



Better Regulations for British Columbians



Contents

Message from the Minister	2
--	----------

StrongerBC: A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow	3
--	----------

Goals and Objectives	4
-----------------------------------	----------

Section 1: Supporting People and Families	6
---	----------

Section 2: Building Resilient Communities	16
---	-----------

Section 3: Advancing True, Lasting and Meaningful Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples	24
--	-----------

Section 4: Meeting B.C.'s Climate Commitments	26
---	-----------

Section 5: Leading on Environmental and Social Responsibility	28
---	-----------

Section 6: Fostering Innovation Across Our Economy	29
--	-----------

Accountability and Commitment	35
--	-----------

StrongerBC
for everyone



Ravi Kahlon

Minister of Jobs, Economic
Recovery and Innovation

Message from the Minister

From day one, our government has been committed to making life better for people.

This work continues with this year's Better Regulations for British Columbians annual report.

This year's Better Regulations for British Columbians report highlights key actions we have taken to improve services for people and businesses during an incredibly challenging year with the ongoing pandemic, wildfires and extreme weather events.

Through our Modernizing Language Initiative, our government continued to reduce barriers in accessing services by working to ensure people are better able to see themselves in the language used by government.

Over the past year, ministry staff worked to remove nearly 750 gendered and other non-inclusive terms from B.C.'s regulations.

Words matter when it comes to promoting inclusion and eliminating discrimination; these individual changes, totaling more than 1,350 instances, make a significant difference in ensuring everyone is represented and reflected in the work we do in government. By using inclusive language, we are taking an important step to break down barriers.

Next year, we plan to remove gendered language from our provincial statutes.

In addition to modernizing language throughout B.C.'s regulations, achievements from this past year include

launching the BC Community Climate Funding Guide, enabling municipalities to ban single-use plastics, and increasing housing flexibility on the Agricultural Land Reserve, to name a few. Additionally, we are taking action and expanding our streamlined amendment process to fast-track regulatory changes that align with our ambitious climate targets for a clean and inclusive economy.

Through this work, we are continuing to ensure better, smarter regulations and services that benefit people, businesses and the environment.

Earlier this year, the Premier and I released the [StrongerBC Economic Plan](#): our government's long-term plan to build an economy that works for everyone. Our work on the Better Regulations for British Columbians initiative supports the StrongerBC Economic Plan while creating a more inclusive British Columbia, where everyone has equal access to government services, no matter their sexual orientation, gender identity, race or cultural beliefs.

Because an economy built for all is an economy built to succeed.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ravi Kahlon'.

Honourable Ravi Kahlon

Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

StrongerBC

A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow

In February 2022, B.C. launched StrongerBC: A Plan for Today, a Vision for Tomorrow, B.C.'s long-term economic plan.

The StrongerBC Economic Plan is for British Columbians by British Columbians, and is the result of months of consultation with people from every region of the province and all walks of life – including businesses, workers, First Nations and Indigenous leaders.

Building off the province's strong economic recovery, the StrongerBC Economic Plan sets out to move B.C. forward with a clear direction for achieving two big goals: inclusive growth and clean growth.

The StrongerBC Economic Plan marks a fundamental change in how we think about economic development and growth by focusing on supporting people and families; building resilient communities; advancing lasting and meaningful reconciliation; meeting B.C.'s climate commitments; positioning B.C. as a leader in ESG (environmental, social and governance) values; and, continuing to foster and grow innovation throughout the economy.

As first steps, the government has moved the StrongerBC Economic Plan forward by announcing key actions including:

- Bridging the digital divide by accelerating the timeline to give everyone in B.C. access to high-speed internet by 2027;
- Investing in British Columbians to fill the jobs of tomorrow by adding more than 600 nurse training seats and expanding affordable and accessible child care spaces for B.C. families;
- Launching the Trade Diversification Strategy by taking the first step of opening a trade office in Vietnam focused on sustainable wood products; and,
- Launching B.C.'s Mass Timber Action Plan to grow the mass timber industry and create good jobs.

For more information about the StrongerBC Economic Plan, visit: <https://strongerbc.ca/plan>.



Goals and Objectives

British Columbia's long-standing commitment to regulatory and service improvement is supported by

THREE MAIN GOALS:

- Increasing access to quality government services that people count on;
- Promoting a modern, efficient, and effective regulatory system; and
- Enhancing accountability for regulatory and service improvement activities.

This is possible through our continued dedication to eliminating outdated regulations and making programs and services more accessible for British Columbians throughout the province.

This year's annual report highlights regulatory and service improvements over the past fiscal year to make life better for British Columbians. The initiatives showcase specific actions government has taken to improve health care, fight climate change, create good jobs, build critical infrastructure, make life more affordable, support people and businesses through the impacts of the pandemic and extreme weather events, and ensure inclusive and clean economic growth in an economy that works for everyone.



The report is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 1 [*Supporting People and Families:*](#)**
promoting the people-centred regulatory and service improvements that British Columbians have come to trust and count on;
- **Section 2 [*Building Resilient Communities:*](#)**
showing how we are helping communities thrive with modern infrastructure resilient to changes in the climate and the economy;
- **Section 3 [*Advancing True, Lasting and Meaningful Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples:*](#)**
highlighting our commitment to reconciliation as well as our dedication to building partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and First Nations communities to advance economic opportunities;
- **Section 4 [*Meeting B.C.'s Climate Commitments:*](#)**
featuring initiatives that mitigate and/or adapt to climate change and help people and businesses transition to clean energy solutions;
- **Section 5 [*Leading on Environmental and Social Responsibility:*](#)**
demonstrating how we are positioning B.C. to compete and win in a global economy that puts a premium on ESG values;
- **Section 6 [*Fostering Innovation Across Our Economy:*](#)**
showcasing the innovative tools, technologies and processes launched over the past year that increase digital access and make life easier for British Columbians; and,
- **[*Accountability and Commitment:*](#)**
profiling B.C.'s commitment to maintaining accountability on regulatory and service improvements.

Section 1

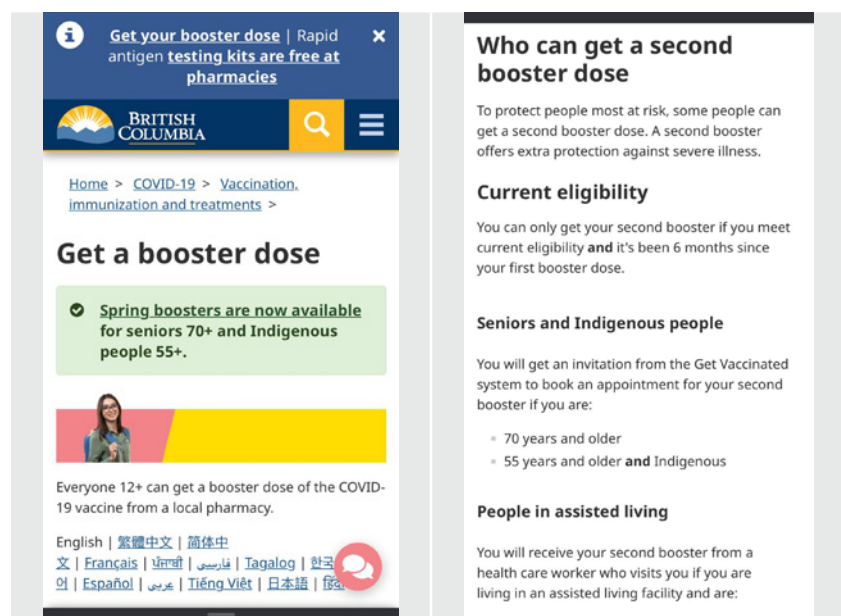
Supporting People and Families

Putting people and families first guides our work and focuses our priorities to design and deliver the services British Columbians have come to rely on. Through the StrongerBC Economic Plan, our government is supporting people and families across a range of initiatives to make life better and more secure. We are making life more affordable by ensuring paid sick leave is available to workers; increasing access to quality child care spaces so that people can navigate their lives without worrying about the health and safety of their children; providing interest-free rent loans and preventing renovations so that people who rent their homes have the security of not losing their housing; and we are providing safe spaces and resources for survivors of abuse, people with substance use issues, and people experiencing anxiety.

The skills, talents and ambitions of B.C.'s people are one of our most important assets. As we continue to emerge from the pandemic and build on our strong economic recovery, we are helping today's workers upgrade their skills and train for more than one million new job openings in the province over the next 10 years to ensure all British Columbians can reach their full potential during these times of rapid change. We've created thousands of new post-secondary tech spaces, reduced barriers to education by keeping tuition affordable, waived tuition for children in care, expanded grants, built 8,000 new student housing units, and restored compulsory apprenticeship and trades. We are building a strong economy that benefits everyone, today and in the future. With our work introducing anti-racism data to tackle systemic racism and improve government programs and services as well as providing training and job opportunities to 5,000 people between the ages of 18-29, we are putting the pieces in place to prepare people and businesses for future opportunities in an economy that works for everyone.

