



Business Plan

2021–22

*Service Nova Scotia
and Internal Services*



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Departmental Business Plans
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Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the 2021/2022 Business Plan for the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services (SNSIS).

SNSIS aims to deliver high-quality, accessible programs and services across multiple channels by listening to Nova Scotians and delivering on their expectations. We put the client – Nova Scotians – at the centre of everything we do.

In 2020-21, we put in place the organizational structure we needed to ensure service excellence guided our work - for citizens and the more than 10,000 employees across government we support.

Together with our employees, we are committed to providing a coordinated approach to client service and the technology and processes that support it using modern, internet-era ways of working. Using citizen-centered approaches to achieve inclusive growth and well-being for all Nova Scotians remains one of our key priorities. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed SNSIS to use this approach in government and healthcare to transform the services Nova Scotians rely on in new and innovative ways. These changes improved service delivery, inspired our partners in government and healthcare to consider more service transformations, and are now a permanent part of operations in many cases.

We are looking forward to supporting the work of the Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Commission and to improving equity, inclusion and access to government services. A significant part of our work will continue to be protecting the privacy and security of personal information as we continue to design, build and transform digital services across government. Modernizing our registries, collaborating on the adoption of digital health technology and promoting innovative procurement practices are other examples of our priorities for the coming year.

We look forward to delivering the exciting initiatives outlined in this plan, and, wherever possible, help to advance government's climate, environmental and equity agenda.

Thank you.

Original signed by

The Honourable Patricia Arab
Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services

Original signed by

Joanne Munro
Deputy Minister, Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services

Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services Mandate

Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services (SNSIS) builds a relationship with every citizen, business, and municipality in Nova Scotia by understanding evolving client needs and balancing these needs with the public good. SNSIS provides client-focused services directly and enables other Departments to deliver programs and services quickly and easily. SNSIS carries out broad legislative mandates, being responsible for the administration and enforcement of a wide array of legislation and regulations. Our activities include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining the provincial registries of vital events, land, businesses and in partnership with the Department of Transportation and Active Transit (TAT), providing services relating to drivers and vehicles;
- Processing services for obtaining licences, permits, registrations, certificates, refunds and rebates;
- Providing contact centre services and access to citizens and businesses, acting as a single point of contact (via telephone and email) for information related to all provincial government programs and services;
- Providing tenants and landlords with efficient and cost-effective services to settle disputes through the Residential Tenancies program. The legislation's objective is to provide a framework for these relationships that balance the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants.
- Empowering consumers and regulating Nova Scotia's consumer marketplace, balancing the need to protect citizens with ease of compliance for businesses;
- Providing government-wide services including financial services, internal audit services including government's fraud reporting services, procurement services, continuous improvement and innovation, physical security, insurance and risk management, business continuity management, public safety and field communications; and geographic information services;
- Leads government-wide efforts to deliver more and better digital services through the Nova Scotia Digital Service (NSDS). Work collaboratively across government and with all departments to consider how provincial public services can be delivered with digital technologies to meet user needs, how data can drive change, and to plan for and lead Nova Scotia into a digital future;
- Licensing and regulation of alcohol and gaming, and the administration of fuel, tobacco and vaping products commodity taxation, including compliance and enforcement activities;
- Ensuring public safety and protection of the public good related to regulated activities under the SNS-IS mandate;
- Collecting debt on behalf of the Crown and the Municipalities, Universities, School Boards, and Hospitals (MUSH) sector.

Priorities

SNSIS is focused on listening to the needs and expectations of Nova Scotians and aims to deliver inclusive, high-quality, accessible programs and services across multiple channels. We utilize a citizen-centric approach to achieve operational and service excellence, while providing support to our teams and remaining fiscally responsible. SNSIS works to make it simpler, faster, safer and more secure for our clients and our partners to do what they need to do.

Actions

SNS-IS leads government-wide efforts to deliver more and better digital services through the Nova Scotia Digital Service (NSDS). Using a digital mindset and applying internet-era ways of working to services used by Nova Scotians, NSDS will continue to partner with departments and agencies and provide leadership in designing, building, and continuously improving government services using modern digital tools and platforms. In 2021-22, SNS-IS will:

- Lead the development and implementation of a Digital Government Strategy to enable safer, faster, and easier services for Nova Scotians, continue to stabilize existing inherited IT environments to enable modernization and digital transformation, promote internet-era public policy, and reduce waste and emissions from technology.
- Enhance and add to digital platform offerings, and ensure enabling, scaling, and sustaining of digital services;
- Develop a Data Strategy for the Government of Nova Scotia and help departments use disaggregated data to advance racial equity and understanding of how various groups are differently impacted ;
- Improve cyber security to ensure better protection of government and health data and information; and,
- Assist the Minister of Health and Wellness to adopt digital health technology, and help Nova Scotians access virtual healthcare providers outside their communities

SNSIS continues to promote innovative procurement practices, aligned with government's goals and values (such as diversity, inclusion and anti-racism), to enable departments in achieving their goals around climate change, energy efficiency and modernization of infrastructure. Where possible, we rely on government purchasing to advance the climate, environmental and equity agenda, work to identify new and improved service offerings and delivery methods, as well as capitalize on digital opportunities.

