
Annual
Report

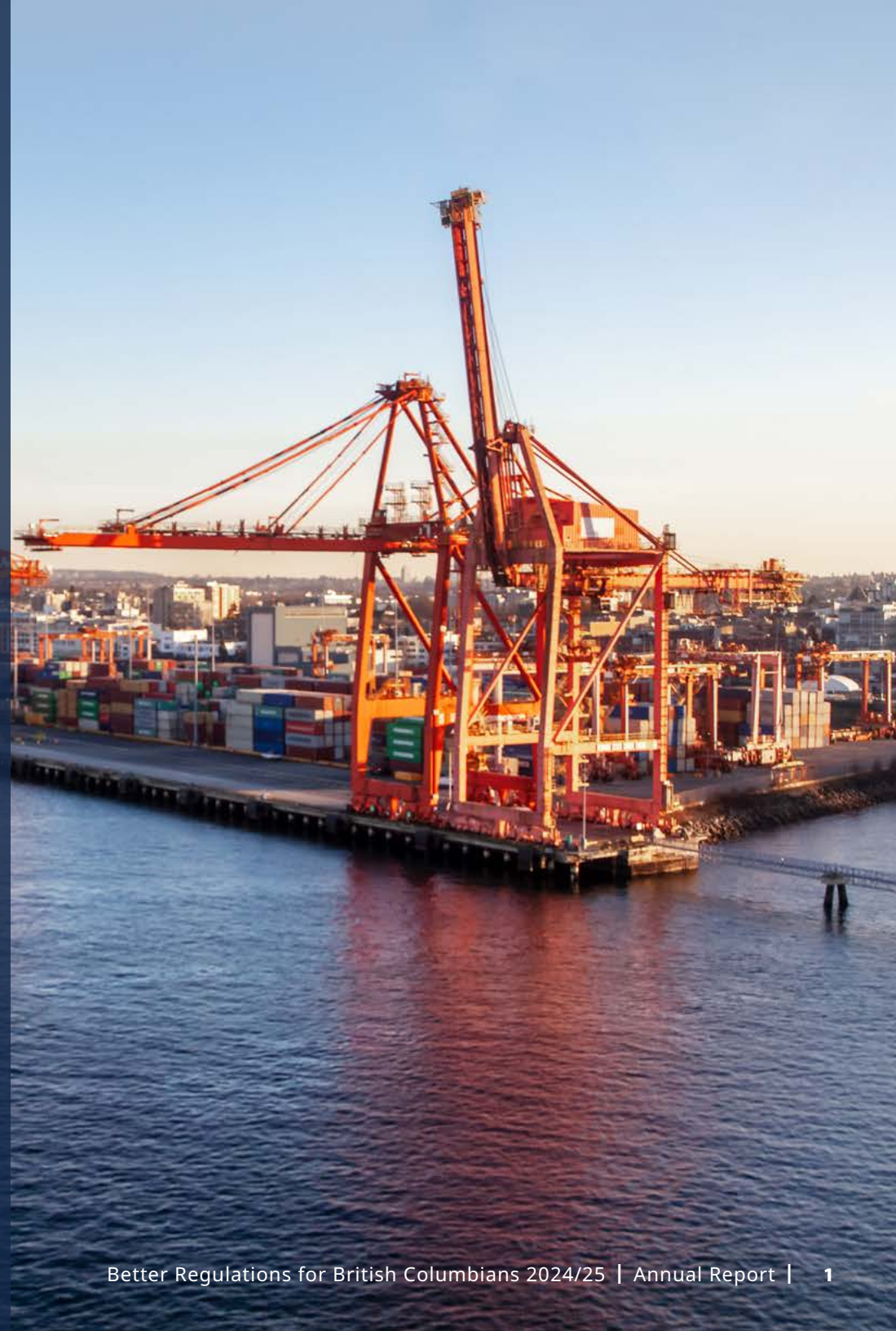
2024/25

Better Regulations for British Columbians



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Message from the Minister



Honourable Diana Gibson
Minister of Jobs, Economic
Development and Innovation

This year's Better Regulations for British Columbians Annual Report highlights the transformative progress we've made across multiple sectors, driven by a commitment to improving the lives of people and businesses in our province. From expanding health care services to introducing innovative tools for economic growth, we've focused on creating solutions that benefit all British Columbians.

