



# THE STATE OF SERVICE

March 2025

Service  
Canada 

## **The State of Service**

Large print, braille, MP3 (audio), e-text and DAISY formats are available on demand by ordering online or calling 1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232). If you use a teletypewriter (TTY), call 1-800-926-9105.

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, 2025

For information regarding reproduction rights: [droitdauteur.copyright@HRSDC-RHDCC.gc.ca](mailto:droitdauteur.copyright@HRSDC-RHDCC.gc.ca).

PDF

Cat. No.: SG1-2E-PDF

ISSN: 2819-098X



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>3</b>	Foreword by Minister of Citizens' Services, the Honourable Terry Beech
<b>9</b>	Passport Program
<b>17</b>	Canadian Dental Care Plan
<b>22</b>	Employment Insurance Program
<b>27</b>	Social Insurance Number Program
<b>32</b>	Efficient, Timely, and Accessible Service Delivery Across Government



# FOREWORD

## BY MINISTER OF CITIZENS' SERVICES, THE HONOURABLE TERRY BEECH

Our government created the Citizens' Services portfolio in 2023 to champion service delivery excellence and to improve government efficiency.

This State of Service report was drafted to communicate how we are accomplishing this mandate and to update Canadians on some of our biggest programs, including the Passport Program, the Canadian Dental Care Plan, Employment Insurance, Benefits Delivery Modernization and the Social Insurance Number program, as well as a selection of other recent service improvements across the Government.

Accessing government services should be easy. You should not have to reintroduce yourself to the Government every time you access a new service, and you certainly should not have to wait in line. Our approach focuses on making this a reality, on saving you time and money and on making the Government more efficient.

### **Time is money.**

A digital-first service approach empowers Canadians to access government services from anywhere and at any time. **This means you will be able to apply for a passport from anywhere that has access to the internet**



**or mobile data.** With the Government committed to having ubiquitous broadband access available across Canada by 2030, government services will literally come to you. This means that families will save time and money by not having to make a trip to a service site, take time off work, or pay for parking or child care. As more Canadians choose to access services online, those who prefer in-person services will have shorter lines as well. For example, **we expect that the upcoming SIN@Entry program will cut lines in a number of Service Canada offices by 50% or more.**

Digitalization of services and modernization of government infrastructure also means that we will be empowered to provide more transparent reporting to Canadians. By publicly sharing efficiency metrics, we can create a similar culture of innovation and continuous improvement. I expect future reports to include metrics such as total cost per passport processed or total time that Canadians have spent on hold. We get what we measure, and at a time when Canadians expect their government to provide services in a simple and efficient manner, these reports can shine light on the areas that are improving and on the areas that require significant changes or investment.

In addition, we have begun a transition away from project management and toward product management. Focusing on the client's user experience means continuously receiving, assessing and implementing feedback to improve our services. This is true for both front-end services that are directly accessed by Canadians, but also for back-end services and infrastructure that make our public servants more productive in executing their duties. **This could mean using artificial intelligence to triage calls when you would otherwise be waiting on hold (front-end) or to allow caseworkers to more easily navigate our most complex files (back-end).**

This approach will also increase the quality of our data and allow us to give more real-time information to Canadians. You will not just be able to apply for your passport renewal online, you will be able to monitor its status online until it arrives



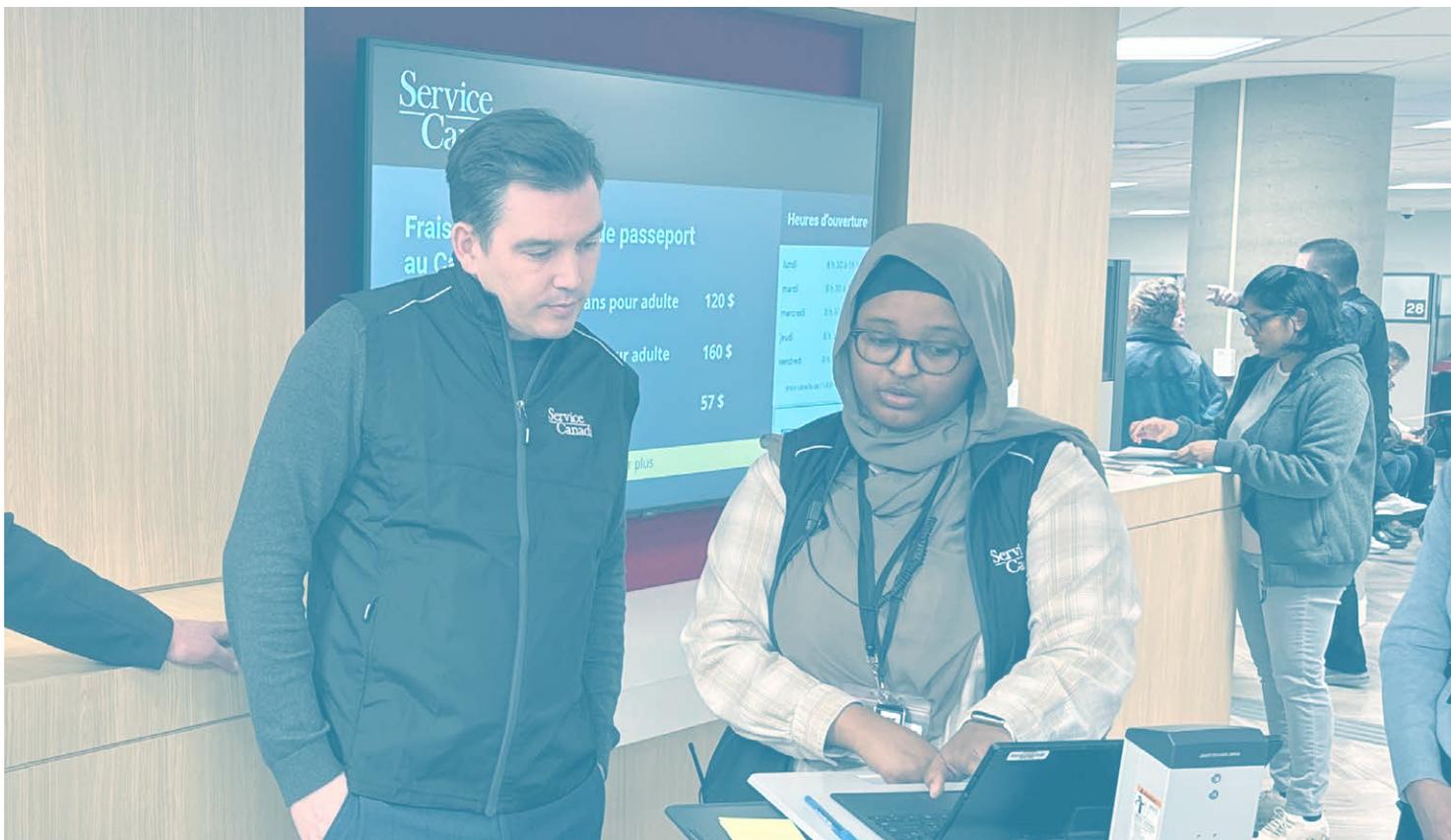
in your mailbox. In fact, the status tracker has already been live for over a year, giving millions of applicants a clear view of the progress of their applications without speaking to an officer. Digitalization validates applications in real time, preventing errors in the application while also eliminating errors due to misreading someone's handwriting. We are so confident in this approach that we will introduce a new policy that guarantees **your passport will be processed within 30 business days—or it will be free.**

Online services require us to provide digital credentials so that you can access your services, benefits and data in a private and secure way. These credentials will be interoperable with existing programs provided by provincial governments such as British Columbia and Alberta. In fact,

you can already use these credentials to access your tax account or renew your auto insurance. I personally save two hours every year by not having to renew my auto insurance in person. Now imagine the productivity gains and cost savings if that same approach is available to millions of Canadians across hundreds of services.

