

*Prince Edward Island*

# **EQUALITY REPORT CARD**

## **2026**



# **B-**

The Equality Report Card is a process to assess Prince Edward Island's progress toward gender equality goals. It was initiated by the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women in 2007.

This report is created through the hard work of all members and staff who have served on the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women from April 2023 to May 2026.

Special thanks to the Chairpersons who led the work for this Report Card. Serena Smith led development of a new assessment model (2023-2024), and Hsiao-Yu Liu led Council through the assessment process and final report (2025-2026). Both were supported by Vice-Chairperson Garima Mishra (2023-2026). The Council would like to give special thanks to Research Coordinator Trish Altass, Program Coordinator Michelle Jay, Office Managers Becky Tramley and Caroline Galloway, former Executive Director Jane Ledwell, and Executive Director Vanessa Bradley for their hard work and dedication to this project.

Special thanks to the former Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Jenn Redmond, current Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Barb Ramsay, and to the Interministerial Women's Secretariat led by Michelle Harris-Genge.

Heartfelt thanks to all departments of government, all participants in the focus groups, and all respondents to the community perceptions surveys.

The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women acknowledges all women-identifying people in our understanding of "women" and strives to ensure gender non-binary, gender-diverse, and gender non-conforming people are included in the Council's work.

The work of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women takes place on the island district of Epekwitk in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq, their home today and for more than 12,000 years. Epekwitk is covered by the historic treaties of Peace and Friendship.

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Related publications:

- 2026 Equality Report Card Assessment Model: <https://peistatusofwomen.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/WEB-2026-Equality-Report-Card-Assessment-Model.pdf>
- 2026 Equality Report Card, Background Report, and French Language Summary: <https://peistatusofwomen.ca/policy-research/equality-report-card-2026/>

# 2026 EQUALITY REPORT CARD

# B-

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The Prince Edward Island Advisory Council on the Status of Women awards the Government of Prince Edward Island a **B-** (73/100 points) on progress toward gender equality goals from 2023 to 2026.

Council awarded points on the following basis:

- Sustained Progress: 46/50 points
- Progress on Council-Identified Aspirational Goals: 7/20 points
- New Progress on Government-Identified Priorities: 20/30 points

The 2026 Equality Report Card assesses actions taken by the provincial government elected April 3, 2023, led first by Premier Dennis King, followed by Premier Rob Lantz. The assessment is based on comprehensive reports from government and community consultations on initiatives up to March 31, 2025, and Council has also credited significant announcements since then. This report card assessment process was completed before the release of the 2026-2027 operating budget.

**SUSTAINED PROGRESS:** Council's Report Card assessment model set the 2023 pre-election status quo at a 50% (a "D" grade) and credited government for sustaining identified initiatives or programs that, in Council members' opinion, set the bar for the status quo. Council assessed that government sustained or enhanced many identified initiatives (**46/50** points).

**ASPIRATIONAL GOALS:** Council awarded **7/20** points for Council-identified priorities for action toward gender equality. The points available for these aspirational goals were only available for work toward the initiatives named in the assessment model.

**NEW PROGRESS:** Council awarded **20/30** points for government-identified new progress toward gender equality. This score acknowledges new initiatives or enhancements to past initiatives, selected by Council as creating positive change and not already considered under other areas of this report.

***The members and staff of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women are committed to working collaboratively with government to help them achieve high grades on the Equality Report Card.***

## CONSENSUS PROCESS

Council members decided on the assessment and content in this report by consensus processes, from 2023 to 2026. All members and staff, without exception, reviewed dozens of government and community consultation reports, completed online forms and surveys, and took part in online and in-person discussions and a grade-setting workshop. All members confirmed consensus on the final grade.

# MAKING DIVERSITY, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION A PRIORITY



*“The Interministerial Women’s Secretariat and its staff is doing fantastic work. In some ways, PEI is a real leader for example using a gender and diversity analysis in emergency response policy.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

We expect the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women to work across all of government to advance substantive equality for women with a clear plan and coordination across departments. We expect the Minister to ensure the use of gender and diversity analysis to understand different effects of existing and proposed legislation, policies, programs, and budgets on Island residents of all genders and diverse groups.

*“The government needs to greatly increase their operational funding to community organizations, and to do better at consulting with them in a more genuine way. They also desperately need to work on turning the gender diversity and sexuality guidelines for the Public Schools Branch into policy.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

We expect government to meaningfully consult and consciously include and accommodate diverse groups in its policies, programs, and services. We expect government to enter intentional partnerships with community, supported by predictable, sustainable funding to community organizations.

We expect government to make active efforts to prevent systemic discrimination and remove barriers to social inclusion. Additionally, we expect government to substantially address exclusion and discrimination based on gender, race and ethnicity, ability, age, language, and other diversity factors.

We expect the provincial government to continue progress toward greater pay equity. Particularly in areas where women have been under-represented, we expect government to support and promote women’s equitable access to workforce development programs, services, education, and training.

We expect the provincial government to remove barriers to women’s leadership in elected and appointed decision-making.

We expect government to be a model employer of women in the public sector, recognizing their work is essential to delivering public services and their income is a foundation for families’ incomes and the provincial economy.

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**A public mandate for the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women to advance equality for women in all government policies, programs, and services**

*Sustained. Former Premier King issued mandate letters to all the Ministers outlining priority areas including for the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.*

*However, outside of the reporting period (March 2026), Premier Lantz issued one overarching mandate letter for all Ministers, and Ministers issued their own letters with their own priorities. The Council was disappointed by this development, as we would like to see the Premier issue letters individually to Ministers (not written by Ministers but by the Premier), which would allow for greater accountability and transparency. The Council would also like to see a mandate letter specifically for the Status of Women.*



**All government departments complete a questionnaire for the Equality Report Card project**

*Sustained. All government departments took the time to complete a questionnaire for the Equality Report Card project. Any follow-up questions were answered promptly and effectively.*



**Support for the Interministerial Women's Secretariat (IWS) to gather representatives of all departments of government to regularly consult on gender and diversity analysis and progress toward gender equality goals through the Task Force for Gender Equity and Diversity**

*Sustained. While IWS (Interministerial Women's Secretariat) reported all departments are engaged with the Task Force for Gender Equity and Diversity, we hope to see more public recognition and reporting on the work of this Task Force moving forward.*



**All government departments are able to provide at least one concrete example of applied gender and diversity analysis and at least half of government departments report that employees participate in gender and diversity analysis training**

*Sustained. All government departments reported at least one concrete example of applied gender and diversity analysis, with some listing multiple examples. Most departments also reported having some employees participate in gender and diversity analysis training.*



**A public commitment to updating the statistical profile of women regularly, comparable to the Statistical Profile of Women produced in 2020**

*Sustained. Government reports that this work is ongoing and that the 2025 Statistical Profile of Women in PEI is expected to be released in 2026.*



**Consistent government-wide and cross-departmental support for the Interministerial Women's Secretariat's efforts on the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence**

*Sustained. The Interministerial Women's Secretariat reports there is government-wide and cross-departmental support for its efforts on the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.*



**A requirement to account for gender and diversity analysis on all Executive Council memos (proposals for policies, programs, and services), in pre-budget consultations, and in capital and operational budget requests, and at least half of government strategies, action plans, and reviews demonstrate that they applied gender and diversity analysis**

*Sustained. Government reports that a Gender and Diversity Analysis worksheet, along with other policy lenses, is included in Executive Council Memo packages. Gender and Diversity Analysis has been applied in various forms and degrees throughout most government strategies, action plans, and reviews.*



**Gender parity (defined as 45% to 55% of any one gender) in appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions through an Engage PEI process, and a critical mass of women (defined as 33%) in senior leadership roles, including senior staff, deputy ministers, CEOs, and senior executives**