B.C. is making bold strides in reducing the financial pressures on families. By expanding affordable housing options and serving communities directly with new mobile government services, we are helping to make life more affordable for everyone.

We are investing in our health care system, by enhancing access to services like opioid treatment and home-based long-term senior care programs. Through forward-thinking policies, including the introduction of innovative cancer therapies and enhanced emergency response capabilities, we are ensuring that health care in B.C. can meet the needs of every citizen.

Our government continues to prioritize safety. We are modernizing fire safety laws; reforming police oversight and protecting individuals from digital exploitation. These efforts are designed to ensure security for all British Columbians.

We are creating an environment where businesses can thrive. By modernizing regulatory processes in multiple industries, digitizing essential services and simplifying access to funding, we are removing barriers to growth and enabling businesses to innovate and prosper.

At the same time, we are navigating a complex global economy. B.C. has stood firm against unfair American tariffs, advocating for fair trade, and protecting our workers and industries. We remain committed to building resilient trade relationships.

As we continue our journey to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient B.C., we are guided by the principle that progress must benefit everyone. Our ongoing work with Indigenous Peoples remains at the heart of our commitment to reconciliation, ensuring that all communities are empowered to succeed.

This year's report highlights the achievements that are making a tangible difference, and we remain dedicated to working together to ensure B.C. continues to be a place where every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Honourable Diana Gibson

Minister of Jobs, Economic
Development and Innovation

Goals and Objectives

This year's annual report showcases specific actions British Columbia (B.C.) has taken to grow the economy, reduce costs for families, strengthen health care, make communities safer, and improve the ease of doing business. The Province is working hard to reduce unnecessary red tape and modernize our laws and service delivery processes to meet the evolving needs of the people of B.C., their businesses, and communities.

The Province's focus on better regulations and services that promote economic growth, and innovation is supported by three main goals:

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

Accountability and Commitment

The Better Regulations for British Columbians Annual Report fulfills requirements established under the Regulatory Reporting Act and its associated regulation. The report must be published by June 30th each year and contain:

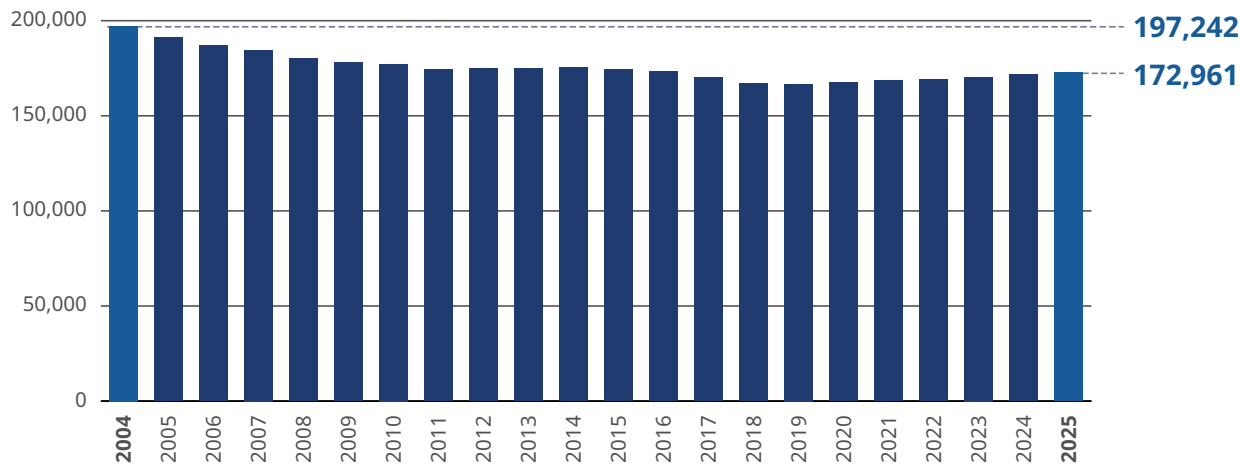
- » The goals and objectives of the government's regulatory reform initiatives;
- » The number of regulatory requirements, as determined by the Minister, on March 31 of the year in which the report is published;
- » An explanation of the methodology used by the Minister to determine the number of regulatory requirements;
- » A historical comparison of the number of regulatory requirements; and,
- » An assessment of the government's regulatory reform initiatives undertaken during the 12-month period ending on March 31 of the year in which the report is published.

