

New Brunswick
Women's Council



Conseil des femmes
du Nouveau-Brunswick

Annual Report

2020-2021

**New Brunswick Women's Council
Annual Report 2020–2021**

Province of New Brunswick
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Transmittal letters

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Louise Imbeault
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

Your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

Sincerely,



Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau, Ph.D.
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

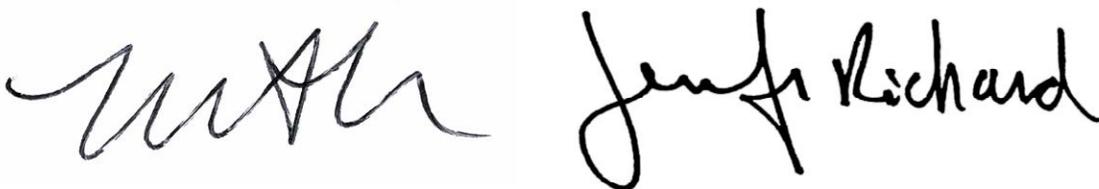
From the Co-chairs to the Minister

Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

Dear Minister,

We are pleased to present to you the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

Sincerely,



Michèle Nadeau and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs of the New Brunswick Women's Council

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The New Brunswick Women’s Council is an independent public advisory body on women’s equality issues.

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2020-2021 in New Brunswick

April 2020

- The state of emergency declared in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic continues.
- Minimum wage increases to \$11.70 per hour.
- The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission [releases information](#) to help New Brunswickers understand their rights and obligations under the *Human Rights Act* during the pandemic.
- On April 18th and 19th, the worst mass shooting in Canadian civilian history is perpetrated in Nova Scotia. Eventually, it would be established the events began with acts of intimate partner violence and an independent public inquiry would be [directed to examine](#) “contributing and contextual factors, including the role of gender-based and intimate partner violence[.]”
- Government [announces](#) job protection, retroactive to March 12, for workers who are not able to work because they have COVID-19, are caring for a person with whom they have a close family relationship who has the virus, or are following self-isolation or quarantine protocols as directed by Public Health. It also protects employees who cannot report to work because they are caring for their children due to school or daycare closures.

May 2020

- Social Assistance rates for single person units increases 5 per cent. This is the first increase to any Social Assistance rates since 2014. It is the first increase since 2010 for employable single person units. Regulatory changes also schedule future rate increases for single person units to occur on April 1st of every year and be tied to the Consumer Price Index.
- For the first time at a COVID-19 media conference, Premier Higgs and Dr. Jennifer Russell, the chief medical officer of health, discuss domestic and intimate partner violence in relation to the pandemic, specifically the impact of stay-at-

home orders for people experiencing or at risk of violence. Both explain that domestic and intimate partner violence services are available despite the state of emergency and that an increase in violence has not been reported or indicated.

- Early learning and childcare centres [begin re-opening](#) beyond providing services to essential workers.
- The federal and provincial government [collaborate to provide](#) temporary pandemic-related wage top-ups for low income front-line essential workers, including: early childhood educators in early learning and childcare facilities; some home support workers providing direct in-person care to seniors, adults, and children; direct person care in group homes, community residences, special care homes, homeless shelters and transition houses; domestic violence intervention workers; and food bank and soup kitchen workers. Workers must be earning less than \$18 an hour to qualify and the top up is retroactive.
- On May 25th, George Floyd, a 46 year-old Black man in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the United States is murdered by a police officer. The Black Lives Matter movement, which began in 2012, grows and protests against police violence take place around the world, including New Brunswick.

June 2020

- On June 2nd, hundreds of New Brunswickers attend rallies to oppose racial injustice and anti-Black racism in police and justice systems more specifically.
- On June 4th, Chantel Moore, a 26 year-old woman from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation (on Vancouver Island, British Columbia) is shot and killed by a police officer in Edmundston, New Brunswick during a well-being check.

