Government to address the gap in Indigenous-led child care and to build on programs and services that are already working, such as the Aboriginal Head Start program. Since 2018, federal and provincial investments have expanded the Aboriginal Head

Start program to provide no-fee, culturally based child care with wrap around supports at no cost to Indigenous families in partnership with the FNHA and the Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC.

While steps have been taken to improve access to child care for Indigenous families, on-going engagement, consultation and co-development is needed to continue to learn from and expand access to Indigenous-led child care while also making progress towards the Province's goal of advancing jurisdiction over early learning and child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples that want and need it.

### First Nations Jurisdiction over Education

As of July 1, 2022, four First Nations in BC have recognized law-making authority over their kindergarten to grade 12 education systems. The First Nations Education Authority has also been established to assist Participating First Nations in developing the capacity to provide education on First Nations lands.

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.

### Indigenous Children & Family Services Jurisdiction

On January 1, 2020, the federal legislation – An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families (the "Federal Act") – came into force which affirmed the inherent right of self-government and jurisdiction of Indigenous peoples in relation to child and family services.

*In 2022, MCFD co-developed the [Indigenous Self-Government in Child and Family Services Amendment Act](#) in collaboration with Indigenous partners, making B.C. the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize an inherent right of self-government specifically in provincial legislation, which will help keep Indigenous children and youth safely connected to their families, cultures, and communities. The Act amends BC's two key pieces of child welfare legislation, the Adoption Act and the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA). The legislative amendments remove barriers and gaps within provincial legislation, enabling the Province and Indigenous Peoples to collaborate and ensure Indigenous Peoples can govern and provide services based on their own child and family laws.*

With the introduction of federal and provincial legislation, there are now new pathways for Indigenous communities to exercise greater involvement, increased authority and jurisdiction over child welfare.

MCFD continues to be engaged at tripartite coordination agreement tables with Indigenous Governing Bodies that are seeking to exercise jurisdiction for child and family services pursuant to the pathway set out in the Federal Act. Additionally, MCFD is meeting with other Indigenous communities that are exploring options for increased authority and jurisdiction.

*On April 12, 2022, Tcwesétmentem was signed between the Simpcw First Nation and the MCFD. It will inform child welfare decision making and ensure the Simpcw First Nation is involved in the protection, planning and placement of Simpcw children and youth who come into contact with the child welfare system. The agreement recognizes elements of the Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families, and outlines how the Simpcw and MCFD will work together on assessments, investigations, plans of independence and plans of care, including placement decisions, to support the well-being of Simpcw families. The agreement also sets out how MCFD's child welfare practice decisions will be informed by a Simpcw community designate to ensure the Simpcw worldview and cultural continuity are incorporated.*

### Prevention and Family Supports

Every child deserves the supports they need to live a full, happy, and healthy life and to reach their goals. Yet right now, the existing patchwork has left too many children and youth with support needs behind, and many children and youth who are neurodivergent or have disabilities or other support needs are not getting the support they need to help them thrive.

In November 2022, the Province committed to engaging in deeper consultation with parents and caregivers, First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, communities, experts and practitioners, and others with lived experience to understand how the system of supports and services for children and youth with support needs can be transformed to build a system that better serves all children and youth based on their needs and that is co-developed with Indigenous communities.

In 2022, BC also increased funding to support children and youth with support needs in the amount of \$114 million over three years.

