

Full Disclosure

November 27, 2019

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* [Our File #: OSW/13/2019]

On October 29, 2019, *The Office for the Status of Women* received your request for access to the following records:

Any and all messaging prepared for the fall sitting of the house of assembly. This includes key messages for the Minister and binders.

I am pleased to inform you that a decision has been made by the *Deputy Minister* for the *Office for the Status of Women* to provide access to the requested information.

In accordance with your request for a copy of the records, the appropriate copies have been enclosed.

Please be advised that you may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the processing of your access request, as set out in section 42 of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the *Act*). A request to the Commissioner must be made in writing within 15 business days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Commissioner.

The address and contact information of the Information and Privacy Commissioner is as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
2 Canada Drive
P. O. Box 13004, Stn. A
St. John's, NL. A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309
Toll-Free: 1-877-729-6309
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500

You may also appeal directly to the Supreme Court Trial Division within 15 business days after you receive the decision of the public body, pursuant to section 52 of the *Act*.



Please be advised that responsive records will be published following a 72 hour period after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the responsive records posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time. Please note that requests for personal information will not be posted online.

If you have any further questions, please contact me by telephone at 729-5730 or by email at MaggiePeyton@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maggie Peyton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Maggie Peyton
ATIPP Coordinator

**QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019**

ISSUE: Re-Scheduling of Women's Leadership Event

The Office for the Status of Women has re-scheduled a women in leadership event in Corner Brook.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- Why did government re-schedule a women in leadership event in Corner Brook? Did issues with community partners influence the decision?

KEY MESSAGES:

We are re-scheduling the women's leadership event in Corner Brook to later this year.

There has been strong interest from panelists and the wider community in the women's leadership event as it celebrates the accomplishments of many impressive women and helps encourage women to seek out potential leadership opportunities.

The promotion of women in leadership roles is essential and we want to ensure our collective efforts receive our focused attention.

**QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 25, 2019**

ISSUE: Gender Based Analysis +

In February 2019, the Premier announced a stronger mandate for the Office for the Status of Women including ensuring stronger gender based analysis across all work carried out by government. Since that time, the Office has undertaken significant efforts to train and deepen GBA+ throughout government.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- The Premier announced stronger Gender Based Analysis across the work of all government, yet the former Women's Policy Office previously claimed GBA+ was conducted all along. Was that untrue?
- We understand Gender Based Analysis + training is occurring within government departments and caucus. Will that be offered to the other parties and the general public, if requested?

KEY MESSAGES:

Gender Based Analysis + has been conducted within Government for many years.

In April 2019, OSW began offering a new and enhanced GBA+ Training to all requesting government departments.

From April to October 2019, OSW has held twenty-five (25) training sessions, with 374 participants in total.

The Office is currently focusing on training departmental employees at this time.

QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 25, 2019

ISSUE: Violence Prevention Initiative

The most recent Violence Prevention Initiative, **Working Together for Violence Free Communities**, time period is nearly complete. The OSW is working with partners to determine next steps.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- What is the status of planning of the Violence Prevention Initiative?
- Are there any plans to evaluate the Violence Prevention Initiative?

KEY MESSAGES:

The OSW formed a Violence Prevention Engagement Planning Committee to inform the consultation development, which includes representatives from key government departments and community organizations.

The OSW is using an evidence-based approach to ensure that the next phase of violence prevention programming will be responsive to the needs of communities throughout the province.

Actions the VPI are largely the responsibility of other departments and partners. Responsible entities track the progress of their initiatives. The OSW plays a coordinating and convening role in terms of the Violence Prevention Initiative.

SECONDARY MESSAGES:

This Violence Prevention Engagement Planning Committee has met twice and a significant research document consisting of 26 different factsheets has been developed and posted online. The Office for the Status of Women is working with committee partners to determine next steps.

Measuring the impact of violence prevention activities can be difficult as it requires a long-term approach. The impact of current actions may not be felt for decades or even, generations.

In fact, increasing crime reporting rates can actually represent the effectiveness of programming as it means that more survivors are coming forward.

**QP Issues Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019**

ISSUE: Pay Equity

On International Women's Day, March 8, 2017, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador supported a Private Member's Motion regarding pay equity, a compensation practice that is based primarily on the relative value of the work performed, irrespective of the gender of employees. The Government committed to start the process to explore potential ways to achieve pay equity in Newfoundland and Labrador.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- When will the Government introduce legislation on pay equity?
- 66 per cent of minimum wage workers in this province are women. What is the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women doing to do to address this issue?

KEY MESSAGES:

In 2018, the Government of NL responded to the Private Member's Resolution by forming an Interdepartmental Committee consisting of representatives from the Human Resource Secretariat, the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, the Department of Justice and Public Safety and the Office for the Status of Women.

Since that time, the Committee has been exploring the feasibility of pay equity in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Pay Equity Interdepartmental Committee has now completed significant research exploring pay equity-related initiatives both in the province, and across Canada.

The Committee is currently in the process of coordinating a meeting between Ministers to determine how to move forward given the findings of that research. I look forward to sharing next steps.

**QP Issues Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019**

ISSUE: Massage Parlours

The City of St. John's has announced that it is revisiting regulations related to massage parlours under its mandate (i.e. regulations related to building zoning and occupancy). Simultaneously, multiple stakeholders have spoken out about the need for the province to enact stronger regulations related to the safety of workers in these establishments. The city has also indicated that it is waiting to hear from the Provincial Government regarding the development regulations it has submitted to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Environment.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- What is the Office for the Status of Women doing to address concerns regarding massage parlours in St. John's?
- Why isn't it working with the city to protect the interests of this vulnerable population?

