

# Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories 2023 to 2027

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English

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Kīspin ki nitawih̄tīn ē nīhīyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

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Tłjchq yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newq dè, gots'o gonede.

Tłjchq

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ʔerih̄t'is Dēne Sų́líné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóftı.

Chipewyan

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Edı gondı dehgáh got'je zhatié k'ée edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahí.

South Slavey

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K'áhshó got'jne xadā k'é hederı ʔedjhtl'é yerıniwę níde dúle.

North Slavey

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Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijāhch'uu zhit yinothan jı', diits'at ginohkhii.

Gwich'in

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Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqłuta.

Inuvialuktun

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Ċ'bd< n n<sup>sb</sup>Δ<sup>c</sup> ΛϋLJΔ<sup>c</sup> Δ<sup>b</sup>nD<sup>c</sup>ϋL>n<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>c</sup>ϋ<sup>c</sup>Δ<sup>c</sup> Δ<sup>b</sup>ϋ<sup>c</sup>Δ<sup>c</sup>.

Inuktitut

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Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnaqtun

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Indigenous Languages:

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## Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories 2023 to 2027

The Northwest Territories (NWT) has always been a land of opportunity. This land has sustained thriving and resilient Indigenous peoples since time immemorial, and it has welcomed and provided opportunities to new community members who have made the NWT their home. Together, the land and the people of the NWT have contributed to Canada's cultural, economic, and environmental prosperity, and we have much more to offer.

The world is changing around us- climate, culture, technology, and society are undergoing rapid transformations. In the NWT, our political systems are evolving, our economy is in transition, and changes to our climate are impacting the land and our people in new ways. While these changes may present new challenges, they also create new opportunities. We must ensure that the NWT is positioned to take advantage of these new opportunities while we continue to build upon our many successes.

To do this work in a changing world, we must challenge the status quo and become the drivers of positive change. If we do things simply because that's the way they've always been done, or if we try to do them alone, we will fail. This work will require the courage and compassion to embrace risk, the humility to trust and to learn, and the willingness to work together in true partnership. It is with this vision of change and new ways of working that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will work to advance progress on the Priorities of the 20<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly:

- Suitability, accessibility and affordability of housing;
- A strong economic foundation;
- Access to health care and addressing the effects of trauma; and
- Safe residents and communities.

It is critical that these basic needs are addressed to help create a foundation from which all residents can strive to realize their fullest potential, capitalize on new opportunities, and achieve self-sufficiency. The Mandate of the GNWT will guide this work over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. The Mandate contains high-level commitments organized into six areas that support the Priorities: Housing, Economy, Access to Health Care, Addressing the Effects of Trauma, Emergency Management and Public Safety.



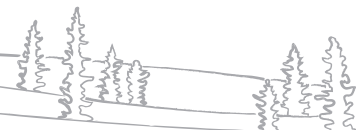
The Mandate commitments are focused to ensure government efforts are concentrated on the Priorities, but broad enough to ensure there is space to incorporate guidance from and be responsive to Members of the Legislative Assembly, the public, Indigenous governments, communities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. Specific actions, targets and measures will be set out annually in the GNWT Business Plans to support meaningful progress and transparent reporting on the Mandate Commitments.

Collaborative governance is the future of the NWT, and collaboration will be a cornerstone of the GNWT’s approach to advancing the Priorities. We are committed to continuing to strengthen our relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership towards a shared future based on a system of cooperative governance. Taking the opportunity to collaborate and align our efforts with Indigenous governments will allow us all to do more for the territory and will demonstrate to Canada and the world what collaborative governance between Indigenous and public governments can achieve.

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities:

- Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage the federal government to advance issues of shared interest;
- Work with negotiation partners to advance, settle and implement land claim, self-government and other Indigenous rights agreements;
- Explore options to support Economic Reconciliation through more flexible and streamlined funding arrangements with Indigenous governments;
- Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.

While we work to enhance our collaboration with Indigenous governments and stakeholders, the GNWT will also strengthen collaboration between departments. To best serve residents, we must improve information sharing within and across departments and ensure that programs and policies are designed with a person-centred approach that prioritizes ease of access for residents over ease of administration.



To advance the Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly and work to fulfill the mandate commitments, we will rely on the public service.

The public service is the GNWT's greatest resource and must be supported and respected within an environment that fosters a sense of purpose and wellbeing and empowers performance excellence and innovation. Our highly trained and dedicated public servants deserve to work in an environment that allows them to contribute to their fullest potential, that values and supports them in providing services with empathy and efficiency, and that encourages and rewards creativity and flexibility. To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all Priorities:

- Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government;
- Implement approaches to design programs and services in ways that promote and the support self reliance and resiliency of residents;
- Better streamline administrative processes, policies and legislation across government to enhance the capacity of the public service to work better together;
- Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability;
- Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the GNWT through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of residents and communities;
- Empower the public service by ensuring they are provided the flexibility to deliver programs and implement policies in ways that best serve residents;
- Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.



