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MINISTRY OF LABOUR

The mission of the Ministry of Labour is to promote fair, healthy, and safe labour and employment relationships in support of a strong, sustainable, and inclusive economy and to ensure provincial employment standards reflect the needs of British Columbians.

MINISTRY SUMMARY

(\$000)

	Estimates 2022/23 ¹	Estimates 2023/24
VOTED APPROPRIATION		
Vote 38 — Ministry Operations.....	17,423	21,489
OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>17,423</u>	<u>21,489</u>
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ²	3	3
LOANS, INVESTMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS ³	—	—
REVENUE COLLECTED FOR, AND TRANSFERRED TO, OTHER ENTITIES ⁴	—	—

NOTES

¹ For comparative purposes, figures shown for the 2022/23 operating expenses; capital expenditures; loans, investments and other requirements; and revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities are restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2023/24 *Estimates*. A reconciliation of restated operating expenses and capital expenditures is presented in Schedule A.

² A listing of estimated capital expenditures by ministry is presented in Schedule C.

³ A summary of loans, investments and other requirements by ministry is presented in Schedule D.

⁴ A summary of revenue collected for, and transferred to, other entities by ministry is presented in Schedule E.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR
SUMMARY BY CORE BUSINESS
(\$000)

	2022/23	2023/24 ESTIMATES		
	Net	Gross	External Recoveries	Net
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Core Business				
Labour Programs.....	15,828	52,904	(33,286)	19,618
Executive and Support Services.....	1,595	2,226	(355)	1,871
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	17,423	55,130	(33,641)	21,489
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				
Core Business				
Labour Programs.....	3	3	—	3
TOTAL	3	3	—	3

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

VOTE DESCRIPTIONS

(\$000)

Estimates
2022/23Estimates
2023/24

VOTE 38 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

This vote provides for the programs, operations, and other activities described in the voted appropriations under the following core businesses: Labour Programs and Executive and Support Services.

LABOUR PROGRAMS

Voted Appropriations

Employment Standards.....	14,010	17,702
WorkSafeBC Funded Services.....	1	1
Labour Policy and Legislation.....	1,817	1,915
	<u>15,828</u>	<u>19,618</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for services promoting harmonious labour and employment relations through the administration of the *Workers Compensation Act*, the *Employment Standards Act*, the *Temporary Foreign Worker Protection Act*, and the *Labour Relations Code*; the operations of the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal, Compensation Advisory Services, and other employment and labour relations initiatives; and worker support programs. This sub-vote also provides for legislative and policy support for activities described within this sub-vote. Costs associated with the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal and Compensation Advisory Services are fully recovered from the accident fund established pursuant to the *Workers Compensation Act*. Costs may also be recovered from ministries, Crown corporations and agencies, and parties external to government for other activities described within this sub-vote.

EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Voted Appropriations

Minister's Office.....	638	718
Corporate Services.....	957	1,153
	<u>1,595</u>	<u>1,871</u>

Voted Appropriations Description: This sub-vote provides for the office for the Minister of Labour and for the Parliamentary Secretary for Labour. This sub-vote also provides for executive direction of the Ministry of Labour; and administrative services for the operating programs of the Ministry of Labour, including financial administration and budget coordination, strategic and business planning and reporting, human resources, office management, accommodation, and information systems, some of which are provided by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. Costs may be recovered from ministries, Crown corporations and agencies, other levels of government, and parties external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

VOTE 38 — MINISTRY OPERATIONS

17,423

21,489

MINISTRY GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY

GROUP ACCOUNT CLASSIFICATION

Salaries and Benefits	38,308	42,945
Operating Costs	10,260	11,675
Government Transfers	59	59
Other Expenses	456	456
Internal Recoveries	(5)	(5)
External Recoveries	(31,655)	(33,641)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES.....	<u>17,423</u>	<u>21,489</u>

Budget 2023/24 Questions and Answers

Contents

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1. Why has the Ministry of Labour's budget increased by \$4.066 million from 2022/23

The Ministry of Labour's 2023/24 budget is \$21.489 million, an increase of \$4.066 million from the 2022/23 Restated Estimates budget of \$17.423 million.