If you have suggestions to address service improvement or efficiency in B.C.'s legislation, regulations, or government processes, please contact us at Better.Regulations@gov.bc.ca.

Regulatory Requirements Count

Measuring regulatory requirements provides important insights into B.C.'s progress toward reducing red tape while maintaining necessary protections for people, communities, and the environment. In 2004, the Province established the Net Zero Increase (NZI) commitment with a baseline of 197,242 requirements, creating a ceiling not to be exceeded. As of March 31, 2025, the number of regulatory requirements was 172,961.

B.C.'s Regulatory Requirements Count



Since establishing the NZI commitment and the regulatory requirements count ("the count"), B.C.'s population has increased substantially, and the economy is more complex. To provide meaningful context for the count, in the 2023/24 report we began to evaluate it against three key indicators:

1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
2. Working-age Population; and,
3. Number of businesses.

This comparative approach offers deeper insights into how the count changes relative to the areas it most significantly impacts: the economy, the people of B.C. and their businesses.

A **Regulatory Requirement** is any action that:



People



Businesses



Government

Must take in order to:

Meet Legal Responsibilities



Access Government Services



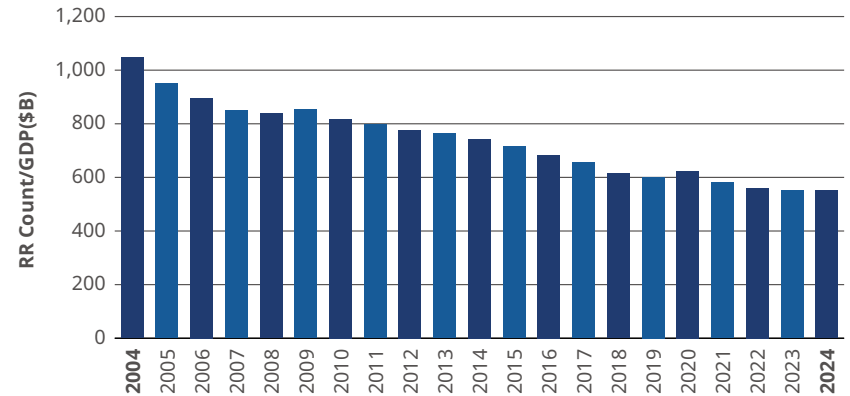
Conduct Business



Economy-based (GDP Count Ratio)

Regulation plays a key role in shaping economic activity across British Columbia. By analyzing the relationship between regulatory requirements and provincial economic output, measured as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), we gain valuable insights into how our regulatory approach affects economic performance.