### **Resilient, Inspire, Strength, Engage (RISE) Grant Program for Youth In, or From, Government Care**

*In June 2022, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (TACS) launched the RISE grant program. The low-barrier grants provide opportunities for young people who are in, or from, government care to engage in their favorite sports, develop connections, self-assurance, and physical literacy. A high proportion of children and youth in or from care (CYIFC) are Indigenous. The Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Council (ISPARC) administers and delivers the RISE grants and has strong ties to sport leaders in First Nations communities across the province.*

*Youth can use grants of up to \$1,000 to pay for program fees, equipment, or travel related to sport, recreation, or cultural activities. The program also provides grants of up to \$10,000 to organizations to develop programs for CYIFC. The RISE grant program is ongoing and has distributed over 250 grants to CYIFC in its first 6 months of operation, with over 93% of recipients under 18 years of age. Most of the recipients were female or gender diverse children and youth who faced additional barriers to participating in physical activities.*

### Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training

Developed in consultation with Indigenous Peoples, initiatives in Government's StrongerBC: Future Ready Plan are aimed at moving from government-led to Indigenous-led post-secondary education and training programs by providing ongoing, stable and predictable funding to expand post-secondary training and labour market opportunities for Indigenous Peoples. Initiatives include funding for First Nations-mandate post-secondary Institutes and for training programs delivered in First Nations communities. In addition, funding is being provided to support education and skills training programming led by and developed with Métis Nation British Columbia.

## Post Secondary Education and Skills

### Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI)

In June 2021, the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI) provided \$15 million in one-time funding to launch the redesigned Innovator Skills Initiative (ISI) to increase diversity in the technology sector, and an extra \$0.583 million was reallocated to ISI in August 2022. By end of March 2023, the sum has been fully expended, and 3,000 grant placements were completed, with these grants providing a portion of employees' salary to help Indigenous women and other under-represented people to get their first job in technology. Based on the program's initial success, an extra \$5 million has been allocated to the program to secure up to 500 more grant placements until the end of 2023.

### Tuition Waiver Program for Former Youth in Care

The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS)'s Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP) supports B.C. students who are former youth in care pursuing studies at a B.C. public post-secondary institution, Native Education College or one of 10 eligible union trades training centres. It does so by covering tuition and other education related fees. Beginning August 1, 2023, the PTWP will be expanded to include all former youth in care regardless of age and provide a new grant to assist with additional educational costs like books and a computer.

## Social Services Sector Community Pathways to Reconciliation Project

SDPR provided a total of \$9.6 million in grants to the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in 2022 to lead the development and implementation of the Community Pathways to Reconciliation Project for the social services sector over the coming five years. There are four main components of the Community Pathways to Reconciliation Project including the development and implementation of a master's degree in business administration in Indigenous and not-for-profit services, an Organizational Assessment tool, a Safe Space app expansion, and San'yas 2.0 training.

*San'yas means "way of knowing" in Kwak'waka the language of the Kwakwaka'wakw Peoples, whose traditional and unceded territories are located on northern Vancouver Island and surrounding areas. To learn more about training, visit [British Columbia — San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Online Training \(sanyas.ca\)](#)*

### Community Employer Partnerships

*From April 1, 2022, to March 1, 2023, SDPR provided over \$4.6 million from Community and Employer Partnerships to support 20 Indigenous-focused labour market projects that will support up to 295 Indigenous participants.*



**Spotlight: Ministry of Children and Family Development and its approach to implementing the Inquiry into MMIWG's Calls for Justice**

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is developing a plan to track progress and meet the Calls for Justice for the *MMWIG Inquiry*. The Ministry has engaged to:

1. Create a cross-divisional Table and establish its goals and principles,
2. Update progress toward the Calls across MCFD,
3. Identify gaps,
4. Discuss solutions and next steps, and
5. Validate the findings.

*In April 2020 the Indigenous Child and Family Services Directors (ICFSD) Society (formerly known as the Directors Forum) established a Steering Committee to address the [Final Report](#) and provide recommendations. The ICFSD Report was co-developed with agencies and with MCFD staff as witnesses. The reciprocal process of developing these two reports demonstrates mutual responsibility, relationship building, and advancing our shared 'heart work' towards meeting the Calls for Justice.*



**Example: Update from the Table**

*In consultation and co-operation with Indigenous rightsholders and partners, MCFD developed amendments to legislation to remove barriers for Indigenous peoples exercising jurisdiction over child and family services. These amendments were passed into law in November 2022. These actions align with Calls 12.1, 12.2, 12.4, 12.11, 16.14, 18.32.*

**Gathering the Circle**

MCFD co-developed the engagement process with its Aboriginal Policy and Practice Branch, using the principles of the Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework (APPF). This restorative framework, co-developed by the MCFD and ICFSD, supports and honours Indigenous systems of caring, supporting children and resiliency. Staff from divisions across MCFD with responsibility to answer the Calls were invited to join the table.