Labour's overall budget increase of \$4.066 million is due to the following:

- The Employment Standards Branch received a base budget increase of \$3.135 million to implement and support a sustainable complaints management strategy and eliminate the historical complaints (backlog reduction).
- \$851,000 increase is attributed to a base budget lift for compensation increases under the Shared Recovery Mandate.
- \$80,000 increase was approved by the Premier's Office to better align the Minister's Office budget with current staffing complement. There is no change to the actual staffing complement (Minister, Parliamentary secretary and five support staff) in comparison to the prior year.

2. Why has the Ministers' Office budget increased by \$80,000 in 2023/24?

- In 2023/24, the Minister's Office budget was increased by \$80,000 to better align the Minister's Office budget with current staffing complement and bring budgets in line with approved budgets set by the Office of the Premier.
- The Minister's Office budget includes funding for the Legislative salaries of the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary as well as budget for five support staff. There is no change to the actual staffing complement from the prior year.
- The approved increase includes \$5,000 for training under office and business.

- Any questions on the review of Minister's Office budgets should be directed to the Minister of Finance.

3. How is the **Labour Relations Board** funded?

- B.C.'s Labour Relations Code provides important protections for workers such as the right to unionize and job security when a unionized business changes ownership.
- In 2019, we modernized the Labour Relations Code after it hadn't been substantially reviewed since 1992; the changes we made improved job security for contracted service workers while delivering more stable and harmonious labour relations for employers and unions.
- Any questions relating to LRB's budget should be directed to the Ministry of Attorney General (AG).
- The Labour Relations Board transferred to AG in 2017/18 as part of the Tribunal Transformation Initiative. This initiative consolidated various tribunal budgets (excluding WCAT) to ensure tribunal processes are efficient, costs effective and meet users' needs.

4. Is there continued funding for the **Forestry Worker Support Programs** in 2023/24?

- Budget 2022 provided more than \$185 million over three years to bring forth coordinated and comprehensive supports to help forestry workers and contractors, industry, communities, and First Nations to adapt and respond to impacts of old growth deferrals. \$44M of this funding was allocated to 2023/24.
- Part of this funding includes support for the Bridging to Retirement program, which supports eligible forestry workers and contractors 55 years or older who are impacted by the old growth deferral process. The program helps them to transition to retirement and create jobs for younger or junior employees in working mills.
- The program is open for impacted and voluntary workers of B.C. forestry mills, forestry-dependent contractors and their employees.

- Previous Years Funding - Early Retirement Bridging Program:

In \$ Millions	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
ERBP Budget (Funded through FOR)	20.000	16.000	4.000	40.000
Forest Worker Support Program				0.000
StrongerBC Funding		18.000		18.000
Total Budget*	20.000	34.000	4.000	58.000
Actual Spend 2019/20 to 2021/22	10.822	33.715	2.321	46.858
Variance	9.178	0.285	1.679	11.142

Cabinet Confidences

- Current Years Funding - Early Retirement Bridging Program:

Actual spending for 2022/23 will be released this Summer with the Public Accounts.

5. Does Budget 2023 provide any incremental funding to address the backlog of Workers' Complaints under the Employment Standards Branch?

- As a demand-driven complaint process, the Employment Standards Branch's (Branch) workload is variable and reflects what is happening in BC's workplaces; the pandemic has increased demand by workers and employers for access to the Branch's services. In addition, legislative and regulatory improvements made since 2018 have made the Branch more accessible to people who need it.
- Supporting BC's workers and employers by investigating and resolving complaints and eliminating the historical complaints (backlog) is a priority for the Ministry.
- The Ministry received a base budget increase of almost \$12 million over three years to implement a long term, sustainable complaints management strategy and to eliminate the historical complaints (backlog reduction). Funding was received to support incremental Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) and supporting operating costs.

The funding breakdown by fiscal year is as follows:

- \$3.135 million in 2023/24 to support 20 FTEs,
- \$3.984 million in 2024/25 to support 27.5 FTEs, and
- \$4.821 million in 2025/26 to support 33 FTEs.