KEY MESSAGES:

The Office of the Status of Women are engaged in valuable partnerships with the city, community, RNC and officials from many government departments and agencies on this issue.

The potential regulation of massage parlours is an issue that crosses several departments and mandates. While the development and implementation of those regulations does not fall under the mandate of the Office for the Status of Women, staff in this office are supporting departmental partners on this issue.

The safety of all workers and residents of this province is of utmost importance to the Office for the Status of Women and is the primary focus in relation to regulating massage parlours.

We provide funding annual funding to both the Safe Harbour Outreach Project and the Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth which provide direct services to those involved in the sex trade and work hard to ensure those voices are heard in decisions which directly impact them.

**QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019**

ISSUE: Standalone Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

In November 2018, the Premier appointed the first standalone Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- Why did the Premier appoint a standalone Minister Responsible for the Status of Women?
- What has the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women been doing over the last year?

KEY MESSAGES:

We have had very capable and talented Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women in the past, but all have had to take on that role, as well as other portfolios. In the interest of making meaningful change for women and girls, a Minister who is focused full-time on the issues affecting women and girls was essential.

The new Office for the Status of Women has a strengthened and deepened mandate to ensure we see meaningful change for women and girls in our province. Three key areas of focus include:

- 1. Preventing of gender-based violence;**
- 2. Ensuring stronger gender based analysis across all work carried out by government; and**
- 3. Advancing women in leadership roles.**

To ensure we meet the goals of our deepened and strengthened mandate, we have been traveling the province meeting with stakeholder groups to acquire a greater understanding of what's working, what's not and how we can support the work of our partners.

**QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019**

ISSUE: Violence Prevention

The Office for the Status of Women plays a central role in preventing violence against women and girls in our province.

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- What is government doing to prevent violence against women and girls?

KEY MESSAGES:

We all play a role in ending violence against women and girls. Working collaboratively is essential to creating safe spaces for women and girls in our province.

Our government has taken steps to help create safer communities through such things as legislative changes, direct investments, accessible housing, and the creation of a ministerial committee designed to identify and address the changing needs of our communities and citizens as they arise. Central to all of this has been our commitment to working with our community partners.

Status of Women Councils play an incredibly important role in preventing violence against women and in advancing the status of women in our communities. We invest approximately \$2.6 million annually to assist them with their important work.

Key Actions to Prevent Violence Against Women (In the last year)

- In November 2018, established the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women as a standalone role.
- Advanced the work of the Minister's Committee on Violence Against Women and Girls. To date, the Steering Committee has met five times to share information, exchange ideas, and develop action plans.
- More than \$2.6 million for Status of Women Councils, including money for a new Status of Women Council in Port Saunders.
- Bail supervision and electronic monitoring programs to help lower levels of recidivism and improve safety for women.
- Implemented improvements to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, including provisions to address workplace harassment and worker-on-worker violence.
- Implemented changes to the Residential Tenancies Act to allow for early termination of rental agreements in cases of domestic violence.

- Implemented changes to the Labour Standards Act allowing victims of family violence to take a total of 10 days of leave a year.

QP Issue Note
Office for the Status of Women
October 24, 2019

ISSUE: Perceived Interference

Status of Women Councils and First Light St. John's Friendship Centre have expressed concern over the perceived interference of the RNC and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women in a local community organization's human resource matter. To right-size this perceived interference, the St. John's Status of Women Council is seeking multi-year funding for the Safe Harbour Outreach Project (SHOP).

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

- Why did government insert itself into a human resource issue involving the St. John's Status of Women Council?
- Will multi-year funding be provided to SHOP, a program of the St. John's Status of Women Council? Will you dismiss your deputy minister?

KEY MESSAGES:

The Provincial Government had absolutely no involvement with the departure of the Executive Director of the St. John's Status of Women Council. The St. John's Status of Women Council's Board of Directors holds the decision making authority over their human resource matters.

Our only awareness of this issue was that we were copied on the original letter from community stakeholders requesting a meeting with the St. John's Status of Women Council.

Ms. Ross brings more than four decades of experience advancing the interests of women in our province. We are fortunate to have her as part of our team as we place a focused effort on working with community partners to create safer communities and help open doors to new opportunities for women and girls.

GNL is presently evaluating the initial phase of multi-year funding that was provided to 22 community organizations, which includes the St. John's Status of Women Council. That review will inform GNL next steps.

We value and respect our partnerships with community organizations. Working collaboratively and collectively is essential to achieving long-term systemic change.

SECONDARY MESSAGES:

- Our government respects the autonomy of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women in their work with citizens and stakeholder groups.

BACKGROUND:

Community Groups Selected for Phase One of Multi-Year Funding

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Circle• AIDS Committee of NL• Association of New Canadians• Bay St. George Status of Women Council• Canadian Mental Health Association• Canadian National Institute for the Blind – NL Division• Coalition of Persons with Disabilities• Community Sector Council• Corner Brook Status of Women Council• Choices for Youth• Consumers' Health Awareness Network of NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gateway Status of Women Council• Gender Status of Women Council• Kids Eat Smart• Labrador West Status of Women Council• Mokami Status of Women Council• Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network• SeniorsNL• Status of Women Central Inc.• Stella's Circle Community Services• St. John's Status of Women Council• Vera Perlin Society Inc.
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