

- October 2013 – Radio Sher-e- Punjab – focused on providing information to the South Asian community;
 - November 2013 – Ready to Rent – Hiye Yu Lelum First Nations group;
 - November 2013 – Ready to Rent – Pauquachin First Nation;
 - February 2014 – Ready to Rent – Victoria Multicultural Centre; and
 - February 2014 – Settlement Services Department for the Tri-Cities (Coquitlam).
- » The Residential Tenancy Branch launched the French version of the Guide for Landlords and Tenants. The Branch continues to publish the Guide for Landlords and Tenants in B.C. in the Punjabi and Chinese languages.
- » The Residential Tenancy Branch continues to offer the general Residential Tenancy Branch brochure in Arabic, Chinese simplified, Chinese traditional, Filipino, French, Japanese, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. All are available online.
- » In addition, the Residential Tenancy Branch built on its ongoing relationship with the Francophone community by providing a public information session in French at the Vancouver Francophone Community Centre.

Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

MANDATE

The vision of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians trying to overcome social and economic barriers. To support this vision, the ministry provides a system of supports and services to eligible British Columbians needing temporary income assistance, disability services and programs, training for employment and supports for community living services that help adults with developmental disabilities and their families.



EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

The ministry understands the need to provide services and supports to a diverse client community in a way that meets their needs. As part of the ministry's vision of achieving positive outcomes for our clients, the ministry has developed a framework consisting of a set of goals and values that are integrated with the B.C. Government's corporate diversity plan: Reflecting Our Communities as well as Being the Best and Citizens @ the Centre.

This framework focuses on reducing access barriers to employment and providing supports for clients of all ethnic, religious and cultural minorities, and First Nations, Metis and Inuit populations. The framework ensures that every client will experience consistent and responsive service, no matter where or how it is delivered. In addition, the ministry is promoting and supporting social innovation as a means to achieve better client outcomes and address social challenges.

EMBRACING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

LANGUAGES

Wherever possible, language is eliminated as a barrier to services for British Columbians. Through the Provincial Language Service, frontline staff works with individuals through translation and interpretive services in over 150 languages.

Employment Program of BC service providers are required to provide full services to all unemployed British Columbians seeking assistance. Service providers achieve this in a variety of ways that are tailored to specific service demands found in their catchment area. Many of these contractors deliver services such as workshops or case management in languages other than English at the local Employment Services Centres. Sub-contracted, specialized immigrant service providers, are also a part of the service delivery model and in some catchment areas such as rural areas where the demand is less, contractors utilize specialized multicultural language supports and other services as needed.

There are dozens of sub-contracted specialized service providers utilized across the province to assist multicultural groups and individuals access all the services provided through the Employment Program of BC. For example, in areas where Service Canada has indicated there are large French-speaking populations the ministry's employment programs has specific contracts to ensure that service can be provided in French.

Additionally, many print materials, such as rack cards and brochures, are available in a variety of languages including English, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Filipino, French, Hindi, Korean, Punjabi and Spanish.

ENGAGING OUR STAFF

The ministry promotes and supports a culture of multiculturalism within the organization by recognizing and celebrating staff contributions, ideas on diversity and by reflecting on the differences in our workplace and communities.

Staff contribute to a blog called "The Water Cooler" on the ministry intranet site, writing on topics of importance to them. Diversity and multiculturalism are common topics of discussion. This has prompted dialogue between staff on how they can work together to foster a more inclusive workplace and build understanding within the organization in how we interact with those we serve. Recently, Elizabeth Jones, a staff member posted a blog to encourage readers to share their thoughts and stories on diversity. An excerpt from her blog is included below:

What is Diversity?

Public Service Week is once again upon us and the theme is Celebrating Diversity.

But what does diversity mean? I know there is an easy way to define diversity (hello Google!), but for me it's difficult to pinpoint. Immediately, diversity brings to mind difference and yet that certainly is not what Public Service Week is about. So, how do we celebrate diversity in a way that also unifies us?

Lately, I have been thinking a lot about storytelling. When I was a kid, I used to love listening to stories my father told and, for whatever reason, they were never fairy tales or adventures. Often times they were about himself, his dad or the people he had met throughout the course of his life. Even to this day, my dad will tell me about someone he met and through that story he gives me wisdom, advice or a new perspective.

It is through our individual stories that our sense of identity is formed and that sense of identity forms the foundation of our community. And what is the public service if not a community?