MANDATE LETTER COMMITMENTS DECEMBER 2022

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
1. Work to improve the timeliness of employment standards dispute resolution.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019, government began modernizing the Employment Standards Branch to make it easier for people to access needed services, because over the previous 16 years there were barriers and it was difficult to get help. As barriers were removed, the volume of complaints rose. To address the increase in complaints, the Ministry has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed new, streamlined intake and triage processes to provide better outcomes for workers, improved the use of technology as part of its overall digital transformation strategy, and improved information gathering. As of February 15, 2023, the backlog was reduced ^{Government Financial Information} to 4,584. The branch is actively recruiting and onboarding new permanent and temporary staff in all roles that support complaints processing, including Data Integrity Clerks, Employment Standards Officers, Industrial Relations Officers and Decision Makers. Budget 2023 was tabled in the Legislature on February 28, 2023, and included an increase of nearly \$12 million over three years for the Employment Standards Branch (ESB). This funding will increase the capacity of ESB, including the hiring of as many as 33 more full-time staff in response to the growing demand for its services, including resolving disputes between workers and employers, providing guidance on BC's employment standards, and processing registrations for employers who wish to hire temporary foreign workers through the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program.
2. Continue engaging with affected parties on implementation of the recommendations of the Industrial Inquiry	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Industrial Inquiry Commission's (IIC) report and recommendations regarding successorship in the forestry sector was publicly released in July 2022. The IIC recommended expanding the Code's successorship provisions so that they apply when Government initiates a transfer of harvesting rights, including to First Nations.

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
Commission regarding Forest Industry Successorship.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the public release of the report, the Ministry engaged with BC First Nations and forest sector employee organizations and employers by inviting them to make submissions regarding the IIC report and their recommendations. • In Fall 2022, the Ministry held five information sessions for interested First Nations, primarily attended by First Nations forestry staff. In addition, the Minister of Labour met directly with the First Nations Leadership Council, and Ministry staff engaged with the BC Alliance for Modern Treaty Nations. • Cabinet Confidences
3. Work with WorkSafeBC to ensure meaningful programs are in place to support the return of injured workers to their workplaces.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill 41, the <i>Workers Compensation Amendment Act (No. 2), 2022</i>, adds new legal duties for employers to maintain employment for injured workers, and for the worker and employer to cooperate in an injured worker’s return to worker. • These provisions will come into force by regulation on a date still to be determined. • WorkSafeBC is undertaking the necessary policy and program development work to support the successful implementation of these duties.
4. Support WorkSafeBC, with involvement of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, to develop better options for chronic work-related pain, including improving pain management practices for	Underway	<p>Cabinet Confidences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkSafeBC is conducting a review of the chronic pain policies to improve consistency in the adjudication, management, and treatment of chronic pain. Work on this policy review will continue through 2023.

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
injured workers and providing treatment on demand to those with chronic pain as a result of workplace injuries.		
5. Ensure our labour law is keeping up with modern workplaces through the upcoming review of the Labour Code, providing stable labour relations and supporting the exercise of collective bargaining rights.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Labour Relations Code</i> (the Code) was last reviewed in 2018 by the Labour Relations Code Review Panel (the Review Panel), as appointed by the Minister of Labour (the Minister). The Review Panel recommended a number of amendments to the Code, several of which were implemented in 2019. This includes amendments requiring the Minister to, every five years, appoint a committee of special advisors to review the Code and make recommendations. This is to ensure that there are regular, transparent, and public consultative reviews of the Code. • As such, in 2024, the Minister will be required to appoint a committee of special advisors to review the Code and make recommendations for amendments. Over the coming year the Ministry of Labour will be working on the appointment of the committee and developing the terms of reference for the upcoming review.

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Janet Routledge Mandate Letter		
1. Support development and maintenance of relationships with organized labour to ensure	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry has prepared a work plan for Parliamentary Secretary Routledge that includes proposed quarterly meeting with key labour stakeholders.