**We're talking billions of dollars, we're talking billions of hours, we're talking better services, and all at a lower cost to taxpayers.**

A digital-first approach also enables the automation of simple and complex tasks across multiple levels of government. If you have ever been married or divorced, changed your name, had a child, attended university, purchased a home, started a business, applied for a passport, retired, or had a family member pass away, you



will have encountered the extraordinary complexity of government. **A “tell us once” approach means that if you change your address, your name or other vital information, you will not have to re-report that information to every order of government and department within.** Instead, you will fill out a simple online form, and we will ensure that the complexity of government is handled seamlessly on the back-end.

In addition, we will use this user-centric approach to simplify how Canadians access new services. I asked the Canadian Digital Service to mock up what the online application for the Canadian Dental Care Plan would look like if we used digital credentials. The benefits were immediately obvious. **It reduced the application time from 8 minutes to 30 seconds, improved program integrity, and significantly reduced the cost and potential for errors.**

In the future, we will be able to provide a client-centric dashboard that will transparently show every individual Canadian the entirety of their interactions with the federal government, including programs and services for which they could qualify. **This is your data, you own it, and you should be able to see it and control it as you see fit.** This same approach can easily apply to businesses, non-profits and other government stakeholders as well.

Our plan is built on five pillars:

### 1. **Deliver the most efficient, timely and accessible services in Canadian history**

- We intend to give Canadians the option to never have to stand in line or wait on hold with their government ever again. We will establish predictable and transparent processing times and place top priority on respecting Canadians’ time and money when accessing services.

### 2. **Placing user experience and productivity at the centre of government services**

- We will design processes and services that are simple to understand and to access. This includes not just simplifying the process, but simplifying policy as well. We will collect feedback in real time and shift toward an approach of continuous improvement.

### 3. **Lowering costs and maximizing value for Canadians**

- We started by focusing on improving service standards across the Government, but it became obvious very quickly that improvements in efficiency and productivity also reduce costs. We will report not just on service standards but on the cost of providing those services; we will do so in a transparent way that will incentivize future governments to focus on improving both metrics simultaneously.

#### 4. Building a digital-first service that includes scalable, secure and reliable infrastructure

- Digital services reduce errors and cost while improving services. They also allow us to leverage digital technology such as robotic process automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Systems must be scalable to prevent the need for costly workarounds, they must be secure to protect our data and integrity, and they must be reliable to minimize down time.

#### 5. Empowering a culture of service and excellence in the public service

- We are blessed to have talented public servants working across the Government. Often the solutions we are developing come from front-line workers who provide these services every day. We need to reduce the distance between policy development and practical implementation. We need to put ourselves in the shoes of clients and ensure their user journey is flawless from start to finish. We need to break down silos between government departments and share information more easily to improve client service. We must also strengthen internal technical capacity and collaboration within the Government and reduce our dependence on outside technological service providers.

We have demonstrated the Government's ability to take on big projects and address big problems. This includes rolling out the largest benefit in Canadian history (the Canadian Dental Care Plan) in record time and successfully delivering the country's largest and most technically sophisticated IT-enabled project, the Benefits Delivery Modernization Programme.

**Citizens' Services is directly responsible for delivering programs and benefits from across the Government—representing 39% of the annual federal budget and \$1.5 trillion in payments over the next decade.**

Progress can't happen without innovation, but it's rare that innovation happens without encountering obstacles. Building trust in the Government's ability to deliver services in a reliable, transparent and cost-effective manner is the only way forward. This means being transparent about our progress, especially if things go wrong.



In this report, we are focusing on service delivery achievements that have a direct impact on the client experience. These achievements also help tell the story of the new direction our government is taking in delivering services to Canadians.

So far, more than 3.3 million Canadians have successfully applied for the Canadian Dental Care Plan, and over 1.5 million Canadians have already seen a dentist. This year, we will launch the Canada Disability Benefit application and deliver a record number of passports. We will roll out Old Age Security to more than 7.4 million Canadian seniors on our new Benefits Delivery Modernization Programme

and launch our first Employment Insurance product on the new system as well. These are just a few of the significant milestones that Citizens' Services has been working on since becoming a new ministry in July of 2023.

This new approach to government services is the key to Canada becoming the most efficient and most user-friendly government in the world. Delivering these services to Canadians will take time, investment and focus, but we are up to the task, and we have already started.



**The Honourable Terry Beech**  
Minister of Citizens' Services





## PASSPORT PROGRAM

The Canadian passport is internationally recognized and respected. It allows Canadians to have safe, secure and visa-free access to over 180 countries. Service Canada provides passport services to Canadians in Canada through the Passport Program, on behalf of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.



The Government of Canada interacts with millions of people each day through the delivery of programs and services. To maintain Canadians' trust, the Government must meet their expectations by delivering timely and high-quality services. Complex applications, limited service points and lack of internet access have often prevented Canadians from getting the support they need—even more so for vulnerable and marginalized groups as well as northern, rural and remote communities.

Nowhere has this been more apparent than the Passport Program. In 2013, the Government of Canada introduced the first generation of ePassport to clients, representing a large step forward in the security and integrity of the Canadian travel document. This update included not only a redesigned passport,



but the introduction of the printing technology infrastructure required to personalize an ePassport.

While the old passport application processing system was stable, it relied heavily on manual processes, which made workload management a challenge.

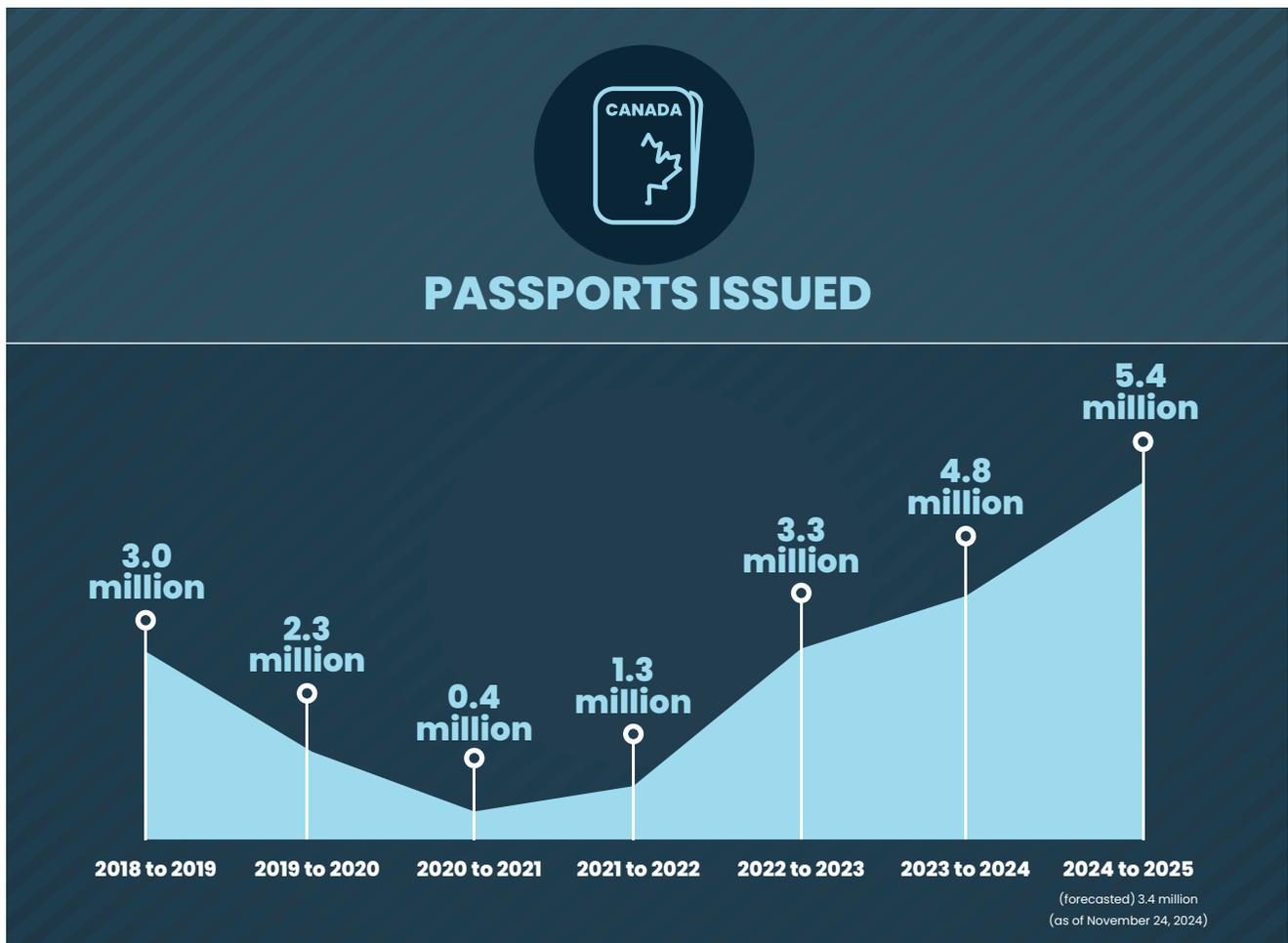
Then came the COVID-19 pandemic.