- On June 12th, Rodney Levi, a 48 year-old man of Metepenagiag First Nation, is shot and killed by an RCMP officer.
- On June 17th, Wolastoqiyik and Mi'kmaw Chiefs meet with Premier Higgs and [call for an independent inquiry](#) into systemic discrimination against Indigenous people in policing and justice systems.
- Amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act* made in 2019-2020 [come into effect](#). The amendments allow individuals to terminate leases early if they or their dependent are the victim of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or criminal harassment and they believe that their safety is at risk if the tenancy continues.

July 2020

- [Government amends](#) the federal-provincial wage top-up program for low-income front-line essential workers to include private sector home care support workers who provide direct, in-home personal care to clients of the Department of Social Development and early learning and childcare enhanced support workers who provide direct client care.

August 2020

- Government launches a consultation for the statutory review of the minimum wage.
- Government publishes its [COVID-19 Fall Pandemic Response and Preparedness Plan 2020](#). The plan includes a commitment to ensuring that gender-based analysis is applied in all COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

September 2020

- For the first time, the level of sedation required for surgical abortion care [is publicly cited](#) as one of the reasons that the procedure is not funded outside of designated hospital facilities.

- A provincial general election is held. Fourteen women are elected and will make up 28.6 per cent of the members of the legislative assembly, a new record for New Brunswick.

October 2020

- 211 [is launched](#) through a partnership between the provincial government, federal government, and the United Ways of New Brunswick. 211 is a free, bilingual, confidential provincial resource to support people in navigating community-based and public services.
- The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission [releases](#) a new guideline, *Special Programs and the Meaning of Equality and Discrimination*.

November 2020

- Government [announces](#) a new initiative to ensure that breast density results are included in mammography reports and patient letters following routine screenings.
- The [provincial and federal governments sign](#) a one-year early learning and childcare agreement to continue work from the 2017-2020 agreement through 2020-2021.
- Under the Safe Restart Agreement, the provincial and federal governments announce pandemic-related increased funding for [early learning and childcare](#) and the [Department of Social Development](#) (mainly long-term care facilities, child welfare, and emergency shelters).

December 2020

- In response to a student movement, government [announces](#) that it will convene a roundtable to address sexual violence on campuses in early 2021 and report back in spring 2021.
- Amendments to the *Coroner's Act* to give statutory authority to the province's Child Death Review Committee and Domestic Violence Death Review Committee receive Royal Assent. These changes [were required](#) to enable the work of the Atlantic

Domestic Homicide Review Network that was [created in January 2020](#). Government [also shares](#) that network members have been appointed.

- A new *Family Law Act* receives Royal Assent. The legislation [reflects changes](#) in the federal *Divorce Act* and establishes a provincial service to allow for the recalculation of child support orders to reflect updated income (the service is not immediately available).

January 2021

- Government [publishes](#) a discussion paper on the future of healthcare in New Brunswick and a [call for submissions](#) on the issue.
- The Canadian Civil Liberties Association launches a legal action against the government, filing a [statement of claim](#) that argues that the funding restriction on surgical abortions provided outside of designated hospital facilities violates the *Canada Health Act* and the right to liberty, security, privacy, and equality under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- Federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women endorse a [joint declaration](#) on gender-based violence that affirms a common vision, principles and goals for responding to gender-based violence. It is [said to be](#) an important step in developing a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.

February 2021

- After raising concerns about process and compensation, student advocates and survivors are [reportedly disinvited](#) from future meetings of the government's roundtable to address sexual violence on campuses.

- The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation [releases its final report](#) on the province's poverty reduction strategy, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014-2019*.
- Government [announces](#) that minimum wage will increase to \$11.75 on April 1st.

March 2021

- Megan Mitton, a Third-Party member of the legislative assembly, [announces](#) she is pregnant. She is only the second member ever to be known to be pregnant while serving in the House and shares that she has obtained a commitment for changing tables to be installed in the building.
- Government publishes a [Gender Impact Statement](#) alongside the 2021-2022 budget.
- Government [announces](#) funding for a research project into systemic anti-Black racism in New Brunswick.
- Government [announces](#) that it will appoint a commissioner on systemic racism to engage stakeholders to develop an understanding of the nature and impact of systemic racism in the province. The leadership of the Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick and Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Incorporated [immediately denounce](#) the approach.
- Motion 52 is [debated, amended, and then carries](#) in the legislative assembly. It directs the Standing Committee on Procedure, Privileges and Legislative Officers to undertake a review of initiatives that will encourage more women to offer as candidates in provincial elections.

