



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

June 2016



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The Caledon Institute of Social Policy regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

Newfoundland and Labrador

CHILDREN/DISABILITY

The province announced enhancements to the Inclusion Program, a voluntary option for eligible child care services to support the inclusion of all children in regular child care programming. The changes will come into effect in the fall of 2016 and will include opportunities for staff development, policies to ease student transitions between child care and school and increased parental involvement and communication with child care providers.

[Link](#)

New Brunswick

LABOUR MARKET

The provincial government has approved the implementation of pay equity adjustments for one of its largest groups of employees. Local 2745 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees includes more than 3,000 workers in the education sector, of which the vast majority is women. The commitment will equate to \$3.5 million a year over the next 10 years.

[Link](#)

LITERACY

The New Brunswick Literacy Secretariat released *The Power of Literacy – Moving towards New Brunswick's Comprehensive Literacy Strategy*, which contains 37 recommendations to improve literacy rates in the province and foster a culture of lifelong learning.

[Link](#)

SENIORS

The Auditor General highlighted a number of concerns regarding current and future nursing home bed demand, as well as the impact long waiting lists on health care. During the last 15 years, the budget for nursing home services almost tripled, outpacing overall provincial expense growth. The facilities are also operating at near capacity and hundreds of people are on waiting lists.

[Link](#)

Nova Scotia

CHILDREN

A report entitled *Affordable, Quality Child Care: A Great Place to Grow!* outlines changes that will take place over the next five years to tackle the concerns identified in the review of regulated child care. Actions in the first phase of the plan include making child care more affordable for families by investing in higher subsidy rates and addressing historically low wages for early childhood educators who were earning a median hourly wage of \$12.84.

[Link](#)



Parent subsidy per diems for child care in Nova Scotia are the lowest in the country and are a barrier for many families trying to access regulated child care. Beginning July 1, families with an income of \$25,000 or less will be eligible for the maximum child care subsidy, up from \$20,800. About 700 families currently receiving a partial subsidy will be eligible for the maximum. This change will attract about 1,200 new families into the program. Families with an income of more than \$25,000 up to \$70,000 will be eligible for a partial subsidy.

[Link](#)

EMPLOYMENT

The Transition Task Force released a report with 15 recommendations to get youth the training and education they need to find meaningful work in Nova Scotia. The task force included representation from youth and students, teachers and principals, school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, the apprenticeship system, universities, the African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaw communities, and business and industry. Recommendations from the task force include:

- providing relevant career information to youth earlier
- reviewing high school and upgrading programs
- helping more apprentices, college and university students complete their education and training, and to do so more quickly
- giving employers a greater voice in influencing some programs in schools, colleges and universities.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

A new \$300,000 annual Chronic Disease Innovation Fund will support programs in communities to reduce smoking or alcohol consumption, help people get active and encourage them to eat more fruits and vegetables.

[Link](#)

Prince Edward Island

COMMUNITIES

The province's Central Development Corporation has developed a new Community Capacity Fund. The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency will contribute \$175,313 and the province will add a \$58,437 investment through Innovation PEI. The Community Capacity Fund will focus on supporting nonprofit organizations to secure expertise to build capacity with respect to community economic development initiatives.

[Link](#)

DEMOGRAPHICS

PEI's 42nd Annual Statistical Review is available on the Department of

Finance website ([Link](#)). The 2015 edition gathers data from provincial government departments, the private sector and Statistics Canada. More than 100 tables outline the province's socioeconomic performance. The Annual Statistical Review is used to determine where, when and how best to deliver critical programs and services.

[Link](#)

LABOUR MARKET

The province launched [WorkPEI.ca](#), a new employment website for local employers and job seekers. The site provides access to assistance delivered by the province, including a new job board with advanced search features aimed at matching job seekers to employers through local job vacancies.

[Link](#)

Québec

EDUCATION

The province will spend \$195 million for 14 measures aimed directly at schools. In an approach based on budget decentralization, 2016-17 budgetary rules allow schools to implement their own measures to support educational success without having to consult their school boards. Measures include support for integration into regular classes of students with social or learning disabilities and practices devoted to success in reading and writing for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Close to \$1 million has been allocated to improve the supervision of schooling at home; \$700,000 is provided for the implementation of special needs pilot projects. The new rules also resolve the issue of school transport for private institutions across Québec.