*Sustained. Though gender is not specified in the publicly shared information about appointments through the [Engage PEI process](#), and details were not provided in government responses for this Report Card, government reports that gender parity continued to be achieved during the reporting period.*



**Consistent funding for the Interministerial Women's Secretariat at rates unreduced from 2023 to support, at a minimum, core funding for gender equality-seeking organizations; Community Grants and Violence Against Women grants; work to promote women in decision making; and a gender and diversity analyst position**

*Sustained. Funding amounts have increased. The grant budget lines were as follows for the reporting period: 2023/24: \$2,659,500 and 2024/25: \$4,252,800.*



**Maintained family-friendly changes to Legislative Assembly sittings**

*Sustained. Family-friendly changes made in 2021 to PEI Legislative Assembly sittings, such as removing evening sitting times and aligning with the school calendar, remain in place.*



**Maintained and supported Guidelines for Respecting, Accommodating and Supporting Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sexual Orientation in Schools, to protect the health and rights of people of all genders and sexual orientations**

*Sustained. Government continues to maintain and support the [Guidelines for Respecting, Accommodating and Supporting Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sexual Orientation in Schools](#).*



**Funding for the Anti-Racism Policy Advisor within government, the Anti-Racism Advisory Table, and operational support for the Black Cultural Society and BIPOC USHR**

*Sustained. Government reports that funds were allotted in the annual operating budget of Executive Council Office to support the initiatives noted above.*



**Leadership by the Public Service Commission (PSC) within government on diversity and inclusion, especially through training programs enhanced by gender and diversity analysis and the continuation of the Public Service Commission Diversity Employment Program**

*Sustained. Government reports that the PSC Diversity Employment Program continues to be implemented and enhanced through assisting with qualified and eligible candidates belonging to diversity groups seeking employment in public service.*



**Municipal governments across the Island are required to provide information about the level of representation of women**

*Partially sustained. While providing gendered information about the level of representation in municipal governments on PEI is not, and has never been, required to be provided, this information should be gathered through a self-identification process, similar to methods used through Engage PEI.*



**Support for a 211 service to connect people with government and community-based social programs and supports**

*Sustained. Government continues to support the United Way of PEI to provide an effective and accessible 211 service.*



**Continued progress toward a fully accessible, province-wide, public transit service**

*Sustained. Government reports progress toward fully accessible, province-wide public transit, with new programs introduced during the reporting period for subsidized monthly passes for adults, seniors, and post-secondary students, and free access for students K-12.*

# ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

## COUNCIL-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION



### Good Progress

**Actions for meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous people, fulfilling commitments on the provincially relevant Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women recognizes progress has been made toward this goal, but there is still a long way to go. Some of the actions that Council was encouraged to see included funding for Indigenous organizations through infrastructure investments in Indigenous communities and justice and public safety considerations. The Council also heard positive feedback on funding for culturally sensitive and community-based initiatives from Indigenous individuals during the community consultation process.*

*However, it has been reported that there are many challenges in finding funding for Indigenous not-for-profits, projects, and other long-term meaningful work.*



### Some Progress

**Gender parity (defined as a maximum of 45-66% of any one gender) in elected, appointed, and hired provincial senior leadership roles**

*While progress has been made toward this goal, some departments continue to be dominated by one gender in their hired senior leadership roles, with a distinct lack of gender parity in elected leadership roles.*



### Little or No Progress

**Transformed employment standards that make diversity, equality, pay equity, and inclusion a priority**

*While a new Employment Standards Act was passed during the assessment period, the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women identified many gaps in employment standards legislation that directly impact women and gender-diverse people. Though PEI is the only province in Atlantic Canada with paid sick leave provisions, legislated paid sick days continue to be well below the average amount needed for workers, particularly for those with unpaid caregiving responsibilities. Requirements to attain a doctors note after 3 consecutive days of illness put strain on our healthcare system and undue burden on workers. Leave provision, such as those for gender affirming care and citizenship ceremonies, should also be paid to ensure access.*

# ADDITIONAL NEW PROGRESS

## GOVERNMENT-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION

0.5

### Some Progress

**A comprehensive provincial anti-racism strategy targets and timelines, based on needs and priorities identified by racialized people with an intersectional lens**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women applauds the development and the release of the Anti-Racism Action Plan in 2023. Unfortunately, the annual progress reports on the action plan, including feedback from the racialized and Indigenous communities and groups, have not yet been made available as outlined in the plan.*

X

### Little or No Progress

**A population strategy based on principles of equity and justice, with the explicit goal of supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion in PEI society**

*While a new population framework for PEI was released during the assessment period, support for diversity, equity and inclusion was not sufficient. The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women feels the plan is unbalanced with a focus on integration into communities and economic gains with minimal consideration of the importance and value of cultural diversity and identity. We also note that the population framework promises an online dashboard to report on progress, and over two years after the framework's release, this dashboard is not yet available.*

*“The model for the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is working well. It would be good to see other diversity, equity, and inclusion councils and committees have the same arms-length from government status so they could offer both critical input and praise.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

✓

### Good Progress

**Implementation of the Gender, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Community Enhancement Program**

Government reports: The Gender, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Community Enhancement Program launched in 2022, and has since provided over 1.5 million in funding to individuals, not-for-profits, municipalities, cultural organizations, and educational institutions to develop and run community-based projects that enhance a sense of belonging and inclusion across PEI.



### Good Progress

#### **Project-based funding for organizations through Interministerial Women’s Secretariat (IWS) grants**

Government reports: Funding was provided to multiple organizations for a wide range of projects that support the mental, physical, and social well-being of women and girls while championing women's rights and gender equality.



### Good Progress

#### **Provincial Correctional Centre (PCC) Women’s Unit**

Government reports: The Department of Justice and Public Safety opened a 34 bed Provincial Correctional Centre (PCC) Women’s Unit in January 2024 and increased staffing to support the unit. The unit is fully accessible. The expansion included a new medical unit and two negative pressure cells for infection control. Medical Services have expanded and several nursing positions have been added, including a full-time Nurse Practitioner. The PCC expansion includes a spiritual room designed to provide a safe and inclusive space for spiritual practices and cultural ceremonies, such as smudging.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women commends government on the opening of the PCC Women’s Unit. We encourage further steps to ensure those transitioning out of incarceration have access to programs and supports that will allow them to meet their mental and physical health needs.*



### Good Progress

#### **Curriculum Updates Supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Government reports: Multiple curriculum updates were made during the reporting period supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. These include: Kindergarten readiness initiatives to promote equity in providing support to caregivers with children transitioning into Kindergarten; a draft curriculum development for an Indigenous Education Curriculum framework supporting the calls to action and the inclusivity of Indigenous Peoples' perspectives and ways of knowing; primary language arts programming has been updated to support the right to read for every child; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Skills included as the fifth general curriculum outcome (GCO) in the grades 1-6 Integrated Curricula Framework.

 **Good Progress**

**Education DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Consultants and Professional Learning Opportunities**

Government reports: Government engaged several consultants throughout the reporting period in areas related to gender and diversity and include an external consultant to review and propose updates for inclusion in PEI's publicly managed early years system; two Early Childhood Inclusion consultants, an Early Childhood EAL/FAL Consultant, and a Bilingual Family Home Centre Coach to strengthen supports for centres to meet the needs of children, families, and educators; an external consultant to review and offer recommendations for enhancing school-age child care; and an external consultant to work collaboratively with Early Years, as well as Child and Family Services, Victim Services, and other interest holders to update the handbook on reporting child abuse and neglect for everyone working in the early learning and child care sector.