We may be unique and varied individuals but the thing that always binds us together is that each of us has a powerful story of a life already lived, a present in the making and hopes as well as dreams to build our future upon. This is how I see diversity unifying us; through our stories.

Each day, we listen to the stories of the people we serve and we meet them with compassion, understanding and support because in their story we see our own. It is through our individual storytelling that we can allow our personal experiences to be heard and, through the sharing of those stories, we build a powerful, rich and diverse community identity.

The ministry's complement of over 2,000 staff is diverse and represents every major culture, a sample of which includes: First Nations, Aboriginal and Metis, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Columbian, Doukhor, Dutch, English, Finish, French, German, Indian, Indonesian, Iranian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Jewish, Korean, Malaysian, Norwegian, Pakistani, Persian, Pilipino, Russian, Scottish, Spanish, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, Tamil, Ukrainian and Welsh.

PARTNERSHIPS

The ministry is involved in a number of partnerships that support multiculturalism. Some partnerships are broad and involve multiple organizations and have province-wide mandates. These include leading government's work to promote and support social innovation; and the generation, development, implementation and scaling of new ideas to address B.C.'s most complex social and environmental problems. Certain populations, including new immigrants and Aboriginal people, tend to be especially vulnerable to the impact of these challenges.

The ministry engages in partnerships with Aboriginal groups to provide training programs that meet the specific needs of their communities. The example below involves the First Nations Social Development Society and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and how they were assisted to develop training programs for First Nations Social Development Workers delivering income assistance on reserve.

First Nations Social Development Workers deliver income assistance to clients on reserve. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development staff and First Nations Social Development Society have been provided access to the ministry intranet site to review the ministry Employment & Assistance worker training material. The ministry is engaging in conversations with the Society and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada about supporting training for First Nations Social Development Workers.

As a result of this conversation, workers were invited to participate in Service Excellence training offered in the north and Mental Health training that was offered across the province. Over 400 participants took advantage of this opportunity. Further partnering opportunities may include giving access to Employment & Assistance worker training material, and First Nations Social Development Workers working with ministry staff to increase awareness of aboriginal cultures.

In addition, the ministry attended a conference last winter to discuss a partnership with the First Nations Social Development Society to work on developing employment planning training. This will enable First Nations Social Development Workers to add an employment planning component to income assistance eligibility focussed on young adults within the aboriginal community.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES

SERVICE DELIVERY

All new frontline workers go through Core Training, a three month training program, preparing staff to perform the essential elements of their jobs. The Core Training curriculum includes a dedicated module on diversity and inclusiveness.

The ministry has established relationships in each of the communities where treaties with First Nations have been signed (Tsawwassen, Maa-nulth and Nisga'a) and Aboriginal organizations (e.g. Friendship Centres, Aboriginal Homeless Outreach, staff and First Nations staff meet to share information on social assistance services.

SOCIAL INNOVATION

As part of government's ongoing work to build the province's capacity for social innovation, the ministry works with its business and non-profit partners to grow and strengthen B.C.'s social enterprise sector. Social enterprises — business that direct their profits toward a social purpose — are important contributors to the social and cultural life of the province. For example, the Osoyoos Indian Branch Development Corporation operates nine businesses, including the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, which highlights the Okanagan people and the area's desert landscape.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

The ministry is committed to supporting a diverse workforce. Based on information from the 2013 Work Environment Survey administered by the BC Public Service Agency, the ministry currently has a higher percentage of workers self-identifying as either Aboriginal (3.4%) or a visible minority (17.5%) than the BC Public Sector as a whole (BC Public Service: 3.1% Aboriginal and 13.1% Visible Minority). This is evidence of the ministry's inclusive hiring practices and embracing culture as a value.

Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

MANDATE

VISION

To be recognized for excellence and innovation in technology, services and program delivery for British Columbians.

MISSION

To grow B.C.'s technology sector, champion innovation, and enable delivery of cost-effective, accessible and responsive services to citizens and the public sector.

We play a unique 'threefold' role within government, as a service delivery agent, providing services directly to citizens; an enabling agent, providing services and infrastructure to our client ministries and the broader public sector; and a change agent, leading the development and implementation of corporate strategies. Our goals are to create conditions for B.C. businesses to be successful; make it easier for citizens and business to interact with government; and deliver efficient and effective services to the Public Sector.

I live multiculturalism by...

Living in my city and embracing everything it has to offer.