[Link](#)

INCOME SECURITY

A new agreement was tabled between the governments of British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Québec and Saskatchewan. Beginning July 1, the agreement covers pension plans with members in more than one province.

[Link](#)

SENIORS

The province tabled *An Act to amend the civil Code of Québec* to protect the rights of elderly tenants. To restore a better balance between owners' rights and the protection of vulnerable seniors, the Act would:

- protect people ages 70 and over
- include a condition of 10 years of residence in targeted housing
- require the owner to provide equivalent housing in case of eviction or recovery.



Protections are also included in cases where landlords are 70 years old or older.

[Link](#)

Ontario

CAREGIVING

Ontario is investing an additional \$75 million over three years to provide patients with more options and access to community-based palliative and end-of-life care. As a first step, the province is expanding investments in hospice services by \$13.9 million over three years. This will increase funding for existing hospice beds by \$15,000 per adult bed and \$22,400 per pediatric bed.

[Link](#)

COMMUNITIES

Youth, municipal leaders, entrepreneurs, business leaders, community organizations and representatives from First Nations and Métis communities met at the Rural Ontario Summit to discuss a key issue: how best to attract and retain youth to rural Ontario. The province announced that it will:

- publish a Rural Ontario Summit report, which will include the ideas, feedback and best practices identified at the summit
- create a one-window website to assist rural Ontarians in accessing important government resource
- operate a third Rural Ontario Summit in 2018.

[Link](#)

DISABILITY

The Partnership Council on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities delivered a final report to the government which is aimed at addressing the high unemployment rates for people with disabilities. The government has stated it will act on the report's eight key recommendations.

Report [Link](#)

The government announced additional supports for children with autism and their families, including:

- a choice of direct funding or, if preferred, immediate and continuous access to Applied Behaviour Analysis services and supports, for children ages 5 and over who were previously on the Intensive Behavioural Intervention waitlist. This funding will provide access to continuous service until the child is able to enter the new Ontario Autism Program next year
- strengthened in-school autism supports to help children transition to and continue in full-time school

- increased access to diagnostic assessments to allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment
- greater access to information and direct supports for families to help them navigate the transition to the new program.

Implementation of the new Ontario Autism Program was originally slated to begin in 2018, and will now begin in June 2017.

[Link](#)

GOVERNANCE

The Ontario government is changing the way it displays gender information on health cards and drivers licences to ensure the fair, ethical and equitable treatment of people with trans and non-binary gender identity.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

The province introduced *The Patients First Act*. Its intent is to give Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks an expanded role, including in primary care and home and community care. The system-level changes is meant to provide easier access to care, better coordination and continuity of care, and a greater focus on culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

[Link](#)

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer Medical issued a statement that assistance in dying is now permitted in Ontario as a result of a decision by the Supreme Court of Canada. Ontario's health regulatory colleges for physicians, nurses and pharmacists will provide guidance regarding medical assistance in dying to patients who request this option. Ontario will also ensure that drugs required for medical assistance in dying will be available at no cost.

[Link](#)

Following a decision by the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, Ontario is making naloxone available in pharmacies across the province without a prescription and at no cost to eligible Ontarians to help reduce opioid overdoses.

[Link](#)

INCOME SECURITY

Ontario will ensure that 260,000 children in families receiving social assistance fully benefit from the proposed new federal Canada Child Benefit (CCB), without any provincial 'clawback.' The CCB will take effect July 1, 2016. The full amount of the CCB benefit will be paid directly to families and will not affect the amount of or eligibility for:

- Ontario Works benefits
- Ontario Disability Support Program benefits
- child care subsidies under the Child Care and Early Years Act



- Healthy Smiles Ontario, the province’s dental program for low-income youth
- rent-geared-to-income subsidies
- portable housing benefits.