StrongerBC
for everyone

GET VACCINATED SYSTEM

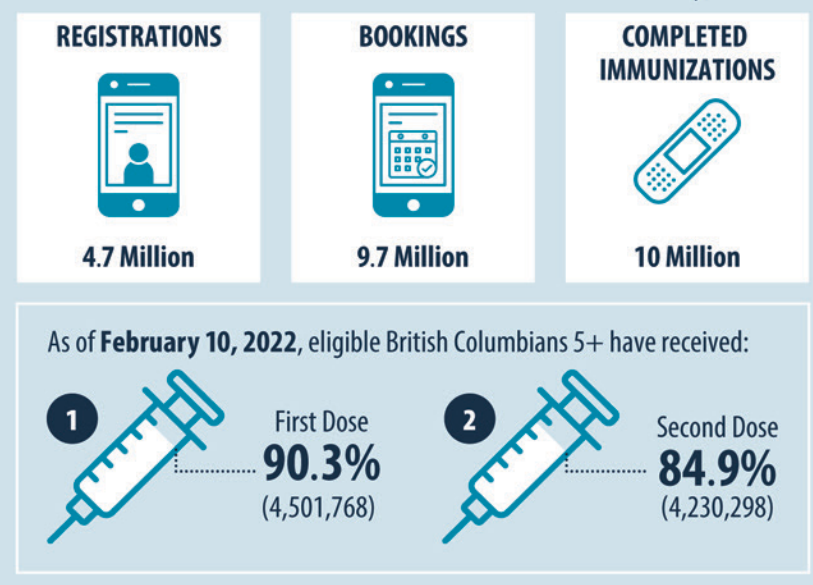


The [Get Vaccinated system](#) was launched to streamline the process of booking COVID-19 vaccination appointments. The system provides quick and convenient access for British Columbians to register and book their vaccine appointments online, reschedule appointments as needed, and receive confirmation and reminders of their appointment via text message or email. As a result, quick and easy access to the vaccine was made available for millions of British Columbians. The system also records the clinical administration of the vaccine, captures information about adverse effects, tracks inventory, and supports vaccine rollout reporting.

B.C.'S COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION PLAN

One of B.C.'s key strengths throughout the pandemic has been its unified and consistent COVID-19 briefings and public health guidance that British Columbians and our visitors have come to trust, respect, and rely on. B.C.'s [COVID-19 Immunization Plan](#) includes unified, consistent and up-to-date information posted online, citizen supports available to answer direct questions via telephone and at ServiceBC offices, as well as the launch of digital tools such as the [Get Vaccinated system](#).

COVID-19 vaccine metrics as of: February 2022





COVID-19 VACCINATION LEAVE

Employees in B.C. are now entitled to job-protected leave inclusive of travel time when receiving their COVID-19 vaccinations. Employees are entitled to up to three hours of paid leave, per dose, as well as unpaid job-protected leave for those who need to assist a dependent family member to be vaccinated. Removing barriers to employees accessing a COVID-19 vaccination helps stop the spread of the virus, supports safe workplaces for employees and customers and aids in B.C.'s economic recovery. This leave is of special benefit to employees who work in rural and remote communities or who have circumstances

where they must travel greater distances to get to a vaccination clinic, or where local clinics have limited hours. As well, paid vaccination leave helps women, youth, minimum wage earners, and other equity-seeking groups who are more likely to be in lower-paid jobs that do not provide employer-paid leave benefits.

PAID SICK LEAVE

Between May 20 and December 31, 2021, workers covered by B.C.'s Employment Standards Act were entitled to up to three days of paid COVID-19-related sick leave. A worker who was sick with COVID-19 (or had symptoms and was

waiting for a test result) was required to self-isolate due to public health orders; this paid sick leave supported these workers to stay home from work without losing wages and protected other people who would have come in contact with them. Government also recognized that many businesses, especially those hard-hit by the pandemic, would need help to cover these costs and supported employers who did not already have a paid sick leave program. Government reimbursed the wages these businesses paid, up to \$200 per day per employee and up to three days, for workers who took COVID-19 sick leave.

Effective January 2022, British Columbia became the first province in Canada to implement a minimum entitlement of five days of paid sick leave per year for all workers covered by the Employment Standards Act. The pandemic illustrated how important it is for workers to be able to stay home if they are sick, to protect themselves and others. Yet, prior to the new entitlement, more than one million workers in B.C. did not have access to paid sick leave and were forced to make the difficult choice between going to work sick or losing wages. Paid leave for any illness or injury protects workers and those around them and is beneficial to businesses.

Paid leave helps to address inequities in current sick leave entitlements, which are often not available to lower paid workers, many of whom are youth, women, and other equity-seeking groups.

ANTI-RACISM IN B.C.

The Province has carried out extensive engagement to support a new anti-racism data act that will help to dismantle systemic racism and improve government programs and services for everyone.

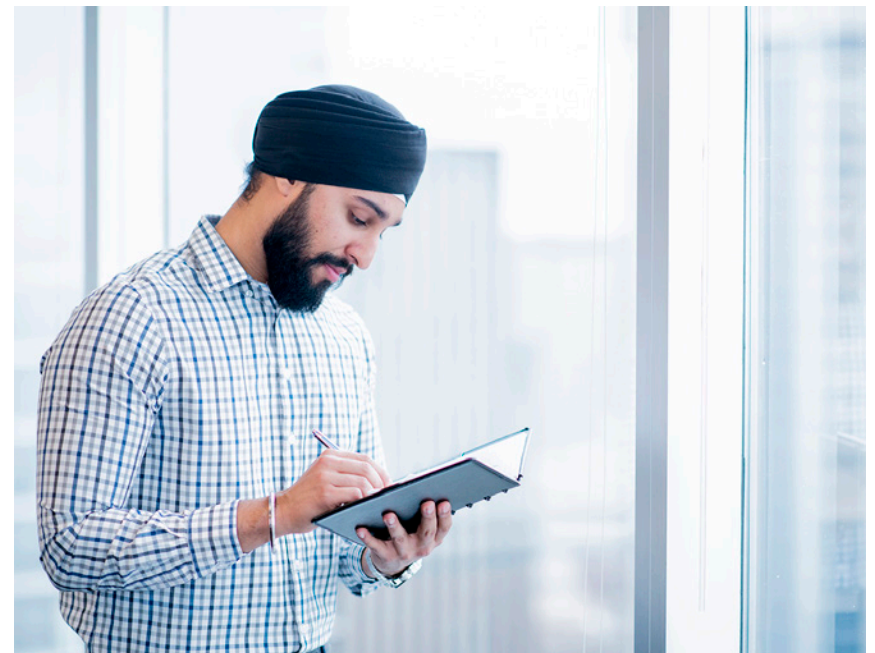
This work started with focused engagement with Indigenous Peoples and racialized communities in Spring 2021. This was expanded to include three streams of engagement in September 2021, including a public online survey, community-led engagements with Indigenous and racialized community organizations, and First Nations- and Métis-led engagement.

The engagement process finished on March 31, 2022, with more than 13,000 people contributing their thoughts on how government can safely collect demographic data such as age, gender identity and ethnicity to improve programs. The legislation was introduced in May 2022.

The Province has also provided direct funding support for communities through the Resilience BC Anti-Racism Network and the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Grants program to tackle discrimination, enhance the province's diversity and improve access to anti-racism resources.

MODERNIZED SAFETY HEADGEAR RULES

Changes to B.C.'s Occupational Health and Safety Regulation are now more inclusive for people who wear religious head coverings. Changes now require employers to review all worksite areas and determine if safety headgear such as hardhats are necessary in each location or if other safety precautions can be taken instead. This regulatory change provides more job opportunities for workers who wear head coverings, such as a turban, as the previous rules left these workers unable to fully participate in the workforce due to unnecessary safety headgear requirements.





INCLUSIVE GENDER DESIGNATION

Keeping with its commitment to diversity and inclusion, government has reduced barriers to allow two-spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse people to update their gender designation on the BC Services Card, B.C. driver's licence, BCeID card, and for people ages 12+, B.C. birth certificate without the confirmation of a physician or psychologist. These changes reduce barriers and empower individuals to self-declare their own gender designation.

INCREASED LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES

Changes to B.C.'s Child Care Licensing Regulation make it easier for more licensed child care programs to be offered on school grounds due to the addition of two new licensing categories:

- ***School Age Care on School Grounds category:*** builds on changes made to the School Act that: require boards to prioritize unused space (not used for K-12 students) for child care and to adopt an inclusive child care policy; and allows licensed child care providers to be exempt from specific space and design requirements (as schools and outdoor spaces are already designed to be safe for children).
- ***Recreational Care licence category:*** enables flexible drop-in and after-school recreation care programs by reducing physical space and program restrictions needed for after-school drop-in programs run by licensed third parties.