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Janet Routledge Mandate Letter		
their feedback is considered in policy development.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliamentary Secretary Routledge is meeting with labour stakeholders for their feedback on specific labour policy issues (e.g., employment standards for app-based ride-hail and food delivery workers).
2. Continue work to develop a precarious work strategy that reflects the diverse needs and unique situations of today’s workers and workplaces.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has prepared a work plan for Parliamentary Secretary Routledge. The ministry has implemented a number of initiatives over the past five years as part of the precarious work strategy, including increasing the minimum wage, improved workers’ compensation benefits and support for workers, workplace safety measures, enhanced employment standards and access to the Employment Standards Branch, and improved access to collective bargaining. Advice/Recommendations
3. Propose employment standards and other protections relevant to app-based ride hail and food delivery drivers.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has had initial consultations with ride-hail and food delivery workers, platform companies, academics and labour organizations, and conducted online survey of ride-hail and food delivery workers and the public, to identify the benefits and challenges of app-based ride-hail and food delivery work. The themes heard in the consultations and the online survey are summarized in a “What We Heard” report. Advice/Recommendations
4. Investigate the feasibility of a government-backed collective benefit fund and	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has prepared a work plan for Parliamentary Secretary Routledge. Work on the feasibility review is expected to begin later this year.

Mandate Letter Commitments December 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Janet Routledge Mandate Letter		
access to a voluntary pooled-capital pension plan for workers who do not otherwise have coverage.		
5. Review labour policy innovations in other jurisdictions related to the emerging economy and precarious work to identify trends that may inform the development of labour policy in British Columbia.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to inform the development of employment standards and other protections for app-based ride-hail and food delivery workers, the ministry has prepared a detailed scan of approaches taken in other jurisdictions with regard to these workers. • Trends and innovations in other jurisdictions will continue to be monitored in order to ensure that the information contained in the scan remains relevant and timely, and to alert BC to any other labour policy issues of interest that may arise. • The ministry proactively examines and considers innovations and trends in other jurisdictions to inform all active labour policy reviews.
6. Work with the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to develop partnerships between labour and business organizations to identify and advance in-demand programs that will ensure workers have the skills they need to participate in the new economy.	Underway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry has prepared a work plan for Parliamentary Secretary Routledge. • Requires engagement with the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills on timing and next steps.

MANDATE LETTER COMMITMENTS PRIOR TO DECEMBER 2022 TRANSITION

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
1. Continue a collaborative approach in working with representatives of workers and employers to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people and businesses.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the pandemic the Ministry worked with worker and employer representatives, other ministries and governments, WorkSafeBC and the Employments Standards Branch to develop legislation, regulations and programs to support workers and employers to address the impacts of COVID-19. This includes the development of workplace safety plans, job-protected leaves related to COVID-19 and vaccinations, and temporary lay-off extensions.
2. Continue working with the federal government on a paid sick leave program to protect workers and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC supported Canada’s initiatives for federal leave programs related to COVID-19. BC is leading the provinces and territories in establishing five days of employer-paid permanent sick leave per calendar year. The Minister and ministry continue to engage with federal, provincial and territorial colleagues on paid sick leave from a national perspective.
3. Create new consultative mechanisms to engage employer and worker representatives in consideration of any changes proposed to workplace legislation to ensure the widest possible support.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry consults with worker and employer representatives in appropriate ways on a project-by-project basis, including group and individual meetings, roundtables, on-line surveys and opportunities to make written submissions.
4. Once the minimum wage reaches \$15.20 per hour in June 2021, provide	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum wage rates in the Employment Standards Regulation will increase this year by 6.9%, which was the rate of inflation for 2022, as measured in the average change in the BC Consumer Price Index.