 **Some Progress**

**Provincial Police Standards**

Government reports: The Department of Justice and Public Safety developed new Provincial Police Standards that include an emphasis on inclusivity, fairness, and cultural competency. These standards require the adoption of evidence-based community policing strategies that are responsive to the unique needs of diverse populations. A wide range of community organizations were consulted and engaged in the development of the standards. Additional standards will be incorporated to address sexual and family violence as updated protocols are created or updated.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women appreciates the progress made to implement Provincial Police Standards. We look forward to additional standards being incorporated to address sexual and family violence.*

 **Some Progress**

**Minister's Advisory Committee on Crime Prevention and Policing**

Government reports: The Department of Justice and Public Safety established a new Minister's Advisory Committee on Crime Prevention and Policing to strengthen partnerships and to give members, including equity seeking organizations, a platform to discuss important and emerging issues in their communities.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is encouraged by the inclusion of equity seeking organizations in this initiative. We expect there will be regular reporting on this group's recommendations and the changes/progress made as a result.*



### Some Progress

#### Code of Conduct Training for Municipal Governments and Staff

Government reports: The Municipal Affairs Division launched mandatory code of conduct training for elected officials. Code of conduct training had been requested by councils, staff, and stakeholder groups such as the Federation of PEI Municipalities (FPEIM) and the Coalition for Women in Leadership. Code of conduct training helps to ensure council is an inclusive and safe environment for all members.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women acknowledges this is an important step. As a next step, we would like to see this requirement extended to MLAs and government/opposition staff as well.*



### Some Progress

#### Shared Services Program

Government reports: The Shared Services Program (SSP) by the Community Sector Network of PEI (CSNPEI) is a strategic initiative funded by Innovation PEI. It is designed to strengthen the not-for-profit sector in PEI by helping organizations access essential administrative services at a lower cost and with greater efficiency. This program was developed through extensive stakeholder consultations, research, and analysis to support not-for-profits by pooling resources and connecting them with vetted service providers.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to see this program initiated, and looks forward to seeing it continue to grow and develop in partnership with the Community Sector Network of PEI.*



### Some Progress

#### Youth on Board Pilot Project

Government reports: The Youth on Board Pilot Project was launched in September 2021, where youth participants (high school students) are matched with mentoring not-for-profit boards to gain experience in not-for-profit governance. Training for youth on board governance and Mentorship Readiness sessions were provided to all participating organizations and included diversity and inclusion awareness and discussions as it relates to youth and the pilot project. The Youth on Board Pilot Project is in its fifth year in 2025-26 and has 35 rural PEI high school students participating on not-for-profit boards or municipality councils.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is encouraged by the introduction of this program, and looks forward to seeing it continue to expand and become a permanent program accessible to a broader representation of PEI youth.*

## **0.5** *Some Progress*

### **Municipal Training Series to Empower Underrepresented Voices**

Government reports: The Municipal Affairs Division has been supporting the PEI Coalition for Women's Leadership (PEICWL) to provide a Municipal Training Series designed to increase civic participation and equip a diverse cohort of potential municipal candidates and community leaders with the knowledge, skills, and networks needed to successfully engage in local governance. The Municipal Training Series empowers underrepresented voices to step into municipal leadership by providing accessible, community-rooted education and support. Work began on this series in 2024/25 with the PEICWL and the Provincial Anti-Racism Office. The series launched in fall of 2025.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women applauds efforts to increase civic participant in collaboration with the PEI Coalition for Women's Leadership. Additional supports for marginalized community leaders and potential candidates are needed to ensure diverse representation within municipal leadership.*

## **CATEGORY SUMMARY: MAKING DIVERSITY, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION A PRIORITY**

**Government continues to make progress in applying gender and diversity analysis across all departments of government, especially as it relates to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous people (focus groups valued the responsiveness from the Indigenous Relations Secretariat as well as increased cultural inclusion from government). There are still many areas that can use an increased focus of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), from employment standards to population strategy. Considering the importance and value of cultural diversity and identity beyond a checkbox is essential to truly valuing DEI. Moving forward, the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women hopes to see progress reports from the anti-racism strategy as well as continued progress toward the Aspirational Goals outlined in the assessment model.**

## ELIMINATING POVERTY



We expect the provincial government to work toward a province where everyone is able to meet their basic needs at all times, including access to enough healthy food and to affordable, accessible, appropriate, and safe housing. We expect government to set a high priority on improving the health, dignity, choice, and wellbeing of poor and economically vulnerable Island residents.

We expect the provincial government to negotiate with the federal government to prioritize the development of a basic income program for PEI.

We expect responsive, flexible, non-stigmatizing social programs and meaningful action to implement an effective cross-governmental provincial strategy to eliminate poverty and promote social inclusion. We expect poverty elimination plans to be informed by the voices of lived and living experiences of low-income.

We expect government's workforce development plans and programs and the Province's labour standards to be based on fairness for workers and to strive toward living wages and employment equity as their fundamental goals.

***“Social Assistance and AccessAbility Services do not provide enough funds for folks to adequately live and survive. There should be more investment into Co-operative Housing. More advocacy for Basic Income. Have decisions informed more by people with lived experience living in poverty. Invest in upstream solutions to prevent poverty/further breakdown of social determinants of health.”***

***—Community Consultation Participant***

***“Not enough investment in food security, mutual aid practices, and in organizations that support those experiencing poverty. The government is not pushing the federal government hard enough on instituting a basic income pilot. There needs to be more affordable and co-op housing available.”***

***—Community Consultation Participant***

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS

**0.5**

**Continued implementation of a Poverty Elimination Strategy and associated Income Support programs, and support for a Poverty Elimination Council to monitor implementation**

*Partially sustained. During the 2-year period being examined, a poverty reduction plan was current and being implemented for 21 out of 24 months. However, an updated poverty elimination strategy is still under development, leaving a gap in direction and implementation.*



**Maintained supports through the AccessAbility Program at a minimum of 2023 levels**

*Sustained. Government reports that increases of 5% were made to Assured Income for clients of the AAS (AccessAbility Supports) program in March 2024. Additionally, shelter rates were also increased by \$25 per bedroom type.*



**Support for the Generic Drug Program and Catastrophic Drug Program at unreduced levels from 2023**

*Sustained. Government reports that, in July 2023, access to catastrophic drug coverage improved by lowering the household caps and easing the financial burden of out-of-pocket expenses.*



**Support for increased food security through programs such as the Community Food Security and Food Education Program, school breakfast and snack programs, and the Healthy School Food and Summer Food Security Programs**

*Sustained. Government reports that support for these food security actions has increased during this period. This support has included: initiating the Seniors Community Meal Grant Program in February 2024; increasing funding to the Provincial School Food Program in fiscal year 2024-25; providing funds to Lennox Island First Nation on an ongoing basis for its Band-administered, culturally appropriate School Food Program; establishing annual core funding to provincial food banks in fiscal year 2024-25; covering the increased costs of the Summer Food Program resulting from increased enrolment in summer of 2024; and increased funding to Meals on Wheels in fiscal year 2024-25.*

*As these programs continue to develop, the Council encourages further efforts to work with local food producers with a focus on food sovereignty, security, and healthy food networks.*



**Support for Skills Enhancement and Mentoring Program (SEAM) and Start to Apply Right (STAR) for youth at high risk of not completing high school**

*Sustained. Government reports that, since 2023, the province has invested over \$900,000 in SEAM programming to support youth at risk in life skills training, community placements, and employability skills training in their communities.*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



### **Funding for Women’s Network PEI-led programs for women including, but not limited to, Trade HERizons and Propelle**

*Sustained. Government reports that support has continued for the Women's Economic Empowerment project. Since 2023, almost 60 women and gender-diverse individuals have been supported in the Trade HERizons program, which offers career exploration and employability skills training, resulting in more than 24 individuals proceeding to apply for further education in the trades.*



### **Continued implementation of the Provincial Housing Action Plan, including continued support for rental supplements and mobile rental vouchers to help to address low-income housing needs and support for the Housing Council to oversee implementation**

*Partially sustained. Though a Provincial Housing Action Plan continues to be implemented, the Housing Council was discontinued and is not part of the new Provincial Housing Action Plan.*



