



Accountability Report 2021–22

Premier/Executive Council/Priorities
& Planning


NOVA SCOTIA

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Accountability Report 2021–2022

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A. Accountability Statement

Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Office of the Premier/ Executive Council Office, Office of Priorities and Planning (formally Office of Strategy Management), and the Office of Citizen-Centered Approaches (the “Offices”) for the year ended March 31, 2022, is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Offices’ Statement of Mandate and Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments, and the opinions of the Offices.

The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Offices’ 2021-2022 Business Plan.

Original signed by:

The Honourable Tim Houston
Premier of Nova Scotia
President of the Executive Council

Original signed by:

Laura Lee Langley
Clerk of the Executive Council
Deputy Minister to the Premier
Acting Deputy Minister of the Office of Planning and Priorities

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B. Message from the President of the Executive Council

I am pleased to present the Accountability Report for the 2021-2022 fiscal year for the Offices.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) acts as a secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet) and its committees, and ensures its business is conducted in a timely and efficient manner.

ECO provides non-partisan advice and information to the Premier, Cabinet and its Committees. ECO administers government's decision-making process, develops and advances corporate priorities and plans, and provides advice and support on the governance of and appointments to agencies, boards and commissions. It also provides operational support to the Office of the Premier.

The Office of Priorities and Planning (OPP) helps to ensure successful implementation of government priorities as outlined in mandate letters for Ministers. OPP is responsible for communicating and managing priority objectives and working across departments to advance government's mandate. Improve the healthcare system, strengthening communities, improving the long-term care system and ensuring better access to mental health supports are among the priorities that matter to Nova Scotians and are at the heart of government's priorities.

The Office of Citizen-Centred Approaches collaborates with ECO, OPP and all departments to ensure government's priorities are advanced and supported to foster and facilitate citizen-centred and restorative approaches in the areas of strategy, decision-making, policy design and operations.

In the coming year, our government looks forward to working with all Nova Scotians as we listen to their concerns and bring forward solutions that help to build a province where everyone can see a future for themselves and their family. Together we will ensure that communities across Nova Scotia are able to provide a quality of life for their people that is second to none.

The Honourable Tim Houston
Premier of Nova Scotia
President of the Executive Council

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C. Financial Table and Variance Explanation

Executive Council Office/Office of the Premier

	2021-2022 Estimate	2021-2022 Actuals	2021-2022 Variance
Executive Council Office/ Office of the Premier	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Executive Council Office/ Office of the Premier	4,807	4,443	(364)
Total: Departmental Expenses	4,807	4,443	(364)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	0	0	0
Fees and Other Charges	0	0	0
Ordinary Recoveries	0	0	0
Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries	0	0	0
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	0
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	36.0	30.2	(5.8)
<u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to vacancy savings.			
<u>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to temporary vacancies.			

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Office of Citizen-Centered Approaches

	2021-2022 Estimate	2021-2022 Actuals	2021-2022 Variance
Office of Citizen-Centered Approaches	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Office of Citizen-Centered Approaches	2,204	1,119	(1,085)
Total: Departmental Expenses	2,204	1,119	(1,085)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	0	0	0
Fees and Other Charges	0	0	0
Ordinary Recoveries	0	0	0
Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries	0	0	0
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	0
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	7.0	6.7	(0.3)
<u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to change in government priorities.			
<u>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to change in government priorities.			

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Office of Priorities and Planning

	2021-2022 Estimate	2021-2022 Actuals	2021-2022 Variance
Office of Priorities and Planning	(\$thousands)		
Departmental Expenses:			
Strategy and Corporate Services	1,256	1,221	(35)
Total: Departmental Expenses	1,256	1,221	(35)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	0	0	0
Fees and Other Charges	0	0	0
Ordinary Recoveries	167	314	147
Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries	167	314	147
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	0
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	8.5	8.0	(0.5)
Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation: Variance due to operating savings			
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation: Variance due to a temporary vacancy			

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D. Measurement of Performance

The Offices discontinued the use of the client survey in 2017 in favor of meaningful conversations with clients and stakeholders to improve processes and communication.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OFFICE

Feedback from conversations with policy analysts, Cabinet Ministers, clients, and stakeholders is generally positive, and noted improved collaboration between the Executive Council Office and departments through the Cabinet submission process. An area of development identified is to continue to increase the efficiency of the Cabinet and Treasury and Policy Board submission process.

