

CLR-INFO

International Women's Day 2023



The Government of Canada's theme for International Women's Day (IWD) 2023 is **Every Woman Counts**.

It's a reminder that all women, from all ages and walks of life, have a place in every aspect of Canadian society, including in the economic, social and democratic spheres.

Check out the [statement](#) and [video](#) from Marci Ien, the federal Minister for Women and Gender Equality and

Youth, to mark International Women's Day.

Provincial News

B.C. provincial budget 2023

BC Budget 2023 was released on February 28. The provincial government is projecting a more than \$4 billion deficit in a 2023-2024 budget, with \$81.2 billion of total spending, with significant priorities put on healthcare, affordability measures, important infrastructure, social and community initiatives. Capital spending on critical infrastructure, such as schools, transit, roads and hospitals, will reach a record \$37.5 billion.

The provincial Budget assumes modest topline GDP growth of 0.4% in 2023 and 1.5% in 2024. On a per capita basis, GDP growth is set to decline by 2.0% and 0.4% over the next two years.

Provincial revenues are projected to fall in 2023/24 as global growth moderates and commodity prices retreat from super-charged levels.

Although the Budget anticipates a modest rise in spending, the plan follows the strong three-year rise in provincial expenditures.

The government has introduced a fiscally stimulative Budget that proposes an operating deficit of \$4.2 billion.

Budget 2023 announced the government's plan to reform provincial carbon pricing. In addition to increasing the tax by \$15/tonne, the government plans to adopt an output-based pricing system (OBPS) for

large industrial operations in the province, which will likely be similar to the system previously implemented by the Government of Canada.

While B.C. business groups are criticizing some significant shortfalls in the B.C. Budget 2023, specifically calling out the Budget's lack of addressing increasing cost pressures facing businesses and the province's competitiveness, some positive business community-oriented measures include:

- \$77 million towards increased investments to address delays in permitting approval in the natural resource sectors.
- Increased supports to address significant societal issues that have a direct impact on business, including housing, homelessness and mental health.
- \$58 million directed towards speeding up foreign credential recognition for qualified professionals.

Learn more:

To read "Full Analysis: BC Budget 2023", prepared by Business Council of British Columbia, visit.

B.C. budget disappoints business groups

Legislation will help close B.C.'s gender pay gap



New pay transparency legislation was introduced March 7, 2023, to help close the gender pay gap in B.C.

Once the legislation is passed, as of Nov. 1, 2023, all employers will be required to include wage or salary ranges on all publicly advertised jobs. In addition, as soon as the legislation is in force, B.C. employers will not be able to ask prospective employees for pay history information or punish employees who disclose their pay to co-workers or potential job applicants – actions known to

contribute to the gender pay gap.

Each year by June 1, the Ministry of Finance will publish an annual report that will serve as centralized reporting of gender pay in British Columbia.

Learn More:

To view Statistics Canada gender wage stats for 2022, visit.

Toxic drugs continue to take lives of British Columbians

Preliminary reporting released by the BC Coroners Service shows that the toxic, unregulated drug supply claimed the lives of at least 211 British Columbians in January, with the total number of deaths surpassing 200 for the eighth time in the past 16 months.

The number of suspected illicit drug toxicity related deaths in January equates to an average of about 6.8 lives lost per day. Consistent with BC Coroners Service reporting throughout the nearly seven-year-old public-health emergency, seven out of every 10 decedents was between 30 and 59, and nearly 80% were male.

At least 11,195 deaths have been caused by illicit drug toxicity since the public-health emergency was first declared in April 2016. There continues to be no evidence that prescribed safe supply is contributing to illicit drug deaths.

Learn More:

Illicit drug overdose death [report](#) (data until Jan. 31, 2023).

[B.C. building historic treatment, recovery services for people struggling with addiction](#)



Budget 2023 sets out more than \$1 billion in new funding over the next three years to ensure that people living with mental health or addiction can find and stay connected to the care they need.

As part of this funding, to support people struggling with addiction and into recovery, the Province is investing \$586 million into the health-care system to add more treatment and recovery services, including 195 treatment and recovery beds throughout B.C.

In addition, using the successful Red Fish Healing Centre as a model, supports for people with concurrent mental-health and addiction challenges will be expanded to regional locations throughout the province.

Learn More:

Learn about [A Pathway to Hope](#), government’s vision for mental-health and addictions care in B.C.

Labour and Economy

[The Bank of Canada holds rates at 4.5%](#)



The Bank of Canada (BoC) announced Wednesday it would hold its key overnight rate at 4.5% after eight consecutive interest rate increases and experts said the pause could last throughout 2023 as the bank watches the economy responds to its policy moves so far.

BoC highlighted the still-tight labour market in its Wednesday statement on the rate decision, and referenced falling inflation that at 5.9% still sits well above the central bank’s 2% target.

Statistics Canada data on February’s employment numbers and inflation are expected in the coming weeks, and those numbers will be “relatively crucial in terms of where we go next,” said Doug Porter, chief economist of BMO Financial Group. [Read more.](#)

Health & Safety

[Supporting employees with mental health injuries – Message from WorkSafeBC](#)

Last October, WorkSafeBC launched a multi-phased ‘Stay Connected’ outreach campaign to employers about the pivotal role they play in return-to-work (RTW) outcomes.

On March 15, WorkSafeBC will be hosting the new webinar as part of the Stay Connected series: “Supporting employees with mental health injuries”, with guest speaker Stéphane Grenier. This session will

help employers better understand how to support workers with mental health injuries in their recovery and return to work.

Please, find more details on [the registration webpage](#).

If you would like to watch a previous session or are seeking more details on the Stay Connected series, visit [the Stay connected series page](#).

[Amendments to Occupational Health and Safety Regulation in effect March 1, 2023](#)

New and revised regulatory requirements for crane misadventure and zone-limiting devices in tower cranes are now in effect.

Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation took effect on March 1, 2023.

These amendments affect the following parts:

- [Part 14, Cranes and Hoists](#)
- [Part 19, Electrical Safety](#)

Housekeeping changes were also made to OHS Policy item [R19.24-1](#) and OHS Guideline [G19.24.1](#).

For more information on the amendments, please see [Regulatory amendment: A primer on crane misadventure and zone-limiting devices in tower cranes](#).

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Metro Vancouver adopts new growth strategy](#)



Metro Vancouver has adopted an updated regional growth strategy to shape the region for the next three decades.

[Metro 2050](#) the collective vision for how projected growth will be managed in the region to support the creation of complete, connected, and resilient communities. It will also protect important lands from development and support the efficient provision of urban infrastructure like transit and utilities.

Metro 2050 is an update of the 2040 plan and addresses climate change, affordable housing concerns, and recent growth projections, and seeks to fully align with Transport 2050, the region's transportation strategy. It includes a series of policy improvements based on learnings over the past 10 years.

[Upgraded wastewater plant will better protect people, environment](#)



The Province is providing Metro Vancouver with funding to upgrade the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant in Richmond, ensuring it can meet the demands of the growing population, while protecting the health of people and the environment.

\$250 million, provided by the Province, will cover one-third of the total cost of Phase 1 of the upgrade project. Funds will support facility upgrades that will help improve wastewater capacity and

quality for more than 750,000 residents, address seismic resiliency, and protect residents' health and the Fraser River's ecosystem.

The upgrades must meet federal regulatory requirements. Phase 1 is underway and is scheduled to conclude in 2026.



Stay safe,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO



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