**Listening, Assessing and Finding Solutions**

The engagement process began with a co-developed Circle Agreement<sup>9</sup> to guide discussions, acknowledge the shared context and establish how the table would work together, with the main principle to hold Indigenous values at the heart of this work.

<sup>9</sup> A circle agreement acknowledges our shared context and establish the foundations for how people will work together, with shared values, intentions, and accountability at the center. The agreement is reviewed at the beginning of each meeting.

**Creating Security, Belonging and Well-being**

In each session diverse forms of knowledge were acknowledged, including lived experience and the perspectives of service delivery staff. Relationship building was a key focus. The Circle Agreement made room for table members to share personal experiences as well as represent their work area.

**Keeping the Circle Strong**

MCFD facilitators kept the circle strong by listening, assessing, and checking in with table members between sessions, providing a summary of 'what we heard' after each session. Using the APPF as the methodology, key themes were woven together using the metaphor of a basket. Through this iterative process information and analysis were validated with table members while keeping MCFD's commitment to building strong relationships as a basis for this shared work and keeping the circle strong.



## RECONCILIATION, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have a wide array of unique traditions and history, including a multitude of distinct languages and dialects, cultures, customs, practices, rights, legal traditions, institutions, governance structures, relationships to land and territories, and knowledge systems. For many years, governments and religions across Canada did not recognize Indigenous people's rights, culture, and traditions – instead, Indigenous peoples were forced to assimilate and had thousands of artifacts and other property confiscated or coerced from their households and communities.

Efforts are being made to not only recognize the harm caused to Indigenous peoples and their communities, but to also begin the reconciliation process to restore Indigenous cultures and practices. This section includes efforts to preserve Indigenous languages, arts, and cultural practices.

### **Discovery of more unmarked graves**

*We recognize that the material presented in this report may be difficult for many to read with the continued findings of unmarked graves on the grounds of former Indian Residential Schools in B.C. and across Canada. These findings have confirmed what families and communities have always known – that their loved ones were victims of colonial violence through harmful government policies. The Province is committed to a process that brings about truth telling, healing, and justice for former students, their families, and communities.*

## Arts, Culture, and Language Preservation

### Investment in First Nations Language, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Revitalization

In June 2022, the Province, through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation announced close to \$35 million in new funding to the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation (FPCF) and First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) to support First Nations languages, arts, and cultural heritage revitalization programming and operations. This investment builds upon the landmark \$50 million provided to FPCC in 2018 to address the language crisis and help revitalize Indigenous languages in B.C.

*Today, there are approximately 200,000 Indigenous people in B.C., with more than 200 distinct First Nations in B.C., each with their own unique traditions and history. More than 30 different First Nation languages and close to 60 dialects are spoken in the province.*

### Funding/Support for Indigenous Language Revitalization

In 2022, \$2.6 million was provided to the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) for the Youth Empowered Speakers (YES) Program, which combines Mentor-Apprentice immersion learning, internships, and education funding to develop fluent language teachers and early childhood educators to support community-based language revitalization. The program addresses the need to develop new First Nations language speakers to become immersion teachers who will work in First Nations communities to deliver community immersion programming across the province. In addition, through the Future Ready Plan, new funding is being provided to support First Nations Language Fluency degrees and revitalization of the Michif language.