When public health measures were lifted in the spring of 2022, Service Canada saw a historic volume of passport requests, and despite months of planning, passport offices couldn't handle the surge in demand. In-person services were still restricted, and 60% of applications were being mailed in compared

to less than 15% of applications before the pandemic. A combination of factors led to a significant backlog:

- a shift toward mail-in applications;
- a large proportion of complex applications; and
- a limited number of staff being allowed in offices and processing centres.

What came next was unprecedented. Canadians lined up for hours at passport offices and Service Canada Centres. Others waited anxiously at home for a passport to arrive in the mail in time for their pre-planned trip. Calls to our offices increased to 18 million in 2022, far more than the 4.7 million calls the previous year.



## EFFICIENT, TIMELY AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

Against this backdrop, Service Canada set out with great determination and purpose to introduce a host of changes to make it easier and faster for Canadians to get or renew their passports and to deliver the most efficient, timely and accessible passport services.

To better manage the demand after the 2022 post-pandemic surge, we expanded our capacity at 24 Service Canada Centres, upgrading them from a 20-day service standard to an expedited 10-day service. There are now a total of 60 sites across Canada offering 10-day service. This expanded service means that Canadians can now pick up their passports closer to their homes, reducing wait times for in-person services at sites in major urban centres.

We also offer urgent and express pickup services at certain offices, for when Canadians need a passport urgently, by the end of the next business day or within less than 10 business days. There are 37 Service Canada locations across the country that offer these urgent and express services.

About **93%** of Canadians now have access to passport services within **50 kilometres** of where they live.

With our focus on expanded points of service, and thanks to new technology, we are well on the way to improving the service experience. Canadians can submit a passport application in person at nearly 600 locations across the country, or they can apply by mail. About 93% of Canadians now have access to passport services within 50 kilometres of where they live.

Service Canada Centres and passport offices have been updated with new tools to automate processes and speed up passport renewals. Canadians can get information about passports and passport applications online through Canada.ca. They can also reach Service Canada staff through a toll-free telephone number.



**In 2024–2025, Service Canada’s in-person network consists of:**

- **317 Service Canada Centres**
- **246 scheduled outreach sites**
- **19 passport service sites**

Scheduled outreach sites offer all the services available at a Service Canada Centre, but they are in rural and remote locations.

We continue to assess more service improvements, such as introducing additional pickup, urgent and express services for underserved, remote and growing communities.

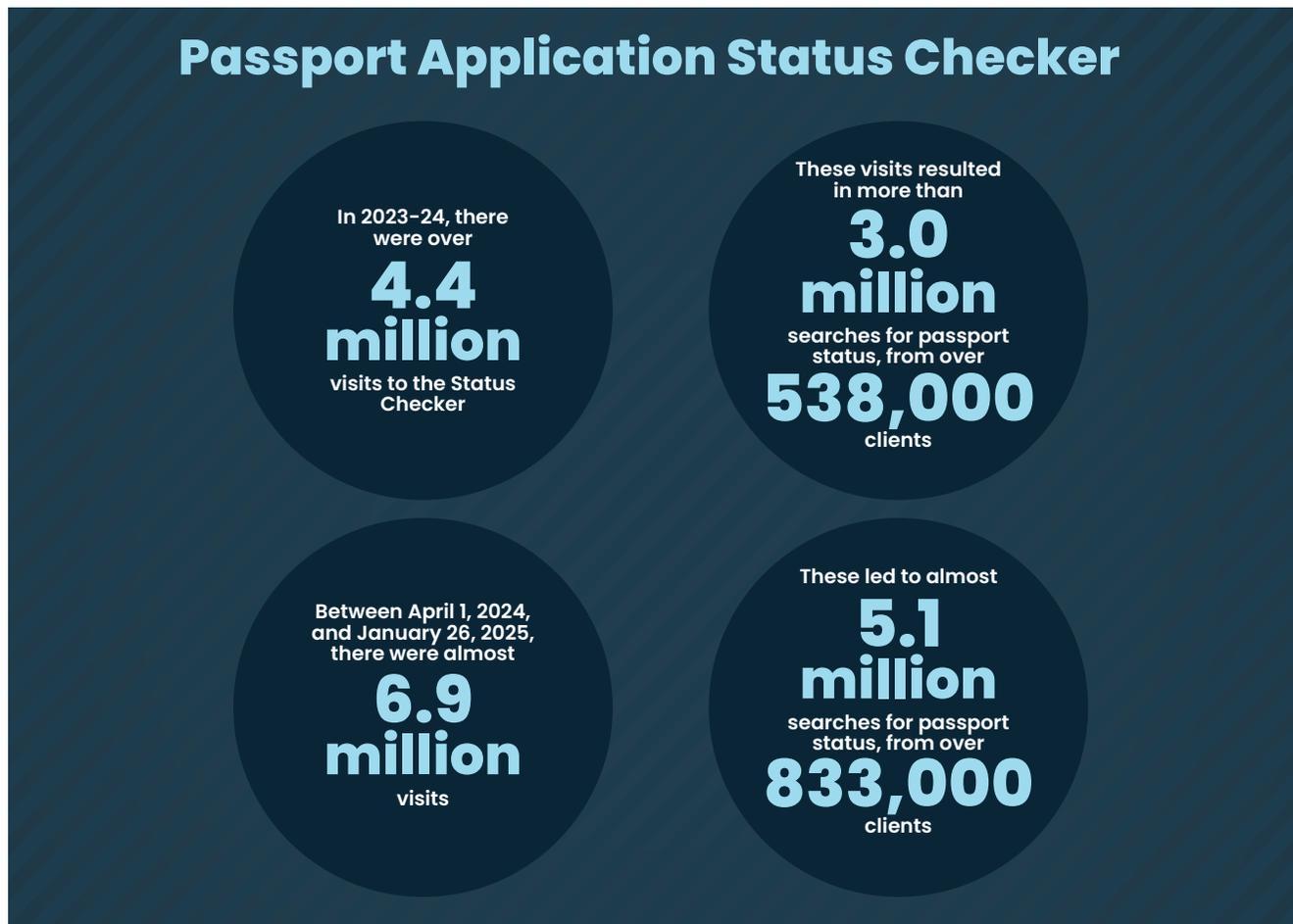
Estimated wait times for all sites have been published on our website since January 2025, which helps to redirect clients to alternate locations with shorter wait times and also reduces lineups in busy offices.