These changes increase access to licensed child care both on school grounds and through recreation programs, providing safe spaces for children to learn and play and a one-stop drop-off for parents who opt for child care on school properties.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS ACT

In October 2021, the Province introduced the Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Act to remove the regulation of ECEs and ECE Assistants from the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, and to create standalone legislation for the ECE profession and recognize the value of ECEs. The ECE Act makes several improvements to provide clarity and address gaps that will allow the ECE Registry to better ensure standards and quality practice for individuals working with young children, including enabling the creation of a transparent public registry of ECEs, ECE assistants and approved post-secondary early childhood education programs. It will also reduce barriers to certification by allowing internationally trained ECEs, who just need a few additional requirements to get their full provincial ECE certification, to work in B.C. while completing those requirements. This will benefit internationally trained ECEs, and employers looking to hire them, by helping them get into the workforce more quickly.



INTEREST-FREE RENT LOANS

A partnership between BC Rent Bank and the Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society now allows low- to moderate-income renters all throughout B.C. access to rent bank services which provide interest-free loans to tenants in crisis. B.C. is the first province to offer this important service, allowing renters to make their payments on time and avoid losing their housing. The loans can be applied to tenants' rent or essential utilities, or toward the deposit or first month's rent for tenants who have secured housing but are unable to pay these requirements on time.

The following regional districts offer access to rent bank services throughout B.C.: Alberni-Clayoquot, Bulkley-Nechako, Cariboo, Central Coast, Comox, Cowichan Valley, Fraser-Fort George, Kitimat-Stikine, Mount Waddington, Northern Rockies, South Okanagan, Peace River, Qathet, North Coast, Squamish-Lillooet and Strathcona.

A complete list of communities served, and loan provider organizations can be found here:

<https://bcrentbank.ca/locations/>.



TENANT COMPENSATION EXEMPTION

Compensation payments are paid to tenants by landlords when the landlord ends a tenancy due to eviction, relocation, renovations, demolition, temporary displacement during repairs, inducement to cease or suspend use or for redevelopment of a rental unit. Effective September 2021, Tenant Compensation payments are now exempt as both income and assets for income, disability and hardship assistance applicants and recipients. This means that if a person receives compensation for ending a tenancy, these payments are not deducted from a person's assistance cheque or otherwise used to determine their eligibility for assistance.

PREVENTING RENOVCTIONS

Through new legislation enacted on July 1, 2021, the Province took steps to prevent renovictions and provide renters with more security and protection. Previously, if a landlord wanted to complete repairs that required the rental property to be vacant, they had to serve their tenants with a notice to end tenancy. The tenant could then dispute the notice with the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) if they did not agree that the tenancy needed to be ended for the repairs to be completed. The tenant could then dispute the notice with the RTB if they disagreed with the eviction. Now, landlords are required to apply to the RTB for pre-approval if they would like to end a tenancy due to a renovation. If a landlord applies, the tenant has an opportunity to participate in a hearing and provide evidence that the tenancy does not need to end for the work to be completed. These process changes support tenants as they will eliminate most renovictions since landlords can only end a tenancy in situations where vacant suites are necessary to make repairs.



HOME OWNER GRANT CENTRALIZED PROGRAM

B.C.'s home owner grant program provides over \$850 million in tax relief to over 1.1 million B.C. home owners each year. Changes to the Home Owner Grant Act have enabled the Province to centralize the home owner grant program beginning in the 2021 property tax year, meeting the commitment made in Budget 2020. Now that the Province is the sole administrator of the home owner grant program, municipalities are no longer required to collect or process applications, which municipalities found to be time-consuming and administratively burdensome. Centralization also ensures all B.C. home owners have access to an efficient online and over the phone application, providing an expedited approval process for the grant and reducing the likelihood of penalties being charged for late payment of property taxes.

STRONGERBC FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAM

The almost \$45 million StrongerBC Future Leaders Program supports over 5,000 youth and young adults to develop skills and find jobs in B.C.'s growing tech sector, environmental and natural resource fields. The program provides people opportunities for training, internships, job co-ops and long-term jobs, creating opportunities for young people to grow and expand their future careers. Additionally, grants have been made available for B.C. businesses who hire Indigenous, Black, people of colour, and under-represented people, with the goal that these jobs may become permanent opportunities.

SEAMLESS DAY KINDERGARTEN PILOT EXPANSION

Building on the success of the initial pilot, the Seamless Day Kindergarten program has been expanded from four to 25 sites in B.C. The program provides before- and after-school care in kindergarten classrooms provided by certified early childhood educators. Offering the program on school grounds allows for learning continuity in the students' day, while also providing peace of mind and convenience for parents so they can fulfill other commitments knowing their children are safe outside of school hours.



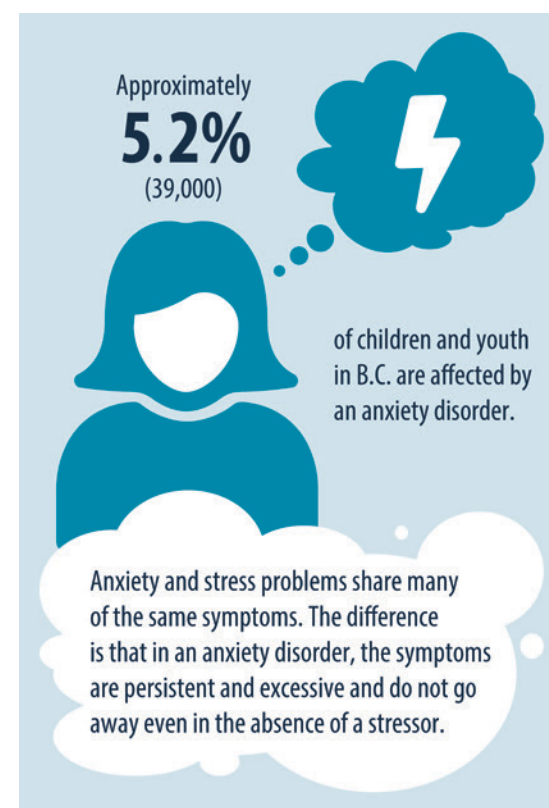
PHONES4YOUTH PROGRAM

B.C.'s Phones4Youth program distributes a free Apple iPhone to every B.C. youth in care aged 13 or older, regardless of their care status. The B.C. government has already distributed over 1,600 phones, which include a screen protector, charger, and carrying case, as well as unlimited phone calls and text messages, and five gigabytes of data at no charge to the youth. By the end of 2022, nearly 4,000 youth in care will receive a phone. The phones will help the youth stay in contact with friends, family and mentors and will provide access to vital resources and other supports as needed.



EXPANSION OF EASE ANXIETY RESOURCES

The Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) program has been expanded to include free online learning resources for grade 8-12 teachers, school counsellors, and staff who work within school districts, independent schools, and First Nations schools. The program has also expanded its collection of activities and resources for parents and care providers to use to support their children's mental health. Over 5,000 educators have been trained since the program's launch, providing the tools needed to help students cope with change and manage their anxiety in healthy ways. This includes practices such as grounding, breathing techniques, mindfulness and coping skills. Other resources help prevent procrastination and test anxiety, manage unhelpful thoughts, and public-speaking fears and address social media's negative impact on mental health and well-being.



JOBS AND TRAINING FOR MALE SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

A project under B.C.'s Community and Employer Partnerships project provided skills training and work experience to male survivors of violence and abuse. They received nine weeks of skills training and four weeks of work experience as well as certification through a construction program delivered by Kinghaven Peardonville House Society in Abbotsford. Participants received weekly sessions of trauma and counselling support during the program. The program was designed to set participants up with the skills needed to work through and overcome their past trauma and challenges as well as the work skills needed to set them up for better paying jobs and brighter futures.

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR PROSTHESES AND ORTHOSES

BC PharmaCare has increased the reimbursement amounts and providers' fees for life-changing prostheses and orthoses, such as:

- Prostheses for arms and legs;
- Orthoses for children and youth; and
- Non-limb prostheses, such as eyes, ears, and noses.

These changes close the gap between reimbursement amounts and providers' fees, putting more money back in people's pockets and decreasing the cost barrier for the devices needed to improve the quality of life for the people who need them.

DISTRIBUTED DRUG CHECKING TO PREVENT ILLICIT DRUG POISONINGS

B.C.'s toxic and illicit drug supply claimed the lives of over 2,200 British Columbians in 2021 – the deadliest year on record for suspected illicit drug toxicity mortality in the province. In late 2021, Health Canada amended a class exemption to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to allow for distributed models of drug checking or lab analysis, through legal collection, storage and transport of small samples of illicit drugs. In October 2021, to operationalize this exemption, B.C. created standards and procedures for regional Medical Health Officers to empower community agencies across the province to set up drug sample collection sites and provide greater access to drug checking services for British Columbians. As a result, B.C. became the first province in Canada to create a Distributed Drug Checking model using the new class exemption.