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
<p>predictability for employers and workers by tying the minimum wage to the rate of inflation.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase will apply to all minimum wage rates set in the Employment Standards Regulation, which include the: general minimum hourly wage; minimum daily wages for live-in home support workers and live-in camp leaders; minimum monthly wages for residential caretakers; and minimum agriculture piece rates for hand harvesting 15 specific crops. • The increase will be effective June 1, 2023, except for the increase to the minimum agricultural piece rates, which come into force January 1, 2024 to minimize disruptions and not occur during the main harvesting season. • This year’s increase ensures that minimum wages keep pace with rising costs of living, and aligns with last year’s increase of 2.8%, which was the annual change in the BC Consumer Price Index in 2021.
<p>5. Ensure that every worker has the right to join a union and bargain for fair working conditions.</p>	<p>Underway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018, the Labour Relations Code Review Panel reviewed the <i>Labour Relations Code</i> (the Code) and recommended amendments. Based on these recommendations, Bill 30, the <i>Labour Relations Code Amendment Act, 2019</i>, amended the Code to improve workers’ ability to exercise their right to join a union and bargain for fair working conditions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving the fairness of the certification process by shortening the time between certification applications and the secret ballot vote (from 10 calendar days to 5 business days), strengthening the restrictions on employer communication during an organizing campaign, and expanding the Labour Relations Board’s ability to impose certification in response to employer unfair practices; and ○ Extending union successorship rights (i.e., the right of a union to maintain its certification when a business is sold or transferred) to situations where contracted services in specified sectors are retendered to another service provider. • In 2022, Bill 10, the <i>Labour Relations Code Amendment Act, 2022</i>, built on these changes by implementing a single-step union certification system. This allows workers to join a union when a clear majority of 55% of all workers indicate they wish to do so, instead of requiring a secret ballot vote, and reduces opportunities for employer interference.

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining ways to enable gig economy workers to exercise their right to join a union and bargain for fair working conditions is under consideration as part of the precarious work strategy. Advice/Recommendations
6. Increase the number of WorkSafeBC caseworkers and increase workplace safety inspections.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022, there were 383 prevention and investigations officers budgeted at WorkSafeBC. This is a 51% increase from a decade earlier (254 officers in 2013). WorkSafeBC employs various enforcement tools to ensure compliance with the <i>Workers Compensation Act</i> and the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Regulation</i>, including orders, warning letters, stop-work orders, compliance agreements, and citations and penalties, where necessary. Enforcement resources are focused on industries and employers at greatest risk for serious injuries, fatalities, or occupational disease. In 2022, WorkSafeBC conducted approx. 53,000 workplace inspections, issued almost 34,000 orders for health and safety violations, and imposed 377 administrative penalties on employers, totalling \$7.1 million.
7. In partnership with WorkSafeBC and with support from the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, work to develop better options for chronic work-related	Underway	<p>Cabinet Confidences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WorkSafeBC is conducting a review of the chronic pain policies to improve consistency in the adjudication, management, and treatment of chronic pain. Work on this policy review will continue through 2023.

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
<p>pain, including improving pain management practices for injured workers and providing treatment on demand to those with chronic pain as a result of workplace injuries.</p>		
<p>8. Support the work of the Minister of Advanced Education to restore the compulsory trades system to improve safety and give more workers a path to apprenticeship completion.</p>	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March 2022, the new Skilled Trades BC Act was passed, which establishes a made-in-BC system to support and train apprentices and modernize the Crown agency responsible for trades training. • The Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills can address questions on the Act and compulsory trades.
<p>9. Support the Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity's work to close the gender pay gap by addressing systemic discrimination in the workplace and through new pay transparency legislation.</p>	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Labour has been supporting the Ministry of Finance in developing pay transparency legislation. The <i>Pay Transparency Act</i> (the Act) was introduced in the BC Legislative Assembly in March 2023. • This legislation is aimed at closing the gender pay gap by requiring employers of a certain size to report on their employees' pay on the basis of gender. Starting in November 2023, BC employers will gradually be required to publicly post reports on their gender pay gap. This requirement will apply to employers as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nov. 1, 2023: BC Public Service Agency and Crown corporations with more than 1,000 employees (ICBC, BC Hydro, WorkSafeBC, BC Housing, BC Lottery Corporation and BC Transit). ○ Nov. 1, 2024: all employers with 1,000 employees or more ○ Nov. 1, 2025: all employers with 300 employees or more

