



Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2022 Report—Volume 1

Chapter 3: 3sHealth—Managing Disability Claims

Provincial Auditor Tara Clemett reports that 3sHealth has effective processes to manage healthcare disability claims overall, but needs to improve in a few areas, including submitting claim applications to adjudicators more quickly (delays ranged from 4–11 days); meeting expected timelines to complete appeal reviews (i.e., within 30 days) or documenting reasons for delays; centrally tracking and analyzing complaints from disability plan members; and enhancing written reports to senior management and to the Board about disability claim management processes (e.g., whether appeals reviewed within 30 days and, if not, why not).

Effective processes to manage disability claims can help to minimize delays in healthcare workers receiving the appropriate support and treatment needed to improve their mental and physical health, and return to work.

- **Disability claims increasing:** More than 3,600 disability claims between January and October 2021 compared to over 3,200 in 2020
- **Majority of claims accepted:** 128 claims (4%) denied between January and October 2021
- 68 appeals on denied claims in 2020, with 35 claim decisions overturned after appeal
- **80% of appeal decisions made later** than the expected 30 days

Chapter 4: Public Service Commission—Advancing Workplace Diversity and Inclusion in Ministries

The Public Service Commission is the central human resources agency for 17 government ministries—over 11,000 employees work across these ministries. Its Talent Branch within the Centres of Excellence Division leads its work on advancing workplace diversity and inclusion. At January 2022, the Branch had about 25 employees working closely with all ministries to support workplace diversity and inclusion. The percentage of employees in ministries who self-declare as disabled, Indigenous, or racialized (e.g., visible minority) are below the Commission’s benchmarks (as of September 2021).

The Commission set up a framework for collaborating with ministries to develop diversity and inclusion policies, goals, and strategies. However, the Commission needs to improve its monitoring of whether ministries meet their established goals and, if not meeting these goals, support them in devising strategies and executing plans to advance diverse and inclusive workplaces. The Commission can do this by monitoring ministries’ inclusion plans and progress reports.

Provincial Auditor Tara Clemett reports that the Commission did not receive 13 of 17 ministry diversity and inclusion plans for 2021–22 (nine ministries did not have finalized plans). The Commission also needs to establish clear indicators, analyze relevant data, and then report progress toward achieving cross-ministerial diversity and inclusion goals. Finally, the Commission needs to modernize its policies and guidance for ministry managers to include all key diversity and inclusion concepts; its Employment Equity Policy was last revised in August 2000. Effective processes for advancing workplace diversity and inclusion can help the Commission support ministries to better innovate, problem solve, and provide services to the public.

Chapter 5: Saskatchewan Health Authority—Purchasing Goods and Services

The Saskatchewan Health Authority purchases goods and services related to the delivery of health services. It purchases capital assets (e.g., hospital beds, buildings), goods (e.g., medical supplies, food, prosthetics), and services (e.g., maintenance) to support the delivery of health services each year. In 2020–21, the Authority purchased approximately \$483 million in goods and services directly, which included about \$170 million in capital assets.

Provincial Auditor Tara Clemett reports that the Authority needs a more centralized approach for purchasing goods and services over \$5,000 as it could not always provide support (e.g., purchase orders, invoices, tender evaluations) for purchases made. Centralizing purchasing would also support better monitoring of staff compliance with its purchasing policies. The Saskatchewan Health Authority needs to:



- Follow its policies when purchasing goods or services over \$5,000 through single or sole source purchasing methods, including when using credit cards
- When tendering, consistently evaluate suppliers, obtain conflict of interest declarations from staff involved, and properly communicate supplier award decisions
- Properly authorize the initiation of purchases and the resulting contracts with suppliers
- Establish a process to assess and track supplier performance

Ineffective purchasing processes increase the risk of the Authority not selecting the most suitable supplier or receiving the best value, and obtaining goods or services that inadequately serve the Authority’s needs or specifications. In addition, unfair, non-transparent, or biased purchases, whether perceived or real, could damage the Authority’s reputation.

The full Provincial Auditor’s *2022 Report – Volume 1* available online at auditor.sk.ca.

The Provincial Auditor is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Office promotes accountability and better management by providing Legislators and the public with an independent assessment of the government’s use of public resources.

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Additional issues highlighted in the **Provincial Auditor’s 2022 Report – Volume 1** include:

- Ch. 6: Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority—Regulating Locally Manufactured Craft Alcohol
- Ch. 7: Saskatchewan Workers’ Compensation Board—Administering Psychological Injury Claims
- Ch. 8 Sun West School Division No. 207—Supporting Students’ Completion of Grades 10–12 Distance Education Courses

Accompanying news releases give further details regarding these key topics.

- The Authority had 615 supplier contracts at December 1, 2021
- Purchases over \$75,000 go through a central purchasing department and get posted on the SaskTenders website
- 75% of public tenders did not have award details posted on SaskTenders as required
- **34 out of 38 sole or single source purchases tested not justified**