With our online tools, Canadians can also now book ahead for a specific time slot at a passport office or a Service Canada Centre up to 60 days in advance. This allows clients to make the arrangements that will be the most cost-efficient and time-efficient for their situation (in terms of child care, parking, travel to the point of service, etc). So far this fiscal year, 508,000 appointments have been booked.

Starting in 2025-26, we will conduct client and jurisdictional research, and our tools will be enhanced to support the expansion of a pilot on text messaging in Service Canada's in-person offices.

At certain times of the year, Service Canada experiences an increase in passport applications, especially during popular travel periods like summer, the winter holidays and spring break. During these busy peak times, we have strategies to limit the impact on clients.

We launched the Passport Application Status Checker in March 2023. This digital tool gives another option to Canadians, so they do not need to wait on hold or in line when they want an update on the status of their passport application. Millions of Canadians have been using the Status Checker.



We offer extended hours and weekend service in busy locations. We actively manage lines and ensure that everyone gets served, and we prioritize based on clients' needs.

We take an "all hands on deck" approach at the start of the day if a lineup has already formed. Staff greet clients and triage them according to their needs. Staff are instructed to regularly communicate with the clients waiting in line. Clients do not need to take a full day off work or arrive before the office opens to access services.

The numbers tell the story: in 2022-23, we processed 3.3 million passports. For 2023-24, that number surged to 4.8 million—an increase of nearly 50%—and we processed 92% of those applications within the service standards.

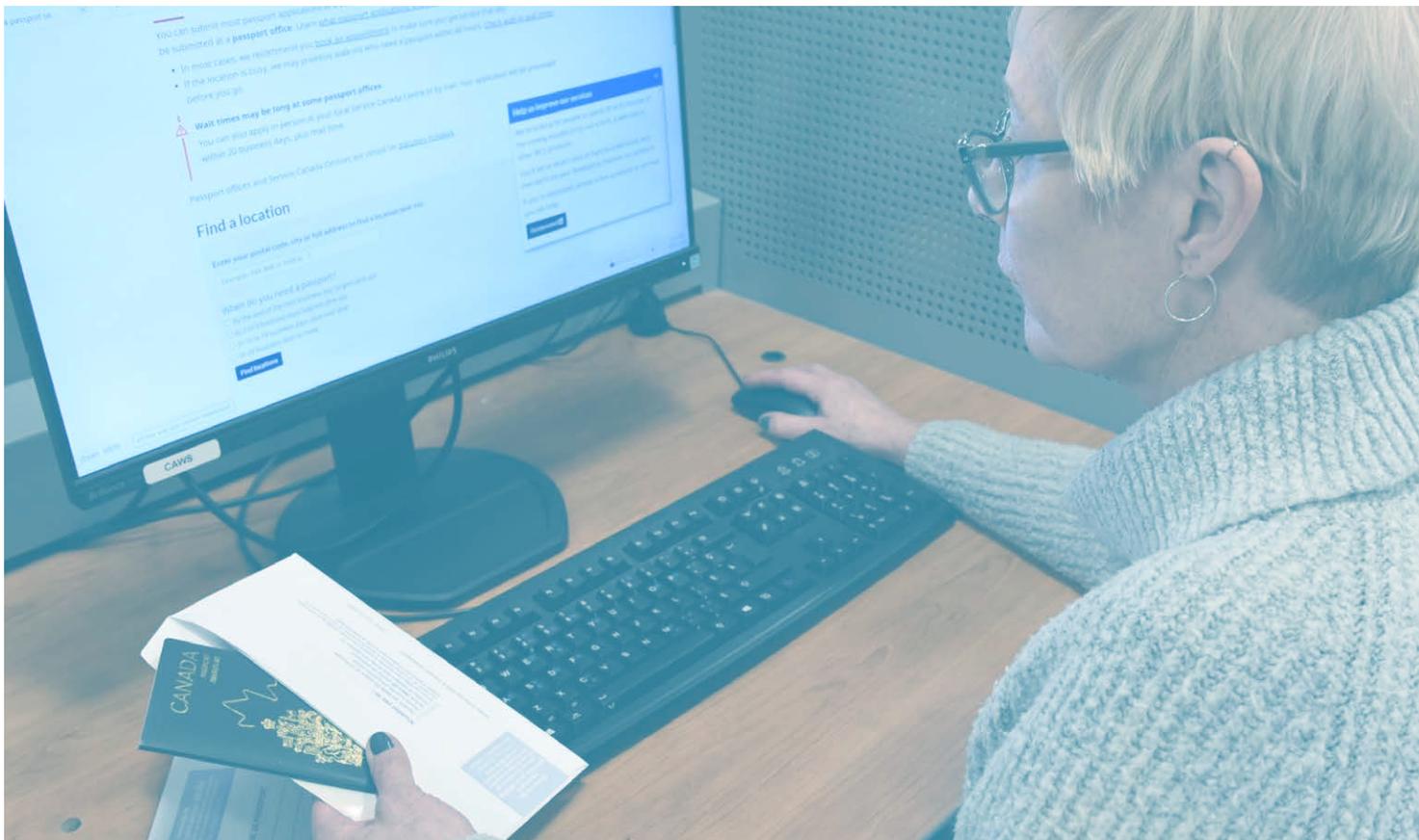
We expect to process 5.4 million passports in 2024-25.

## SCALABLE, SECURE AND RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Next Generation of ePassport initiative is a critical component of this work, helping us to build the capacity to produce secure passport documents that keep pace with international security standards. As part of this initiative, we introduced new passport books with state-of-the-art security features.

Between spring 2023 and spring 2024, Service Canada replaced all legacy passport printers. In addition to supporting new security features, these new printers are five times faster and will provide increased capacity, which we will need to support population growth and the accompanying increase in passport applications.

We also opened a third print centre in fall 2024, located in British Columbia, so we could produce passports more efficiently based



on an applicant's location and also ensure business continuity across the network. This new centre increases our production capacity, which means that we can deliver passports on time across Canada. This is the first passport print centre in western Canada: the other two print centres are in Quebec and Ontario. Together, these print centres process and print almost all Canadian passports. Since the new British Columbia print centre started operating at the end of November 2024, it has issued almost 158,000 passports.

## **STREAMLINED PROCESSES**

Starting in July 2023, Service Canada began rolling out the new passport intake and processing systems. They were fully deployed by October 2024. These systems significantly reduce the amount of paper applications we handle. The full intake of a passport application is now completed at the first point of contact. Officers at all Service Canada Centres across Canada can now enter applications directly in this system. This digital workflow has allowed us to eliminate much of the paper file movements between offices and production centres. This reduces the administrative burden, allowing officers to focus their attentions on client service.

We have also introduced automated processing for simplified renewal applications. So far, the automation rate is around 75% of all renewal applications received, which represents 1,712,777 applications being automated between April 1 and December 31, 2024. This means that our officers can devote more time to working with clients on more complex cases and activities. Although the benefits from this automation are still being fully assessed and quantified, we expect that it will lower the cost of processing passports in the future.

Taken together, these improvements enhance our flexibility, agility and efficiency and help us to deliver timely passport services to Canadians, wherever they are.

## **DIGITAL-FIRST SERVICE**

More and more, clients' interactions with us are happening in a digital environment. This means that our digital presence is the foundation of the public's trust in us. Accordingly, we are expanding our digital services to modernize and improve the client experience. In late 2024, we launched a gradual rollout for online passport renewal applications. A limited number of eligible applicants can use this digital tool and have their application processed within 20 business days. More Canadians will gradually have access to this service in 2025.