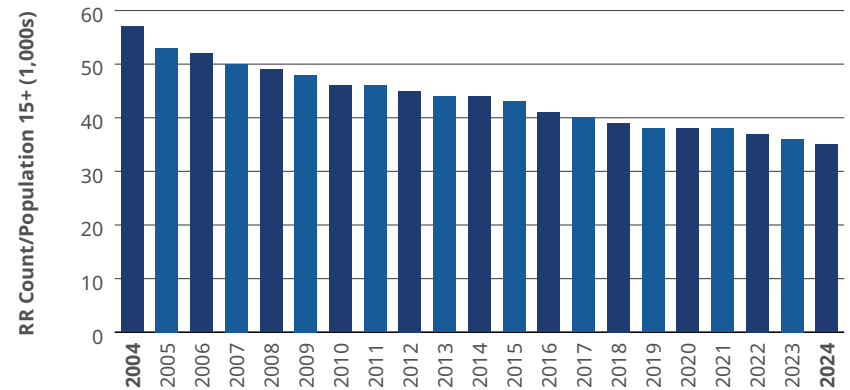
The ratio of regulatory requirements to GDP has consistently declined since 2004. Looking at the past decade (since 2014), we have seen provincial GDP grow by 31 percent while regulatory requirements decreased by 2.5 percent, demonstrating our commitment to economic growth with smart regulation.



People-based (Population Count Ratio)

Well-designed regulations provide important protections and benefits for everyone in B.C. The population-based ratio examines regulatory requirements in relation to our working-age population, helping us understand how regulations impact residents and workers.

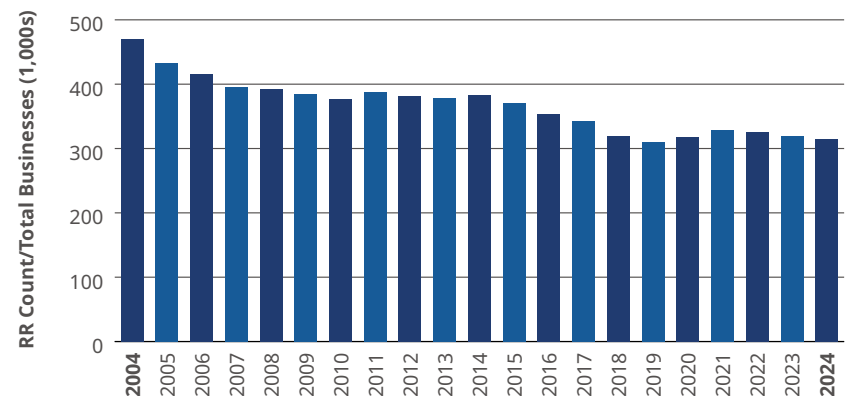
This measure, which tracks the number of requirements per working-age resident (aged 15 and over), shows a decline since 2004. During the past decade (since 2014), B.C.'s working-age population has expanded by 23 percent while regulatory requirements have decreased by 2.5 percent, reflecting our focus on streamlining rules while accommodating growth.



Business-based (Business Count Ratio)

A strong business community forms the foundation of B.C.'s economy. As of 2023, the province is home to over 524,000 small businesses with fewer than 50 employees, making up over 98 percent of all businesses. Self-employed individuals without paid help represent 60 percent of B.C. businesses. Among the approximately 215,000 businesses with employees, 56 percent operate with fewer than five employees, and 96 percent employ fewer than 50 people.

Our business-based measure tracks regulatory requirements in relation to the number of businesses operating in the province. This ratio has steadily declined since 2004. In the last decade (since 2014), the number of businesses in B.C. has grown by 19 percent while regulatory requirements have decreased by 2.5 percent, demonstrating our commitment to reducing red tape for businesses while maintaining important regulations protecting public health, safety and the environment.



2024/25 Achievements

The stories profiled in the 2024/25 Annual Report are a sample of the efforts made to improve access to the services British Columbians count on. The stories are organized into the following themes:

- » Growing the Economy
- » Reducing Costs for Families
- » Strengthening Health Care
- » Making Communities Safer
- » Improving the Ease of Doing Business

More achievements from 2024/25 can be found online. Please visit our Better Regulations for British Columbians [webpage](#) to read more.