ECO has implemented an electronic submission process, which enabled departments, by way of email from the Deputy Minister, to submit Cabinet submissions on behalf of the Minister to a dedicated inbox. This improvement has resulted in a more efficient and effective process for Cabinet Ministers, departments, and ECO.

Over 700 electronic submissions to were supported by ECO in 2021-2022, which required detailed analysis to assist with informed decision making, and administrative support to ensure accurate and timely dissemination of information.

Governance and Accountability Unit:

The Governance and Accountability Unit (GAU) has centralized certain aspects of the Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABC) appointments and governance process to ensure that appointments are made in a timely way, and created and implemented strategies to promote diversity and inclusion. In addition to coordinating the appointments process, the goals of the GAU are to develop performance indicators for monitoring new policies and processes regarding appointments. The GAU frequently fielded calls from departments, ABCs, and applicants to assist them through the online web application and the appointment process, and to help better understand the corporate process.

The GAU continued its outreach and marketing to diversity groups promoting appointments to ABCs and encouraged members of the public inquiring about the process to self-identify when submitting their applications. Applicant and application numbers for the recruitment campaigns indicate the online system has been well received and both the number of applicants and applications has been maintained or increased over time. From April 1, 2021, until July 14, 2022, approximately 40% of individuals declare their gender and diversity when creating their system profiles. About 5% of individuals claiming diversity are from outside Canada and do not hold Canadian citizenship or Landed Immigrant Status, therefore are not eligible for appointment consideration.

From April 1, 2021, to July 14, 2022, there were 606 appointments to ABCs , of which 219 disclosed one or more diversity characteristics (roughly 1/3 or 36 % of the total number of appointments).

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OFFICE OF CITIZEN-CENTERED APPROACHES

OCCA worked to accelerate system level change and different ways of working to measurably improve the social wellbeing of Nova Scotians. Core activities included:

- providing facilitative leadership and support to corporate and inter-departmental committees advancing government priorities related to pandemic response, integrated service delivery and human-centered policy design; and
- supporting key departmental engagement processes with external stakeholders and community partners. For example, supported the Accessibility Directorate with engagement on the design of the Responsive Compliance and Enforcement Framework under the *Accessibility Act*.

Due to internal restructuring in 2021-2022, the functional responsibilities of OCCA were embedded within the Executive Council Office.

OFFICE OF PRIORITIES & PLANNING

OPP is responsible for communicating the priority objectives of Cabinet and working across departments to advance government's policy agenda. It works closely with departments and agencies to translate government's priorities into policies, plans, programs, and initiatives intended to produce measurable results. Government priorities are advanced and core responsibilities fulfilled through leadership in planning, policy development, and alignment across government.

In fiscal 2021-2022, OPP assisted with the transition to a newly elected government as it continued to support the response to COVID-19. It led efforts to articulate and communicate government's ambitious policy agenda across departments and their agencies. To deliver comprehensive solutions to Nova Scotians, the office staged various workshops and supported various leadership committees. Using a variety of methods, it facilitated collaboration and aligned work on government's priority objectives and complex issues. Work in areas such as predictive forecasting, strategic and growth planning, data analytics, and leadership support encouraged policies and programs that attract and retain people, create more and better opportunities, and support sustainable prosperity in all our regions. This past fiscal year, the office also significantly advanced government's capacity to provide timely, accurate, and meaningful information, data, and analysis to decision makers and improved government performance monitoring and measurement.

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E. Annual Report Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* (the “*Act*”) was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The *Act* allows government employees to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed, or is about to be committed, and they are acting in good faith.

The *Act* also protects disclosing employees from reprisals by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labour Board.

A wrongdoing, for the purpose of the *Act*, is:

- a) A contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations;
- b) A misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets;
- c) An act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health, or safety of persons or the environment; or
- d) Directing or counseling someone to commit a wrongdoing.

OP/ECO/OPP/OCCA have no items to report for 2021-2022.

Information Required under Section 18 of the <i>Act</i>	Fiscal Year 2021-2022
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	n/a