

# New child care legislation to improve services for children and families <sup>[1]</sup>

Media Release

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New legislation will be introduced in the House of Assembly today to modernize the current legislation for child care services in Newfoundland and Labrador, while ensuring the continuation of quality, safe child care across the province.

"Our government is focused on providing regulated child care services throughout the province that are built on three key pillars - quality, sufficiency and affordability. Those are the building blocks of our 10-year child care strategy Caring For Our Future, which ensures that parents who choose regulated child care in Newfoundland and Labrador will have access to high quality, affordable services. Quality programming in both centre-based and family child care is fundamental to an effective system of regulated child care and that programming must be supported through an appropriate legislative framework. Our new modernized, strengthened legislation reflects current knowledge in the child care field, streamlines policies and processes, increases transparency and provides flexibility for licensees."

- The Honourable Susan Sullivan, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

There are six key differences in the new act from the existing legislation. They are:

- The definitions of a "child care service" and a "child care provider" have been clarified and strengthened to outline specific exemptions to each definition;
- The capacity limit on a regulated child care licence has been removed which allows licensees to determine the scope of their service but does not impact quality of service for children;
- An appeals process for a licensing decision has been defined;
- The Minister, rather than the Lieutenant Governor in Council, will now appoint the Provincial Director of Child Care. The normal public service competition process will apply to that position;
- Regional managers will not be appointed as inspectors, providing transparency in the inspection process; and
- A statutory review will be required every five years, including a public consultation.

"Our commitment to our children is clear - no more so than in the creation of a new department focused on the complete continuum of learning from infancy to high school. Our new legislation also recognizes the importance of early learning, and through the six key changes we will modernize our legislation and bring it in line with best practices throughout the country with a clear focus on providing safe, quality care for our children."

- Minister Sullivan

To enhance the quality, accessibility, and affordability of regulated child care services for families with young children, Budget 2014 allocated an additional investment of \$11.4 million for child care, bringing the total budget to approximately \$42.5 million. This funding will focus on continuing to implement the 10-year child care strategy, Caring For Our Future. As of June 2014, there were 7,815 regulated child care spaces throughout the province, which is almost a 70 per cent increase since 2003.

**Region:** Newfoundland <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** spaces <sup>[3]</sup>

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