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nov. 1, 2026: all employers with 50 employees or more ● The Act also requires employers to include an expected pay range in job postings and prohibits employers from asking job applicants for pay history information and retaliating against employees who disclose their pay to co-workers or potential job applicants. ● Regulations are being developed for the fall that will provide employers with more details about how they will be required to report pay information.
10. Support the work of the Minister of Agriculture and Food to continue improving working conditions for all workers including temporary foreign workers and temporary domestic workers working in farming communities.	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On January 1, 2023, minimum piece rates for agriculture workers were increased by 2.8%, which was the rate of inflation for 2021, as measured in the average change in the BC Consumer Price Index. ● Effective January 1, 2024, minimum piece rates for agriculture workers will increase by 6.9%, which was the rate of inflation for 2022, as measured in the average change in the BC Consumer Price Index. The changes increase minimum wages paid to hand-harvesters of 15 crops specified in the Employment Standards Regulation. ● The Ministry continues to engage with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food as part of the review of the piece rate system, including options to change or repeal existing provisions. ● The Ministry remains engaged with the Ministry Agriculture and Food on potential ways in which the Ministry of Labour can support other improvements for farm workers.
11. Support the Parliamentary Secretary for Rural and Regional Development to establish a Worker Training and Job Opportunity Office to maximize the impact of our economic recovery plan for workers and communities during	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2022 mandate letter for the Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development does not include this item nor require further progress to be made on previous mandate letter items. The mandate letter does, however, include direction to “Support the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills and engage with sector partners to continue to expand access to skills training for people in rural, remote, and First Nations communities.” ● Related questions should be referred to the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

Mandate Letter Commitments February 2022	Completed or Underway	Status
Minister Harry Bains Mandate Letter		
COVID-19 and beyond – with a focus on retraining workers, supporting resource communities facing job loss, developing higher value goods, and accessing new global markets and opportunities for BC products.		

Mandate Letter Commitments November 2020	Completed or Underway	Status
Parliamentary Secretary Adam Walker Mandate Letter		
1. Work with labour and business organizations to develop a precarious work strategy that reflects modern workplaces' diverse needs and unique situations.	Completed (PS Walker's work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry implemented a number of initiatives over the past five years as part of the precarious work strategy, including increasing the minimum wage, improved workers' compensation benefits and support for workers, workplace safety measures, enhanced employment standards and access to the Employment Standards Branch, and improved access to collective bargaining. • Parliamentary Secretary Walker began the Ministry's work to propose employment standards and other protections for app-based ride-hail and food delivery workers (see next item). • Parliamentary Secretary Adam Walker's work on this priority is complete, as he is no longer Parliamentary Secretary with the Ministry of Labour.

Mandate Letter Commitments November 2020	Completed or Underway	Status
Parliamentary Secretary Adam Walker Mandate Letter		
<p>2. As part of the precarious work strategy, propose employment standards targeted to precarious and gig economy workers, and investigate the feasibility of a government-backed collective benefit fund and access to a voluntary pooled-capital pension plan for workers who do not otherwise have coverage.</p>	<p>Completed (PS Walker’s work)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry began its review of employment standards for gig workers with an initial focus on app-based ride-hail and food delivery workers. • Parliamentary Secretary Walker led the initial consultations with app-based ride-hail and food delivery workers, platform companies, academics and labour organizations, as well as an online survey of ride-hail and food delivery workers and the public, to identify the benefits and challenges of app-based ride-hail and food delivery work. • Parliamentary Secretary Adam Walker’s work on this priority is complete, as he is no longer Parliamentary Secretary with the Ministry of Labour. • Advice/Recommendations



December 7, 2022

Honourable Harry Bains
Minister of Labour
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Bains:

Thank you for agreeing to continue to serve as Minister of Labour. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

A strong, sustainable, and inclusive economy in British Columbia is impossible without a strong and resilient workforce where people are the core focus. Part of ensuring a resilient workforce is guaranteeing the rights of workers to organize to ensure safe and fair workplaces, and setting baseline rights guarantees for workers, including a fair minimum wage, a right to stay home if you're sick, and decent benefits if you're injured on the job.