[Link](#)

The province has appointed the Honourable Hugh Segal to provide advice on the design and implementation of a Basic Income Pilot in Ontario. Basic income, or guaranteed annual income, is a payment to eligible families or individuals that ensures a minimum level of income. Ontario will design and implement a pilot program to test the growing view that a basic income could help deliver income support more efficiently, while improving health, employment and housing outcomes for Ontarians. Mr. Segal will deliver a discussion paper to the province by the fall to inform the design and implementation of the pilot. The discussion paper will include advice about potential criteria for selecting target populations and/or locations, delivery models evaluation of the Basic Income Pilot. Ontario will undertake further engagement with experts, communities and other stakeholders as it moves towards design and implementation.

[Link](#)

Starting in early 2017, child support payments will be fully exempt from social assistance benefit calculations to increase incomes for families who receive both social assistance and child support. Currently, child support payments are treated as income and deducted dollar-for-dollar from benefits.

[Link](#)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/LABOUR MARKET

Ontario is expanding its investment in the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund. The province will invest \$70 million over seven years to extend the fund, originally launched in 2014. The new combined, 10-year total investment is \$95 million. The name of the program will also be changed to the Indigenous Economic Development Fund.

[Link](#)

MENTAL HEALTH

Ontario is piloting a new program that will give survivors of sexual assault access to free legal advice, regardless of how much time has passed since the incident. Survivors of sexual assault living in Toronto, Ottawa and the District of Thunder Bay will be able to receive up to four hours of free, confidential advice from a lawyer. The legal advice may be provided over the phone or in person.

[Link](#)

SOCIAL ECONOMY

Ontario has launched a new five-year strategy that will help social enterprises grow their businesses, enter new markets and create jobs, while addressing complex social and environmental challenges. Ontario’s Social

Enterprise Strategy 2016-21 set out commitments in three key areas:

- equipping social enterprises with solid business fundamentals
- connecting social enterprises to markets and capital to grow and scale
- demonstrating the value of social enterprise and social finance to investors, government, and communities.

The province will invest more than \$6 million in the first year of this renewed strategy.

[Link](#)

WOMEN

The Ontario government has set a target that, by 2019, women make up at least 40 percent of all appointments to every provincial board and agency. Ontario is also encouraging businesses to, by the end of 2017, set a target of appointing 30 percent women to their boards of directors. Once businesses set the target, they should aim to achieve it within three to five years.

[Link](#)

Manitoba

GOVERNANCE

The province has introduced proposed legislation that would repeal the *Balanced Budget, Fiscal Management and Taxpayer Accountability Act* and will introduce new legislation that would replace it in conjunction with plans for Budget 2017.

[Link](#)

The Manitoba government has adopted the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act*. Highlights of the legislation include:

- establishing a Francophone Affairs Advisory Council composed of senior officials and community members to advise and make recommendations to the minister responsible for francophone affairs
- modernizing the mandate of the Francophone Affairs Secretariat
- requiring departments and public bodies to prepare a multi-year strategic plan relating to the provision of French-language services
- requiring a report on the work of the secretariat and the advisory council, and progress made by public bodies to implement French-language services plans be tabled annually.

[Link](#)

Saskatchewan

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Budget forecasts total revenue of \$14.02 billion and total expense of \$14.46 billion for a projected deficit of \$434 million in 2016-17. The deficit is due largely to a drop of nearly a billion dollars in non-renewable



resource revenue. Social policy-related highlights include:

children

- at-risk children, youth and their families will receive a \$16.7 million investment, including:
 - \$7.9 million for medically fragile children and those with complex needs
 - \$5.7 million for foster care and extended family care
 - \$2.3 million in preventative services to keep children from coming into the care of the ministry
 - \$0.8 million for Assisted Adoption
- creation of 810 new child care spaces that are being developed as part of the 18 new elementary schools currently under construction
- \$1.6 million for nearly 200 previously-approved child care spaces this year. This investment brings total funding for child care to nearly \$53 million in this budget. The number of licensed child care spaces in Saskatchewan has increased by close to 5,800 since 2008, bringing the total to more than 14,600

disability

- \$210 million will be dedicated to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program for people with significant and enduring disabilities
- \$3.4 million will address the emerging needs of those with intellectual disabilities and support the transition of individuals from Valley View Centre as homes and programs become available
- work on a third assessment and stabilization home – part of the safety net of supports for people with intellectual disabilities – will begin
- government's next steps on the *Saskatchewan Disability Strategy* will focus on the "Where to Start" actions discussed in the strategy, as well as six priority areas identified by community members:
 - accessible and safe transportation so people can participate in their communities
 - respite to help families and caregivers get a break from their caregiving role
 - accessibility legislation to create more inclusive communities
 - residential services to help people live in their homes and communities
 - service co-ordination and navigation so people can find disability services when they need them
 - awareness and understanding of the rights of people experiencing disabilities so all citizens have a greater understanding of and respect for their rights,