This timeline is focused on public policy changes as well as historic dates and developments in New Brunswick. It is not exhaustive and excludes motions and bills that are introduced by opposition parties that did not advance. Except for a minimum wage increase, funding announcements made at the end of 2020-2021 for 2021-2022 are not included.

Message from the Co-chairs

Thank you for taking time to read this annual report and engage with the work that the Council accomplished from April 2020 to March 2021.

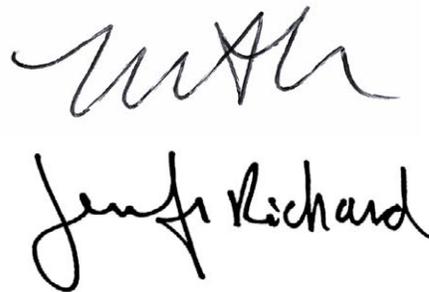
This year, the Council continued to share existing data and stories from [Resonate](#) (a public engagement initiative held in 2017-2018) but stopped producing new analysis or publishing previously unshared stories from participants. The Council's research and public engagement work shifted to focus largely on COVID-19 through a digital library created in partnership with Code for Canada. The library is available at bibliothequecovidlibrary.ca.

The Council participated in government consultations, providing advice and recommendations on the minimum wage and the 2021-2022 budget. The Council also completed a project to make its submissions to consultations held in previous years available on its website.

The Council also worked on issues relevant to women's substantive equality outside of consultations. New issues-based work focused on COVID-19 and systemic racism against Black and Indigenous people and communities. As this was an election year, the Council also took the opportunity to reiterate much of its existing advice and recommendations. This work was provided to government and shared with the public through briefs and online posts.

In both our new and reiterated advice, the Council continued to emphasize the *how* of better public policy. We urged government to think about social deficits and debts, engage in co-creation, to centre the most marginalized and vulnerable in decisions, and to increase their transparency around the use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus as a policy tool.

In this report, you will find more detailed information about this work as well as our membership and our governance processes. We also identify important events and milestones, as well as opposition motions in the legislative assembly and government actions, that are relevant to women's equality in New Brunswick. As always, our hope is that this report captures the work of the Council and tracks changes in the landscape of gender equality in our province.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is a stylized, cursive signature that appears to be 'Michele Nadeau'. The bottom signature is also cursive and clearly reads 'Jennifer Richard'.

Michèle Nadeau and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs, New Brunswick Women's Council*

*Co-chairs at the time of publication of this report.

Issues

As is typical for the Council, issues-based work for 2020-2021 focused on providing advice and recommendations to government through meetings and correspondence, participation in consultations, and the submission of briefs. Research and analysis by staff, consultation with Council members and other organizations and experts, and resources like [Resonate](#) shaped the selection of issues to prioritize and the development of advice and recommendations. The Council shared this work with the public by making its submissions to consultations and other briefs public, through media releases and interviews, and via online posting. Except for media interviews, all of this content is available via the Council's website.

As 2020-2021 was an election year, the Council reiterated much of its existing advice and recommendations. The Council also addressed two issues that shaped the year in significant ways: COVID-19 and systemic racism. This section of the annual report provides detailed information on these two issues. Information on reiterated advice and recommendations is briefer, except in instances where existing advice was updated. Links are provided to specific documents that are referenced; where no specific documents are named, the related advice and recommendations can be found in the Council's [pre-](#) and [post-](#)election briefs.

This section also includes information on work that the Council monitors, notably government plans and frameworks and opposition motions relevant to women's equality that are not already covered in the timeline at the beginning of this report.

COVID-19

In June, the Council launched a [digital library](#) of content on the COVID-19 pandemic that considers marginalized populations, the not-for-profit sector,

or uses a social justice lens. The library contains content specific to New Brunswick as well as content at the regional, national, or international level that is general or broad enough to be relevant to the province. The library was developed in collaboration with Code for Canada, the Canadian Digital Service, and the Canadian School of Public Service Digital Academy as part of their joint [#OpenCall](#) program to help government teams during COVID-19.

