

Better Regulations for British Columbians Annual Report

2025/26





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Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Jobs and
Economic Growth

Message from the Minister

Every year, our government works to make it easier for people and businesses to access the services they rely on. In a time of global uncertainty, improving how government works is one of the most effective ways we can support families, strengthen communities, and help businesses grow.

This year's Better Regulations for British Columbians Annual Report highlights how we are modernizing government services and removing barriers that stand in the way of people getting things done. By streamlining processes, updating outdated rules, and adopting digital tools, we are building a stronger, more resilient economy that works better for everyone. We are doing this work while continuing to strengthen our health care system and keep our communities safe. We launched our Ease of Doing Business initiative, which invites businesses to identify the challenges they face and propose practical solutions. One of the obstacles we heard loud and clear is how regulatory differences across provinces create unnecessary delays and costs.

That is why we proposed, chaired and championed the development of the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement, which will break down interprovincial trade barriers, making it easier for B.C. businesses to sell products across Canada, and for people to buy Canadian-made goods. We also passed new legislation to make interprovincial mutual recognition permanent in B.C., ensuring that goods and services approved in other provinces can be sold or used here, reducing duplication and lowering costs.

This is the largest set of red tape reduction actions in Canada's history, and it's just the beginning.

For people, we have continued removing everyday barriers: supporting school boards to expand child care to children of all ages, eliminating unnecessary doctors' notes, simplifying and speeding up permitting processes, and modernizing outdated administrative requirements.

Strengthening health care remains a strong priority. By recruiting U.S. trained health care professionals, enhancing safeguards around prescribed alternatives and modernizing policies, we are ensuring that patients get the care they need when they need it.

We are also improving safety across the province by making changes that support emergency preparedness, more efficient safety planning, and improved connections for families, while addressing safety concerns for children and youth.

The progress highlighted in this year's report demonstrates what we can achieve by working together with people, businesses and communities. We remain committed to making government services simpler, faster, and more responsive, so everyone in British Columbia can thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ravi Kahlon', written in a cursive style.

Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth

Goals and Objectives

This year's annual report highlights the concrete steps British Columbia (B.C.) has taken to grow the economy by making it easier to do business, while continuing to strengthen our health care system and keep our communities safe. To continually meet the changing needs of British Columbians, the Province's regulatory reform policy is driven by three overarching goals:

1. Expanding access to high-quality government services that people rely on;
2. Supporting a regulatory system that is modern, efficient, and effective; and,
3. Strengthening accountability for ongoing regulatory and service improvements.

Accountability and Commitment

The Better Regulations for British Columbians Annual Report is required under the Regulatory Reporting Act and its related regulation. The legislation specifies the report must be published each year on or before June 30 and outline the Government's regulatory reform programs, including:

- The goals and objectives of the government's regulatory reform initiatives;
- The number of regulatory requirements, as determined by the Minister, as of March 31 of the reporting year;
- An explanation of the methodology the Minister used to determine that number;
- A historical comparison of regulatory requirement totals; and
- An assessment of the regulatory reform initiatives undertaken during the 12 month period ending March 31 of the reporting year.