B.C.'s quick action led to the establishment of Distributed Drug Checking sites in many more locations where British Columbians can submit illicit drug samples to be tested by allowing agencies to collect, store and transport between collection sites to testing sites. Information about illicit drug sample contents is provided back directly to clients, and aggregate data gives service providers and policy makers better surveillance data about illicit drug market trends and the adulterants contributing to toxic drug poisonings.

Drug checking is a public health intervention to prevent illicit drug poisonings by allowing people to have samples of illicit drugs analyzed to determine its composition (including additives such as fentanyl) and make more informed decisions about whether, where, with whom, or how much of the drug to use.

INCREASED ASSISTANCE RATES FOR ALL INCOME AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE CLIENTS



More than 300,000 British Columbians benefited from the largest-ever permanent increase to income assistance and disability assistance rates and the first-ever increase to the Senior's Supplement. As of April 2021, individuals on income assistance and disability assistance automatically started receiving a permanent increase of \$175 per month for each adult.

The Senior's Supplement was increased by \$50 per recipient. This raises the maximum rate for a single person from \$49.30 to \$99.30 per month, benefiting up to 20,000 more low-income seniors. This change was the first increase to the supplement since 1987 and supports about 80,000 seniors.

EASIER ACCESS TO MEDICATION IN LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES



As part of B.C.'s leading-edge overdose response plan, the Residential Care Regulation has been amended to allow additional health care professionals to prescribe addictions treatment medication to residents in licensed community care facilities. For example, this change will allow for opioid replacement therapies to be provided by additional clinicians, such as registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses. These changes remove barriers to prescribing medication for persons in licensed community care facilities by aligning the regulations with the Public Health Order that authorizes Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses to prescribe certain controlled drugs and substances for treatment of opioid use disorder. These changes represent a significant change in B.C.'s health care system and are an important move to better support people in under-served, rural and remote areas.

EXPANDING THE FUEL TAX REFUND PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Effective April 20, 2021, B.C. expanded the definition of "person with disabilities" within the Fuel Tax Refund program to now include persons who live on First Nations reserve land and who receive (or would receive but for having reached 65 years of age) disability assistance or a supplement from Indigenous Services Canada under the federal Social Assistance for Persons with Disability program. These changes allow more people with disabilities to register and qualify for the Fuel Tax Refund program, so that they are eligible for a refund of the fuel tax they pay on the gasoline, diesel or propane used in their vehicle.

In addition to the expanded definition, the changes made significantly improved and streamlined the registration process for people who live with disabilities and are applying for the fuel tax refund. New registrants can register online through [eTaxBC](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov2/eTaxBC) and will experience reduced wait times because of these changes.



Section 2

Building Resilient Communities

Through the StrongerBC Economic Plan, we are putting the infrastructure in place that promotes meaningful job creation and economic opportunity throughout all communities in B.C. These enhancements will give communities the tools they need to quickly adapt to rapid change and harness the full economic opportunity arising due to the adoption of new technologies, the challenges and impacts brought on by climate change and the increase in global economic integration.

As outlined in the Economic Plan, healthy, inclusive societies where wealth and opportunity are shared among all people are more productive, competitive and innovative than societies where inequality is high. Inclusive societies are also more resilient. That is why we are breaking barriers by designing regulations and services that respect and reflect the diversity of all people in B.C. For example, we are making B.C. parks more accessible and inclusive and also introducing the new Accessible British Columbia Act which supports accessibility and inclusion for people who have disabilities.

We are building modern economic and social infrastructure including increasing access to quality health care, local food, affordable housing and safer roads and transportation while simultaneously making substantial investments in fire, flood, and emergency event preparedness and mitigation. Through this work, we are demonstrating that even during a time of great global uncertainty, B.C. continues to put the pieces in place to build an economy that works for everyone.

StrongerBC
for everyone

ACCESSIBLE BRITISH COLUMBIA ACT

In April 2021, B.C. introduced the Accessible British Columbia Act to support accessibility and inclusion for people who have disabilities in B.C. With the Accessible British Columbia Act now law, government has established a provincial accessibility committee to provide advice on accessibility. Government is also developing a forward-looking accessibility plan and building a tool to receive feedback on the accessibility of government services.

Establishment of the

Provincial Accessibility Committee

Government established a committee to advise on matters related to accessibility, and to support the development of B.C.'s accessibility standards. Committee members either have disabilities themselves or represent disability-serving organizations. This will ensure that as standards are developed, they are well-informed by the people they aim to serve. The accessibility standards will be dedicated to ensuring all people are included, respected, and reflected in areas such as employment, education, transportation and customer service so that all people can participate fully, regardless of their abilities.

INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY FOR GUIDE DOG AND SERVICE DOG TEAMS



Amendments to B.C.'s Guide Dog and Service Dog Act and regulations in July 2021 increase and clarify the rights of people who use guide dogs or service dogs, making B.C. more accessible and inclusive. Guide dog and service dog teams can apply to the Province for voluntary B.C. certification cards, which provide legal protections for people who hold them as it is illegal to deny access to public spaces and services, or deny or cancel a tenancy agreement to people who require a guide or service dog. These changes expand public access and tenancy protections and streamline certification processes for guide dog and service dog teams making B.C. more accessible and inclusive as a result. [Learn more about supporting accessibility for people who require a guide dog or service dog.](#)

MAKING B.C. PARKS MORE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE



Parks across B.C. are becoming more accessible and inclusive because of BC Parks' renewed commitment ensuring that "Everyone is welcome in nature." Existing parks will be upgraded to be more accessible while new campgrounds and recreational sites will feature accessible design standards going forward. Additionally, new accessibility information is also being added to the BC Parks website where people can view photos and descriptions of facilities before they arrive at the park they plan to visit. These changes allow people to prepare their travel plans and ensure that their destinations will accommodate their needs.



FASTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS

Changes to the Local Government Act remove barriers and help simplify local governments' approval processes helping to get the homes people need built faster. Recent amendments remove the default requirement for local governments to hold public hearings for zoning bylaw amendments consistent with official community plans and enable local governments to delegate decisions on minor development variance permits. Additionally, the Local Government Development Approvals Program provided \$15 million of funding to help local governments implement best practices and make innovative changes to their development approvals processes.

LAND OWNER TRANSPARENCY REGISTRY

The Land Owner Transparency Registry, the first of its kind in Canada, offers transparency information on interest holders or beneficial owners of B.C. real estate. New purchasers of land have been required to file with the registry since November 2020 and pre-existing reporting bodies are required to file by November 30, 2022. The registry collects information about reporting bodies, and interest holders and makes this information accessible to law enforcement, taxing authorities and authorized regulators. More limited information is available to members of the public. These changes aim to end hidden ownership of land by creating a publicly accessible registry that identifies beneficial ownership of land.

Since the legislation came into force in November 2020, whenever a relevant corporation, trustee or partner in a partnership buys land in B.C., they must submit a transparency report that identifies any interest holders. The registry compiles the information and makes it publicly searchable in order to end hidden ownership and potential tax evasion, fraud and money laundering in B.C.

FINANCIAL SERVICES THROUGH A SINGLE REGULATOR



Changes to legislation combined three regulators in financial services into a single regulator, the BC Financial Services Authority, which now includes real estate. Having a single regulator for financial services streamlines B.C.'s regulations and allows more oversight to real estate transactions and more protections to British Columbians when they are buying and selling properties.

INCREASED HOUSING FLEXIBILITY ON THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE



Regulatory amendments that came into force in December 2021 now allow property owners on the Agricultural Land Reserve to have both a principal home and a small secondary home on their property that no longer requires that it must be lived in by the landowner or their immediate family members.

These changes increase flexibility as the secondary homes can now be used for purposes such as:

- Housing extended family or farm labourers
- Tourism accommodation
- Rental housing

Property owners still require permission from their local or First Nations government, but a streamlined approval process eliminates the need for an application to the Agricultural Land Commission.

AGRIINSURANCE PROGRAM ADJUSTED



B.C.'s AgrilInsurance program adjusted the loss verification period for growers who file insurance claims for apples that broke down due to heat damage. By extending the period in which claims were accepted, apple growers were able to receive payments for crops that experienced delayed rotting caused by the 2021 heat dome.

AgrilInsurance is an affordable insurance program that supports participating farmers to manage the risk of crop losses caused by weather perils such as hail, frost, excessive rain, fire, flooding, drought and wildlife. In B.C., AgrilInsurance is offered for berries, grain, forage, grapes, tree fruit, vegetables and flower bulbs. The 2021 heat dome caused severe losses to many crops in B.C. In 2021, the AgrilInsurance program received 2,521 notices of loss from insured farmers and over \$37.8 million in claims indemnities paid out; all claims have been processed for the crop year.