## Royal BC Museum Public Engagement and Consultation Framework

Working with Indigenous partners is a critical consideration in modernizing the Royal BC Museum. The Province, through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports (TACS) and the Museum are working with Indigenous partners to ensure Indigenous perspectives are considered in the infrastructure, programming, exhibits, and research. The Museum is committed to advancing the understanding of Indigenous peoples and cultures in all aspects of the future of the Museum. In January 2023, the Museum launched a robust multi-year public engagement, which includes multiple Museum led focused sessions with Indigenous peoples, to rebuild and reinvest in strengthened relationships and ensure Indigenous perspectives and voices are reflected in the vision for the future of the museum. The Royal BC Museum also continues to be deeply committed to working with Indigenous communities on repatriation.

## Royal BC Museum's Collections and Research Building

In February 2023, the Royal BC Museum's new Collections and Research Building (CRB) completed the procurement process to select a design builder and transitioned into implementation phase. The project has been working closely with the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) nations, including a Project Indigenous Liaison Officer, to ensure that every aspect of the work from the design through to construction and programming honors the traditional territories and people through active engagement with partner and neighboring nations.

## Reconciliation

### Consent Agreements with Tahltan Central Government

In June 2021, the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation was authorized to negotiate an agreement with Tahltan Central Government relating to consent for decisions under the Environmental Assessment Act for the Eskay Creek Project and

the Red Chris Mine. B.C. and Tahltan have signed an agreement under the Declaration Act and the Environmental Assessment Act that requires Tahltan consent prior to proceeding with the Eskay Creek Project and are actively negotiating a similar agreement related to environmental assessment amendment for an expansion of the Red Chris Mine. Once signed, the amendment activities may not proceed without the consent of Tahltan Nation.

## Parks

### Reflecting Indigenous peoples' history and cultures in provincial parks

BC Parks has an ongoing commitment to reflect Indigenous peoples' history and cultures in provincial parks and protected areas. In partnership with Indigenous Peoples, BC Parks has been working to identify new strategies and expand on current initiatives with an initial focus on Indigenous naming, new establishments, and shared stewardship activities.

In the Fall of 2022, meetings were held with a number of First Nations who have partnered with BC Parks in various capacities to solicit their feedback. The results of these meetings are being used to inform a report that will include key milestones that have been achieved together and proposed recommendations for how BC Parks can improve the reflection of Indigenous Peoples' history and culture in parks and protected areas.

*Learn how to pronounce Indigenous community, organization and territorial names: [Phonetic Pronunciation Guide - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)*

## Repatriation

Repatriation grants support the principle of self-determination and collaboration between cultural institutions and Indigenous peoples.

## Repatriation Funding and Programs

In March 2022, TACS provided \$750,000 to the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation to support repatriation initiatives. This funding built upon previous repatriation grant programs administered by the BC Museums Association and the Royal BC Museum. The First Peoples' Cultural Council administered a repatriation program, providing funding directly to 16 Indigenous communities for repatriation activities. Recipients utilized this funding to implement a broad range of repatriation projects specific to bringing home their ancestral and cultural treasures, which included the following activities:

- ▶ Planning, preparation, and research to understand repatriation needs for bringing home ancestral and cultural treasures;
- ▶ Transportation, storage, and related protection for moving or transporting repatriated ancestral or cultural treasures;
- ▶ Community ceremonies upon return to a First Nation;
- ▶ Consultants and contingencies.

While all projects involved the repatriation of Indigenous ancestors and cultural or intellectual property in a broad sense, the creative diversity of project design reflects the complex and braided nature of the reclamation of Indigenous Peoples' right to identify, control and protect their cultural heritage.

First Peoples' Cultural Council staff also supported B.C. First Nations in building their capacity to develop grant applications through a proactive and responsive community outreach approach, providing one-on-one support to potential grant applicants for the Repatriation Grant.

This funding also includes direction to the First Peoples' Cultural Council to:

- ▶ Collaborate on repatriation efforts with partners, such as the Royal BC Museum, the BC Museums Association, Indigenous heritage experts, and other stakeholders as appropriate; and,
- ▶ Assisting the Ministry to plan the Province's new repatriation policy framework, as included in the Province's Action Plan (action item 4.33).