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

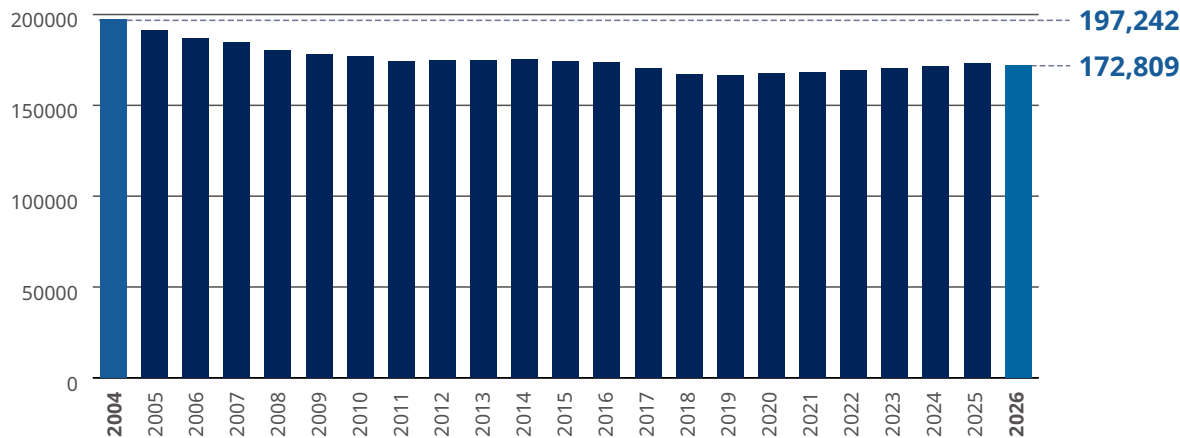


Regulatory Requirements Count

Established in 2001, B.C.'s Regulatory Requirements Count (the count) serves as a proxy measure of regulatory burden on people and businesses. B.C.'s approach has historically focused on reducing red tape and is guided by the Regulatory Reporting Act, Red Tape Reduction Day Act and the Regulatory Reform Policy.

A cornerstone of the program is the Net Zero Increase (NZI) policy which commits the Province to remain below a baseline count of 197,242 regulatory requirements established in 2004. As of March 31, 2026, the count was 172,809, approximately 12 per cent below the 2004 baseline.

The NZI was last extended in 2025 for up to three years until the end of 2028.



To further illustrate that the count has not grown exponentially alongside our increasing population and complex economy, the Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth reports out on three ratios that compares the count to three widely recognized economic 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 in relation to the areas it most directly affects: the economy, the people of B.C., and their businesses.

A Regulatory Requirement is any action that:

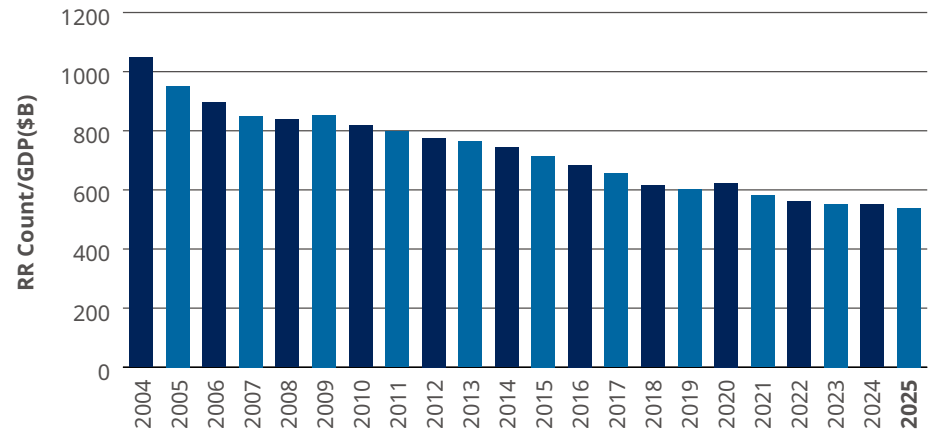
- Person**
- Business**
- Government**

Must take:

- To Access Government Services**
- Conduct Business**
- Meet Legal Responsibilities**

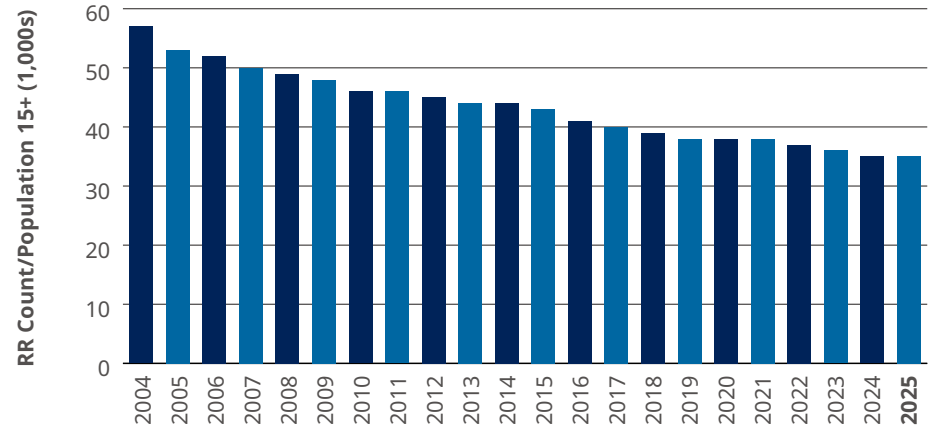
Economy-based (GDP Count Ratio)