Growing the Economy

British Columbia is focused on building a strong, diversified economy that creates good jobs throughout the province. From innovation in mass timber construction to streamlining digital permitting processes, we are removing barriers to growth while ensuring sustainable economic development. Our approach delivers confidence for businesses, security for workers, and generates the revenue needed to sustain the essential services British Columbians rely on. The following initiatives demonstrate our commitment to developing a resilient economy that works for everyone while addressing tomorrow's challenges.

Digital Building Permit Hub Accelerates Home Construction

The new [Building Permit Hub](#) is transforming B.C.'s construction sector, removing barriers to economic growth by digitizing and standardizing the building permit process across jurisdictions. The Hub modernizes requirements, automates compliance checks, and streamlines workflows, allowing builders to dedicate more resources to actual construction rather than navigating complex permitting processes. As the tool expands to more communities, it is expected to increase construction activity, create jobs, and generate substantial economic activity. This initiative establishes B.C. as a leader in digital permitting innovation and fosters broader economic growth.

The Province's digital transformation of the permitting process has reduced processing times for natural resource permits related to housing by 45 days and decreased riparian area protection assessment times from up to 12 months to just 30 days for 90% of applications.





Building Code Changes Expand Mass Timber's Economic Potential

B.C. is strengthening its position as a global leader in sustainable construction with updates to the BC Building Code that expand the use of mass timber. The changes now allow mass timber in buildings up to 18 stories and extend this construction method to schools, libraries, retail spaces, and care facilities. The approach creates new market opportunities for B.C.'s forest sector, driving demand for value-added wood products and supporting jobs throughout the supply chain, particularly in rural communities.

Electricity Regulation for Cryptocurrency Projects

To ensure access to clean, affordable electricity while supporting sustainable economic growth, the Province amended the Utilities Commission Act to regulate electricity service for cryptocurrency mining operations which consume massive amounts of electricity. The amendments enable the government to establish permanent regulations for cryptocurrency mining projects, helping to preserve BC Hydro's clean electricity for homes and job-creating businesses as the Province transitions away from fossil fuels. This approach ensures that B.C.'s low-cost, clean electricity is directed towards industries that create meaningful employment and economic opportunities for British Columbians.

Employment-Focused Reforms Strengthen Economic Inclusion

The Province has modernized its employment and assistance requirements for people on income and disability assistance to better support them finding and keeping a job. These significant updates removed barriers that made it difficult for people receiving assistance to pursue employment opportunities. This approach replaces punitive measures with supportive assessment and tailored employment planning, creating clearer pathways to workforce participation. These reforms were shaped by consultation with over 10,000 people, many with lived experience of poverty, ensuring policies reflect their needs. The changes also incorporate Indigenous experiences and knowledge, fostering more inclusive economic growth across all communities.

The province amended the 2018 Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, the Employment and Assistance Act, and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act to help people get out of poverty.



Reducing Costs for Families

British Columbia is taking action to reduce costs for families across the province. From expanding affordable housing options to implementing predictable minimum wage increases tied to inflation, we are addressing the financial pressures facing households today. Our government is making essential services more accessible through mobile delivery, streamlining child care funding, and strengthening protections for renters. These initiatives reflect our commitment to make life more affordable while ensuring families can access the support that they need.

Web Portal Helps Protect Renters from Bad-Faith Evictions

B.C.'s new [Landlord Use Web Portal](#) helps prevent bad-faith evictions while creating a standardized process for legitimate landlord use claims. The portal requires landlords to provide detailed information about who will occupy the unit when ending tenancies for personal use. The changes extend notice periods from two to four months, giving displaced tenants more time to find new housing, and increasing the dispute period from 15 to 30 days. Landlords also face significant penalties for bad-faith evictions, including compensation of 12 months' rent to tenants. The system enables post-eviction compliance audits and collects data on eviction patterns, helping the Province develop more effective tenant protection policies.