With the launch of the library, the Council [advised government and the public](#) that as long-term recovery from the pandemic is planned, government must ensure that the experiences, concerns, and ideas of individuals and communities who are often excluded from decision-making are heard. Rebuilding in a way that reduces disparity, supports the most vulnerable, and increases equity is not only possible but necessary. Visioning and co-creating a renewed New Brunswick that centres the voices of those often left out of decision-making will make the province more resilient, sustainable, and prosperous for all.

In advance of the 2020 election, the Council published [an issues brief](#) that included additional advice and recommendations. The Council explained that the pandemic is not affecting everyone in the same way and that the province's plans to mitigate future waves of COVID-19, recover economically, and create a "new normal" need to respond to this. The Council advised that to respond to the pandemic comprehensively and effectively, government needs to understand its gendered impacts and put the people and communities who are the most vulnerable in the province at the centre of COVID-19 planning. The Council also explained that vulnerable and marginalized communities have been fighting for survival long before COVID-19 and many of the strategies they

have developed (like mutual aid networks and bubbles or pods) are going mainstream in the context of the pandemic. These strategies provide an example of how inclusive and equitable decision-making benefits everyone.

The Council re-iterated this advice [after the election](#), in [advance of the throne speech](#), and during the [2021-2022 budget consultation](#).

The Council was pleased that [government's fall COVID-19 plan](#), released in August, included this statement:

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated the situation for vulnerable groups across New Brunswick. Response and recovery efforts that take into account the vulnerable groups will help prevent further economic and social inequalities and create more responsive, vibrant and sustainable communities... The Province is committed to ensure gender-based analysis is applied in all COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

Systemic racism

On June 4th, Chantel Moore of Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation (on Vancouver Island, British Columbia) was shot and killed by a police officer in Edmundston, New Brunswick during a well-being check.

The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, which serves 14 Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations including Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, [issued calls](#) for immediate action for justice, including:

- “immediate action in our request for an independent investigation on the police fatally shooting a 26-year-old Nuu-chah-nulth woman in the early hours of Thursday June 4th in Edmundston, New Brunswick” and
- “immediate action on this request and to be updated throughout the entirety of the process.

We call for action on implementing measures to ensure conduct and police practices are done in a way that de-escalates a situation and to use trauma-informed practice when doing so. We ask that changes be made to police conduct in this sense to ensure more lives are not lost in this devastating manner.”

In advice to government and a [public statement](#) provided in June, the Council echoed these calls to action and expressed its deepest concern and support for the family and communities of Chantel Moore.

The Council also committed to study and consult the role of policing in communities and to bring findings and recommendations to the attention of government and the public. The Council recognized that it was making this commitment while protests and action take place worldwide in support of the Movement for Black Lives and to address the role of policing in perpetuating anti-Black racism and upholding white supremacy. While anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, and other forms of racism have distinct histories and are perpetrated differently, they are also interconnected—all these layers and complexities must inform the analysis and recommendations.

In July, the Council advised government via correspondence to establish a commission of inquiry into systemic bias and racism against Indigenous people in our police and justice systems, as per the [call to action](#) from the 15 First Nations Chiefs in New Brunswick. The Chiefs expressed that a review of existing reports and recommendations, as proposed by government in response to their call for an inquiry, would not suffice. The Council agreed with this. While an inquiry must take existing reports and recommendations into account, new work that is New Brunswick-specific must also be undertaken. The Council also affirmed the Chiefs' assertion that the inquiry must be independent and Indigenous-led. The Council advised that the

establishment of this inquiry (i.e., the drafting of terms, including: scope, deliverables, ways of working, and resourcing) must centre and prioritize the expertise and needs of Indigenous peoples.