Examining how regulatory requirements interact with provincial economic output, represented by GDP, provides important insight into the ways our regulatory framework affects overall economic performance. Since 2004, the ratio of regulatory requirements to GDP has steadily declined. Over the past decade, provincial GDP has increased by 32.3 per cent while regulatory requirements have decreased by 0.8 per cent—clear evidence of our commitment to supporting economic growth through smart, effective regulation



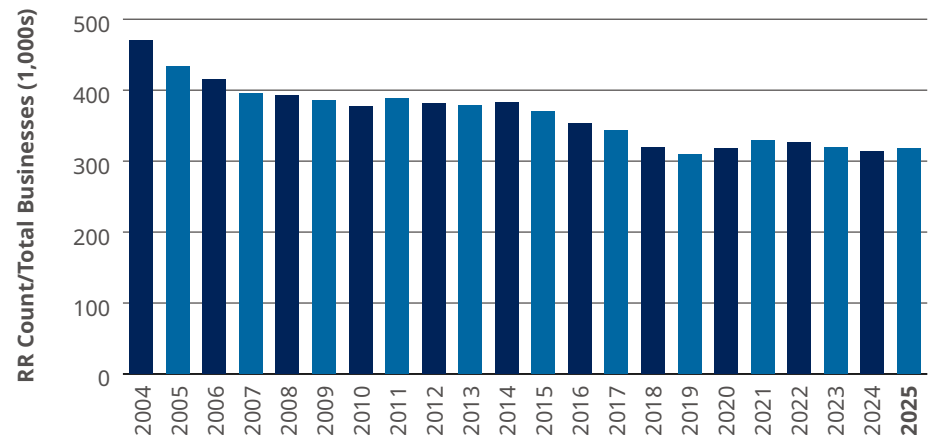
People-based (Population Count Ratio)

Looking at the number of regulatory requirements in comparison to the working-age population (15 years and older), helps us better understand the impact of regulatory requirements on how these rules affect residents and workers; this metric has been trending downward since 2004. Over the past decade B.C.'s working-age population has grown by 21.6 per cent, while regulatory requirements have fallen by 0.8 per cent—demonstrating B.C. can streamline regulations while supporting population growth.



Business-based (Business Count Ratio)

As of 2025 the Province has more than 537,000 small businesses with fewer than 50 employees, accounting for over 98 per cent of all businesses. Self employed individuals without paid staff make up over 60 per cent of B.C.'s business landscape. As the graph demonstrates, this ratio has consistently declined since 2004. Over the past decade, the number of businesses in B.C. has increased by 16 per cent while regulatory requirements have fallen by 0.8 per cent, illustrating our ongoing commitment to reducing red tape for businesses while upholding essential regulations that protect public health, safety, and the environment.



2025/26 Achievements

The stories highlighted in the 2025/26 Annual Report represent a selection of the good work being done to improve access to the services British Columbians rely on. These stories are grouped under the following themes:

- Ease of Doing Business
- Streamlining Services
- Strengthening Health Care
- Making Communities Safer

More achievements from 2025/26 can be found online.

Please visit our Better Regulations for British Columbians [webpage](#) to read more.



The Ease of Doing Business Initiative aims to simplify processes and access to services to help businesses succeed, draw more investment and improve competitiveness.



Improving the Ease of Doing Business

Over the past few years, businesses in British Columbia have experienced a barrage of unprecedented challenges, including disrupted supply chains, tariffs, increased competition and labour shortages. In response, the Province is focused on making it simpler, faster and more predictable to do business by removing unnecessary barriers and strengthening economic competitiveness. Specifically, over the last year the Province has worked to break down interprovincial trade barriers, streamline regulations, accelerate the permitting and approval processes for major industrial projects, improve access to skilled labour and modernize our tax policy.

Ease of Doing Business

In the summer of 2025, the Province launched the Ease of Doing Business initiative to reduce barriers, cut red tape, foster innovation and create a more supportive, business-friendly environment in B.C. Using an [online portal](#), individuals and businesses are invited to identify challenges and recommend solutions which are then provided directly to responsible ministries for consideration and action. Information gathered will help Government establish a set of performance measures to make it easier for companies and organizations of all sizes and sectors.

