

Business Plan

2024-25

Ministry of Justice and Attorney General

Saskatchewan! 

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Justice and Attorney General*

I am pleased to present the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Business Plan for 2024-25. Key justice initiatives in the 2024-25 budget will continue to focus on access to justice and public safety. These include the development of a Case Readiness Unit to assist Crown Prosecutors in addressing high caseloads and prioritization of complex files and the addition of a prosecutor dedicated to gang cases.

Work on courtroom safety and efficiency will also continue, with the construction of a new detention area in the Battleford Court of King's Bench, implementation of standardized security and distress systems throughout Saskatchewan courthouses, and the installation of more video-conferencing equipment, which will decrease prisoner transports from correctional centres and free up police resources.

In 2024-25, funding for interpersonal violence programs and services will be expanded, including through the National Action Plan to end Gender-Based Violence, with continued investment in second stage shelters. This year will also see the expansion of a Drug Treatment Court to North Battleford and continued support to community reintegration and prevention programs through community outreach services for youth and adults. We will continue to support the Family Law Mandatory Early Dispute Resolution Program to encourage families to resolve conflicts and encourage the use of the Child Support Calculation Service pilot project. The Ministry will also continue to provide early, intensive outreach to families at risk of violence through Family Intervention Rapid Support Teams.

The Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT) will see continued investment, including the appointment of a new Team Commander, to ensure transparency and accountability within policing. SIRT's mandate is to investigate alleged cases of serious injury, death, sexual assault, or interpersonal violence arising from the actions of on- and off-duty police officers, including while an individual is in police custody. We will also expand the University of Saskatchewan College of Law student experiential learning placements in Public Prosecutions, the Ministry of Justice, and with Legal Aid in rural Saskatchewan.

To ensure our ongoing success as a Ministry and enhance our ability to provide justice services, we will focus on recruitment, retention, and succession planning to ensure the ongoing, effective delivery of government and Justice priorities. The 2024-25 budget will also continue to support the promotion of Saskatchewan's interests at both national and international tables. For example, in 2025, Saskatchewan will co-chair a Federal-Provincial-Territorial conference on human rights. We will continue to be an active participant when provinces and territories come together for candid conversations at the Deputy Minister and Ministerial level.

We also continue to undertake the implementation of *The Saskatchewan First Act*, including through the work of the independent Economic Impact Assessment Tribunal, whose exclusive role is to define, quantify and report on the economic impact that federal initiatives could have on Saskatchewan. Last fall, the Tribunal received its first referral to assess the economic impact of the federal *Clean Electricity Regulations*, and a report is expected this spring.

2024-25 Budget Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>\$31.7M in total for interpersonal violence programs and services some of which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4.66M through the National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence; • \$328K for second-stage shelters (almost \$1 million over three years); and • \$577K increase for community-based organizations, including those that provide supports and services to individuals and families impacted by interpersonal violence and abuse.
<p>2</p>	<p>\$4.7M to support the modernization of courts through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.9M for improvements to the Judicial Scheduling, Tracking and Amalgamated Reporting System (J-STAR) used for scheduling and financial management in the court system; and • \$2.8M to enhance video conferencing across courts including construction and information technology installation.
<p>3</p>	<p>\$996K for programs supporting safer communities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$186K increase to hire a gang prosecutor for the southern part of the province through the Gang Violence Reduction Strategy bringing the total funding to \$666K; • \$120K increase for the expansion of Drug Treatment Court to North Battleford; • \$200K for court security initiatives such as a new detention area for the North Battleford Courthouse and installing a standard security desk and distress button system throughout all Saskatchewan Court Houses; and • \$490K for five full time employees to establish a Case Readiness Unit to assist Crown Prosecutors in addressing high caseloads and prioritization of complex files and the addition of a prosecutor dedicated to gang cases.
<p>4</p>	<p>\$165K to support the civilian-led independent Serious Incident Response Team to investigate serious incidents involving police officers.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>\$100K to the University of Saskatchewan College of Law to expand experiential learning placements in Public Prosecutions, the Ministry of Justice and with Legal Aid in rural Saskatchewan.</p>

Government Vision and Goals

Saskatchewan's Vision

“...to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life.”

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2024-25 annual reports.

Ministry of Justice and Attorney General Overview

Mandate

The Ministry of Justice and Attorney General provides access to quality justice services that respects the rule of law and protects the rights of all individuals in Saskatchewan; promotes safe and secure communities; and provides legal and justice policy advice to government.