Reducing Travel and Costs with Mobile Government Services

The new Service BC Mobile Service Centre is helping families save valuable time and money by bringing essential government services directly to communities. This specially equipped van travels to remote, rural, and Indigenous communities where residents previously had to make long, costly trips to access in-person services. Offering driver's license renewals, marriage licenses, birth certificates, and MSP applications, the mobile centre reduces or eliminates expenses for transportation, child care, and time off work. During emergencies, like wildfires or floods, it provides critical services to communities. The van's technology provides digital services, offering Wi-Fi and satellite connectivity in remote areas.

As of December 2024, the mobile service centre has served over 50 communities (including 32 First Nations communities) and completed over 9,000 transactions.



Child Care Funding Portal Reduces Administrative Burden

The [My ChildCareBC Services](#) portal is streamlining funding processes for child care providers throughout the province, helping reduce costs that are ultimately passed on to families. This online system allows providers to apply for operational funding, fee reductions for parents, and wage enhancements for Early Childhood Educators through a single digital platform. Using automated processes and advanced logic, the portal has reduced application processing times, with 80% of submissions now automatically approved at the first stage. This efficiency means more timely funding to facilities and quicker fee reductions for parents, allowing providers to focus more on children and less on paperwork.

New Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres

The Ministry of Education and Child Care introduced the [Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres](#) to lower costs and speed up the development of new child care spaces. These guidelines provide clear, standardized design principles, reducing the need for costly revisions and delays. By simplifying the planning process, organizations save time and resources while ensuring centres meet health and safety standards. This initiative helps child care providers build more spaces at a lower cost, increasing access to affordable child care options for families, and supports economic growth by enabling more parents to enter the workforce.



Strengthening Health Care

British Columbia is committed to strengthening health care by expanding access to essential services for everyone, regardless of where they live. From innovative at-home solutions for seniors to same-day treatment for those struggling with addiction, we are transforming how care is delivered across the province. Our government is implementing forward-thinking approaches to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions while bringing life-saving cancer therapies closer to home. These initiatives demonstrate our dedication to building a health care system that is accessible, comprehensive, and responsive to the diverse needs of all British Columbians.

New Phone Line Provides Same-Day Opioid Treatment Access

In August 2024, the Province launched the Opioid Treatment Access Line (1-833-804-8111), a province-wide telephone service providing immediate access to treatment for people struggling with opioid addiction. Callers can speak with doctors and nurses who can prescribe life-saving opioid agonist medications and connect them directly to regional health care teams for ongoing support in their community. The confidential service, available 9AM to 4PM, seven days a week, helps overcome barriers to treatment, especially for those in smaller communities with limited local resources. This initiative is part of B.C.'s comprehensive effort to expand addiction treatment access, prevent overdose deaths, and support long-term recovery.

Long-term Care at Home Helps Seniors Age in Place

The new Long-term Care at Home program is revolutionizing senior care by providing essential support services typically found in care facilities directly to seniors in their own homes. The program equips residences with customized technology for virtual care and monitoring, including fall detection, activity tracking, medication adherence systems, and two-way emergency communication devices. A dedicated care team monitors these systems and responds to alerts when needed. Currently being piloted in Delta and Victoria with 26 participants, the program aims to support over 2,700 seniors across B.C. within four years and will be funded through the Canada-British Columbia Aging with Dignity agreement.

Life-Saving Cancer Therapy Now Available in B.C.

Patients in British Columbia living with advanced leukemias and lymphomas can now access innovative Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-Cell (CAR-T) therapy within the province. This new treatment was previously only available through referrals to other provinces or countries but is now offered at Vancouver General Hospital and BC Children's Hospital. CAR-T therapy genetically engineers a patient's own white blood cells to recognize and attack cancer cells, providing a critical option when conventional treatments fail. Since intake began in 2024, the program has expanded from treating 25 patients annually to up to 50 patients per year, ensuring more patients can receive this specialized care closer to home.