SUPPORTING B.C.'S DAIRY INDUSTRY



Two temporary emergency regulations were put in place quickly, which limited the impacts of flooding and landslide events on B.C.'s dairy farmers and kept dairy supply chains running smoothly. One of the changes waived penalties for milk received from cows with elevated bacteria and somatic cell counts. These counts do not impact milk safety but impact potential shelf life of milk products. The other change allowed dairy farmers to supply dairy plants with products that followed safety protocols and used chlorinated water in their process during water advisories. This flexibility continued to protect and maintain public health and safety while also allowing farmers impacted by the flooding event in the Sumas Prairie region to continue to operate during the emergency.

MODERNIZED MEAT LICENSING



The launch of a new meat licensing system for beef, pork and poultry now includes three licence categories designed to benefit and support the different size and scale of meat processing and livestock businesses in B.C. These changes prioritize food safety and make it easier for B.C. farm businesses to produce and sell meat products, increasing production, food security, and the availability of local products available in rural and remote communities.

Farmgate and Farmgate Plus licences are now managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, which will streamline the licensing process for rural B.C. slaughter facilities as they no longer have to contact regional health authorities, reducing administrative burden for businesses and increasing food safety.

NEW VIRTUAL HEALTH CLINIC IN NORTHERN B.C.

People living in the Northern Health region can now access same-day health care from the comfort of their own homes through the new Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic. Health care providers are available virtually between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days a week, and offer care for a variety of symptoms as well as support for mental health challenges and substance use treatment.

The virtual clinic is open 12 hours a day and offers access to services for all people, including those that live in rural, remote and/or Indigenous communities who otherwise might not have access to the health care they need.

FLEXIBILITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

As of February 28, 2022, amendments to the public notice requirements for local governments provide greater flexibility and accessibility for local communities. Local governments now have the option to adopt a bylaw to specify how public notice will be provided in their community or may continue to use the default option of providing notice by newspaper. This change will enable local governments to assess and explore the most effective way to engage and provide information to their residents. Public notice is required for actions such as public hearings, heritage designation, elections, and land disposition.

Updates to legislation also transformed temporary amendments that made it easier for local governments to conduct business during the COVID-19 pandemic into permanent authorities.

Examples of the updates include:

- Providing local governments the flexibility to hold virtual and hybrid meetings (and public hearings) in addition to in-person meetings;
- Expanding eligibility for mail ballot voting by bylaw in local government elections;
- Permitting improvement districts greater flexibility with the timing of their annual general meetings and elections; and
- Creating new ministerial authorities for borrowing in emergency situations and elections administration matters, allowing the Province to be more responsive in future extraordinary events.



HIGHWAY 1 KAMLOOPS TO ALBERTA TRAVEL ADVISORIES WEBSITE

The section of the Trans-Canada Highway 1 from Kamloops to the Alberta border, a major route for truckers and vacationers, is being widened from two lanes to four lanes. In the meantime, users can keep well-informed via the [Highway 1 Kamloops to Alberta Travel Advisories Website](#). The public can find updates about construction and highway maintenance, as well as the estimated travel time due to delays. The website was especially helpful during flooding and wildfires, providing links to emergency information so that users could plan their routes safely and effectively.

Travel Advisory Communications Plan

The website is a component of a wider communications plan that continues to keep road users informed about the cumulative effects from the multiple construction projects and highway maintenance activities simultaneously in progress along that section of the highway and even includes links to live updates on DriveBC's Twitter feed. Due to the communication plan's success, another website has been launched that will track the [recovery projects on several highways in the province](#) that resulted from the November 2021 Atmospheric River flooding.

NEW WEBSITE PROVIDES UPDATES ON CARIBOO ROADS

The launch of the [Cariboo Road Recovery Projects website](#) allows the public to access up-to-date information about current or planned roadwork, as well as learn about damage caused by landslides and road washouts at ten specific locations in advance of their trip. Most of the roads affected in these closures are side roads and some of them have heavy impacts affecting smaller communities. This information allows these communities to identify where road closures are, learn about the current conditions and progress being made as well as anticipate when the roadwork will be completed.



NEW ALGAE WATCH WEBSITE

A new [Algae Watch website](#) was launched to track harmful algae bloom information throughout the province. British Columbians can access the website to learn about harmful and non-harmful algae blooms and can use the online submission form to share photos and information on the location and extent of algae blooms in their communities. This citizen science program will help the Province track and understand these events throughout B.C. All submitted information is reviewed and shared with the public through an online map.

Harmful algae blooms can impact human and animal health, drinking water supplies and recreation-based economies. Harmful algae blooms are becoming more frequent due to watershed-scale land development and climate change.

TIMBER HARVESTING CONTRACTOR AND SUBCONTRACTOR REGULATION

Amendments to the Timber Harvesting Contractor and Subcontractor Regulation in June 2021 continue to create transparency in contract negotiations and improve the dispute resolution process between forest tenure holders and the long term contractors they hire. Licence holders must now provide clearer work specifications so that contractors are well-informed when they make quotes for their work. This is a welcome change for the almost half of B.C.'s forest contractors, who have advocated for more sustainable rates since 2012. These changes will help to protect forestry contractors by ensuring they are fairly compensated for the scope of work they are undertaking when they negotiate their rates.





Section 3

Advancing True, Lasting and Meaningful Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Our commitment to true, lasting and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples means building a B.C. where everyone feels seen, heard and has the opportunity to reach their full potential. Through partnerships with First Nations, Indigenous organizations and Indigenous Peoples, we continue to work collaboratively to eliminate barriers to equal participation and leadership in the future of B.C.'s economy, such as amending the Human Rights Code to list Indigenous identity as a protected right against discriminatory conduct and supporting Indigenous learning and learners. This work will advance lasting and meaningful reconciliation through economic development and opportunities that recognizes Indigenous Peoples are leaders and partners in all aspects of the economy.

UPHOLDING INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Legislative amendments have been made to further recognize, respect, and uphold Indigenous rights. Indigenous identity is now a protected ground against discrimination in the B.C. Human Rights Code. Additionally, B.C.'s Interpretation Act has been amended to explicitly state that all provincial laws uphold the constitutional rights of Indigenous Peoples. Changes to the Interpretation Act also add direction that all provincial acts and regulations must be interpreted so as to be consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These legislative amendments add further protections to the rights of Indigenous Peoples and demonstrate B.C.'s continued commitment to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and combatting racism and discrimination.

StrongerBC
for everyone

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY WITHIN B.C. HEALTH CARE

A collaboration between Indigenous Services Canada, the Province and the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health has facilitated the development of a repository for cultural safety and Indigenous-specific anti-racism tools and resources with the goal of making B.C.'s health care systems culturally safe and accessible for all Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Metis and Inuit. The resources are available online for all health care organizations and include videos, communication resources, research papers, training materials and educational platforms with the goal of eliminating anti-Indigenous racism in the health care system.

VIRTUAL INDIGENOUS JUSTICE CENTRE

In October 2021, the Virtual Indigenous Justice Centre opened to provide Indigenous Peoples with online access to legal services and supports and to make navigating the justice system easier. The virtual centre is a partnership between the Province and BC First Nations Justice Council. The centre provides a range of assistance and supports to Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit, who are otherwise not eligible and/or cannot access legal aid, including:

- Providing legal advice and representation for family and criminal court cases to Indigenous clients in rural and remote communities who would not otherwise have access to support, or for clients in other legal proceedings which could reasonably lead to imprisonment or a child becoming in need of protection;
- Working with the court, where appropriate, to divert legal matters from the formal court system to less intrusive measures, such as alternative dispute resolution processes, mediation and restorative justice processes, in consultation with officers of the court and local protocols; and
- Helping Indigenous Peoples access legal, social, housing, transportation and health and wellness supports to positively and adequately address the challenges many people face in dealing with the current mainstream justice system.

The centre is staffed by three lawyers, a navigator and a legal assistant and is part of the broader BC First Nations Justice Strategy that was launched in March 2020.

SUPPORT FOR FIRST NATIONS JURISDICTION OVER EDUCATION

First Nations participating in the education jurisdiction initiative in B.C. will have the authority to certify and regulate teachers who work in schools under their jurisdiction. Legislative changes now enable the Province to provide operational support to this new certification and regulation process. These changes support First Nations control over First Nations education.