Mission

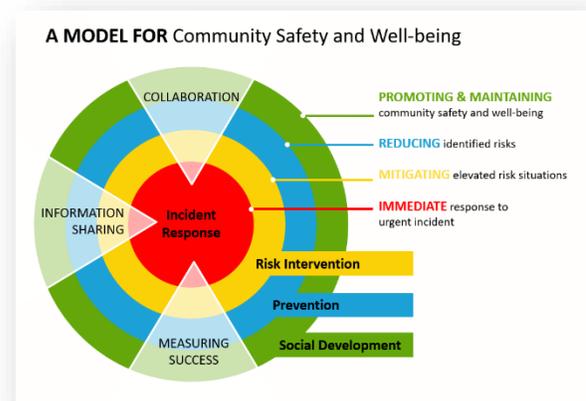
We contribute to strong communities and families in Saskatchewan by protecting rights and safety and ensuring fair, timely access to quality justice services.

Vision

All people in Saskatchewan live in safe and just communities.

The model for community safety and well-being is realized through collaborative partnerships among communities, service delivery partners, and governments.

The aim is to achieve sustainable communities where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging and the opportunity to participate, and where individuals and families can have the best quality of life, with a focus on education, health, economic participation, and social and cultural expression.



Goal 1: Stand up for Saskatchewan

The Ministry is committed to standing up for a strong Saskatchewan. We will advocate for Saskatchewan's interests at national and international forums providing legal support and advice, offering litigation expertise, and implementing key legislative commitments.

Strategy - *The approach we will take to achieve our goal:*

Advance Saskatchewan's interests through legislation and advocacy.

Key Actions - *What we will do to get there:*

- Promote Saskatchewan's interests in the courts and at national and international forums.
- In support of *The Saskatchewan First Act*, the Economic Assessment Tribunal will define, quantify and report on the economic impact that federal initiatives could have on Saskatchewan. The first referral to the Tribunal concerns the federal *Clean Electricity Regulations*.

Goal 2: Efficient and accessible justice system

The Ministry is committed to establishing and maintaining an efficient justice system that ensures equal access to justice for all residents. We will work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency in court proceedings, promoting timely resolution of cases and enhancing the quality of services.

Strategy - *The approach we will take to achieve our goal:*

Explore new and effective ways to enhance accountability.

Key Actions - *What we will do to get there:*

- Improve the efficiency of court operations through the expansion of videoconferencing to support appearances in rural and remote locations.
- Modernize business legislation and regulations to streamline requirements and expand the use of simpler business processes.

Strategy - *The approach we will take to achieve our goal:*

Address the impacts of increased demands for justice programs and services.

Key Actions - *What we will do to get there:*

- Ensure processes and personnel are in place so that individuals charged with a criminal offence can be tried without unreasonable delay, in accordance with precedents set by the Supreme Court on timelines for trials.
- Target key positions for increased recruitment and retention efforts.
- Continue to operate therapeutic courts to address criminal behaviour involving domestic violence, addictions, and mental health issues. This includes expansion of a drug treatment court to North Battleford.
- Increase capacity for gang prosecution in southern Saskatchewan by hiring an additional prosecutor.

Goal 3: Safe communities

The Ministry is committed to supporting strong and safe communities by exploring more effective ways to hold criminals accountable. This includes ensuring deterrents are proportionate to offences, helping people find pathways out of the justice system, and investing in needed infrastructure and capacity.

Strategy - *The approach we will take to achieve our goal:*

Support community reintegration and prevention programs.

Key Actions - *What we will do to get there:*

- In partnership with Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, continue supporting the Saskatoon Tribal Council on the *īkwēskīcik iskwēwak* (ah-gwee-ski-chick isk-way-wuk) program that provides female offenders with safe and successful reintegration back into communities.
- Support community outreach, prevention and reintegration services for youth and adults involved in the criminal justice system, including:
 - school based justice programs;
 - employment and education programming;
 - crime prevention and crisis intervention services; and
 - residential programs.
- Support the development of two Complex Needs Emergency Shelters that will provide an alternative safe and secure location for police to bring an individual who is intoxicated or presents a danger to themselves or the public. Individuals will be monitored for up to 24 hours and will be connected to services such as addictions, housing and income supports.

Goal 4: Strong families

Strong families are essential to building safe communities. The Ministry will support families by providing prevention and early intervention support during times of crisis and continuing to strengthen resolution services for families going through conflict to ensure the safety and well-being of all those involved.

Strategy - *The approach we will take to achieve our goal:*

Strengthen resolution services for families in conflict.

Key Actions - *What we will do to get there:*

- Continue to support the Family Law Mandatory Early Dispute Resolution Program to provide families with dispute resolution services outside the court system.
- Encourage the use of the Child Support Calculation Service pilot project to help families ensure a fair level of support for their children without the need to go to family court.
- Provide early intensive outreach to families at risk of violence through Family Intervention Rapid Support Teams.
- Assist women and children leaving domestic violence through second stage housing.
- Improve response and accountability for victims of violence through victim advocate case reviews.