Reinforcing B.C.'s Leadership in Interprovincial Trade

On March 12, 2026, the Trade Recognition Act received royal assent, making it easier to do business, further reinforcing B.C.'s leadership in eliminating interprovincial trade barriers. The Act allows that goods and services lawfully sold, used or supplied in any other Canadian province can also be sold, used or supplied in B.C., unless an exception applies. This eliminates duplicative testing, approvals, and certifications. The result: lower costs and higher productivity for B.C. businesses with more choices and better prices for consumers.

Removing Trade Barriers, Buying Canadian

The Government of B.C. proposed, chaired and championed a national initiative to establish the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement. The pan-Canadian agreement will break down interprovincial trade barriers, making it easier for B.C. businesses to sell products across Canada, and for people to buy Canadian-made goods. If a good can be lawfully sold in B.C., it will no longer face additional testing, certification or other approvals before it can be sold across the country. Any exceptions to this standard will be clearly identified.

“This is the largest set of red tape reduction in Canada’s history, and it’s just the beginning,” said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth.

[BC Gov News](#)

Infrastructure Projects Act

On May 28, 2025, the Infrastructure Projects Act (IPA) received Royal Assent, formalizing the powers of the Ministry of Infrastructure and helping to streamline decision-making for major public infrastructure like schools, hospitals, and long-term care homes, so communities can get the services they need, faster. The IPA also can help expedite the delivery of projects designated as provincially significant, i.e., projects that bring substantial economic, social or environmental benefits for people in B.C.

Contaminated Site Regulation Amendments

The Contaminated Sites Regulation has been amended to modernize requirements for site remediation, add exemptions to streamline processes, and update forms. The amendments allow site users to move sand and gravel to infrastructure projects around the province’s 1,200 gravel pits and quarries without submitting a seven-day notice. Additionally, by exempting sites already certified as clean from soil relocation requirements, the amendments eliminate unnecessary notification processes, further reducing administrative burden.



Consent-Based Authorization for the Eskay Creek Revitalization Project

In close partnership with the Tahltan Central Government (TCG), B.C. has delivered the province's first consent-based Environmental Assessment for the Eskay Creek revitalization, supporting Indigenous jurisdiction and reopening a gold and silver mine; representing an important milestone in government-to-government decision-making for major projects. The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) conducted the assessment on behalf of both the provincial and federal governments, eliminating the need for two assessments for a single project. The EAO's assessment featured unprecedented collaboration with provincial permitting agencies, federal regulators and TCG to streamline the reviews, share expertise, and determine the best placed regulator to oversee various conditions.



Expansion of MineSpace

In November 2025, the Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals expanded the online portal [MineSpace](#), used for managing permits, compliance and reporting, to support the online submission of major mine applications and to publish Mines Act digital credentials, improving transparency and efficiency.

Commercial Liens Act Implementation

The new Commercial Liens Act (CLA) creates a comprehensive and fair lien framework that makes debt collection easier for anyone who repairs, stores, or transports goods. The CLA modernizes an inconsistent and confusing patchwork of outdated laws that created different rules for different service providers. This reform reduces risks and costs so that service providers are less likely to lose their liens and the payments that liens secure. The new legislation also creates updated rules and processes that are easier to understand, which benefits both businesses and their customers.

International Credentials Recognition Act – Prohibition on Canadian Work Experience Requirement

The International Credentials Recognition Act (ICRA) helps 18 regulatory authorities under the ICRA improve their credential recognition processes, making it fairer, faster, and easier for people trained outside Canada to use their skills. Previously, many international professionals had to obtain Canadian work experience in order to become licensed to practice. As of July 2025, internationally trained applicants in most professions under the ICRA who meet certain criteria cannot be required to have Canadian work experience and must instead be allowed to demonstrate their competence in applied knowledge and skills through alternative methods.

Licence Renewal Requirements for Wineries

Winery licensees are no longer required to meet winery-specific licence renewal requirements – this means that wineries no longer have an annual minimum production requirement of 4,500 litres. Going forward, wineries will be treated the same as breweries and distilleries. This change reduces the administrative burden on licensees, streamlines licensing requirements for all manufacturers, and responds to industry feedback following the B.C. grape shortage in 2024.