Working in these ways, the GNWT will advance the Priorities of the 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly through the following Mandate Commitments:

## Housing

Everyone needs a place to live. Suitable, accessible, and affordable housing is essential to building safe, vibrant communities, and enhancing economic growth and business development. Housing programs integrated with other social supports are key to addressing gaps in the northern housing continuum, including housing for seniors, Elders and persons with disabilities. The GNWT cannot address the housing crisis alone. Indigenous governments are leading the way to advance successful housing initiatives and implement creative solutions that meet local needs and enhance community autonomy to address housing issues. Access to land for housing and collaborative solutions to manage skilled labour shortages and high development and construction costs will help expand housing options for all northerners. To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, the GNWT will:

- Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options;
- Collaborate across departments and with partners to support vulnerable residents, prevent and reduce homelessness, and encourage self-sufficiency;
- Work with Indigenous, federal, and community governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to secure sustainable funding for housing now and into the future;
- Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities;
- Support residents to gain skills and education in the trades through a range of programs and partnerships.



## Economy

Strong and stable economies and their associated employment opportunities are an important part of community wellness and vibrancy. Strategic infrastructure investments, labour force development, sound economic policies and a streamlined regulatory system all contribute to attracting meaningful growth, encouraging entrepreneurship, and building capacity for private sector development. Investment in clean, reliable, sustainable energy for communities and industry, and bringing social aspects into the economy such as jobs for long term care or childcare in communities, are important steps to reducing the cost of living and doing business long term. Seeking partnerships for publicly funded projects that support the public interest and GNWT objectives such as local employment opportunities, a low carbon economy and economic diversification is also important to economic development in the NWT. To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

- Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT;
- Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable;
- Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks;
- Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions;
- Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.

## Access to Health Care

The GNWT is committed to providing culturally respectful, trauma-informed and recovery-oriented services within the health and social services system. Integrated approaches to wellness, social supports, health education and public awareness are needed to address the root causes of poor health outcomes, and assist vulnerable populations, including seniors, Elders, persons with disabilities, and at-risk youth. The GNWT will focus on increasing access to healthcare and addressing systemic inequities and inefficiencies. Virtual care options may help meet health program delivery needs, improve continuity of care, and manage the ongoing health human resource crisis. To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, the GNWT will:

- Deliver equitable access to sustainable primary care in all NWT communities;
- Focus on health promotion and preventative care, and disease prevention across all age groups;
- Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions, while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT;
- Improve medical travel and out-of-territory care, with a focus on clinical coordination and cultural safety.





## Address the Effects of Trauma

Colonization and racism are root causes of trauma for Indigenous peoples in the NWT. The impacts of isolation and evacuation due to climate disasters and the global pandemic have also contributed to collective trauma for all NWT residents. Individual, collective, and intergenerational trauma is behind too many of the health and social challenges impacting NWT families and communities. The GNWT is taking steps to provide equitable, person-centred, anti-racist and trauma-informed care to all residents in ways that connect and coordinate programs and services. To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, the GNWT will:

- Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents;
- Support Indigenous governments and other partners to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, northern and regional trauma treatment, mental wellness and addictions programming by removing administrative barriers and streamlining supports;
- Enable residents to focus on healing by making programs and services easier to access through an integrated and person-centered service delivery approach and by working in collaboration with Indigenous governments, community governments and other partners;
- Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.



## Emergency Management

The NWT is on the front lines of climate change and must be prepared to mitigate and respond to continuing climate-driven events such as floods and fires. Disaster recovery can span several years and better preparation for the NWT to deal with the impacts of climate-related hazards is urgently needed. The GNWT will work proactively to respond to emerging threats in ways that are solutions-based and action-oriented. To enhance the safety of residents and communities, the GNWT will:

- Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies;
- Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses;
- Invest in robust and redundant community, energy, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure;
- Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.

## Public Safety

NWT residents want to feel safe in their communities. The NWT has some of the highest crime and victimization rates in Canada. It is critical that we understand the root causes of crime and the impact it has on our residents and communities to ensure efforts to address and prevent crime are effective. Equally important are efforts to intervene and disrupt patterns of repeat offending that too often are challenging residents' sense of safety. To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, the GNWT will:

- Work with law enforcement, governments, communities and across departments to create and strengthen tools that can be used to disrupt and combat the drug trade and associated criminal activity;
- Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions;
- Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.

Our actions will be guided by the commitments contained in the Mandate and informed by open dialogue and engagement with the public. We look forward to working with all Members of the 20<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly to advance our shared Priorities for the benefit of all NWT residents.