An online application will drastically change the experience of applying for a passport: clients will be able to apply from the comfort of their home wherever they are in Canada, and even submit their professional digital photo and payment online. This new channel makes all passport services more efficient and will help us reduce costs for the program, allowing us to reinvest in other areas such as program integrity. It will also help to reduce lineups and wait times at Service Canada locations.

When online passport renewal is available to all eligible Canadians in 2025, they will save time and money. For renewals, clients will no longer have to take time off to visit a Service Canada office or prepare a mail package and visit a Canada Post office. They will save on travelling costs, including parking. They will be able to go through the application process at the time that works best for them.

All of this means that over time, government services will become digital first and digital-by-design, while also keeping in-person options and telephone service. The Government of Canada has a service infrastructure and will continue to build on this foundation and improve client experience. Online passport renewal will make it simpler and faster to renew passports, reducing in-person client visits and lineups while also increasing efficiency and productivity.

*A family in La Crete in northern Alberta needed to renew their passports in 2023. La Crete is a small hamlet of around 3,800 people. It's about 701 kilometres north of Edmonton, which means it's **701 kilometres from the nearest passport office.** With the gas, accommodation and time off from work, they estimated that their passports would cost them **an extra \$750 on top of the application fee.***



## SAVING TIME AND MONEY FOR CANADIANS

The bottom line is that, today, we are providing Canadians with secure and accessible travel documents when they need them. We have made significant improvements throughout the processing system—both in passport offices and online. These improvements are due to new technology, innovation and plain hard work. As a result, we now have a more resilient and efficient system.

With this solid capacity, we now handle higher volumes of work without negatively affecting processing times.

The transformation of the passport network is ongoing. Our goal is to build a streamlined, cost-efficient, scalable and flexible service model that can respond to changes in volume. With digital solutions, we can build a more accessible and secure system. We are focused on providing Canadians with a modern end-to-end experience when they apply for or renew their passports.

Expanding the services available at our locations in remote communities can have a huge effect on the clients in those communities. Prior to the introduction of the 10-day passport service in the Iqaluit and Yellowknife Service Canada Centres in fall 2024, clients requiring passports in less than 20 days would have had to make a costly trip into the closest urban centre for expedited passport processing. These trips could cost upwards of \$1700 per client depending on where they live.





Since the expansion of 10-day passport services, the Yellowknife Service Canada Centre has seen an increase of 22% in passport applications compared to the same period last year. This represents a potential annual savings of \$350,000 for the Canadians served by this office compared to the price of travelling to another city for passport services.

The Iqaluit Service Canada Centre has seen an increase of 43% in passport applications compared to the same period last year. This represents a potential annual savings of \$300,000 in travel costs for the Canadians served by this office.

Service Canada is successfully bringing important services closer to Canadians. This saves them both valuable time and money.

*Online passport renewal will save Canadians time and money, and Service Canada will gain increased efficiency and productivity.*



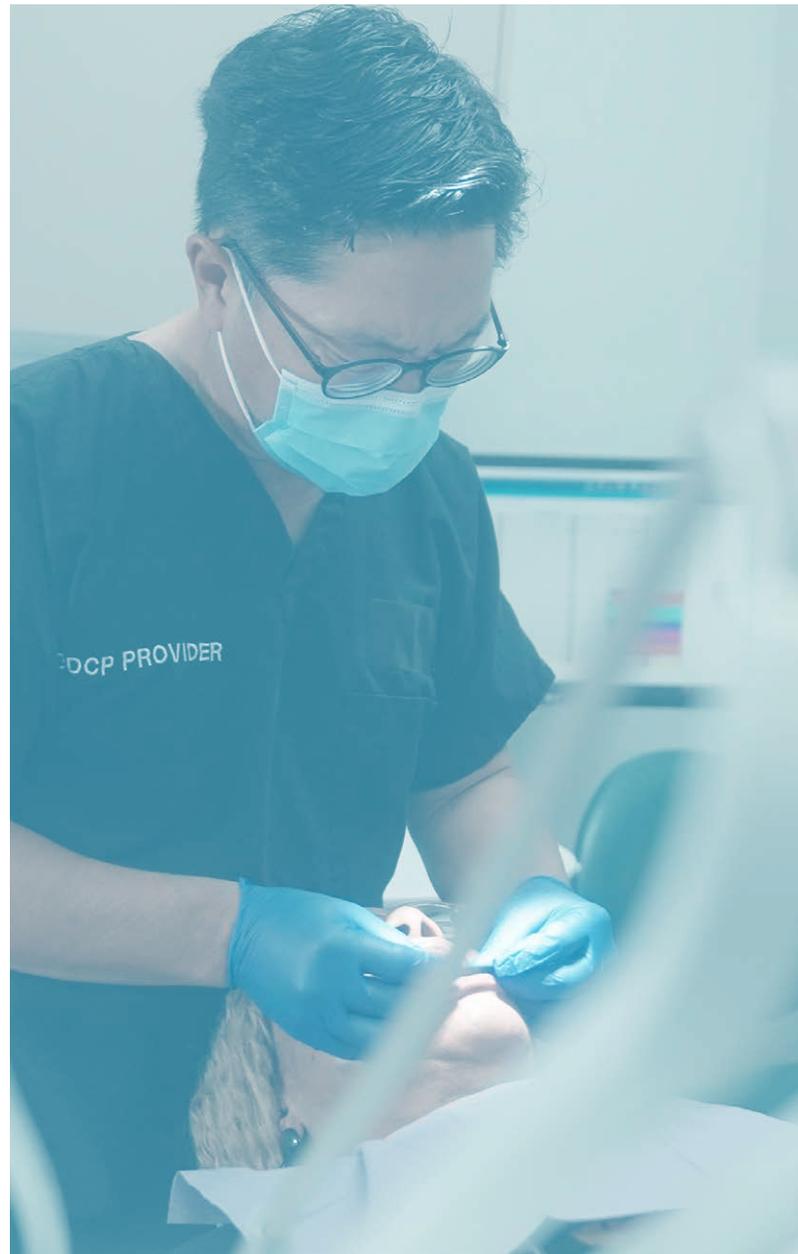


## CANADIAN DENTAL CARE PLAN

In December 2023, the Government of Canada launched the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), the largest benefit rolled out for Canadians in a generation. The CDCP makes dental care more affordable for low-to-middle income Canadian families who don't have private dental insurance.

Since the launch of the CDCP by Health Canada, Service Canada has been:

- processing applications and verifying the eligibility of all applicants
- offering a client-tested online application portal and self-serve tools
- supporting clients through its network of call centres and in-person locations across Canada
- partnering with community organizations across Canada to make sure hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations can access the benefit
- making Canadians aware of the program through targeted communications campaigns
- monitoring client experience and ability to access the program



The CDCP improves access to dental care for Canadians by covering some of the cost of eligible dental services for families with net incomes under \$90,000 who do not have access to private dental coverage. Since the program's launch in December 2023, Service Canada has supported the delivery of the CDCP by providing Canadians with application services and information about the plan and through a dedicated call centre, in-person support, web services and targeted communications explaining who is eligible for coverage. The CDCP has already improved the lives of millions of Canadians by expanding access to affordable dental care. Canadians over the age of 70 were the first to become eligible for treatment under the CDCP.

While Service Canada finalized the development of an online application process, seniors received letters informing them that they could easily apply through an automated phone Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. Phone applications were immediately successful. The uptake exceeded all expectations with over 1.8 million accepted applications from the approximately 1.9 million seniors estimated to be eligible. Once launched, more than 75% of those who applied did so through the automated phone IVR system without officer assistance.