education

- \$3.7 billion in total spending and investments in pre-Kindergarten to

grade 12 and post-secondary education, student supports and job skills training. The budget includes K-12 school operating funding of almost \$1.9 billion, up \$16.6 million or about 1.0 percent compared to last year

- \$288 million to school divisions for supports for learning funding in the 2016-17 school year. This funding includes supports for students with intensive needs, students in vulnerable circumstances and students who require English as an additional language support. In addition, \$5.4 million of school operating funding is being targeted to support Syrian refugee students
- \$660 million this year in operating funding for Saskatchewan's post-secondary schools
- \$53 million in direct support to students, including:
 - \$32.5 million for the Student Aid Fund to provide student grants, bursaries and loans
 - more than \$14 million for scholarships, including the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship
 - \$6.5 million for the Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings

health

- the 2016-17 Health Budget was increased by \$57.4 million, or 1.1 percent, over 2015-16. There has been a 50 percent increase in the health budget since 2007. \$5.17 billion will be invested in health infrastructure, improving access to care and reducing wait times for surgery and diagnostic services for Saskatchewan people
- the province will reduce Health Authority administration expenses by \$7.5 million and re-invest those savings in frontline staff in long-term care homes
- \$20 million in additional funding to the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative to reduce wait times

housing

\$3.8 million for housing programs – the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation will support the Disability Strategy, Poverty Reduction Strategy and Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan by focusing on accessible, affordable housing for those most in need

income security

\$494 million for income assistance programs that support more than 30,000 individuals and families. This investment includes \$36.5 million for the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA), an increase of \$19.5 million over last fiscal year. In 2015, a procedural change directed all new fully employable applicants to TEA, rather than some to the Saskatchewan Assistance Program, resulting in more targeted and streamlined services for fully employable clients. Some program changes will be introduced in this fiscal year to increase fairness and equity among clients



and enhance the sustainability of the programs, while ensuring that vulnerable citizens receive the supports they need.

Indigenous peoples

- \$211.9 million in program funding intended primarily for First Nations and Métis organizations and individuals
 - \$30.8 million in funding for targeted activities on- and off-reserve, such as training for jobs and on-reserve Adult Basic Education (Ministry of the Economy)
 - \$5.1 million in ongoing funding for initiatives that respond to the Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis People (Ministry of Education)
 - \$78.8 million, an increase of \$4.8 million, in gaming agreement transfers to First Nations and Métis organizations (Ministry of Government Relations). The Budget also includes increased funding for hiring additional wildfire fighting crews (Ministry of Environment) and the First Nations Apprenticeship Program in the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

[Link](#)
 Health details [Link](#)
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CAREGIVING

Saskatchewan employees who need to take time away from work to care for a loved one will soon be eligible to receive up to 28 weeks of job-protected leave. This is an increase from eight weeks. Amendments are the result of recent changes in federal legislation in which employees are eligible for 26 weeks of benefits after observing a two-week waiting period.

[Link](#)

FAMILIES

The Sweet Dreams project provides vulnerable mothers with a safe place to live with their children while they receive parenting support, access to educational opportunities and the chance to develop employability skills. The five-year goal of the project is to help 22 children out of foster care by keeping them safely with their mothers continuously for more than six months after participating in the program. The spring 2016 periodic review from an independent assessor confirmed that 21 children and their mothers had achieved this to date, significantly reducing the likelihood of those children having to come into care in future. The Sweet Dreams pilot project is set to continue until 2019. The project was made possible by a Social Impact Bond between the Government of Saskatchewan, EGADZ, Conexus Credit Union and social benefactors Wally and

Colleen Mah – the first of its kind in Canada.