Our province is growing at historic rates as people move here for new opportunities. Our government must continue to support skills training for new arrivals as we respond to rural and urban community growth across the province with improved infrastructure and amenities like schools, roads, transit, and hospitals.

We will need more trained and efficient workers to deliver public services of the high quality British Columbians rightly expect. Private sector employers are prioritizing skills training, too, as they look for workers to respond to the increasing demand for British Columbia's services and products.

All these challenges demand strongly balanced partnerships and relationships between labour, government, and business to ensure our province remains a great place to live.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Implementing paid sick leave for all workers in British Columbia, allowing people to stay home when sick in order to protect their co-workers and the public and prevent spread of illness in workplaces.

- Raising the minimum wage to help lift more people out of poverty, make life more affordable, and build a strong economy for British Columbia.
- Introducing the single-step certification to protect a worker's right to join a union and bargain collectively for workplace safety, compensation, and benefits.
- Strengthening employment standards to better protect young people in the workplace and preventing hazardous work.
- Improving the workers' compensation system by protecting benefits from inflation, protecting injured workers' right to return to work, and creating a new Fair Practices Office, while maintaining stable premiums for employers.

As you continue to make progress on items in your previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Work to improve the timeliness of employment standards dispute resolution.
- Continue engaging with affected parties on implementation of the recommendations of the Industrial Inquiry Commission regarding Forest Industry Successorship.
- Work with WorkSafeBC to ensure meaningful programs are in place to support the return of injured workers to their workplaces.
- Support WorkSafeBC, with involvement of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, to develop better options for chronic work-related pain, including improving pain management practices for injured workers and providing treatment on demand to those with chronic pain as a result of workplace injuries.
- Ensure our labour law is keeping up with modern workplaces through the upcoming review of the Labour Code, providing stable labour relations and supporting the exercise of collective bargaining rights.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Labour. You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on the priorities outlined in the mandate letter issued to them.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action

and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Eby", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

David Eby, KC
Premier



February 25, 2022

Honourable Harry Bains
Minister of Labour
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Bains:

Thank you for agreeing to serve British Columbians as Minister of Labour.

In this past year, as a member of Cabinet, your work has contributed to this government's efforts to support British Columbians as they face the impacts of COVID-19. People throughout the province continue to work together to stay safe and rebuild their lives and communities from the effects of the pandemic. Our government remains committed to getting through the pandemic and its aftereffects by building on this resilience and focusing on what matters most to people.

British Columbians voted for a government focused on their priorities: providing better health care for people and families, delivering affordability and security in our communities, and investing in good jobs and livelihoods in a clean-energy future.

I expect you –with support of your ministry – to focus on the commitments detailed in our platform, *Working for You*, along with the following foundational principles:

- **Putting people first:** Since 2017, our government has focused on making decisions to meet people's needs. That focus drove our work in our first term and will continue to be our priority. British Columbians are counting on the government to keep them safe and to build an economic recovery that works for everyone, not just those at the top. Keeping people at the centre of everything we do means protecting and enhancing the public services people rely on and working to make life more affordable for everyone.

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- **Lasting and meaningful reconciliation:** Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility for us all. The unanimous passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was a significant step forward in this journey. True reconciliation will take time and ongoing commitment to work with Indigenous peoples as they move toward self-determination. Our government – and every ministry – must remain focused on creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to be full partners in our economy and providing a clear and sustainable path for everyone to work toward lasting reconciliation.
- **Equity and anti-racism:** Our province's history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government, and their lives. Our government has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every ministry has a role in this work. While our caucus elected a record number of women, more work remains to address gender equity. Delivering on our commitments to address racial discrimination will require a commitment by all of government to ensure increased IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) representation within the public service, including in government appointments. Our efforts to address systemic discrimination must also inform policy and budget decisions by reviewing all decisions through a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens.
- **A better future through fighting climate change:** In 2018, our government launched our CleanBC climate action plan. CleanBC puts British Columbia on the path to a cleaner, better future by building a low-carbon economy with new clean-energy jobs and opportunities, protecting our air, land and water and supporting communities to prepare for climate impacts. It is every Minister's responsibility to ensure your ministry's work continues to achieve CleanBC's goals.
- **A strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone:** We will continue our work to support British Columbians through the pandemic and the economic recovery by investing in health care, getting people back to work, helping businesses and communities, and building the clean, innovative economy of the future. Our plan will train the workforce of tomorrow, help businesses hire and grow and invest in the infrastructure needed to build our province.