Updates to Liquor Licensing Process for Private Corporations

Private corporations no longer have to report internal or external share transfers, except for Manufacturer and Agent licences. This means licensees won't need to submit detailed legal ownership charts showing every shareholder. This change reduces paperwork, focuses oversight where it's most needed, and helps speed up licensing decisions.





Streamlining Services

When we make services faster and easier to understand we not only help businesses grow we also ensure the people in British Columbia get timely access to the supports they need. This includes streamlining pre-existing or new licensing processes, building a home, making finding a job easier for military spouses and families, and increasing access to child care and family support services.

Streamlining Approvals for Large Industrial Projects

The Energy Statutes Amendment Act and associated regulations make it easier for large industrial projects to connect to the North Coast Transmission Line (NCTL), and to support a final investment decision. Building the NCTL is a cornerstone of government's co-ordinated strategy to meet the rising demand for clean electricity, and to power economic growth, jobs, climate action and reconciliation throughout British Columbia.

Cutting Permits Performance Standards

The Ministry of Forests has dramatically improved a key performance standard of processing 90 per cent of Cutting Permits in 40 business days, to processing 90 per cent of Cutting Permits within 25 days. The ability for the Ministry to provide consistent, reliable and timely decisions on cutting permit applications supports a strong economy, a resilient forest sector, and job creation across the province.

Free Court Services Available Through Online Platform

The new virtual counter is a free online service that offers convenient remote access to court services, connecting people with expert staff who can answer questions in real time, share forms and links, and arrange follow ups when needed. People can choose to connect with a virtual counter representative by video or phone.

People can now receive free, convenient help and advice navigating the court system from anywhere in the province with the launch of the new virtual counter service.



Modernizing B.C. Laws

The new [Statutes Act and Regulations Act](#) received Royal Assent on December 3, 2025, modernizing and expanding the functions of the King's Printer. In alignment with other jurisdictions, the Act makes online versions of laws official, improving public access, transparency, and usability. Under the Evidence Act, both print and online legislation are now recognized as official sources, replacing the historical rule that only printed copies were considered official.

Changes to Support Faster, More Affordable Electricity Connections for New Homes and Businesses

In response to B.C.'s growing housing needs, BC Hydro has made changes to the Distribution Extension Policy (the Policy) to support faster, more affordable electricity connections for new homes and businesses throughout the province. The changes are designed to streamline the connection process and reduce costs, particularly for residential developments. The Policy was last updated in 2008 and required the first customer requesting an extension to pay the full cost of system upgrades. The updated policy spreads those costs more broadly, so customers no longer carry the full burden when future users also benefit from upgraded infrastructure.

The cost of a simple connection to a new single-family home has dropped by more than 90%, from over \$800, and can now be as low as \$64.



Removing Barriers to Make Way for More Child Care

On October 30, 2025, amendments to the School Act were brought into force, allowing school boards to provide child care to children of all ages, including infants and toddlers, and during non-school days such as professional development days, and winter, spring and summer breaks. These changes enable school districts to better meet families' needs by offering child care in one convenient location. They also improve school districts' ability to support sustainable child care programs or expansions by allowing them to work like a not-for-profit centre.



Stronger Oversight and Improved Tools – Mobility Application

The province-wide implementation of the mobility application enables social workers to access and update case information offline and, in the field, supporting consistent, responsive service for children, youth and families across B.C. The tool reduces administrative burden and duplicate entries, improves timeliness of documentation, and strengthens oversight by helping ensure information is captured at the point of service. The rollout was supported by training and change management activities across service delivery areas as part of ongoing efforts to enhance analytics, reporting and practice supports.

Issuance of Digital FOODSAFE Certificates

On October 27, 2025, an amendment to the Food Premises Regulation under the Public Health Act removed a barrier to the issuance of digital FOODSAFE certificates in B.C. and across Canada. Previously, only paper FOODSAFE certificates could be issued and mailed to students who successfully completed the FOODSAFE course. This project enables students to receive a digital certificate within a minute after successfully completing an online FOODSAFE course, expediting the ability for job seekers to present to potential employers.

