

Alberta's Social Policy Framework (Phase I proposed Vision, Outcomes and Principles)

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Vision:

Within the next decade, all Albertans will share the highest quality of life in Canada through equitable access to:

- basic necessities (including nutritious food, housing and utilities, clothing and transportation);
- essential health supports (including physical and mental, curative and preventive, diagnosis and medication);
- affordable good quality childcare (including out of school childcare);
- high standard schooling in a safe environment (with individualized teacher support and safe from drugs and bullying);
- fair, stress free and safe workplace;
- a living wage from a job; and
- sufficient training to develop to individual capacity and reach individual potential.

Alberta's vision will be achieved through provincial government leadership and through preventive as well as remedial solutions developed in partnership with businesses, employers, non-profit agencies, voluntary sector, educators, labour and professional organizations, community leagues, municipalities, aboriginal groups and the federal jurisdiction.

The vision will be sustained through remedial as well as preventive solutions, and through mechanisms (such as application of Jordan's Principle) that eliminate jurisdictional disputes whether they are between programs, providers or funders.

Alberta's Social Policy Framework developed with publicly defined ten-year goals, strategies, outcome targets and timelines – patterned along the lines of

Alberta's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness – will ensure its success and achievement.

Outcomes:

1. No Albertan will lack adequate food, shelter, clothing, transportation and the necessary health supports including medication.
2. Each child will have equitable access to an early learning centre (which is more than daycare), a drug-free school, and a high standard of education from kindergarten to two-year post-secondary job skill training (excluding university) at no cost or fees.
3. All seniors will have equitable access to a continuum of programs and services that are affordable without requiring to dispose of their personal assets, and that meet at least the level and standard of living set publicly.
4. All Albertans will have equitable access to comprehensive health services (both mental and physical, preventive and remedial) that is fully publicly funded, publicly administered and delivered effectively and efficiently under government supervision.
5. Aboriginal Albertans will have access to skills training so that they can fill jobs in Alberta's future diversified economy before there is a need for temporary foreign workers.
6. Albertans with a disability will be supported with adequate income, job training and social programs.
7. Incentives and supports will be introduced to make work pay and help the working poor remain attached to the labour market.
8. Child poverty will be eliminated and overall poverty will be reduced significantly within a decade with measurable goals set for each year.
9. Child abuse (mental and physical), youth homelessness and domestic violence will be eliminated through preventive programs and services.
10. Impacts of boom and bust will be smoothed out, particularly in relation to rental housing and employment. (Comment: Research has shown that domestic violence increases during economic boom and bust changes).
11. Albertans will access through a Single Point of Entry all supports and services administered by various programs, ministries and delivery agencies in order to avoid silo and turf protection.

12. Standards for programs and services will be set publicly and reviewed periodically.
13. Outcome measures for programs and services will be developed and publicly monitored whether they are delivered by government department or authority, or by for-profit or non-profit delivery agency.
14. Budget will be allocated by initiative (Budgeting-by-Initiative) instead of by program in order to avoid silo-protection and redirecting of funds to other program priorities.

*(Example: For the initiative of eliminating child poverty, new funds and its accountability should **not** be assigned to separate individual programs **but to** the broad umbrella of the initiative, and the program mechanisms should be used simply for the delivery of services).*
15. No user-fee will be applied for essential services, however, for non-essential services publicly acceptable means test using the most current income will be applied to assess eligibility and co-pay.

Principles:

- Encourage healthier, socially just and inclusive communities.
- Treat each Albertan with dignity and respect regardless of his or her income status, personal barrier, physical appearance, linguistic limitation or cultural background.
- Promote wider acceptance by making programs and services universal.
- Encourage initiative not dependence, cooperation not competition, inclusiveness not turf-protection, and compassion not selfishness.
- Reward effort and improvement, not simply completion and closure.
- Provide tax incentive to employers who continuously train and develop employees.
- Design policies and procedures in partnership with employers, community leaders, delivery agencies and academics.
- All Albertans will have equal access to and support for building a sustainable livelihood (financial assets, savings and source of financial security).