### **Support for shelter services in various locations across the province and community outreach services such as the Charlottetown Community Outreach Centre**

*Sustained. Government reports providing continued support for multiple shelter and outreach services across the province. These include: running two gender-inclusive overnight emergency shelters in Charlottetown (opened December 2022 with 50 beds) and Summerside (opened October 2024 with ten beds and room to expand if required) with a central principle of trauma-informed care; supports for the operation of other shelters on PEI including Bedford MacDonald House, Blooming House Women’s Shelter Inc., LifeHouse Emergency Shelter, Winter Street Emergency Shelter, and the Chief Mary Bernard Memorial Women’s Shelter; and funding for community outreach and support provided to PEERS Alliance as part of the Street Outreach Project.*

# ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

## COUNCIL-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: ELIMINATING POVERTY



### *Little or No Progress*

#### **Implementation of a province-wide guaranteed basic income program**

*A province-wide guaranteed basic-income program accessible to all who need it based on income is not yet available. There is little evidence to show basic income has been at the forefront of the provincial government's discussions with the federal government since it was included in the Minister's mandate letter in 2023.*



### *Little or No Progress*

#### **Minimum wage, set as a livable wage (as calculated based on Market Basket Measure or by credible sources such as the Canadian Council for Policy Alternatives) and indexed to the cost of living**

*While Prince Edward Island had the highest minimum wage in Atlantic Canada during the reporting period, PEI minimum wage (\$17 per hour) continues to be well below the [most recent calculated living wage](#) by the Canadian Council for Policy Alternatives of \$22.76 per hour.*



### *Little or No Progress*

#### **No one is homeless in PEI and services are delivered on housing-first basis, not in part-time shelters**

*[The 2025 Point in Time Count Report](#) from the John Howard Society shows that homelessness continues to be an issue on PEI. Shelter services on PEI continue to be primarily part-time, forcing residents to leave during the daytime hours. This is particularly problematic in areas outside of Charlottetown, where drop-in outreach services are not available.*

***“The system of private landlords, especially incentivizing large developers is absolutely consolidating land and money in the hands of the upper class while renters are becoming more and more vulnerable. Eliminating homelessness is possible in PEI, but not if we keep doing the same patchwork of services, most of which do not want to work with the most vulnerable, hard to serve people.***

***—Community Consultation Participant***

## ADDITIONAL NEW PROGRESS

### GOVERNMENT-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: ELIMINATING POVERTY

#### **Good Progress**

##### **Increased Supportive Housing and Shelter Services**

Government reports: During the reporting period, the PEI Housing Corporation (PEIHC) increased Supportive Housing (39 units) and Shelter Services (21 beds) both through the increase of units for the PEIHC inventory and supporting not-for-profit organizations. PEIHC acquired 11 units in Kings County, meaning there are now supportive housing units in all three counties in PEI. Ten more transitional housing units were also opened by BGC Charlottetown, supported by operating funding by PEIHC. An additional 24 units owned by PEIHC are now in development/construction, as well as 12 units through funding provided to BGC Charlottetown.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to see this work is happening across all three counties in partnership with not-for-profit organizations.*

#### **Good Progress**

##### **Community Housing Expansion Pilot Program**

Government reports: Through the launching of the Community Housing Expansion Pilot Program (CHEP), the not-for-profit and co-operative housing sector was funded to grow their housing capacity and portfolios through both acquisitions and new construction. The pilot supported the acquisition of 116 units in 2024-2025.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women recognizes the impact of this program. We hope to see it become a permanent funding opportunity.*

#### **Good Progress**

##### **Expanded Eligibility for Support Services for those Transitioning Out of Care**

Government reports: Recognizing that youth transitioning out of the care of the Director of Child Protection at age 18 face heightened risks related to income, education, and mental and physical health, Child and Family Services (CFS) has expanded eligibility for support services. These Transitional Supports help youth with education and training, housing, developing life skills, dealing with emotional and relationship issues, and more. Previously, this support was limited to youth aged 18 to 21 who were in permanent care when they turned 18. It is now available until age 25 for those who were in either temporary or permanent care.

## **0.5** *Some Progress*

### **Policy changes to the Canada Student Financial Assistance program**

Government reports: Federal and Provincial/Territorial work has led to some important policy changes to the Canada Student Financial Assistance program in recent years, improving access to federal and provincial student loans as well as federal study grants:

- Interest was removed from federal and provincial student loans starting April 1, 2023, reducing debt loads of graduates with a student loan.
- People in situations of intimate partner violence or family breakdown can be considered independent students instead of dependent or married students for the purpose of eligibility assessment, if they can provide documentation supporting the situation.
- An expansion of the Canada Student Grant for Students with Disabilities allows access to more non-repayable funds.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women appreciates efforts made to lighten the burden of student loan repayment in partnership with the Federal government. Simplifying the onerous assessment process for those experiencing intimate partner violence or family breakdown would help to more effectively remove barriers to access for those experiencing violence.*

## **CATEGORY SUMMARY: ELIMINATING POVERTY**

**With the number of Islanders suffering as a result of poverty and all that poverty inflicts on people's health and dignity, it is clear that not enough is being done to mitigate rising inflation, the current housing crisis, and high rates of food insecurity. Homelessness is a growing issue on PEI. While we are glad to see increased supportive housing and shelter services, Islanders are falling through the cracks. Progress toward a Basic Income Guarantee for PEI in collaboration with the Federal Government has stalled. Not-for-profits are unable to fill the ever-widening gaps in public services and systems, and new government initiatives have not kept pace with ever-increasing challenges.**

**Further efforts are needed to work with local food producers on PEI, many of whom are women, to implement food security programs and address the importance of food sovereignty on PEI.**

## SUPPORTS FOR CAREGIVERS AND CAREGIVING



We expect the provincial government to acknowledge, value, and invest in the frequently unpaid and underpaid work of caregivers, often women, who care for children or adults, including seniors.

We expect government to enact policies that increase supports, not burdens for caregiving, to allow caregivers full participation in the life of Island society and to ensure that we share collective responsibility for caregiving along with individual caregivers in families and communities.

We expect government to invest in affordable and accessible caregiving services, including child care, eldercare, homecare, long-term care, and respite services, with the goals to increase equitable access to paid work, education, and training opportunities, and to support the mental health and wellbeing of caregivers.

Government must also consider caregiving responsibilities and availability, and our common responsibilities of collective care must also be considered in emergency preparedness and response, health system planning, and climate change adaptation. We expect government to recognize and provide resources to the voluntary sector's work in caring for the community.

*“Supports for caregivers in the sandwich generation caring for children/youth and vulnerable adults/seniors are needed. Supports for caregivers to participate in community activities that contribute to their sense of belonging, contribution, mental health, and well-being are needed.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

*“There needs to be additional free programming for new and vulnerable parents to keep families together and reduce CPS [Child Protective Services] involvement. So many issues around child welfare stem from poverty and a lack of resources or support. There needs to be more financial support for those in caregiving roles, and this needs to extend to those who are permanent residents, or those who are caregiving for someone without PR/citizenship.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Work to finalize and implement agreements that will move us toward an average of \$10-a-day child care, in partnership with the federal government**

*Sustained and achieved. In partnership with the federal government, parent fees were reduced to \$10/day in Early Years Centres and Family Home Centres in January 2024.*



**Support for early years centres across the Island with funding for at least 6,864 total child care spaces, including school-age programs and 4,386 spaces excluding school-age programs, and 450 infant spaces in public and private settings**

*Sustained. Government continues to provide funding and supports for early learning and child care centres across the Island with 7,930 total child care spaces, including school-age programs and 5,290 spaces excluding school-age programs.*



**Investment in a child care action plan focused on under-served populations and vulnerable children, including support for child care subsidies for before and after-school child care and private sitters**