[Link](#)

The Healthy Families Initiative, a new two-year \$750,000 pilot program, will fund up to 10 Regina families with complex needs while reducing their dependency on government programs and services. The program will assist families who have been top users of publically-funded programs and services. Counselling staff will work with the families to reduce criminal offences and family violence, support families to care for their children, increase employment, support families challenged by mental health and addictions, and ensure children are attending school. The Healthy Families Initiative is an evidence-based program modeled on a successful initiative in the United Kingdom. Based on the results of the model program, it is estimated that the Healthy Families Initiative will generate a two-to-one return on investment, saving government \$1.5 million.

[Link](#)

A program that helps minimize the effect of separation and divorce on family members, especially children, is now being offered throughout the province. “Family Matters: Assisting Families through Separation and Divorce” provides high-quality information and a cost-effective way to access the justice system. The program, which was provided nearly \$1.3 million in funding from the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, offers families in transition access to an early, affordable and informal opportunity to resolve issues. The program assists couples with or without children.

[Link](#)

HOUSING

More than \$2.1 million has been approved under the province’s new Graduate Retention Program – First Home Plan, in support of 230 approved applications. Of that amount, payments of \$450,000 have been issued for 49 interest-free loans. The average loan is \$9,185. To date, approximately 276 applications have been made, with the first received 17 minutes after its launch.

[Link](#)

MINIMUM WAGE

On October 1, 2016, Saskatchewan’s minimum wage will rise from \$10.50 to \$10.72 per hour. This increase will impact more than 23,000 minimum wage earners, more than half of whom are under 25 years of age.

[Link](#)

Alberta

MINIMUM WAGE

Following weeks of consultation with residents, the province is planning the next steps toward a \$15 minimum wage by 2018. Effective



October 1, Alberta's general minimum wage will rise \$1.00 to \$12.20 per hour and the current liquor server rate will be removed. Weekly and monthly minimum wages used by certain professions will rise to \$486 and \$2,316, respectively, at the same time. Minimum wage will go up a further \$1.40, to \$13.60 per hour, on October 1, 2017, and by \$1.40, to \$15 per hour, on October 1, 2018. Weekly and monthly rates will increase by equivalent amounts.

[Link](#)

SENIORS

Twenty-five seniors groups, community organizations and municipalities across the province will receive a total of \$1.2 million to address and prevent elder abuse. The grants will be allocated for year two of the three-year, \$3-million Taking Action Against Elder Abuse Co-ordinated Community Response Program.

[Link](#)

British Columbia

CHILDREN

The province's Child Care Major Capital Funding Program will allocate \$11.3 million to create 1,818 new licensed child-care spaces in 30 communities.

[Link](#)

COMMUNITIES

The BC Economic Development Portal has been updated to strengthen the economic resiliency of communities in all regions of the province. It allows easy access to a range of essential tools that build capacity at a local level, including:

- Funding and Grants Search Tool (new): find financial support by searching an up-to-date database
- Performance Measurement Tool (new): tracks success and demonstrates the value of economic development
- BC Economic Atlas: visualizes a region's potential and make better decisions with an economic data-mapping tool
- webinar series: keeps up on current trends and practices with live or recorded webinars
- economic development resources: teaches the basics, assesses communities and uses toolkits (e.g., Business Attraction Toolkit) to identify economic opportunities and secure investment opportunities.

[Link](#)

DISABILITY

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is eliminating the \$45 BC Bus Pass annual administration fee for people with the Persons with Disabilities designation. The change is part of a series of policy measures that will correct an inequity in the ministry's system of transportation supports. Currently, about half of the people receiving disability assistance do not get any transportation support. The government has invested \$170 million over three years to ensure all 100,000 people on disability assistance have transportation support.

Beginning September 1, people with disabilities will receive a rate increase of \$25 and a \$52 transportation support allowance. They will have the choice of accepting the transportation support allowance on their assistance cheque, or in the form of the BC Bus Pass. Clients who get the Special Transportation Subsidy worth \$66 per month will continue to receive that support, plus an additional \$11 per month.

[Link](#)

Students who face barriers to education and training – such as physical or learning disabilities – are being supported with a range of programs being developed by individual public post-secondary institutions. The province is providing one-time, targeted investments of \$75,000 for 20 public post-secondary institutions. In addition, Vancouver Community College has received \$275,000 to create programs and supports for students with disabilities.