Expanded Scope Empowers B.C.'s Emergency Responders

B.C. has expanded the scope of practice for paramedics and first responders, allowing them to provide faster, more advanced emergency care. Paramedics can now perform needle decompression for chest trauma, portable ultrasound assessments, and advanced airway management. First responders, including firefighters, can administer epinephrine for allergic reactions and conduct diagnostic tests like blood glucose monitoring. These updates have reduced hospital transports, eased pressure on emergency departments, and ensured better patient outcomes. By equipping emergency personnel with more tools, the province has strengthened pre-hospital care and improved the health care system's efficiency.

New Teams Reduce Unnecessary Hospital Admissions

The new Emergency Department Admission Avoidance Teams connect patients who do not require hospitalization with community-based care. These specialized teams focus on older adults and those with mental health and substance use concerns. These populations experience hospital admission rates nearly three times higher than average. Each major hospital in B.C. has established these teams, which operate seven days a week. This innovative approach ensures patients receive the right care in the right setting, reducing hospital overcrowding while improving patient outcomes and decreasing costs by avoiding unnecessary admissions.

Making Communities Safer

British Columbia is taking decisive action to enhance public safety through modernized legislation, improved governance, and innovative digital tools. We have updated outdated fire safety laws, reformed police oversight mechanisms, and created new protections against digital exploitation. These initiatives reflect our comprehensive approach to community safety, addressing both traditional threats like fires and emerging challenges in the online world. The stories below demonstrate our ongoing work to build communities where everyone feels secure, protected, and empowered.

Modernized Fire Safety Legislation Strengthens Community Protection

The Fire Safety Act replaces decades-old legislation with modern approaches to fire safety and prevention. The new Act introduces a risk-based compliance monitoring fire inspection system that helps to focus resources on high-risk buildings, along with an administrative penalty of up to \$25,000 for individuals and \$50,000 for corporations in non-compliance. Municipalities will conduct proactive inspections based on assessed building risk, while regional districts will operate on a reactive complaint-based model with support from provincial fire service advisors. This legislation enhances protection for people and communities through more effective enforcement of fire safety requirements, helping to prevent tragedies and property damage.

Structure fires increased by 24% between 2014 and 2024, contributing to 2,014 injuries, 324 deaths, and over \$5.1 billion in property losses over that same period.



Police Act Reform Improves Governance and Oversight

Amendments to the Police Act make B.C.'s policing system more accountable and responsive to communities. Municipalities now have more flexibility in choosing their police board representatives and empowering board members to select their chair, a new mandatory training requirement for all police board members, and new authority for the Director of Police Services to establish a Code of Conduct for police board members. In addition, municipal councils are now required to notify the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General if they have not approved their proposed budget on time. The expansion of the police complaint commissioner's authority to conduct reviews and call public hearings for misconduct strengthens and improves the efficiency of oversight of municipal police in the province. The definition of 'misconduct' under the Act now aligns with the BC Human Rights Code, encompassing discriminatory jokes and gestures. These reforms are intended to increase public trust in policing, particularly for Indigenous and racialized communities.

New Protections Against Non-Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images

The new Intimate Images Protection Service offers emotional support, help with tribunal applications, and assistance communicating protection orders. Victims can access the BC Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) to get protection orders against individuals or online platforms, even without naming a respondent. Youth aged 14+ can apply for protection without involving a parent. This streamlined process can force immediate removal of content from the internet while allowing victims to seek monetary compensation of up to \$5,000 in the CRT, \$35,000 in the Provincial Court and higher amounts in the Supreme Court.

Statistics Canada reports an 80% increase in non-consensual intimate image sharing incidents between 2014-2020. Nearly half (48%) of youth victims were exploited by an intimate partner or friend.



New Digital Tools Enhance Community Emergency Preparedness

British Columbians now have access to improved digital resources to help prepare for and respond to emergencies. The [Emergency Ready Planner](#) is an online tool that helps people and families create personalized emergency plans tailored to their local needs and hazards. The upgraded BC Wildfire Service app provides access to critical wildfire information, such as an interactive map showing wildfire perimeters, weather conditions, and evacuation details. The improved [Drought Information Portal](#) gives communities, farmers, and businesses better data about drought levels and watershed conditions. These user-friendly tools give British Columbians easier access to vital emergency information, enabling them to better protect themselves during crises.