Section 4

Meeting B.C.'s Climate Commitments

The last year has shown us the catastrophic effects caused by extreme weather and climate change such as heat domes, flooding and wildfires. The climate emergency is here: without bold and consistent intervention, we will continue to see more frequent and severe climate-related events that will threaten B.C.'s economy and society. The StrongerBC Economic Plan delivers on the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 – a stronger, more ambitious plan set to accomplish our goals for a cleaner and brighter future that addresses climate change. We are working hard to accomplish B.C.'s legislated greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 40% below 2007 levels by 2030 and to reach net-zero by 2050. From enabling municipalities to ban single-use plastics to making it easier for automakers to bring zero-emission vehicles to market, B.C. is being recognized for our continent-leading moves toward a sustainable future powered by clean and renewable energy.

PREVENTING PLASTIC WASTE IN B.C.

Amendments to regulation in July 2021 now allow local governments to develop bylaws that ban single-use plastic products without the need for ministerial approval. Products eligible for the ban include single-

use check-out bags, polystyrene foam containers, plastic utensils and stir sticks. These changes will significantly reduce the single-use products that end up polluting B.C.'s land, air and water.

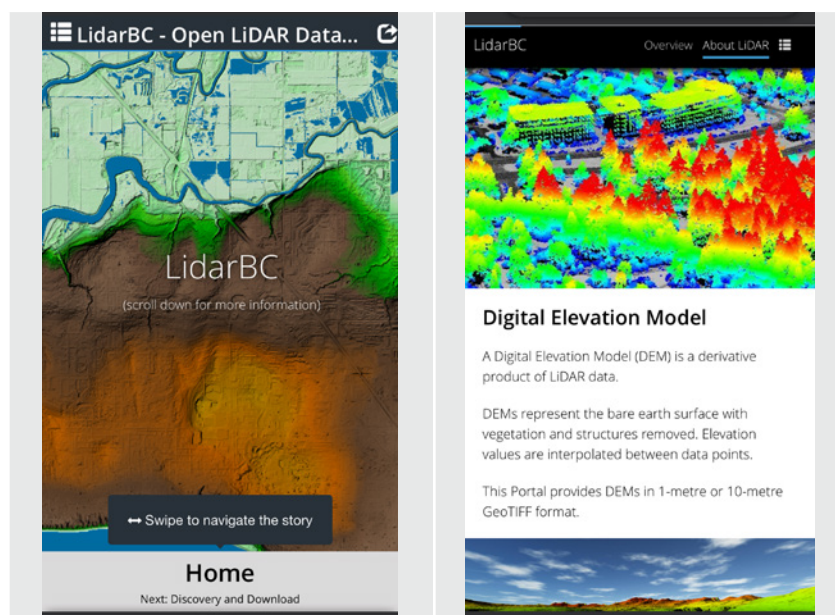
Changes to legislation in November 2021 enable the Province to identify and take direct action to phase out single-use plastic products and packaging. Decisions will be made based on the environmental and economic impacts of any bans, with the first phase of new regulations expected in early 2023. This furthers the Province's actions launched in July 2021 to allow local governments to ban single-use plastics without requiring ministerial approval.

ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES ACT ONLINE REPORTING TOOL

The Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) Act online reporting tool was developed to digitize and streamline compliance reporting for regulated automakers under the ZEV Act and Regulation. As well, a guidance document and video tutorial were developed and shared to help automakers navigate the process, reducing the ZEV credit claim, transfer, and compliance reporting times.



LIDAR DATA PORTAL



The Province is proud to present the [LiDAR \(light detection and ranging\) Data Portal](#), a free website providing public access to LiDAR information and associated datasets. The Portal provides maps, legends, visuals, and access to information covering about 86,000 square kilometres of B.C. using LiDAR, a cost-effective and efficient method for mapping terrain by using remote-sensing technology to acquire dense and accurate elevation data.

Offering this data free to the public allows businesses, natural resource operators and First Nations to make important and informed decisions, such as land use planning, forest-inventory, harvest, and water management, engineering and construction, public safety and climate change modelling using data they would not otherwise have had access to due to time and cost constraints.

BIOMASS UTILIZATION MOBILE APP

The Province is proud to announce the launch of the public and free [Biomass Utilization Mobile App](#) (BiOS). The BiOS app is a user-friendly mobile platform that provides government and forest sector users with a real-time estimate of the quantity of forest residual biomass and supply costs to support the forest bioeconomy and to minimize slash pile burning. BiOS supports evidence informed decision making, allowing for improved sustainable management of these resources, increasing sustainable economic development, Indigenous engagement and climate action as a result.

The BiOS app is available for download on mobile devices on [iTunes](#) or [Google Play](#). For tutorials on how to begin using the BiOS app, check out the series of step-by-step videos available on [YouTube](#).

HYDROELECTRIC SCHOOL TAX EXEMPTION

Amendments to the School Tax Exemptions and Refunds Regulation streamlines the qualification process for independent hydro-electric power projects to reduce their property tax liability for run of river, and other new and small hydro-electric facilities. Approved projects no longer need to reapply annually to BC Assessment for the School Act property tax exemption or provide yearly documentation to maintain EcoLogo certification. This means that small hydro-electric power projects which have been approved for the School Act property tax exemption remain approved without further annual applications to BC Assessment or annual renewals of EcoLogo certification, saving businesses time and money.

StrongerBC
for everyone



Section 5 Leading on Environmental and Social Responsibility

B.C. is known worldwide for leading on environmental and social responsibility. This commitment represents a competitive economic advantage, creating new opportunities and putting a premium on businesses and their offerings that maintain strong ESG (environmental, social and governance) values. To accelerate this work, the Province is helping British Columbians to develop, promote, and market environmentally and socially responsible goods and services in addition to the launch of a \$500 million investment fund that provides access to capital to B.C. companies that demonstrate strong ESG values.

INBC INVESTMENT CORP.

B.C. is proud to introduce InBC Investment Corp., a \$500 million strategic investment fund that provides access to capital for promising B.C. companies looking to grow and scale within B.C. The fund is based around a triple bottom line supporting people, the planet, and ensuring profits are realized throughout B.C.

BC COMMUNITY CLIMATE FUNDING GUIDE

The online [BC Community Climate Funding Guide](#) makes it easier for Indigenous communities and local governments to identify and search over 100 climate-related funding opportunities for community projects in clean energy, climate adaptation, clean transportation and community infrastructure. The site was designed to be a one-stop resource for users to easily find funding for projects that increase sustainable energy use and adapt to a changing climate. The website also features funding updates, opportunities, deadlines and resources.

CLEANING UP B.C.'S COASTLINE

The Clean Coast Clean Waters Initiative Fund (CCCW) is supporting the largest coastline cleanup in B.C.'s history, with more than 900 tonnes of marine debris and plastic removed to date, and at least 60% of it reused and recycled. The CCCW is part of B.C.'s \$10 billion COVID-19 response, which includes StrongerBC: BC's Economic Plan that protects people's health and livelihoods, in partnership with Indigenous Nations, businesses and local communities.

Section 6

Fostering Innovation Across Our Economy

We are harnessing the power of advanced technology and other innovations to add value to B.C.'s products and services by supporting B.C. entrepreneurs and businesses to grow and scale throughout the province, adopting new technologies, and increasing talent development and availability. Transforming new and traditional industries via innovative practices and new technologies will position B.C. as a global innovation leader where British Columbians can benefit from new jobs and opportunities across an innovation-driven economy.

The use of new tools and technology makes it easier and more convenient for British Columbians to access government information and services by enabling faster and more efficient processes, laying the groundwork for the StrongerBC Economic Plan's commitment for inclusive growth. Our recent modernization efforts deliver better government services through new and improved digitized and streamlined processes. Eliminating the need for in-person services allows for flexibility and supports the many British Columbians who live with a disability, live in rural or remote communities, or whom would

otherwise have difficulty navigating in-person processes. From streamlining business name requests to allowing online ICBC insurance renewals, we are working hard to continually improve and innovate our processes while maintaining our strict commitment to protection of privacy and security.

B.C.'S TRADE AND INVEST WEBSITE

The Province has modernized the [Trade and Invest BC website](#), the Province's online presence dedicated to helping B.C. businesses access international markets and assisting international trade partners and investors to learn about doing business in B.C. The website provides resources and information for people looking to:

- Expand their business outside of B.C.;
- Invest in B.C.; and or
- Purchase B.C. goods and services.

Additionally, users can find tailored help by submitting a form explaining their specific situation and needs or by calling **604-775-2100**.



ONLINE ICBC INSURANCE RENEWAL



Eligible ICBC customers are now able to renew their personal ICBC insurance policies online. Brokers are available to support customers and provide expert advice to assist with insurance needs. Customers can use the online service to renew their current personal auto insurance coverage, find out if they are eligible for select discounts, update the drivers listed on their policy and modify how they use their vehicle. Online insurance renewal provides eligible British Columbians with greater convenience and flexibility, allowing people to access ICBC services from anywhere with an internet connection.

STREAMLINED BUSINESS NAME REQUESTS

What used to take weeks and months, now takes only the click of a few buttons. [BC Registries and Online Services](#) has been modernized by offering the new Name Request application to provide better service to current and future business owners when choosing a name for their business. Within seconds, users can tell whether a potential business name is already taken and can use this information to quickly develop a unique business name in B.C.

