



AUDIT AT A GLANCE

Performance Audit of Ministry of Justice and Attorney General: Providing Transition Spaces for Individuals Leaving Interpersonal Violence

Why It Matters

Saskatchewan had one of the highest rates of intimate partner violence in Canada. The Ministry of Justice and Attorney General needs effective processes to provide transition spaces for individuals leaving interpersonal violence through transition and second-stage housing.

Why We Did This Audit

Interpersonal violence generates high costs to human-service systems, workplaces, and families, and has serious health and social impacts on those directly involved.

Providing transition housing helps ensure survivors of interpersonal violence can access safe spaces and appropriate support services, retain or access employment, have access to childcare, and live free from abuse.



Key Facts and Figures

- Interpersonal violence is the intentional and unlawful use of physical force or power that may result in injury, death, psychological harm, or deprivation.
- Transition houses provide short-term emergency safe shelter for up to 90 days and 24/7 support services. Second-stage houses provide shelter for up to two years with intervention and counselling support services.
- The Ministry provided 12 transition houses \$7.4 million and seven second-stage houses \$328,000 in 2023–24.
- In 2023–24, Ministry funding to transition houses averaged \$34,895 per space and \$4,289 per survivor served.
- Funding levels were not based on the extent of survivors served. For example, two Ministry-funded transition houses in different areas of Saskatchewan with equal bed numbers had funding differ by over \$200,000 in 2024–25.



What We Found

The Ministry of Justice and Attorney General has established processes to license and fund transition houses in Saskatchewan; however, we found funding levels differed between transition houses across the province, and the Ministry could not explain why.

We found this funding not based on the number of survivors of interpersonal violence served.



We Made Six Recommendations

The Ministry of Justice and Attorney General needs to:

- Periodically inspect transition houses to assess whether they meet established requirements. While the Ministry expects transition house staff to receive certain training throughout the year (i.e., trauma-informed care) as outlined in funding agreements, we found only one of 12 transition houses reported completing trauma-informed training.
- Verify periodic criminal record checks exist for staff working in transition and second-stage houses. We found one instance where an employee at a transition house did not have a criminal record check on file.
- Determine, analyze, and report key performance information (e.g., number of individuals turned away each month) from transition houses to senior management to help inform strategies that address performance shortfalls. Our analysis of turn-away rates at the Ministry-funded transition houses found 18% of turn-aways that occurred between April 2023 and March 2024 resulted from capacity issues.
- Improve access to its licensing and funding process for potential new transition house operators. Currently, the Ministry relies on potential applicants contacting either the Ministry directly or referred to the Ministry based on inquiries made to other government agencies.