In this correspondence, the Council also advised government to act on [calls to action](#) from Black Lives Matter Fredericton/NB to:

- “incorporate content on the history of slavery, segregation, and systemic oppression in New Brunswick and Canada into the public school curriculum of New Brunswick”
- “commission independent research on the personal, social, and economic impacts of racism in New Brunswick and develop an action plan to remedy these issues through an anti-racist strategy” and
- “implement mandatory cultural competency/ anti-racism training for police and government officials.”

The Council advised that this work must be led by Black individuals and communities, as they are most directly affected by anti-Black racism and have the experience and expertise required to ensure this work is designed and executed in a way that meets the goals of the calls to action.

The Council made its support of both sets of calls to action public via briefs published [before](#) and [after](#) the provincial general election.

Social Assistance rates

The Council recommended that social assistance rates be brought in line with the Market Basket Measure (MBM). The current rates, which are below the MBM, fail to meet the needs of recipients and do not make fiscal sense given the long-term costs to government that result from individuals living in poverty.

Minimum wage

In advance of the election, the Council recommended that the minimum wage move toward a living wage. Later in the year, the Council's [submission to the 2020 statutory review of the minimum wage](#) recommended the approach suggested by the Saint John Human Development Council and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. These organizations advocated for a \$15 minimum wage, explaining that this is not a living wage but a rate based on a model where government and employers work together to make sure people's needs are met through the combination of an adequate minimum wage, employment standards, and social programs. The Council's [submission to the 2021-2022 budget consultation](#) reiterated the \$15 rate recommendation and noted the need for future adjustments that reflect increases in the cost of living.

Legislate pay equity for the private sector

The Council recommended private sector pay equity legislation. The Council also restated longstanding concerns about the pay equity adjustments that some workers in community-based caregiving receive. The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity has concerns that the methodology used to determine these adjustments is flawed, resulting in wages that are too low, and that these adjustments have not been reviewed since they were initially made.

Early childhood education and care

The Council recommended that government treat early childhood education and care as a critical infrastructure investment and as an essential component of women's equality and improving future outcomes for marginalized and vulnerable children. Government must also work with New Brunswick's early learning and childcare sector to shift toward a not-for-profit model. Wages for early childhood educators must also rise.

Home care

The Council advised that home care workers need pay increases and improved working conditions, including enhanced support for their safety and security, reimbursement for costs incurred on the job (e.g., mileage), and predictable scheduling.

Support newcomer and immigrant women in the workforce

The Council advised that as government works to grow the population and workforce through immigration, newcomer and immigrant women require tailored supports to increase their access to employment opportunities in all fields and at all levels of work.

Unpaid labour

The Council advised government to consider how community-based approaches to addressing complex issues like poverty, an aging population, and health care may increase the demand for unpaid labour from women.

The Council suggested that concrete supports for unpaid dementia caregivers could involve investing in respite services and other support programs as well as support for travel costs, home modifications or other financial costs. This model could apply to other areas of unpaid care as well.

Support for community-based non-profit organizations

The Council advised that government must move to longer-term, sustainable operational funding models for community-based non-profit organizations to support service delivery, internal capacity-building, and improve wages for workers.

Sexual violence

The Council recommended that government increase funding for [Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick: A Framework for Action](#). Funding the framework would help close

service gaps for survivors of sexual violence and provide better support for community organizations addressing this issue.

The Council continued to work with government as part of a multi-sector stakeholder group [convened by government in 2017](#) to provide recommendations on improving police response to reports of sexual violence.

Midwifery

The Council recommended increasing support for midwifery services in New Brunswick. The existing demonstration site in Fredericton must be better resourced not only to serve the local community, but also to generate data required for evaluating the site and planning the expansion of midwifery services to more regions of the province.

Pharmacist care

The Council recommended that government explore expanding pharmacists' regulated scope of practice to allow them to prescribe hormonal birth control. Should this be integrated into the services pharmacists can offer, the cost of prescribing should be eligible for billing to Medicare.

Abortion access and support for Clinic 554

The Council recommended that Regulation 84-20 Schedule 2 (a) of the *Medical Services Payment Act* be updated to allow surgical abortions outside of hospitals to be billed to Medicare (this would also require enabling community-based surgical abortion providers to bill ultrasounds to Medicare).