*Partially sustained. A gender and diversity analysis was completed on the child care subsidy program, but no further follow up has been reported. It is unclear if current subsidies are sufficient and accessible to all who need them.*



**Tuition-paid SkillsPEI programs and services to assist PEI residents in completing their high school education (GED) and upgrade for further study, and SkillsPEI child care allowance to cover incremental costs incurred for child care while the caregiver is attending programs approved under Training PEI**

*Sustained. Government reports that tuition-paid Skills PEI programs and services continue, and that Skills PEI continues to provide child care allowance to reduce the barrier that child care costs can create for individuals pursuing their Canadian Adult Education Credential (which replaced the GED) and other training programs.*



**Support for and promotion of parenting programs including the “Triple P” Positive Parenting Program, Handle with Care, Period of Purple Crying, Parenting from Two Homes, Best Start voluntary in-home visiting for caregivers and young children, and Strongest Families Program for mental health**

*Sustained. Government reports that the “Triple P” Positive Parenting Program continues to be available and that Handle with Care is funded by Early Years to the PEI Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA).*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Support for the Grandparent and Alternative Care Provider Program to provide financial support to some grandparents and alternative care providers**

*Sustained. Government reports that investments were made to increase the benefits paid to Grandparent and Alternate Care Providers (as well as Foster Parents) in recognition of the costs of raising children, specifically the Back to School and Winter Clothing Allowances.*



**Continued implementation of the recommendations and actions in “Promoting Wellness, Preserving Health Action Plan for Seniors, Near Seniors and Caregivers,” including continued support for programs that allow seniors to stay in their own homes, such as Seniors Safe@Home, Seniors Home Repair Program, and Seniors Independence Initiative**

*Partially sustained. While these programs continue, some seniors reported through the community consultation process that new requirements to access the Seniors Independence Initiative are intrusive and create barriers to access.*



# ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

## COUNCIL-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: SUPPORTING CAREGIVING



### Good Progress

**A revised Child Protection Act based on children’s fundamental human rights**

*[The Child Youth and Family Services Act \(CYFSA\)](#) was proclaimed on September 9, 2024, strengthening protections for children and youth.*



### Little or No Progress

**A universal, accessible after-school program for grades K to 6**

*A universal, accessible after-school program has been proposed in draft form but has not yet been implemented.*



### Little or No Progress

**A comprehensive home-care and home-support plan to promote well-being and quality of life and ensure supports and resources for living and aging in place, including support for caregivers to adults and seniors**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women was pleased to see the introduction of a caregiver benefit, but disheartened by the amounts provided which are well below what is required for full-time caregivers to meet basic needs and live with health and dignity.*



### Little or No Progress

**Adequate core funding for social-sector not-for-profits providing essential public services that support basic needs, health, and dignity**

*Many not-for-profit organizations on PEI do not have access to any, or sufficient, core-funding, and rely on project-based funding to offer essential services. More transparency around the processes and metrics used to determine which organizations are able to access core-funding through government is needed.*

## ADDITIONAL NEW PROGRESS

### GOVERNMENT-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: SUPPORTING CAREGIVING



#### Good Progress

##### Improved Wages and Pension Plans for Early Years Workers

Government reports: In partnership with the Early Childhood Development Association in 2023, a defined-contribution pension plan for individuals working in Early Years Centres was introduced. The wage grid in October 2023, April 2024, and October 2025 was increased to ensure certified early learning and child care staff are well compensated.

*Staffing in Early Years Centres provides an essential service, supporting the wellbeing of children at a critical stage in their development. The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to see these improvements for those working in Early Years Centres.*

0.5

#### Some Progress

##### Renovation and Construction of CFS Group Homes

Government reports: A Child and Family Services group home was renovated to ensure full accessibility for children, families, and staff. As well, the construction of two new group homes was approved, which will be fully accessible, with more home-like environments rather than institutional. Their placement in communities across PEI make them closer to children's homes, schools, and recreation and cultural activities, helping them and their parents have easier access to each other and components of their daily lives.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women appreciates efforts to de-institutionalize group homes for those in care, and encourages government to further expand staffing supports and services.*

*“Maybe our health wouldn't be flagging if we didn't bear a greater burden of responsibility for caring for people both outside and inside the home, in the former at lower wages than men and in the latter for free... Maybe if more women and gender-diverse people were in leadership positions - if only we didn't have to worry not only about the extra burdens above but also the increased risk of technology-facilitated and other forms of GBV on top of it all ... maybe then we'd see some policies and actions that actually made a difference.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

## **0.5** *Some Progress*

### **Improved Wages in Private Long-Term Care**

Government reports: Working with the Long-Term Care (LTC) Association, a new contract with LTC owners was signed. This resulted in an increase in the daily health care rate with a commitment to allocating 2/3 of the increase toward increasing wages of workers in the sector. Monitoring will be conducted with yearly reporting.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to see wages increase for private Long-Term Care workers. We hope to see increased investment in, and availability of, publicly owned Long-Term Care services, and further investments to enhance the safety and wellbeing of all workers in this sector.*

## **0.5** *Some Progress*

### **Inclusive Equipment and Materials Grant**

Government reports: An Inclusive Equipment and Materials Grant was introduced to all Early Years Centres, providing up to \$35,000 per centre (depending on full-time enrollments) for the purchase of equipment and materials to support inclusive programming.

*Supporting inclusive programming is a welcome initiative. The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women looks forward to further investments and evaluation results that demonstrate how these investments have improved experiences for children and families accessing Early Years Centres.*

## **CATEGORY SUMMARY: SUPPORTS FOR CAREGIVERS AND CAREGIVING**

**We are glad to see that support for caregivers is increasing in PEI, including the Child Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA), the beginning stages of a universal, accessible after-school program, and improved wages and pension plans. However, as supports grow, so do needs. Caregiving and caregivers are invaluable to PEI's social, emotional, and economic wellbeing, and women continue to shoulder the majority of this burden. Caregivers have reached the point of burnout, and benefits offered are well below what is required for basic needs. Strengthening Employment Standards, such as increasing paid sick leave provisions, would better support caregivers to fully engage in the labour market and contribute to the PEI economy. The wellbeing of caregivers requires maximum attention and support from government.**

## WOMEN AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH



*“The Patient Medical Home model works well: we can get follow-up care. We can see a pharmacist who knows our file and provides personalized follow-up. We can see several specialists and get referrals. Mental health care is available from a social worker.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

We expect the provincial government to sustain a strong system for primary care, balanced by proactive, upstream investment in wellness and health promotion. We expect government’s plans and actions to be rooted in health equity and to focus on public health measures ahead of individual behaviours.

We expect government to recognize whole-body, holistic physical and mental health, with services grounded in best practices and up-to-date, gender-sensitive research and evidence. We expect government to build responsive health systems that listen to and learn from people’s lived and living experiences. We expect the health system to support and celebrate gender diversity.

We expect government to acknowledge the impacts of and respond to the social determinants of health, such as income, gender, orientation, language, and culture, as well as the impacts of climate change and environmental factors.

We expect access to health services with dignity and without judgment, discrimination, or stigma, including system-wide support and help for mental health and addictions, timely care in crisis situations, and also care and support across the lifespan.