REMOVING BARRIERS IN THE CANNABIS INDUSTRY



Updates to regulations remove barriers for B.C.'s cannabis industry, making it easier to manage employees, and sell and deliver cannabis products. These changes continue to protect public safety as well as open up further revenue opportunities in B.C.'s legal cannabis market.

Private licensed cannabis retail stores can now sell cannabis-related clothing, books and artwork. Before this change, cannabis retail stores could sell only cannabis, cannabis accessories such as rolling papers and pipes, shopping bags and prepaid purchase cards. Some restrictions will remain in place to prevent cannabis use by minors.

Licensed cannabis retailers are now able to offer curbside pick-up and deliver non-medical cannabis products directly to consumers between the hours of 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. or earlier, if local time restrictions are in place.

The Worker Qualification Regulation was repealed. This change removes the requirement for cannabis retail store licensees and their employees having to obtain a security verification to work in a cannabis retail store. The mandatory training requirements under the Selling it Right Program remain in place.

EFFICIENT LIQUOR AND CANNABIS LICENSING

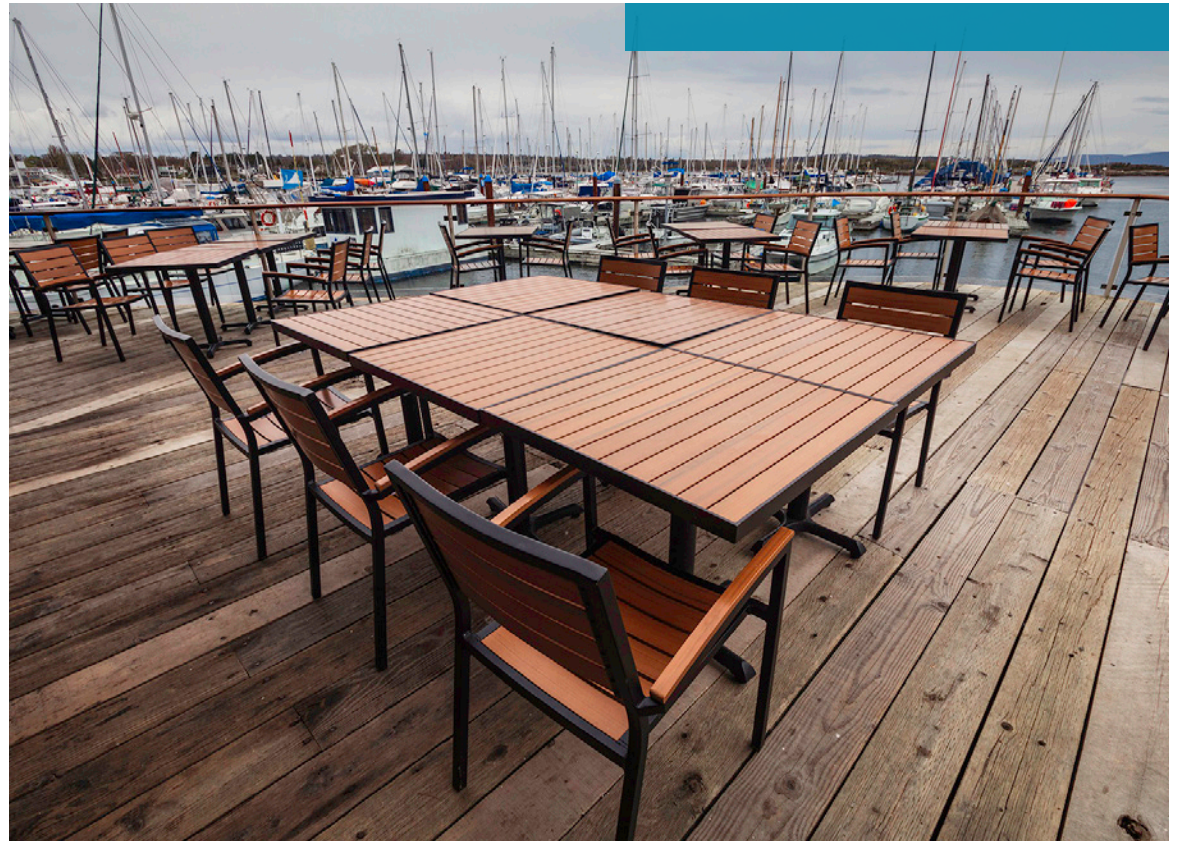
Applications for a special event permit required to serve liquor at events such as community festivals, family gatherings and private functions can now apply through the [Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Portal](#). These changes will speed up the application process, and in some cases, offer immediate approval. Users will require either a BCeID or a BC Mobile Card to sign up to verify their identities before the permit is granted.

FLEXIBILITY FOR THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

Due to positive response, temporary amendments that were first introduced to help B.C.'s liquor industry during the COVID-19 pandemic have now become permanent. These positive changes were a lifeline for service businesses, enabling them to serve more customers, adhere to the required physical distancing guidelines and launch new revenue streams to combat the financial fall out caused by the pandemic.

Food Primary, Liquor Primary and Manufacturer licensees (such as wineries, breweries, and distilleries) can now apply to make their expanded service areas permanent.

The hours of liquor sales have been permanently extended to begin at 7 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. Businesses can continue to support their customers by providing a greater window of time for customers to shop, providing added convenience to all shoppers,



especially people who live with disabilities, seniors, and those who live in rural and remote areas.

B.C.'s liquor-primary and food-primary liquor licensees are now able to package and sell single-serve mixed cocktails as well as unmixing drinks for takeout or delivery with the purchase of a meal. These changes allow customers to purchase a cocktail, a glass of wine, cider or draft beer, or an unmixed ounce of a spirit when ordering a take-out or delivery meal, while also offering another revenue stream for licensed restaurants and pubs.

This additional choice for consumers builds on other measures government has approved in recent months to benefit approximately 2,000 liquor-primary and 6,000 food-primary licensees in B.C. Notably, they can already sell full bottles of wine and spirits as well as mixed drinks packaged in single servings for takeout and delivery with the purchase of a meal.

INCREASING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR FAMILY DISPUTES



New Provincial Court Family Rules (PCFR) modernize court processes and support earlier and more durable resolutions. Free services are available from the Family Justice Services Division (FJSD) at Justice Access Centres and Family Justice Centres throughout the province. Staff offer information, support, referrals and dispute resolution (mediation) services with the goal of helping people resolve their family law matters out of court. The new PCFR introduces early requirements directing parties with family law matters to FJSD for needs assessment, parenting education and consensual dispute resolution (where appropriate) before they engage with the courts. For family law disputes that do require a court appearance, court forms and processes have been streamlined and modernized, making processes easier to understand and more efficient to navigate. These changes save families time, money, and reduce the conflict and stress they may otherwise have experienced resolving these issues.

[A new online service](#) was launched that guides British Columbians through a plain language, intuitive user experience that asks questions and tailors results so that people no longer have to navigate through complex forms as the app inputs the results and creates the forms for them. British Columbians can use this service to have the system correctly identify and fill out and file provincial family law case forms for matters such as child support, parenting arrangements, case management and protection orders instead of having to travel to court registries. The online service has been specially designed with trauma-informed functionality, including safety screening, a quick exit button, safety checks throughout the process, the ability to save information as the user progresses through the questions and referrals to additional resources.

During the pandemic, the Provincial Court enhanced its capacity for people with family law proceedings to attend remotely. Remote attendance offered a way for the court to continue to operate during the pandemic while ensuring the safety of parties, lawyers, and court staff. Due to positive outcomes and response, the PCFR have been amended to incorporate the flexibility to attend many family law proceedings in person, by telephone, video conference or other means of electronic communication. Continuing this flexibility helps maintain better access to the courts and can ease the effect of travel, time off work and child care on families.

VIRTUAL PROVINCIAL AND SUPREME COURT HEARINGS

The B.C. government has invested heavily in the tools, technology and training needed to support virtual court appearances safely and securely. A virtual appearance is one where at least one court participant is appearing virtually (by telephone, videoconference, or online audio or video). The Provincial and Supreme Courts heard over 522,000 virtual appearances in 2021, or about 43,500 virtual appearances per month. This represents a 60% increase compared to 2020 when there were 325,000 virtual appearances.