The Council also advised government to work with Clinic 554 to co-create a solution to prevent its impending closure. In 2020-2021, Clinic 554 operated as a family practice, a specialized provider of LGBTQ2S+ health care, and the only out-of-hospital surgical abortion provider in the province.

Social deficits and debts

The Council advised government to account for [social deficits and debts](#) in its work. Social deficits are the gap between what people need in terms of services and what is available to them (these services may be offered publicly or by the community sector). Like fiscal deficits, social deficits do not simply disappear at the start of a new year; they become debt with interest. The interest looks like problems becoming more entrenched and complex the longer that adequate services are missing.

Co-creation

The Council advised government to engage in [co-creation](#) and foster the conditions necessary for co-creation. Co-creation is when people and communities who are impacted by a situation are involved in the process of identifying the problem, designing the services that will address it, and establishing how the services will be evaluated. Co-creation not only results in better services but also increases public trust in government.

Gender-based analysis

The Council recommended that government expand its use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in decision-making and to also share more information with the public on the use of and findings from those processes.

During the consultation for the 2021-2022 budget, the Council [recommended](#) that government expand on the 2020-2021 budget processes' internal use of gender impact assessments by publicly sharing details on how GBA+ or other similar tools and processes were ultimately used in the 2021-2022 budget process.

In March, government published a [Gender Impact Statement](#) alongside the 2021-2022 budget. In its [media release for the budget](#), government explained that the statement "outlines Gender-Based Analysis+ impact of specific budget

measures. This statement acts as a starting point to publishing gender-based information and aims to show the government's commitment to expand its approach to gender budgeting." This document was the first of its kind among provinces and territories. The Council advised that this was a promising first step, with room for improvement.

Trust and transparency

The Council's advice and recommendations frequently referenced building trust with the public through increasing transparency about government processes. The Council advised that using tools like GBA+, accounting for social deficits and debts, co-creation and sharing information about the use of those tools would increase trust. The Council's [submission to the 2021-2022 budget consultation](#) put a new rationale forward for the importance of trust and transparency: with authoritarian and populist movements emerging around the world and the ongoing stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential that governments take steps to increase their credibility and build trust with the public. Being more open about their decision-making and showing how they are ensuring policy is evidence-based are ways that they can do this.

Women in politics

While there were fewer women candidates in the 2020 provincial general election compared to the 2018 election, more women were ultimately elected, setting a record high for both the number and percentage of women in the legislative assembly (14 women, making up 28.6 per cent of members). [Before](#) and [after](#) the election, the Council published charts tracking representation by sex in the provincial legislature over time.

During the year, the Council became aware of gender-based challenges posed by some portions of the Elections New Brunswick forms that candidates must fill out. A number of women and individuals who belong to gender minorities were concerned

with providing their home addresses on publicly available documents. A number of individuals who belong to gender minorities identified issues with forms asking for their sex and the only options being male, female, or other. The Council did not give advice on this until 2021-2022.

Members and staff

Members

The Council's work is directed by its volunteer membership, which includes organizations (represented by a woman staff member or volunteer) and individual women committed to women's equality.

Members shape the Council's issue-based work by collaborating with staff to identify and analyze priority issues and propose solutions. Members also ensure that the voices of women from diverse identities, communities, and experiences are represented within the Council. The members also have a governance role that includes developing policies to direct the Council's operations at a high level.

2020-2021 membership

Organizations

- Sexual Violence New Brunswick (formerly the Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre; represented by Jennifer Richard)
- New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council (represented by Amanda LeBlanc)
- New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity (represented by Jody Dallaire and Johanne Perron)
- New Brunswick Multicultural Council (represented by Myriam Mekni)
- Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick (represented by Nelly Dennene and Julie Gillet)
- Saint John Women's Empowerment Network (represented by Joanne Britton)
- YWCA Moncton (represented by Michèle Nadeau)

Individuals

- Darlene Doiron
- Mayme Lefurgey
- Martine Marchand
- Patricia Morris
- Madeleine Nickerson
- Noëlla Richard
- Louisa Seales
- Constance Sewell

Ex officio members

- Jocelyne Mills, assistant deputy minister, Women's Equality Branch
- Beth Lyons, executive director, New Brunswick Women's Council

Notes on membership

Co-chairs

The 2020-2021 year began with J. Dallaire and J. Richard continuing as co-chairs. In October, J. Dallaire's term as co-chair ended and N. Richard was appointed as an interim co-chair.