[Link](#)

The province released a two-year progress update of *Accessibility 2024*, its 10-year plan to make BC the most progressive province in the country for people with disabilities. Accessible in Braille and American Sign Language, the report showcases innovative activities and partnerships among government, businesses and the disability community. Highlights include:

- \$164 million invested through the Employment Program of BC over the last four years and funding for assistive technology through the newly-launched Technology@Work program
- the Presidents Group – a group of influential business leaders – is encouraging employers across different sectors to hire more people with disabilities
- Policy changes over the last two years include:
 - an investment of \$170 million over three years to increase rates for people on disability assistance provides more choice and transportation support to 100,000 disability assistance recipients
 - asset limits for people receiving disability assistance were increased from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for a single person and from \$10,000 to \$200,000 for a family in which two people have a disability



- people on disability assistance can also receive cash gifts or inheritances with no impact on their disability assistance benefits.

Report [Link](#)
Release [Link](#)

EDUCATION

BC will invest \$6 million so that, by the end of Grade 9, every student in the province will take a module of basic coding under BC's new curriculum. Coding is a hands-on way of teaching students how to analyze a problem, determine the steps to fix that problem and then create directions to enable a machine to carry out those steps. Whether or not students pursue careers in the tech sector, these are vital analysis and critical thinking skills for future success.

[Link](#)

The *Private Training Act* will be brought into force through regulation effective September 1, 2016, and will benefit students and private training institutions, including language schools.

This new legislative framework will create higher quality standards, streamlined administrative processes and a broader range of enforcement mechanisms. The new approach is in response to the core review undertaken by government, and balances the interests of students and private training institutions. The sector is expected to complete the transition within approximately 18 months.

[Link](#)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/HOUSING

Aboriginal individuals and families with low to moderate incomes will benefit from new affordable rental housing with the BC government announcing a \$50 million investment to improve access to Aboriginal housing. The funding is part of a \$355 million investment announced in February 2016 to create more than 2,000 units of affordable housing. It is the largest single affordable housing investment in BC's history.

[Link](#)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

British Columbia's First Peoples' Cultural Council has launched a new keyboard application that makes more than 100 First Nations languages available on mobile devices. It allows First Nations speakers to email, text or send documents written in their own language. BC has 203 First Nations communities with 34 languages and 61 dialects; 29 percent of semi-fluent speakers are under 25.

[Link](#)

INCOME SECURITY/LABOUR MARKET

The province announced the initial results of the first round of offering the Single Parent Employment Initiative. More than 2,800 single parents on income and disability assistance have enrolled in the program to date. Participants can access up to 12 months of funded training for in-demand jobs or work experience placements, child care costs, transporta-

tion assistance and employment readiness workshops. They are able to remain on income assistance while enrolled in a training program. They also continue to be supported in the first year of employment with child care costs and supplemental health coverage.

[Link](#)

LABOUR MARKET

Through a new partnership with Small Business BC, small business owners can apply to the Canada-BC Job Grant to cover two-thirds of the costs of skills training for new or current employees to a maximum of \$10,000 for each employee trained per fiscal year. In addition, employers may qualify for up to 100 percent of costs if the training results in the company hiring a person who was unemployed, up to a maximum of \$15,000 for each future employee.

[Link](#)

Yukon Territory

No updates this month.

Northwest Territories

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The \$1.6 billion budget reflects the GNWT's commitment to protecting spending on core social programs. Social policy-related highlights include:

- \$4.3 million in new initiatives for education, training and youth development including \$2.2 million to the Student Financial Assistance to assist with costs such as housing amounts for students away from their communities, tuition grants and student loan repayment assistance
- direct funding under the labour agreement with the federal government to help NWT residents with disabilities become suitably employed by enhancing support for employer needs
- \$4.3 million in community wellness and safety initiatives including \$501,000 to ensure a successful rollout of the new *Mental Health Act*.

[Link](#)

Nunavut

INCOME SECURITY

The Government of Nunavut has released the *Report on the Review and Reform of Income Assistance and Economic Development*. It proposes a number of improvements to income assistance and economic development programs. The report and recommended reforms are based on the ideas and suggestions Nunavummiut proposed last fall during community visits.

[Link](#)