**10** [Rural Health Services in BC \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca)

## TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Approximately 95% of the provincial land base in B.C. is considered non-urban<sup>10</sup>, and residents must travel longer distances with limited modes of transportation and weak to no cell phone reception and internet connection to access services and supports. This can create significant safety risks for travel and challenges for victims of violence in accessing victim services, shelters and/or transition houses, medical care, and to safely report their victimization to law enforcement.

Therefore, safe, affordable, and reliable transportation infrastructure and cellular and internet connectivity are essential to the safety and well-being of all British Columbians, but especially for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people who live in rural and remote communities. This section outlines progress made by the Province within the past year to address gaps in cellular service and transportation along B.C. highways and to provide greater training and education to the transportation industry to become aware of the vulnerabilities that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people may face in rural and remote parts of the province when accessing services and supports.

### Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan

The Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan was created in response to the *MMIWG Inquiry*. The BC Transit inter-community service continues to provide reliable, affordable, and safe transportation along Highway 16 and enables people to travel to their nearest large community and return home the same day. Ridership was over 16,000 in 2022 (up from 13,700 in 2021), bringing the total number of passengers to over 80,000 since the service began in 2017. In 2022, BC Transit and local partners conducted public engagement on Highway 16 service, which will inform future changes to the service.

*There are 15,000 km of primary, secondary, and major highways in B.C. As of December 2022, 4,200 km (28 per cent) do not have advanced cellular service, 3,100 km do not have access to commercial power, and 1,400 km have access to commercial power but no cellular service.*

*The [Connecting British Columbia](#) program provides funding for the expansion of cellular networks in B.C. \$15 million has been allocated so far to improve cellular connectivity on highways which will connect 532 highway kilometres and 30 rest areas, including 252 kilometres and two rest areas along Highway 16 – the Highway of Tears. (As of December 2022).*

### BC Bus North

In response to Greyhound Bus discontinuing its services in June 2018, the Province launched BC Bus North. As of April 1, 2022, Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) became responsible for BC Bus North. This service is funded through to March 2025 by a \$7.9 million grant B.C. and the federal government provided NDIT in 2021. The service provides safe, reliable, and affordable transportation between communities. In spring 2022, NDIT engaged with several communities and First Nations about the service with the aim of improving services. To date, BC Bus North has carried over 20,000 passengers.

### Active Transportation

The [CleanBC: Roadmap](#) to 2030 outlines several targets to reduce emissions in the transportation sector including increasing mode shift and reducing distance traveled by vehicles in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants program provides cost sharing grants to Indigenous and local governments to plan and build active transportation infrastructure. To support Indigenous communities, a sliding scale for cost-share funding provides the highest percentage of cost-sharing (80 per cent) for projects led by or in partnership with Indigenous communities. In addition, these projects are prioritized through

the evaluation process. Since these elements were included in 2019, \$5.1M has been awarded to 27 projects in 25 Indigenous communities, representing approximately a 150-fold increase from pre-2019 investments. In the most recent 2022/23 BC Active Transportation grant, 11 of the 74 projects were for Indigenous projects.

### Indigenous Communities Driver Licensing Outreach

The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) is responsible for driver licensing, and Road Safety and Community Coordinators work with the driver licensing team to engage with First Nations' communities to create awareness and understanding about the driver licensing process. Although ICBC is supporting Indigenous communities on driver licensing matters, they also acknowledge that there are still significant barriers to address. In March 2022, the Road to Reconciliation Report Working Group was established, including representatives from UBCIC, ICBC, RoadSafetyBC, and the Crown Agencies Secretariat (CAS), to collaboratively undertake work to improve the current driver licensing and training system for First Nations in B.C. The Working Group continues to regularly meet to help advance and action recommendations from the Road to Reconciliation Report.