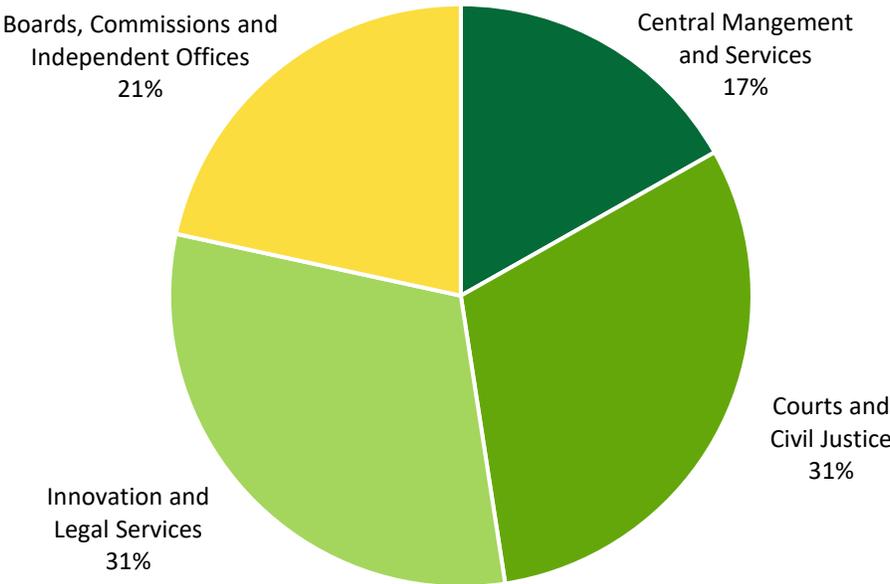
Performance Measures - What success looks like:	
Outcome:	Communities in Saskatchewan are proactively taking steps to be safer.
Measure:	The number of communities supported in the development of community safety and well-being plans and the number of communities and tribal councils supported by the Northern Alcohol Strategy.
Outcome:	Saskatchewan courts are effectively handling more appearances using technology.
Measure:	The percentage of appearances being held via videoconferencing.
Outcome:	Perpetrators of violence have supports to hold themselves accountable for their risk of using violence and to change their behaviour.
Measure:	Number of individuals connected to risk reduction approaches including brief intervention counselling, longer term counselling, and participation in the development of family safety plans.
Outcome:	Saskatchewan children have access to services and programs that reduce the negative long-term impacts of interpersonal violence.
Measure:	The number of children supported by programs related to interpersonal violence and abuse.
Outcome:	Saskatchewan residents have a better awareness and understanding of the issue of interpersonal violence and abuse in the province.
Measure:	The reach (number of views and impressions) of public awareness campaigns related to interpersonal violence.

2024-25 Improvement and Innovation Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>Public Prosecutions Case Readiness Unit</p> <p>The Public Prosecutions Case Readiness Unit initiative was created to assist prosecutors in ensuring case files are complete more quickly, allowing for resolution discussions to take place sooner and for cases to be ready for trial sooner.</p> <p>This unit will be reviewing cases as soon as they are received from the police. Cases will be assessed for completeness to ensure all relevant disclosure is in the possession of Prosecutions and provided to the accused. This will allow prosecutors more time to assess cases on the prosecution standard to ensure they should move forward. Complete files, earlier in the process, will see cases ready to move forward to resolution or trial sooner.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Judicial Scheduling, Tracking and Amalgamated Reporting (J-STAR System)</p> <p>The Judicial Scheduling, Tracking and Amalgamated Reporting System (J-STAR) is used for scheduling and financial management in the court system. In 2024-25, this system will expand to include the ability for electronic submissions of court documents through an online public portal.</p> <p>This improvement will eliminate the need to fax or deliver in person documents required by the Court of King’s Bench.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Regina Domestic Violence Court</p> <p>In 2024-25, the Regina Domestic Violence court will implement changes to current processes with the aim of reducing wait times. The results will be tracked and evaluated for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Stakeholders involved in this improvement project include police, Prosecutions, Legal Aid, Community Corrections, Victims Services, Saskatchewan Health Authority, community-based organizations, and the judiciary.</p>

Financial Summary

Ministry of Justice and Attorney General 2024-25 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	\$42,159
Courts and Civil Justice	\$77,142
Innovation and Legal Services	\$77,354
Boards, Commissions and Independent Offices	\$54,158
Total Appropriation	\$250,813
Less Capital Acquisitions	(\$6,988)
Plus Amortization	\$3,183
Total Expense	\$247,008



Links to More Information

- [Ministry of Justice and Attorney General](#)
- [Government of Saskatchewan Budget, Planning and Reporting](#)