Beginning in May 2024, Canadians 65 and older were eligible to apply online. As of June 2024, children under 18 and those with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate also became eligible to apply online.

This success is largely rooted in a strong partnership with Health Canada and in Service Canada's ability to leverage its expertise in service delivery to build a timely, accessible and client-centred service infrastructure.

*Just over one year after the CDCP's launch in December 2023, the plan has received more than **3.8 million applications** (as of January 2025). Over **86% of these applicants** have been deemed eligible and approved for coverage. Since access to the oral health services began in May 2024, **over 1.4 million Canadians** have already received care (as of January 2025).*



## **EFFICIENT, TIMELY AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICE**

The automated phone system and the online application process have seen solid uptake from Canadians. Hard-to-reach or vulnerable Canadians have received help with their applications through outreach services.

Most applicants have successfully used the automated application process. Of those seeking help with their application by phone, 98% were able to complete their application with an officer's help in less than 10 minutes. We anticipated that there would be surges in demand following targeted awareness campaigns. Service Canada prepared for this by upskilling and cross-training staff to handle higher volumes and inventory effectively.

The CDCP Call Centre has maintained an officer accessibility rate of

**over 99%,**

meaning that no callers are turned away due to high call volumes. The average call wait time has been less than

**35 seconds.**

Most clients (87%) were able to complete their application over the phone or online without the help of an officer.

As of January 30, 2025,

**3.3 million**

people have been deemed eligible for the CDCP.

As of January 30, 2025, Service Canada has engaged with

**24,787 community partners**

to raise awareness of the CDCP and assist vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations in applying.

In 2024, Service Canada made significant enhancements to CDCP self-serve technologies, including the online application portal and status checker.

Additionally, the launch of the CDCP correspondence view within the digital My Service Canada Account (MSCA) allowed clients to obtain information about their CDCP applications efficiently online. This improved service delivery for all users, making the CDCP more accessible and inclusive, and laying the groundwork for further enhancements. In 2025, Service Canada will implement system updates and stabilization so that we can handle larger volumes.

We will continue making improvements to MSCA, including increased identity assurance and digital support for clients. These initiatives aim to streamline government services and further enhance productivity.

In the upcoming year, Service Canada will continue to enhance the CDCP by focusing on the needs of current members and expanding services to more age groups. To do so, Service Canada will continue to draw on its extensive service delivery expertise. We will use the insights we have gained to directly address client needs and expectations for accessible CDCP application and eligibility services.

## **PLACING USER EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTRE OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

Service Canada appointed a new Chief Client Experience Officer (CCXO) to put people first in the design and delivery of services. The Government is transforming into a place where policies, programs and products are designed for clients' actual needs and capabilities as they are—rather than being designed for needs and capabilities that we assume they will have. This transformation is happening step by step, with each new usability test that we carry out. It involves an advanced use of data and iteration, but it also involves creating a new culture and a new set of norms.

Throughout the CDCP application development process, we conducted extensive user-testing and consultations with potential clients. These consultations helped us develop an application process that is clear, accessible and intuitive and that meets the needs and preferences of the target age groups.

The CCXO had a significant impact in making the CDCP a user-friendly and seamless client experience. By applying client experience methods right from the start, such as client research, testing and service blueprinting, the CCXO has enabled millions of Canadians

to apply for this critical benefit independently, addressing barriers and ensuring timely support for those who need it most.

Service Canada designed the CDCP by testing the application process with real people and listening to their feedback. Usability testing and a client-centric focus had a considerable impact on the number of potential clients who could apply without assistance. For the automated phone system using the original draft scripts, only 40% of usability testing participants successfully completed their applications without assistance. After we implemented the recommended usability improvements to the scripts, 77% of clients were able to complete their application unassisted. This was almost twice as many compared to what we saw during the testing. In raw numbers, this means that approximately 710,000 fewer CDCP clients needed assistance from call centre officers.

The successful implementation of self-service features and leveraging its operational expertise has allowed Service Canada to adjust initial projections for staffing and costs, while

delivering robust, efficient services.

Consequently, Service Canada saved \$33 million in 2024 compared to its initial estimates. Any unused funding provided to Service Canada by Health Canada for CDCP application intake and assessment is returned to Health Canada for the delivery of the CDCP.

By using technology to empower clients to self-serve in seconds, Service Canada freed up resources for those needing help from an officer as they apply for CDCP benefits. This enhancement has been welcomed by those clients who need or prefer more personalized help. Self-service has made the CDCP easier to access and more efficient for clients who are comfortable self-serving, as well as more inclusive and accessible for all clients.

We also plan to implement new workload management functionality in the Officer Portal/ Case Management System. This will help our employees manage, document and process workloads more efficiently, reducing manual work and improving processing accuracy.



## RESULTS AND PROJECTED SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

In May 2024, Service Canada transitioned to a digital-first service delivery model for eligible applicants. Since the online application system opened, approximately 80% of applicants have applied online (as of the end of December 2024). For those who still preferred the phone system, Service Canada's CDCP Call Centre has ensured that almost no callers are turned away due to high call volumes, with officers accessible nearly 100% of the time.

The average call wait time has been less than 35 seconds. Employment and Social Development Canada and Service Canada built a secure digital solution for data sharing with the Canada Revenue Agency, Health Canada and Sun Life, as required, to ensure secure and timely exchanges of applicants' files among partner organizations, in alignment with Government of Canada Digital Standards.

Our agenda for 2025 includes user-friendly improvements and new services. As we open enrollment to the largest cohort to date, adults 18 to 64 years old, we are also developing a comprehensive Member Eligibility Review environment to support the integrity of the program, as well as a new workload management program to increase efficiency in all areas of service delivery.

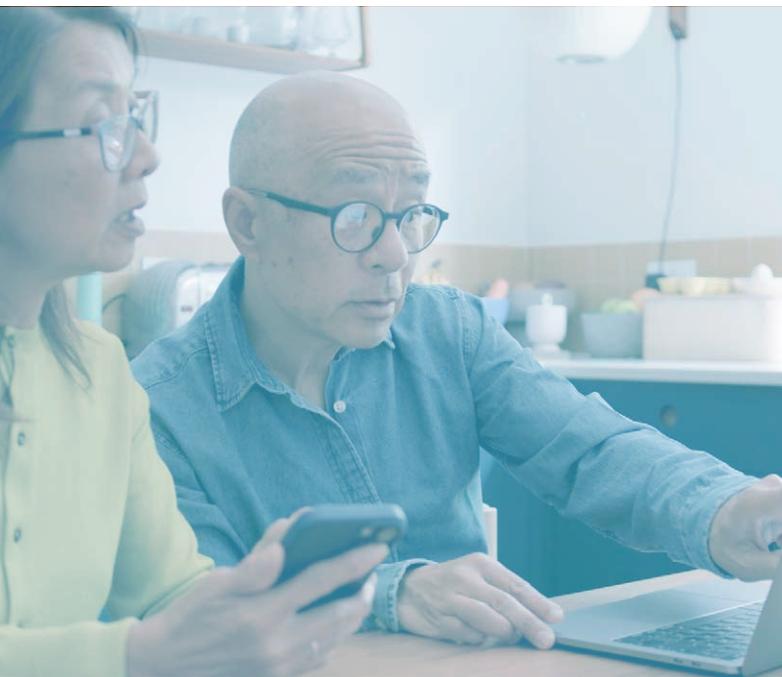




## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

Millions of workers in Canada rely on Canada's Employment Insurance (EI) program every year. Whether they become unemployed through no fault of their own, are starting a family or are taking care of a loved one or themselves, EI steps in to help.

Workers in Canada receive EI benefits if they qualify and are entitled to receive them. Self-employed workers may also be entitled to EI special benefits if they qualify and have opted into the EI program.