Changes in membership

In June, N. Dennene stepped down as the representative of the Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick. J. Gillet began acting as the organization's representative in October.

In February, J. Perron replaced J. Dallaire as the representative for the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity.

These changes would not be made official via an Order in Council until 2021-2022.

Staff

- **Beth Lyons** – executive director
- **Linda Landry-Guimond** – office manager
- **Jennifer Dickison** – director of research and policy
- **Melissa Wah** – public affairs strategist

Governance

Members are engaged year-round in the work of the Council via regular email communications and committee work. Typically, staff and members also meet multiple times a year in-person and via teleconference. In order to respect COVID-19 public health guidance and to protect the health and safety of its members and staff, the Council only met via teleconference and virtually in 2020-2021.

In 2020-2021, the council held four meetings:

- October 15th
- December 7th
- March 11th
- March 29th

Minutes for all meetings (excepting those portions or entire meetings that are in camera) are available on the Council's website at nbwomenscouncil.ca or by contacting the Council.

The Council uses standing and ad hoc committees to advance various pieces of work between meetings and ensure accountability. Staff and members sit on committees; special contributors may be invited to join as well. In 2020-2021, the following committees were active:

- Finance (standing);
- Governance (standing);
- Issues advisory (standing); and
- Membership recommendation (ad hoc).

During 2020-2021, the Council conducted a membership self-evaluation and began to discuss its next strategic planning process.

Call for membership

Via committee, the Council continued work related to the call for membership that had been launched in the previous fiscal year. The committee was initially comprised of three Council members: J. Richard (co-chair), N. Dennene, and D. Doiron. N. Dennene left the committee in June when she ended her time with the Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick.

In addition to the strength of applications, the committee considered the following when reviewing submissions:

- that the Council's membership is intended to be primarily composed of organizations; and
- the current composition of the Council's membership and whether an applicant's addition to it would contribute to linguistic and regional balance and/or enhance representation of voices from marginalized identities, experiences, and communities.

The Council provided its recommendation for appointments to government in July. Due to the pandemic, however, appointments were delayed and the availability of recommended appointees changed throughout the year. The Council updated its recommendations multiple times based on this and appointments would not be made until 2021-2022.

Mission, vision and strategic directions

Mission: To further gender equity in New Brunswick by strategically addressing ongoing and emerging issues through research, informed and committed membership, and engagement with government and the public.

Vision: A diverse and inclusive New Brunswick of real and deeply-rooted gender equity.

Strategic directions:

Become a leading voice on issues of importance to women and relating to gender equality in New Brunswick.

- Establish clear positions and, where appropriate, recommendations on key issues.
- Become a leading resource for research, analysis, commentary, and recommendations.
- Be able to identify and respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities.

Be engaged with and informed by the women of New Brunswick in their full diversity.

- Membership and analysis reflect the diversity of women's identities, experiences, and communities.

- Provide opportunities for women to identify and share priorities, needs, and solutions.
- Build connections with equality-seeking and women-focused groups throughout all regions.

Develop robust membership and internal processes centred on consensus-building, inclusion, and anti-oppression.

- Foster a committed membership in which members experience solidarity, trust, and respect with one another.
- Develop policies and processes that are sound, equitable, and reduce barriers to participation.

Advocate, educate, and partner strategically.

- Focus on systems-level change.
- Take a collective impact approach.
- Identify strategic roles for the Council given its unique mandate, resources, and relationship to government.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these strategic directions were left in place despite being due for renewal in 2020.

Finances

Expenditure status report by primary fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

	Budget	Actuals
Personnel services	355 153	328 201.02
Other services	98 700	55 097.87
Materials and supplies	8 000	5 390.61
Property and equipment	2 000	0
Total	463 853.00	388 689.50