# Reflections and Next Steps

As we reflect on the fourth anniversary of the release of *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, the Province of B.C. continues to engage in reconciliatory work to identify and implement meaningful and lasting solutions to address the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. Through our engagements on the Path Forward, we know these solutions must be led by self-determining Indigenous Peoples and communities. In particular, the leadership and expertise of Indigenous women must be acknowledged and supported throughout these processes to dismantle the colonial relationship between all levels of Canadian government and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples across Canada.

Our government has undertaken meaningful efforts to advance the work of both the *MMIWG Inquiry* and the *Declaration Act*. Some of the new provincial investments into community-based supports, health and wellness, housing, child welfare, justice and public safety, cultural preservation, transportation, and connectivity highlighted in this report illustrate the government of B.C.'s commitment to ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples. These investments have been woven into provincial legislation, policies, programs, and services to create a safer province. As we embark on work to implement B.C.'s anti-racism legislation and data collection alongside the Province's gender-based violence action plan, we are aware of the challenges that lie ahead. These challenges are complex and require not only the Province's full commitment to these issues, but also to work diligently alongside all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of B.C. We must listen and incorporate Indigenous-led actions to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

The Province remains keenly focused on advancing mandate commitments to fulfill the vision of the Path Forward, provincially relevant Calls for Justice, and to align our efforts towards meaningfully implementing the *Declaration Act Action Plan*.



# Appendix: B.C.'s Path Forward Priorities and Early Strategies: Key Commitments from 2021 Mandate Letters

BC's Path Forward Priorities and Early Strategies for BC: Key Commitments		Ministry Mandate Letter	Relevant Call(s) for Justice
<b>1. SAFE SPACES AND SAFETY PLANS</b>			
1.1	Invest in community-based mental health and social services so there are more trained frontline workers to help people in crisis, and free up police to focus on more serious crimes	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (with Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General support - Policing and Public Safety Modernization Project)	1.5, 3.4; 3.5, 4.1; 4.2
1.2	Support communities in addressing street disorder and public safety concerns by expanding mental health intervention team	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	1.5, 3.4; 3.5, 4.2
1.3	Identify minimum standards for sexual assault response	Gender Equity Office & Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General-Community Safety & Crime Prevention Branch (GBV Action Plan)	1.5; 1.8; 4.3; 5.3; 16.38
1.4	Increase training related to sexual assault for police agencies, crown council and justices	Gender Equity Office & Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General-Community Safety & Crime Prevention Branch (GBV Action Plan)	1.5; 1.8; 4.3; 5.3; 16.38
1.5	Based on recommendations of the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act, identify recommendations to address systemic racism, create dedicated hate crime units within local police forces, and review training and procedures related to 'wellness checks.'	Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General-Police Services Branch (with Ministry of Attorney General - PS for Anti-Racism Initiatives' support)	1.5,3.5; 5.7; 9.2; 9.3; 9.4; 9.5; 9.6; 9.7; 9.8; 18.13
1.6	Implement a homelessness strategy	Ministry of Housing	4.1, 4.6, 4.7, 12.4, 12.11, 16.1, 16.18, 16.19, 18.25
<b>2. HEALING SUPPORTS</b>			
2.1	Advance the BC First Nations Justice Strategy, develop, endorse and advance the Metis Justice Strategy, and improve access to culturally appropriate justice.	Ministry of Attorney General (with Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General)	1.5, 5.11; 5.12; 5.15; 5.16; 5.21
2.2	Continue to establish Indigenous Justice Centres across the province	Ministry of Attorney General (with Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General)	1.5, 4.2; 5.11
2.3	Provide an increased level of support – including more access to nurses and psychiatrists – for B.C.'s most vulnerable who need more intensive care than supportive housing provides by developing ComplexCare housing	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (with Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Health support)	3.2; 4.1; 18.25
2.4	Further implement A Pathway to Hope, BC's roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people, by expanding access to counselling, using new e-health and other technologies to bring care to more people in all regions of BC	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	3.2; 3.4; 18.28
2.5	Accelerate B.C.'s response to the opioid crisis across the full continuum of care: prevention, harm reduction, safe prescription medications, treatment, and recovery	Ministry of Health (with Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions support)	3.2; 3.4