- **EI regular benefits** are provided to workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, for example through job loss due to a shortage of work, or through seasonal or mass layoffs. They are willing and available to work but can't find a job.
- **EI special benefits** provide temporary income support to eligible insured employees or self-employed persons (including fishers) who are unable to work due to specific life circumstances. These include sickness, pregnancy, caring for a newborn or newly adopted child, and caring for a critically ill or injured person or someone needing end-of-life care.
- **EI fishing benefits** are available to qualifying self-employed fishers who are actively seeking work. Unlike EI regular benefits, eligibility for EI fishing benefits is based on earnings, not insurable hours of employment. Fishers may be eligible to receive fishing benefits plus special benefits.



For over 80 years, Canada's EI program has been integral to the social safety net, evolving to meet changing societal needs. Recent reforms have focused on modernizing the program. In 2018, a temporary measure provided up to five additional weeks of EI benefits for seasonal workers in 13 targeted EI economic regions. This measure has since been extended several times and now is in place until 2026.

Maternity benefits were enhanced, allowing earlier access. Additionally, EI sickness benefits were extended from 15 to 26 weeks in 2022, and new caregiver benefits were introduced for those caring for critically ill or injured persons.

### **EFFICIENT, TIMELY AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICES**

The EI program has always been adaptable to meet the changing needs of Canadian workers. In 2021, we updated the "Contact Employment Insurance" page on Canada.ca so that people who wanted to call for help with EI could see the average wait time. In 2021-22, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the EI Call Centre answered a record **1.6 million more calls** than the year prior. During this period, the average wait time was 20 minutes.

Service Canada is taking action to reduce wait times so workers in Canada can have timely access to the information and support they require. With investments in technology and officer capacity, the percentage of callers able to speak to an officer has reached the highest levels in its history. Service continued to improve, and during 2023-24, the average call wait time was 4 minutes. So far this fiscal year, the program has maintained this average call wait time.

The service standard for the EI program is for 80% of claimants to receive a decision on their claim, and their first payment if applicable, within 28 days of applying for benefits.



**In 2023-24,**  
the EI Call Centre  
answered approximately

**6 million calls**

with an average  
wait time of

**4 minutes,**  
compared to an average of

**18 minutes**

for the same period  
in 2022-23.



The EI service delivery network enhances national processing capacity to ensure timely and accurate processing and adjudication for clients. Claims and inquiries are directed to the next available officer, regardless of location. This approach promotes a balanced workload, while comprehensive training and processes are implemented to ensure consistent client outcomes.

Results from the Service Canada Client Experience Survey 2022-23 found that 78% of EI clients were satisfied with their overall service experience. This is a slight increase from the 76% of EI clients who were satisfied in 2021-22.

The Government launched the EI Benefits Estimator in October 2024 to better help workers in Canada assess the benefits and services they may be eligible for. This now averages 4,482 daily visits.

The EI Benefits Estimator helps workers get greater clarity on the benefits that they could be eligible to receive. By answering a few questions anonymously, workers can quickly and efficiently obtain an estimate of benefits and the duration for which they could receive them, based on their actual or potential situation.

**As of January 30, 2025, approximately 417,000 estimates have been generated.**

## **SCALABLE, SECURE AND RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Building scalable, secure and reliable infrastructure and services for the delivery of EI is foundational to the modernization of EI on the Benefits Delivery Modernization (BDM) Programme.

The BDM Programme is improving the service delivery of statutory benefit programs including Old Age Security (OAS), EI and the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). It will do this by bringing these key benefits onto a single platform and providing clients with seamless access to the benefits on a modern and improved system. The first phase of BDM was completed in June 2023 for OAS clients, and it has been supporting more than 600,000 clients who receive foreign benefits under an international agreement. Following that successful launch and continued progress, the full deployment of OAS onto BDM is planned for March 2025 and will serve more than 7.4 million OAS clients.

Program and policy changes over the past decades have added complexity to these IT systems supporting Employment Insurance. EI is the next benefit to undergo transformation through the BDM Programme.



A modernized EI service delivery will bring an improved user experience and place productivity at the centre of government services. EI on BDM will equip employees with:

- modern tools and technologies;
- streamlined and standardized processes;
- reduced manual interventions; and
- opportunities to learn and develop new skills.

With over 3 million EI applications received in a typical year, it's critical for Service Canada to provide clients with the level of service they've come to expect. Transforming EI will mean easier access to benefits and a seamless experience for clients of all backgrounds and abilities, including vulnerable populations.

The modernization of EI will be a multi-year journey, taken in a series of small and well-measured steps. It will prioritize the most important work first so we can gradually transform the EI program between 2025 and 2028.

Over the life of the EI on BDM project, work will focus on transforming the service delivery experience for EI claimants and transforming the way they access services and benefits through Service Canada.

The EI transformation will achieve the following:

- improve the client experience in accessing and managing benefits;
- allow clients easy access (self-service) to apply and to view claim information through a delivery channel of their choice;
- enhance the officers' experience in managing client inquiries and processing claims through digital tools, greater automation and a smoother workflow; and
- strengthen up-front integrity and quality controls to focus on detecting and preventing fraud and errors and on improving payment accuracy.

## LOWERING COSTS AND MAXIMIZING VALUE FOR CANADIANS

Service Canada partially or fully automates millions of claims every year.

By automating a portion of the work, we allow processing officers to focus on activities that may impact a client's access to the program or their benefit rate.

Approximately 70% of the claims are fully or partially automated, while the remainder require some form of manual intervention.

Automation tools using artificial intelligence are also rapidly becoming a big part of how we better serve workers in Canada.

For example, many employers include unnecessary text comments when issuing records of employment. EI systems could not automate claims with these added comments, and officers needed to review the information in the comment section. However, since 2020, Service Canada has used artificial intelligence to support the review and interpretation of 700,000 text comments. Artificial intelligence has supported the reduction of an average of 8,300 work items per month, with an accuracy rate of 99.9%, allowing information to be processed more efficiently, and supporting claims processing via automation. This has resulted in \$165,000 in annual savings.

Service Canada has also been testing machine learning that develops predictions based on large volumes of data and identifies work that can then be streamlined more efficiently to officers for more effective processing or systems automation.

Service Canada will continue to leverage technology and look for ways to process claims in the most efficient way. Investing in new processes that leverage automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence.



By leveraging these new technologies, the Department expects to streamline workload management and to provide better personalized and timely services to Canadians.

The document upload function has been enhanced, allowing EI claimants to upload medical and other supporting documents directly to their EI file using AppliWeb or My Service Canada Account (MSCA).

More than 5.6 million clients have an MSCA, which they can use to get services and information on several government benefits including EI. To improve the client experience, a new dashboard for the MSCA portal was designed and implemented, enabling users to view services and benefits available to them on a single page.

Through user research, Service Canada identified three main problems with the old MSCA dashboard:

- Navigation was complex and relevant information was hard to find.
- Users had difficulty identifying tasks and completing them.
- Many of the services are spread across several platforms and users got lost on webpages.

The new MSCA dashboard was fully rolled out after a pre-release on December 27, 2023. Between December 13, 2023, and December 31, 2024, there were 3,918,239 unique visits, and more than 1,000 users have provided feedback to inform further improvements.