*“You have to be very specific and you really have to advocate. You have to be loud. Access to primary care shouldn't be like the squeaky wheel gets the grease kind of situation.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Continuation of all services provided by the Sexual Health, Options and Reproductive Services (SHORS) programs for women and all genders, including abortion care through in-province access to both surgical and medical abortion (the abortion pill), clear and accessible information about services and choices, and follow-up care**

*Sustained. Government reports that Sexual Health, Options and Reproductive Services (SHORS) continues to provide programs for women and all genders. The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women also heard from several people who had positive experiences with SHORS, and the service is expanding due to use.*



**Continued implementation of recommendations and actions from “Awareness to Action: A Health Strategy for Women and Islanders Who Are Gender Diverse 2022-2027”**

*Sustained. Government reports that several activities took place during the reporting period aligned with the recommendations and actions from “Awareness to Action: A Health Strategy for Women and Islanders Who Are Gender Diverse 2022-2027”. These include: the launching of the Women and Gender Diverse People's Health Hub website and Speaking of our Health social media campaign; three at-large seats added to the Women and Gender Diverse People's Health Council to increase the diversity of perspectives and voices; and learning events about anti-racism in health, Indigenous health, and health equity. However, there is still much work to do and we encourage government to continue in these efforts.*



**Specialized mental health help for specific groups, such as: youth and families, through Student Well-being Teams; youth, through the Insight Program; and food producers, through the Farmers Talk Program and Fisher Assistance Program**

*Sustained. The specialized mental health services for specific groups outlined continue to be provided. Independent evaluations of these services should be conducted regularly to ensure they are effectively meeting the needs of each community, with results shared publicly for transparency.*

*The Council would like to see the effectiveness of these programs evaluated, as we received feedback from farmers and other community members that they are not always accessible, helpful, or relevant.*



**Health promotion and health monitoring through the Public Health Office that focuses on social determinants of health and applying gender and diversity analysis**

*Sustained. Government reports that the Chief Public Health Office continues to apply gender and diversity informed approaches in health promotion, population health monitoring, and program development. This includes consideration of social determinants of health such as gender, age, geography, income, identity, and lived experience.*

*Gender and diversity analysis is incorporated through population level data analysis, disaggregated data where available, community engagement, and targeted public health initiatives aimed at addressing health inequities. This analysis informs recommendations related to prevention, screening, health promotion priorities, and policy development.*



## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Use of gender-specific protocols in Health PEI substance use treatment programs, such as the Strength and in the Transition Unit Programs**

*Sustained. Gender-specific treatment options continue within addiction services in community and transitions sites. It is critical that a range of programs and services are available to ensure inclusive access, and that programs are not directly connected with any specific religion or ideology.*



**Health supports to enhance physical health, bodily integrity, and dignity: most importantly, free menstrual products in schools**

*Partially sustained. While supports to enhance physical health, bodily integrity, and dignity have been implemented, we encourage government to continue to expand these efforts. Additionally, we appreciate efforts by IWS to provide menstrual product to schools on PEI. Enhancing ongoing communication with PEI school administration and providing ongoing support would help to address gaps in access to menstrual products experienced by staff and students in some schools.*



**Continued Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services (medical and forensic support for victims of sexual assault by specially trained nurses) in all hospital emergency rooms**

*Sustained. Government reports that Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services continues throughout the reporting period.*



**Continued support for the Gender Affirming Care Clinic, including approval and funding for gender-affirming surgeries**

*Sustained. Government reports this service has expanded to an interdisciplinary model including social work, licensed practical nursing, and medical office assistant support, in addition to local physicians and nurse practitioners.*

# ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

## COUNCIL-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH

### **Some Progress**

**Appropriately staffed primary care through patient medical homes and neighbourhoods that provide everyone with access to primary care services incorporating the social determinants of health and gender equity**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women is pleased to see that some progress has been made. We look forward to further expansion of patient medical homes and associated patient medical neighbourhoods across the province, as well as further clarity of the services to be offered at each patient medical home and neighbourhood and ensuring there are sufficient primary care staff and administrative support for each medical home.*

### **Some Progress**

**Expanded, timely, and fully accessible gender-sensitive mental health service options for women and gender diverse people that meet their needs, with specialized supports for sectors and communities with specific needs (such as youth, food producers, 2SLGBTQIA+)**

*Investment in specialized services and programs has seen positive progress during the reporting period, with programs such as Strongest Families and those delivered through Our Landing Place offering much needed supports. At the same time, during community consultations, many women and gender diverse people shared they continue to experience gaps in supports and services. Concerns were shared that the open access model for counselling services does not allow for trust to be built with practitioners, and requires patients to re-tell their stories and relive trauma as a result.*

### **Good Progress**

**Comprehensive care for breast health, including reconstructive breast care for anyone who requests it; and breast screening, monitoring, and follow-up that meet or exceed national good-practice guidelines such as those of the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care, including monitoring options for people with dense breasts**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women recognizes the effectiveness of self-referral services for mammograms for women over 40 years of age, and that information is shared about breast density directly with patients.*

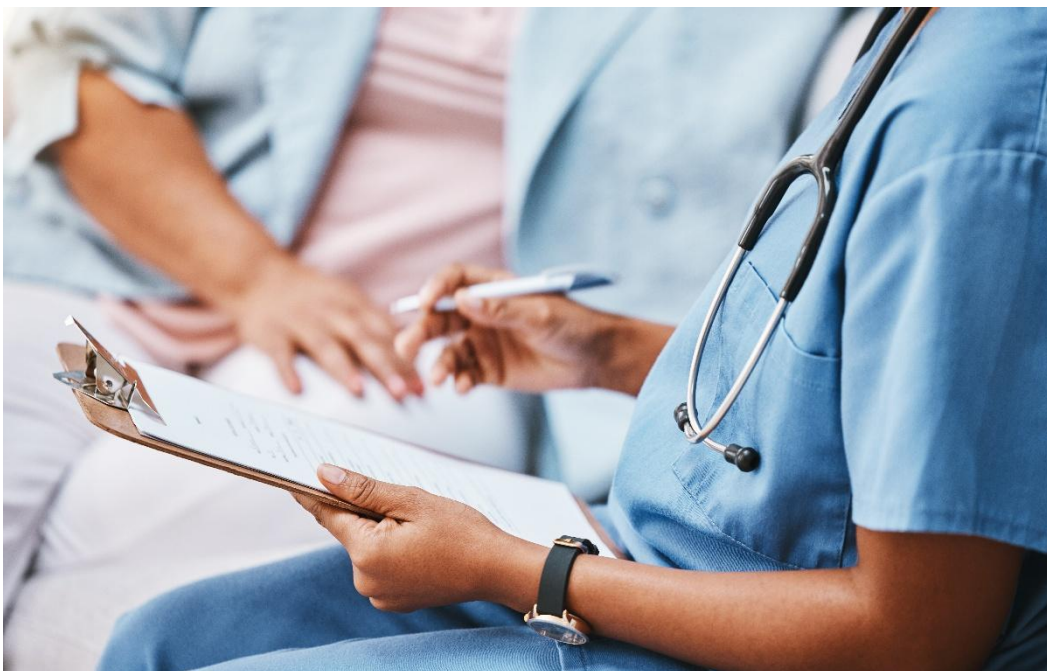
## **0.5** *Some Progress*

**Access to free contraceptive care and menstrual products with a range of options for those who need it, through programs founded in principles of reproductive justice**

*Coverage for contraceptive care has greatly improved, with some options being completely covered. Expanding the range of options covered would help to ensure access for all those who need it. Additionally, it is good to see increased access to free menstrual products in some government buildings. The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women expects that all schools and government buildings on PEI will provide access to free menstrual products in their washroom facilities.*

*“I’m concerned about the move from ongoing sustained care to one-time drop-in clinic model... People with complex trauma need complex, sustained care. I get that they are trying to address long waitlists and it is not a lack of care but a function of what they are dealing with. But I don’t think complex trauma can be treated that way.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*



# ADDITIONAL NEW PROGRESS

## GOVERNMENT-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH

### **Good Progress**

#### **Midwifery Services**

Government reports: Midwifery Services officially launched in PEI and a funding agreement has been finalized and is in place with the PEI Midwives Association.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women applauds the (re)introduction of midwifery on PEI. We look forward to seeing this service continue to expand and develop, particularly in rural areas.*

### **Good Progress**

#### **Workforce Adaptation Fund**

Government reports: A Workforce Adaptation Fund was implemented and coordinated by ResourceAbilities to ensure fair and effective support is provided for accessibility improvements (via WALP (the department of Workforce, Advanced Learning, and Population)).