BC's Path Forward Priorities and Early Strategies for BC: Key Commitments		Ministry Mandate Letter	Relevant Call(s) for Justice
2.6	Expand the availability of treatment beds for people by building new treatment, recovery, detox and after-care facilities across the province with some beds specifically for British Columbians under age 24	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	3.2; 3.4
2.7	Expand support for Aboriginal Friendship Centres that serve the needs of local Indigenous communities	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation	4.2
2.8	Reflect Indigenous peoples' history and cultures in provincial parks and wilderness areas	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (with Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation support)	2.3; 2.4; 2.5
2.9	Extend support for cultural preservation and revitalization by funding key projects designed to preserve and respect Indigenous cultures, including the retention and revitalization of First Nations languages.	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation	2.1; 2.3
2.10	Continue to support families involved with the child welfare system by focusing on family preservation and keeping children and youth connected to their communities and culture.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	4.1; 12.6; 12.7
<b>3. STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR PARTNERS</b>			
3.1	Deliver the action plan required under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' Act to build strong relationships based on recognition and implementation of the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples protected in UNDRIP and Canada's constitution	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (with Attorney General support)	1.2
3.2	Draw from recommendations from 'In Plain Sight' to address Indigenous-specific racism in health care in B.C.	Ministry of Health (with Attorney General – Housing - PS for Anti-Racism Initiatives' support)	18.26
3.3	Expand the 'situation table' model that connects front-line workers from different health, safety, and social service sectors to identify and help vulnerable people.	Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (with Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions support)	1.6; 4.2; 7.3
3.4	Continue to work with Indigenous partners and the federal government to reform the child welfare system, including implementing the new federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families, and continuing to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in care.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	12.1; 12.2; 12.4; 17.16
<b>4. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
4.1	Establish core funding for sexual assault centres	Gender Equity Office & Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General-Community Safety & Crime Prevention Branch (GBV Action Plan)	1.8,3.3, 4.2
4.2	Improve transit options for people in rural communities by expanding service for the BC Bus North program	Ministry of Transportation	4.1; 4.8; 17.9
4.3	Conduct a full review of anti-racism laws in other jurisdictions and launch a stakeholder consultation to inform the introduction of a new Anti-Racism Act that better serves everyone in B.C.	Ministry of Attorney General (PS for Anti-Racism Initiatives)	1.2, 5.24, 16.16, 16.31, 16.44, 17.2, 18.3, 18.4

BC's Path Forward Priorities and Early Strategies for BC: Key Commitments		Ministry Mandate Letter	Relevant Call(s) for Justice
4.4	Work with B.C.'s new Human Rights Commissioner and other stakeholders to introduce legislation that will help reduce systemic discrimination and pave the way for race-based data collection essential to modernizing sectors like policing, health care and education	Ministry of Attorney General (PS for Anti-Racism Initiatives)	
4.5	Expand the use of cross-government data to increase evidence-based decision making and better inform public policy.	Ministry of Citizens' Services Support	
4.6	Assist more people from underrepresented groups get their first job in the tech sector, while simultaneously helping B.C.-based tech companies hire and grow, by increasing the number of Innovator Skills Initiative Grants and prioritizing placements for women, Indigenous people, people of colour and others currently underrepresented in B.C.'s tech sector	Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (with PS for Technology and Innovation's support)	4.4
4.7	Create a plan for a dedicated Secretariat by the end of 2021 to coordinate government's reconciliation efforts and to ensure new legislation and policies are consistent with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation	1.2
4.8	Build on our expanded supports for youth in care, with particular attention to supporting the transition to independence and ensuring supports reach all youth	Ministry of Children and Family Development	12.11





Ministry of  
Public Safety and  
Solicitor General