New Rules on Sick Notes Eliminate Unnecessary Paperwork

Under new employment standards regulations, employers cannot ask for a sick note from any health care professional designated under the Health Professions Act as evidence of a worker's first two short-term absences of five consecutive days or fewer in a calendar year. These changes help ensure the province's health care professionals, can focus on patient care, not paperwork. Removing the need for unnecessary sick notes also alleviates the burden from workers of the extra time and out-of-pocket costs associated with getting a note, including payment for the note, transportation, and child care.

Early Access to WorkBC Employment Services for Military Spouses and Family

B.C. is expanding WorkBC Employment Services eligibility so that military spouses and dependant adult children relocating to British Columbia with a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) member can access WorkBC services before establishing residency. The change recognizes the challenges caused by frequent relocations and helps families as they prepare to move. It removes a key barrier that previously delayed access, even when families planned to live in B.C. Overall, the change makes the process more timely, predictable and easier to access.

Improved HOV Lane Access for EV Drivers

Starting August 15, 2025, drivers of eligible plug-in hybrid or battery-electric vehicles will no longer need to display an OK decal to use designated High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) lanes. This update to the Electric Vehicle in High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes program simplifies HOV lane usage for electric vehicle owners and eliminates administrative wait times for decals. Other changes include allowing eligible out-of-province vehicles and electric heavy-duty trucks to use HOV lanes where signage permits, supporting more efficient movement of goods and encouraging cleaner transportation options.

Freshwater Fishing Licence Sales Streamlined to B.C.'s WILD System

Recreational freshwater anglers can now buy B.C. freshwater fishing licences through the Wildlife Information and Licensing Data system (WILD), bringing fishing and hunting licensing into one convenient online platform. This secure and convenient new method automates identity and residency verification, helping reduce administrative workload, reduce wait times and enhancing user experience.





Strengthening Health Care

It is essential that our public health care system attracts the qualified workers needed to make sure it remains efficient, reliable, and able to help British Columbians. This is why B.C. has introduced new initiatives to recruit U.S. trained health professionals while making safer alternatives more accessible to better support those suffering from addiction.

More Health Care Professionals to Call B.C. Home

One year after the B.C. government launched a targeted campaign to recruit U.S. trained health care workers, more than 400 U.S. doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and allied health professionals have signed on to work in B.C.'s communities. The marketing campaign started in June 2025, targeting the states of Washington and Oregon, as well as select cities in California. By welcoming more U.S. doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and allied health professionals, B.C. is building on the expertise of its health care workforce to strengthen services for people and build healthy communities.



Province Strengthens Safeguards for Prescribed Alternatives

The Province is completing the transition to new witnessed dosing requirements to address the diversion of prescribed alternatives (e.g., hydromorphone) while maintaining access for people who rely on the program. As of December 30, 2025, all patients with prescribed alternatives must take their medication under the supervision of a health professional, such as a pharmacist or nurse.

The Prescribed Alternatives program helps save lives by separating people at the highest risk of overdose from toxic street drugs and predatory drug dealers.

Making Communities Safer

British Columbia is advancing measures to enhance community safety, including increasing resources to support preparedness for emergencies and risks arising from natural hazards and climate related disasters. In addition, policy amendments have been implemented to support children by maintaining family relationships while child protection processes are underway.

Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment

More resources are now available to help communities better prepare for emergencies and keep people safer from the risks associated with natural hazards and a changing climate. Available since October 2025, the British Columbia Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment (DCRRA), and the B.C. Hazard Insights Tool (HIT), provide provincewide information and data to help experts better understand disaster risk and inform risk-reduction actions that can save lives, reduce community and economic disruptions and reduce the costs to governments in emergency response and recovery.

Family Safety Planning

The Province has strengthened safety planning through legislative amendments, helping families stay connected, while mitigating safety concerns for children and youth. Safety plan agreements are voluntary, short-term agreements developed in collaboration with parents for the care of the child or youth. These agreements mitigate safety concerns in a way that supports the child or youth to remain safely with their parent, or with a trusted adult (as arranged by their parent), while awaiting the outcome of a child-protection assessment or investigation, or decision on a court order.

The Province has strengthened safety planning through legislative amendments, ensuring children remain safe, while maintaining connections with their families.





BRITISH
COLUMBIA

If you have suggestions to address service improvement or efficiency in B.C.'s legislative frameworks and government processes, please contact us at BetterRegulations@gov.bc.ca