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women appreciates efforts to improve accessibility. We encourage government to further expand this program with the goal to ensure safe and equitable access in all PEI public spaces.*

### **Some Progress**

#### **Safe Sport Policies and Anti-Racism Charter for Recreation Programs and Spaces**

Government reports: The Division of Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity works with Sport PEI and Recreation PEI to provide workshops/training on development of safe sport policies for provincial sport and recreation organizations. In addition to this, Recreation PEI launched an Anti-Racism Charter. This Charter serves as a practical tool for organizations and municipalities to shape their work in addressing racism in their recreational programs and spaces. The Division, in partnership with Sport PEI and the provincial sport organizations, will be establishing an Independent Third-Party mechanism to manage complaints of maltreatment, harassment, and abuse in sport.

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women acknowledges efforts toward equality in sport and recreation. We look forward to an Independent Third-Party mechanism being introduced.*

## **0.5** *Some Progress*

### **Newly Developed Collaborative Initiatives with Indigenous Communities**

Government reports: The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure provided funding to Indigenous communities to develop active transportation projects and worked with Abegweit First Nation to manage the Abegweit Connects building project and also completed a substantial road project in that area to enhance road safety. A collaborative and community-focused approach to service delivery was developed, which resulted in two pop-up clinics in PEI for Lennox Island First Nation, Abegweit First Nation, and Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI that offered in-person licensing and registration services to Indigenous individuals. Additionally, housing agreements such as the Hillsborough Park project agreement signed with PEI First Nations are a step in the right direction.

*While efforts toward Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples have been assessed under Sustained and Aspirational Goals in this report, the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women wishes to also acknowledge newly developed collaborative initiatives with Lennox Island First Nation, Abegweit First Nation, and Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI.*

## *Good Progress*

### **Diverse Library Resources and Services**

Government reports: The Library loans out Mental Health Kits, which contain resources in both English and French for adults, teens and children. These Mental Health Kits address topics ranging from depression and anxiety to eating disorders and gambling. Parenting to Go Kits are also available through the library. These kits contain a selection of books on a specific parenting topic. Topics range from mental health and ADHD to parenting teenagers, toddlers and adoptive children. The library's Library of Things collection also possesses a wide variety of items that support mental and physical health. Examples include Fitness and Yoga Kits, Snowshoes, PLAY Kits, Pickleball Sets, Nature Backpacks, Ice Skates, and Hiking Backpacks.

## **CATEGORY SUMMARY: WOMEN'S AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE'S MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

**There have been some strides made when it comes to mental and physical health on PEI: access to midwifery services, progress made with patient medical homes, and more comprehensive care for breast health. Services are still falling short for mental health services for women and gender-diverse people, with focus groups highlighting lack of access to counselling services, long wait times for care, lack of accessibility, and lack of trauma-informed care at the new mental health drop-in clinic. There is more to do to support Islanders' mental and physical health through developing in-province capacity, listening to and supporting current staff, and continuing to grow gender-responsive mental health and addictions services.**

## ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



*“The bilateral partnership for the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence has provided funding support never seen before. The cross-departmental approach taken by the province is very effective.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

We expect the provincial government to work toward ending violence against women and children, other gender-based violence, and all forms of family violence.

We expect government to provide and support programs that aim to prevent violence, whether it is an abuse of power and control that is physical, emotional, financial, or sexual. We expect government to invest in prevention work that addresses the community role in eliminating the root causes of gender-based violence: misogyny and gender discrimination and lack of respect for women-identifying people.

We expect government services that are gender appropriate, culturally sensitive, trauma-informed, and that never revictimize victims or survivors. We expect services for people who cause harm that support them to be accountable.

We expect the provincial government to place high priority on ensuring women and families have access to justice, particularly for family law. We expect government to invest in programs and services that help people get legal help.

We expect therapeutic court options, including domestic violence court options, supported by timely treatment or services, including appropriate follow-up. We expect more restorative and transformative justice programs and approaches, with transparent processes for deciding when restorative and alternative approaches are appropriate for victims, offenders, and the community.

*“People end up staying in unsafe places or with unsafe people because there is nowhere else to go. Even when you do have a place, so much money goes into housing, they’re cutting things like food, meds.”*

*—Community Consultation Participant*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Annual commitment of core funding to Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS) and the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (PEIRSAC) with yearly increases of at least 1% and that reflect cost of living**

*Sustained and Enhanced. Government reports that funding for these services increased during the reporting period.*

*PEIRSAC core funding commitment:*

*2023/24 \$872,500 (no increase - note: in 2022/23, the organization's funding increased by 80%)*

*2024/25 \$946,000 (= 8.4% increase since previous year)*

*2025/26 \$996,300 (=5.3% increase since previous year)*

*FVPS core funding commitment:*

*2023/24 \$856,900 (= 13.2% increase since previous year)*

*2024/25 \$894,900 (= 4.4% increase since previous year)*

*2025/26 \$939,600 (=4.9% increase since previous year)*



**Ongoing steps toward implementation of the domestic violence court as a therapeutic court option**

*Sustained and achieved. Government reports that in January 2024, Justice and Public Safety launched the Domestic Violence Court Program.*



**Continued implementation of the recommendations and actions outlined in “Creating A Culture of Care: A Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Adult Sexual Violence in Prince Edward Island 2023,” including continued support for the Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services Program and restorative justice programs**

*Sustained. Government reports that as of March 31, 2025, 14 of the 21 actions had been initiated. To ensure monitoring and evaluation of progress, a coordinating committee oversees the implementation of the strategy, and government and community partners also engaged in the work gather to share progress and learning in their work.*



**Maintaining the “Third Option” for preserving anonymous sexual assault forensic evidence to allow time for victims to decide if they want to involve police**

*Sustained. The “[Third Option](#)” continues to be available on PEI. Government reports that interjurisdictional research and consultations continue with community-based organizations to ensure best-practices are implemented.*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS

- 0.5** Continuation of in-school resources and supports, including high-quality, meaningful sexual consent and sexual violence resources, and Multi-Agency Service Teams (MAST) to bring together a variety of professionals to create a case plan for a child or youth

*Partially sustained. While some in-school resources and supports are available across PEI, they are not equally available in all PEI schools. More effective partnering with not-for-profit organizations with expertise in sexual health and gender diversity is recommended.*

- Support for PEI families affected by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

*Sustained. Government reports that, in 2024, the government of PEI doubled funding to support the Indigenous Working Group to focus on the elimination of gender-based violence and safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.*

- Updates and training on woman abuse/spousal abuse protocols and policies in justice and social services, and for intervention in family violence, relationship violence, and gender-based violence for front-line workers such as police, justice workers, child protection workers, and health-care workers

*Sustained. Government reports that the Interministerial Women's Secretariat Family Violence Prevention Coordinator provided Family Violence Prevention training sessions through the Public Service Commission's Pathways to Learning courses.*

- 0.5** Ongoing application of a spousal assault risk assessment/management tool and training for new staff to become certified

*Partially sustained. Further clarity on how a spousal assault risk assessment/management tool is applied would be helpful. Government reports training is planned in 2026, but it is unclear if this training has been available or mandatory for all new staff to be certified.*

- Maintenance of leave provisions for domestic violence/intimate partner violence/sexual violence under employment standards

*Sustained. Leave provisions for domestic violence/intimate partner violence/sexual violence have been maintained under employment standards.*

## SUSTAINED PROGRESS



**Continuation of the Bridge: a hub model of intervention that brings together government departments and community agencies to allow information-sharing and to connect people at acutely elevated risk of serious harm to timely services**

*Sustained. Government reports that The Bridge Situation Table continues to meet twice weekly to identify those in the community at an acutely elevated risk of harm to themselves or others. It continues to receive an increased number of referrals each year. It uses a multi-agency, collaborative, risk-driven intervention model comprised of representatives from government agencies, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations. Oversight of the Bridge Situation Table is provided by the Bridge Secretariat, which continues to address systemic issues identified through the Table's work.*