During the 2024 wildfire season, nearly 1.1 million hectares burned, and 4,100 properties were under evacuation orders across B.C. There are now approximately 1,600 wildfires per year across the province.

Improving the Ease of Doing Business

British Columbia is committed to making it easier to do business in our province. By modernizing regulatory processes, digitizing essential services, and reducing red tape, we are helping businesses spend less time on administration and more time on growth and innovation. From interactive building codes and enhanced tax services, removing barriers to First Nations Land registration to digitizing processes for access funding and annual reporting, the Province is implementing practical solutions that reduce complexity and administrative burden. The following achievements highlight our ongoing work to create an economy where businesses of all sizes can thrive and contribute to our province's prosperity.

Interactive Building Code Streamlines Compliance

The Province has partnered with [Trax Codes](#) to deliver a digital version of the BC Building Code, making provincial building regulations more accessible. This interactive platform transforms the building code into an easily searchable, annotatable resource that building officials, architects, engineers, and contractors can access via web and mobile applications. The system features AI-powered search capabilities, automated updates to ensure users always have the latest regulations, and collaborative tools that allow project teams to share comments and bookmarks. This innovative approach clarifies building requirements, enhances compliance, and streamlines the building approval process across British Columbia.

Enhanced Tax Portal Reduces Administrative Burden

A major upgrade has improved how businesses interact with B.C.'s tax services. This enhancement to the [eTaxBC](#) portal delivers an intuitive interface that reduces time spent on tax administration. The mobile-friendly system features improved navigation and search functionality, making it easier for business owners to find what they need. Security enhancements include new multi-factor authentication, protecting sensitive information while maintaining ease of access. The upgrade



also brings the system into compliance with international accessibility standards, ensuring business owners with disabilities can navigate tax requirements more easily. These improvements help owners spend less time on administration and more time focusing on their business.

Removing Barriers to First Nations Land Registration

First Nations can now directly acquire, hold, and register land in their own names following legislative amendments to the Property Law Act and Land Title Act. Previously, many First Nations faced discriminatory barriers that required them to use proxies such as development corporations, societies, or individual members when purchasing property. This added unnecessary costs, complexity, and delays. These legislative changes eliminate administrative hurdles by recognizing First Nations as legal entities capable of registering land interests directly with the land title office. These reforms advance the Province's reconciliation commitments, creating a more equitable real estate environment that respects First Nations' central connection to land.

Online Portal Streamlines Agricultural Funding Access

The new [Programs Online Digital Service \(PODS\)](#) is modernizing how B.C.'s agriculture and agri-food sectors access funding programs. This digital platform replaces cumbersome paper-based processes with a streamlined online experience that allows producers and processors to submit applications easily, track progress, and request reimbursements through a single secure BCeID login. The system processed its first application in just eight minutes during the Tree Fruit Climate Resiliency Program launch. Administrators also promptly closed intake upon reaching funding limits, saving applicants valuable time. By automating data flow, PODS not only accelerates the application process but enables government officials to make more data-driven decisions about programs.

Digitizing Seafood Processors' Annual Survey for Greater Efficiency

British Columbia's seafood processors now benefit from a streamlined process for annual reporting thanks to the digitization of the Fisheries Production Schedule survey. Previously, processors had to complete and mail a survey on the quantity and types of seafood they processed the previous year. Now, they can complete and submit their data online. The digital upgrade simplifies the submission process, reduces administrative burdens, and enhances data accuracy. The digital format makes it easier for businesses to meet regulatory requirements, supporting B.C.'s seafood industry and contributing to a more efficient and accessible regulatory environment.

Since the launch of PODS, more than 450 businesses have submitted over 660 applications to seven programs, requesting more than \$10 million in funding.





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