ONLINE RESOLUTION OF TRAFFIC AND OTHER VIOLATION TICKETS

The Province has launched a [new website](#) to assist British Columbians with understanding, paying for, or disputing traffic and other violation tickets without the need for court. The site provides information about provincial violation tickets, as well as information about tickets issued for offences under municipal or federal laws, such as operating without a business licence or fishing without a licence. The website features guided pathways to relevant information and resources to help British Columbians pay for, dispute, request an extension or a fine reduction, and other information as needed. These changes will help streamline the processes faced by British Columbians for the more than 500,000 violation tickets issued in B.C. each year.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS FOR B.C. CORPORATIONS



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, credit unions, societies, cooperative associations, and companies were able to meet their obligations under the Cooperative Association Act, Credit Union Incorporation Act, Societies Act and Business Corporations Act by holding annual general meetings in an electronic format for a temporary time period. Many cooperatives, societies and small businesses found that electronic meetings are more efficient and flexible and remove barriers for participation for people who would not be able to attend in-person meetings. As a result, these temporary changes were made permanent in 2021.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO THE PHARMACARE SPECIAL AUTHORITY



In partnership with the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), the Special Authority (SA) department is undergoing a digital transformation to provide the capability for health care providers to submit drug, device, or medical supply coverage requests for B.C. residents through the PHSA eForms platform rather than through paper fax. SA requests are now being processed and adjudicated through a new case management system and patients have direct access to the resulting coverage decision via the Health Gateway. These efforts to modernize the SA program will streamline application processes and improve turnaround times, resulting in faster coverage for patients, while maintaining security of personal information.

Before

the PharmaCare Special Authority
digital transformation:

Approximately 27%
of applications had
to be returned due to
missing information



Turnaround time for
coverage requests
could take up
10 to business days

After

with the PharmaCare Special Authority
digital transformation in place:

Only **1%** of applications
are returned due to
missing information



Turnaround time for
coverage requests
has been reduced to
a **MATTER OF MINUTES**
for certain medications
through Auto-Adjudications

COVID-19 RELIEF FOR THE GAMBLING SECTOR

In Spring 2021, a new regulation under the Financial Administration Act forgave one annual registration fee for all gaming facility operators and their senior officials, providing almost \$1.2 million in financial relief for the gaming sector as they were required to close for a 15-month period from March 2020 to July 2021. Additionally, the Gaming Control Regulation was amended to defer payment of almost \$1.4 million in annual registration fees to December 31, 2021. As well, about 5,200 registrations for gaming services providers and gaming workers were deferred to December 31, 2021, which deferred an additional \$869,500 in renewal fees. Extending registration terms ensured workers did not need to complete a registration renewal process at a time when most workers had been laid off or furloughed. Instead, gaming services providers could focus their limited staff resources on planning for the reopening of gaming facilities.

EXPANDED USE OF ELECTRONIC TICKET RAFFLE SYSTEMS

The Gaming Policy Enforcement Branch permitted the use of electronic raffle systems on Class B licences. Changes to the Licensed Charitable Gaming Rules expanded the ability for eligible Class B Gaming licensees to use certified electronic raffle systems to operate ticket raffles including 50/50 gaming events online. These changes increase the ability for charitable and religious organizations throughout the province to raise money.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY TENURE CONTINUATION OPTION

Amendments to the Petroleum and Natural Gas Drilling Licence and Lease Regulation allowed the Minister to grant a one-time tenure continuation for one year to holders of petroleum and natural gas drilling licences and leases with terms set to end between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021. Applications were streamlined this year, requiring tenure holders to submit a simple application and a standard annual rental payment. Without these changes, tenure holders would have had to complete a longer application, commit to carry out the work even if it was unfeasible during the COVID-19 pandemic, or pay a penalty for failing to do so.

This amendment provided relief to 34 tenure holders with interest in one or more of 168 tenures who needed more time to exercise their tenure rights due to constraints caused by COVID-19. This included companies who were considering delays to planned fieldwork to address community concerns about increased risks of COVID-19 transmission due to the influx of people needed to support summer field programs.

StrongerBC
for everyone

Accountability and Commitment

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS COUNT

The regulatory requirements count is a longstanding performance measure used to monitor the overall number of provincial regulatory requirements for people, businesses and government. Our regulatory requirements count and impact assessment process continue to ensure that we remain accountable and transparent in designing modern, effective, and efficient laws and regulations. To achieve this, all new or amended legislation, regulations and associated policies and forms must include analysis of all potential impacts for people and businesses. Any changes to regulatory requirements must be documented.

A regulatory requirement is any action a person, business or government must take to access services, carry out business or meet legal responsibilities.

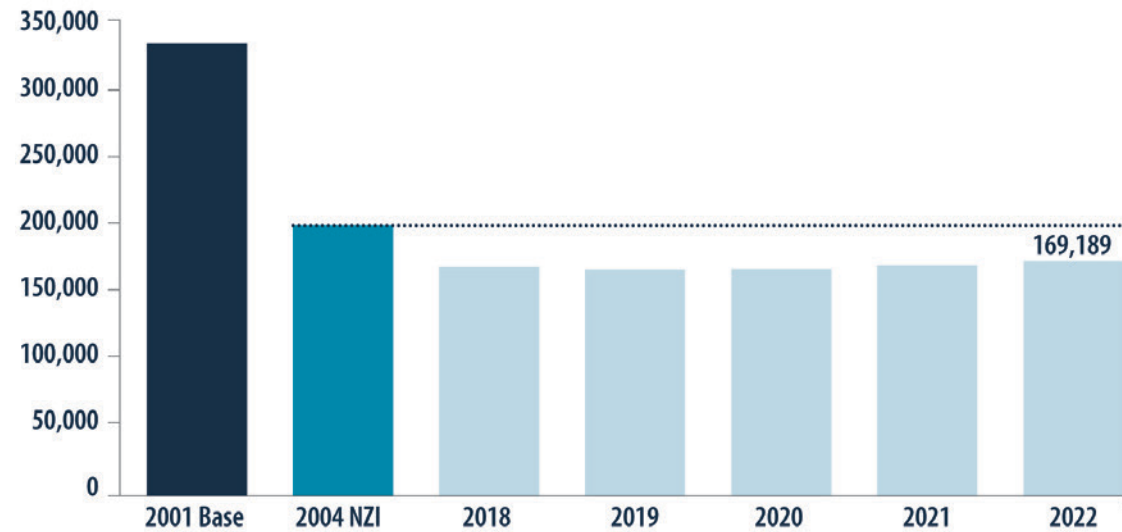
Continually monitoring and measuring our progress helps to ensure B.C. maintains an efficient and modern regulatory framework. To prevent undue increases to B.C.'s regulatory framework, a regulatory baseline was established in 2004 and the Net Zero Increase commitment was made to not increase the total number of regulatory requirements from the 2004 level.





The baseline set in 2004 was 197,242 regulatory requirements. As of March 31, 2022, the regulatory requirements count was 169,189 – a decrease of 14% compared with the 2004 baseline. The Net Zero Increase commitment is in place until 2024.

B.C.'S REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS COUNT



BETTER REGULATIONS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS PACKAGE

The Better Regulations for British Columbians (BR4BC) annual process groups together minor changes to modernize B.C.'s regulatory framework and improve service delivery. It is an efficient way to make cross-government regulatory changes by clarifying, correcting or repealing outdated information. In March 2022, we amended 33 regulations to update, modernize or repeal outdated sections.

MODERNIZING LANGUAGE INITIATIVE

Words matter when it comes to promoting inclusion and eliminating discrimination. Through an ongoing commitment to public service innovation, people throughout B.C. can now see themselves reflected in the intentional language used throughout government products.

The Modernizing Language Initiative was launched in 2020 to systematically remove gendered and other non-inclusive references from B.C.'s regulations, policies and programs – the first jurisdiction in Canada to do so. Terms such as he, she, his, her, mother, father, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, chairman, actress, baggageman as well as references to the opposite or same gender have been updated in amended regulations to more inclusive wording that does not use gendered language. This is typically achieved by a slight rewording of the affected sentence, or by using non-gendered substitutes such as parent or sibling. In specific instances, wording that suggests only two genders exist have been amended to include all genders.

The 2022 package of regulatory amendments was announced on March 30, 2022, the day before International Transgender Day of Visibility. This year, almost 750 instances of gendered language have been removed from 138 regulations and their accompanying forms and materials.

We are working to expand this important work and address thousands of instances of gendered and non-inclusive language within B.C.'s legislation. These individual changes add up to make a significant difference in ensuring everyone is represented and reflected in government products.

OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to continuing our efforts to ensure that B.C.'s laws and regulations are inclusive and representative of all British Columbians, and that the impacts on people, the environment, and businesses are considered when developing government policy. We will continue to leverage technology to identify outdated, burdensome, or non-inclusive language that is a barrier to inclusive and sustainable growth. Our goal is to make B.C. a leader in better, smarter, and more inclusive regulations.

B.C. is proud to be working toward legislation and regulations that support an inclusive and sustainable economy.

If you have suggestions of possible wording changes to address in B.C.'s government products or have encountered a regulation that you think could be improved to meet our climate goals, please contact us at BetterRegulations@gov.bc.ca.





BRITISH
COLUMBIA