**Support for work by the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention (PAC) at a minimum of 2023 funding levels**

*Sustained. Government reports that additional funding was provided to develop the PAC Strategic Plan (2024-2027).*

***“There has been an increase in downstream funding for GBV programs. However, downstream is not where we need to be. Support for victims/survivors is important, but how can we get to a place upstream where prevention-based activities address the root causes? (Root causes like trauma, the patriarchy and absurd gender norms that allow men to feel justified in controlling/dominating/abusing women, etc.)”***

***—Community Consultation Participant***

# ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

## COUNCIL-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**0.5**

### *Some Progress*

**Comprehensive, evidence-based K-12 curriculum linked to public education and public awareness campaigns to increase recognition of healthy relationships, consent, and continuum of gender-based violence**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women appreciates efforts to enhance curriculum focused on healthy relationships, consent, and the continuum of gender-based violence. Further efforts to implement and link with public awareness campaigns is needed.*

**0.5**

### *Some Progress*

**Increased access to justice for family law matters, including sufficient family law legal aid (especially expanded eligibility), community legal clinics, and pro bono legal clinics**

*Expanded opportunities to access justice and legal support, such as those provided through the Community Legal Information services, are welcome. However, access to legal aid continues to be too restrictive and does not cover many areas, such as division of assets. More must be done to ensure child support payments are timely, accurate, and enforced.*

**0.5**

### *Some Progress*

**Robust restorative justice options for situations of sexualized and other gender-based violence, taking into consideration what safeguards and supports are needed for survivors**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women wishes to recognize that while some progress has been made to make restorative justice options available, many gaps in access to these options persist. Further consideration of safeguards for survivors is needed.*

**X**

### *Little or No Progress*

**Third-party reporting for sexualized violence against adults**

*While some research and jurisdictional scans were completed during the reporting period, third-party reporting for sexualized violence against adults is not yet available on PEI.*

## ADDITIONAL NEW PROGRESS

### GOVERNMENT-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES: ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

0.5

#### *Some Progress*

##### **Incorporating gender-based violence into disaster preparedness and emergency response**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women was please to see the development of this strategy and encourages government to move forward expediently with its implementation. We look forward to seeing the results of this important work.*

0.5

#### *Some Progress*

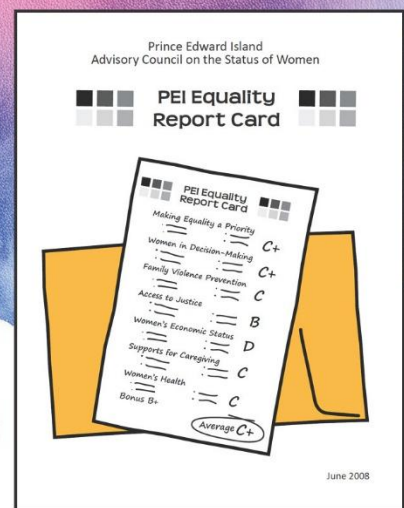
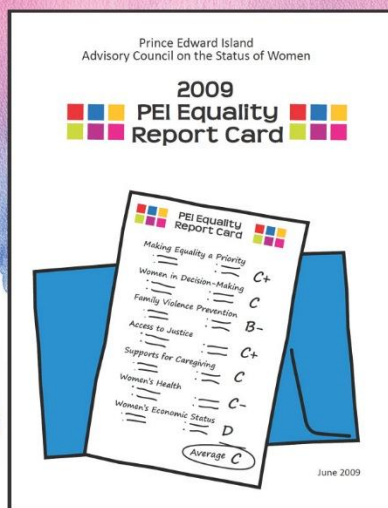
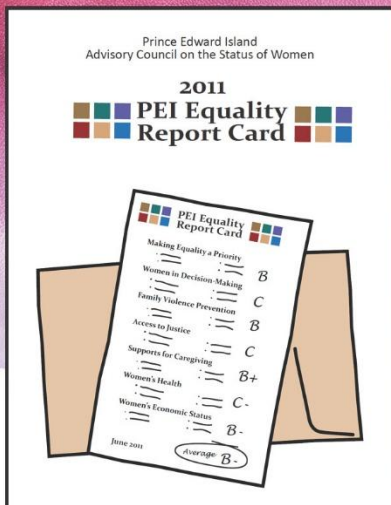
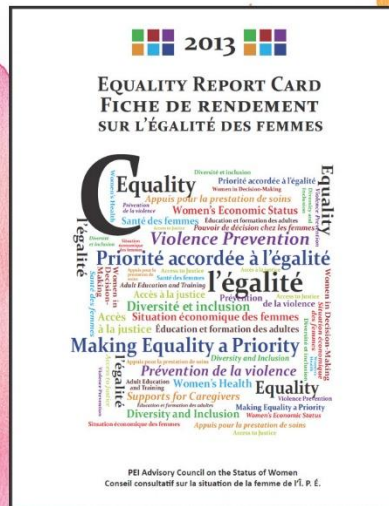
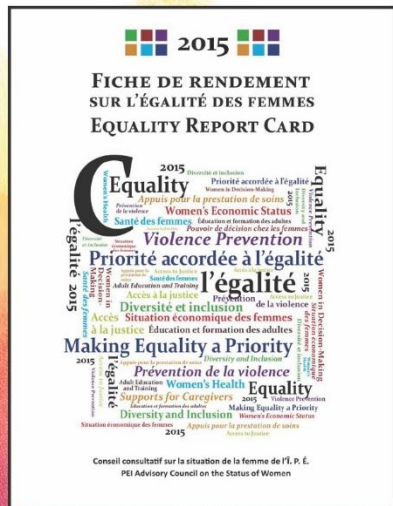
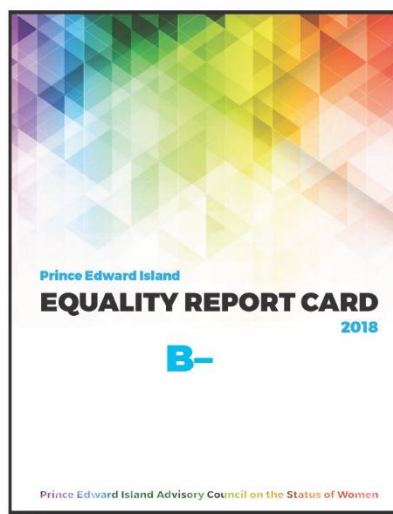
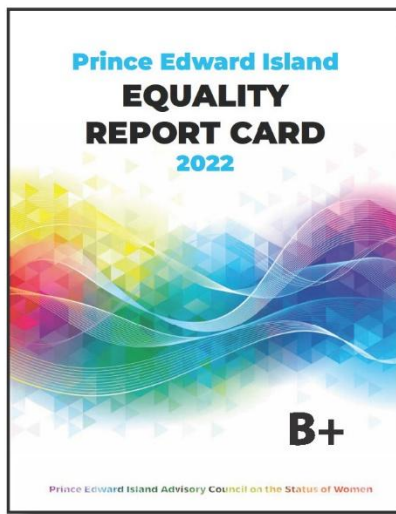
##### **Canada Housing Benefit for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence**

*The PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women applauds PEI's partnership with the Federal Government to introduce the Canada Housing Benefit for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence. We encourage further evaluation of the eligibility requirements to access this program that can create barriers to access for those in immediate need.*

### CATEGORY SUMMARY: ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The PEI government's response to gender-based violence remains consistent, leveraging federal partnerships and building responsive supports. This includes efforts to enhance school curriculum, increase access for family law matters, and grow restorative justice options. More remains to be done to prevent violence, especially to address root causes such as inequality, discrimination, colonization, stigma, and marginalization.





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