The Department is continuing to make progress with its multi-year Registries Modernization Initiative to improve the way these services are delivered to Nova Scotians. In 2021-22, SNSIS will:

- Implement new IT solutions for Vital Statistics (VS) Registry;
- Advance the modernization of the Lobbyist Registry, Land Registry and, in partnership with the Department of Transportation and Active Transit (TAT), the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV);

Red tape and regulatory burden reduction remain one of SNSIS' significant commitments. In collaboration with the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness (ORASE), we will reduce red tape and regulatory burden on businesses and citizens. In 2021-22, we will continue to identify opportunities to reduce regulatory and compliance burden on Nova Scotians in SNSIS programs and services through improved service offerings and process improvements.

In 2021-22, by understanding the needs of the restaurant industry, SNSIS will undertake necessary legislation and regulatory amendments to:

- Advance third-party delivery of alcoholic beverages with restaurant food orders;
- Explore additional and flexible ways of collecting liquor license fees;
- Collaborate with Department of Environment and Climate Change to remove barriers for restaurants so they may better meet customer needs and allow dogs on patios, where appropriate.

Working to ensure the enhanced protection of personal information and data under the care and control of government, SNS-IS will continue to modernize and enhance privacy practices and awareness across government balanced with citizens' rights to access government information.

Core Responsibilities

Service excellence is at the heart of everything SNS-IS does. As part of our core business, we provide a vast array of services to the citizens and businesses of Nova Scotia. We also provide the services, tools, and supports that enable other government departments and public sector entities to focus on providing quality services.

Actions

- Seek out opportunities to support entrepreneurs and business owners through process improvements and digital transformations. For example, in 2020-21 SNSIS launched RJSC Connect that provides smart forms for all business types, and allows users to track the status of their filings or document requests with real-time notifications and faster response times;
- Ensure continued support of Nova Scotians by maintaining the COVID-19 eviction ban for renovations put in place through the Public Health Order;
- Support government's commitment to Affordable Housing by ensuring swift implementation of the recommendations of the Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Commission, where applicable, and collaborating with and supporting the Minister of Infrastructure and Housing to address the supply of affordable housing and access to that housing;
- Modernize and update legislation, regulations and programs to respond to the evolving needs of citizens, businesses, and consumers, including the modernization of the *Residential Tenancies Act*;
- Foster innovation and seek new ways to utilize government procurement in a way that supports the economic, environmental, and social impacts of purchases. Opportunities will be highlighted to pilot some of the most promising new practices for increasing supplier diversity and to stimulate local business;
- Provide direct client service processing of applications, renewals, and payments across all channels on behalf of more than 30 programs and services from government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions;
- Develop information access and privacy standards, supportive tools, and resources to support the changing digital environment;
- Provide sustainable geographic solutions to support planning and informed decision making;
- Provide licensing and compliance functions for a broad range of provincial commodity tax programs including fuel, tobacco, vaping and corporate capital taxes while ensuring that the sale of contraband products are minimized;
- Provide reliable public safety communication services.

Financial Summary

Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services			
	2020-2021	2020-2021	2021-2022
	Estimate	Forecast	Estimate
Program & Service Area	(\$ thousands)	(\$ thousands)	(\$ thousands)
Departmental Expenses:			
Senior Management	424	363	440
Strategy and Corporate Services	11,651	11,027	11,356
Government Services	31,604	33,551	31,754
Internal Audit Centre	2,258	2,312	2,768
Financial Services	12,979	13,501	13,635
Citizen Services	30,313	34,532	31,893
Nova Scotia Digital Services	156,103	160,511	182,234
Procurement	9,754	9,109	9,873
Program Modernization	44,113	42,143	44,532
Total Departmental Expenses	299,199	307,049	328,485
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Recoveries	16,547	20,730	17,155
TCA Purchase Requirements	8,172	10,993	11,086
Funded Staff (Net FTE's)	1,614.9	1,530.5	1,655.2