The pandemic has reminded us that we're strongest when we work together. Delivering on our commitments to people will require a coordinated effort with your cabinet and caucus colleagues, supported by the skilled professionals in the public service. You will also support your cabinet colleagues to do their work, particularly where commitments cross ministry lines.

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British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the broader public good despite their partisan perspectives. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas, regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships through public and stakeholder engagement plans that connect with people to incorporate their perspectives early in the policy development process. These plans must include measurable outcomes and ensure active dialogue and ongoing outreach in your ministry's actions and priorities.

Over the course of our mandate, I expect you will make progress on the following items:

- Continue a collaborative approach in working with representatives of workers and employers to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people and businesses.
- Continue working with the federal government on a paid sick leave program to protect workers and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.
- Create new consultative mechanisms to engage employer and worker representatives in consideration of any changes proposed to workplace legislation to ensure the widest possible support.
- Once the minimum wage reaches \$15.20 per hour in June 2021, provide predictability for employers and workers by tying the minimum wage to the rate of inflation.
- Ensure that every worker has the right to join a union and bargain for fair working conditions.
- Increase the number of WorkSafeBC caseworkers and increase workplace safety inspections.
- In partnership with WorkSafeBC and with support from the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, work to develop better options for chronic work-related pain, including improving pain management practices for injured workers and providing treatment on demand to those with chronic pain as a result of workplace injuries.
- Support the work of the Minister of Advanced Education to restore the compulsory trades system to improve safety and give more workers a path to apprenticeship completion.

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- Support the Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity's work to close the gender pay gap by addressing systemic discrimination in the workplace and through new pay transparency legislation.
- Support the work of the Minister of Agriculture and Food to continue improving working conditions for all workers including temporary foreign workers and temporary domestic workers working in farming communities.
- Support the Parliamentary Secretary for Rural and Regional Development to establish a Worker Training and Job Opportunity Office to maximize the impact of our economic recovery plan for workers and communities during COVID-19 and beyond – with a focus on retraining workers, supporting resource communities facing job loss, developing higher value goods, and accessing new global markets and opportunities for BC products.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for the New Economy. You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on the following priorities, outlined in the mandate letter issued to them:

- Work with labour and business organizations to develop a precarious work strategy that reflects modern workplaces' diverse needs and unique situations.
- As part of the precarious work strategy, propose employment standards targeted to precarious and gig economy workers, and investigate the feasibility of a government-backed collective benefit fund and access to a voluntary pooled-capital pension plan for workers who do not otherwise have coverage.

Our work as a government must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated in this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual cabinet and Treasury Board oversight. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by cabinet.

All cabinet members are expected to review, understand and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* and conduct themselves with the highest level of integrity. As a minister of the Crown, your conduct will reflect not only on you, but on cabinet and our government.

You are responsible for providing strong, professional, and ethical leadership within cabinet and your ministry. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your

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deputy minister and the public servants under their direction who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. You must ensure your minister's office meets the highest standards for integrity and provides a respectful and rewarding environment for all staff.

My commitment to all British Columbians is to do my level best to make sure people's lives are better, safer, and more affordable. I believe the challenges we face can and will be overcome by working together. By way of this letter, I am expressing my faith that people can expect the same commitment from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Horgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Horgan
Premier



December 7, 2022

Janet Routledge, MLA
Parliamentary Secretary for Labour
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Parliamentary Secretary Routledge:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Parliamentary Secretary for Labour. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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