A machine learning model was tested in July 2023 and successfully triaged

**40,000  
claims,**

allowing the work to be completed using system automation without officer intervention, providing a savings of approximately

**\$2.6 million.**

Over the last two fiscal years, other automation initiatives, including system utilities, have been used to complete

**100,000  
work items,**

providing a savings of approximately

**\$4.7 million.**

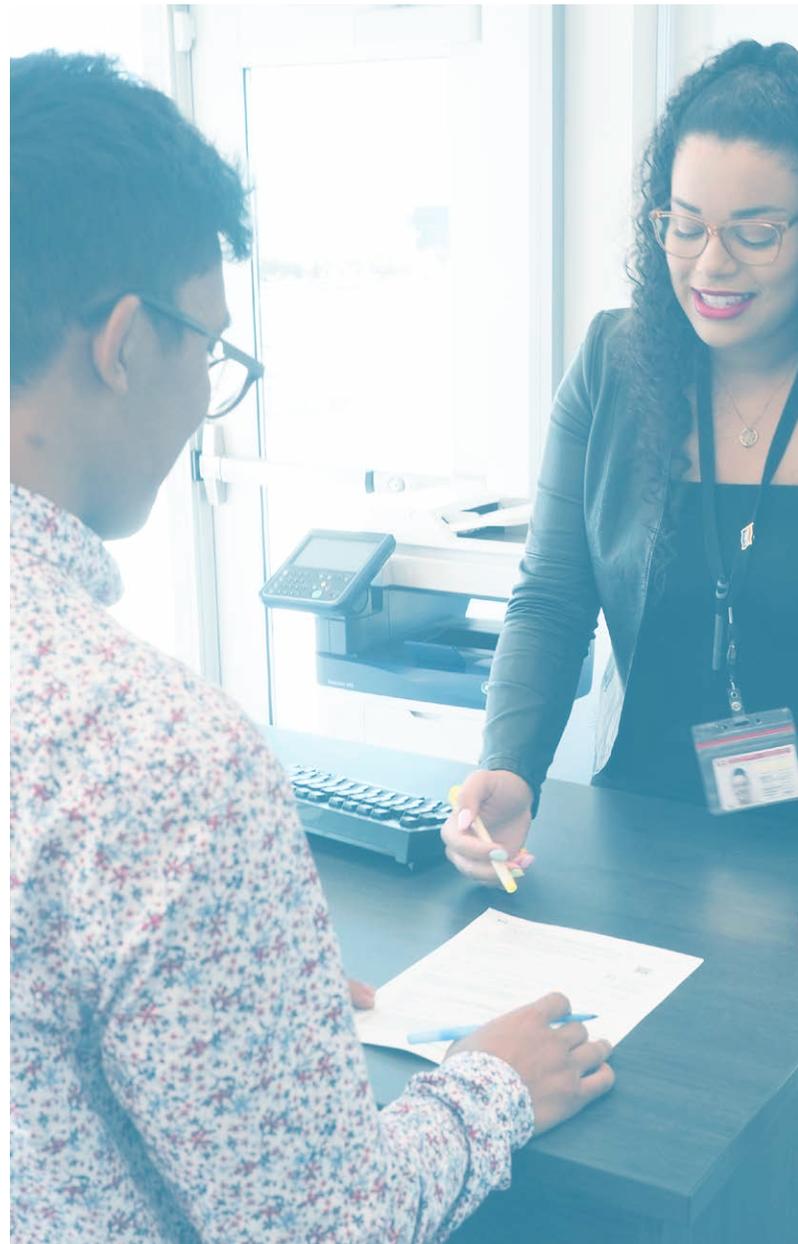


# SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER PROGRAM

To work in Canada or access government programs and benefits, everyone requires a nine-digit Social Insurance Number (SIN).

Service Canada is responsible for issuing SINs. They are issued to a Canadian citizen or permanent resident for life. A temporary resident receives a SIN that begins with “9” and that expires when the period authorized for their stay in Canada expires. If they later become a permanent resident, they would be assigned a new SIN (one that does not begin with “9” and that does not expire).

It is against the law to use another person’s SIN. Safeguarding the privacy, security and integrity of the SIN is important to help protect people, organizations and the Government against fraud and misuse.



## HISTORY OF THE SIN

**1964:** The SIN was created for use as a file number for Employment Insurance (EI) and the Canada Pension Plan. Over the years, its use was expanded for other purposes.

**1988:** The use of the SIN was restricted to legislated authorized programs and activities.

**1993:** The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat introduced the *Policy on Privacy and Data Protection* to require legislative or Treasury Board policy authority for SIN use within government institutions.

**2008:** The *Policy on Privacy and Data Protection* was adopted into the *Directive on Social Insurance Number*, which remains in place today and limits how government institutions can collect and use the SIN.

The Government of Canada maintains and follows legislation, policy, and guidelines to protect the SIN from unauthorized use. Service Canada also provides informational resources on its website, including a web page on the [protecting your SIN](#) and the [SIN Code of Practice](#), which describes best practices and roles and responsibilities of all SIN users including Service Canada, Service Canada's partners, employers, organizations and individuals.

## SERVICE DELIVERY

To meet service delivery standards, a national workload framework was established to process SIN applications on a first-come, first-served basis.

**2006:** The **SIN@Birth** initiative was launched in Ontario to allow parents to apply for their child's SIN as part of the provincial registration of birth form. This service is now offered in all Canadian provinces but is not yet available in the territories.

**2014:** The production of plastic SIN cards ended. Clients now receive their SIN in paper form (also known as the confirmation of SIN letter). The \$10 replacement card fee was also eliminated.

**2017:** Reporting gender information on a SIN application became optional. There are now three options: "M" (male), "F" (female) or "X."

The temporary closure of Service Canada Centres in **2020** presented an opportunity to enhance service delivery, leading to the implementation of the online SIN application service (eSIN). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, clients could not apply for their SIN online. Clients living within 100 kilometres of a Service Canada Centre had to apply in person. Clients living further than 100 kilometres could apply by mail.

Using eSIN, clients can apply for their SIN from the comfort of their homes. If their documents are in order, their application will be processed within 5 business days from the date the application was received, cutting in half the previous service standard of 10 business days.

Since its launch in **2020**, more than 3.8 million SIN transactions have been received via eSIN, meaning that millions of clients did not need to wait in line at a point of service, or mail an application and wait for a return.

Starting in **2022**, clients have been able to receive emails when they apply for their SIN online: one email confirming receipt of their application, and a second email once their application has been processed.

Since **2023**, clients have been able to use numeric characters in their first name, and this has also been reflected in the Social Insurance Register. This improvement was made in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action 17, in which all levels of government were called upon to enable Indigenous people, including residential school Survivors and their families, to reclaim their Indigenous names.

## SIN on My Service Canada Account

In August 2023, Service Canada launched the SIN on My Service Canada Account (MSCA) initiative. Clients can now view their SIN on MSCA. Once their online SIN application has been processed, clients can use their SIN application number to register for an MSCA account.

### eSIN automation

Service Canada's digital SIN service offering will continue to improve through automation, to be even more efficient and save clients more time. The time for an online SIN application to be processed will be brought down from a few days to just minutes. This will move even more people out of lineups and help reduce the need to send an application by mail.

Beginning in fall 2025, Service Canada will begin releasing a new eSIN automation solution in three phases. Eligible applicants will continue to apply for a SIN via eSIN, which will be processed automatically (using document verification service and optical character recognition). Once the application is successfully processed, a SIN will be made available to the applicant within minutes, via their MSCA. In addition to being faster and more efficient, this change

**In 2023–24,**  
of the

**2.9 million**

SIN transactions submitted through all service channels, newcomers such as international students, temporary or permanent residents accounted for almost

**75%**

of the total number of clients.

**In 2025–26,**

Employment and Social Development Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada will introduce an integrated and automated bundle of immigration services and SIN services called SIN@Entry.

## eSIN Automation

Authenticates personal identification documents and extracts key information from them. This improves turnaround times for obtaining a SIN and reduces the resources required for manual application processing. Saving 137,844 hours of program services officers' time on a yearly basis starting in fall 2027.

Saving  
**137k**  
hours starting  
in fall 2027

Leading to  
**\$11.4**  
million  
in estimated  
annual savings

is also more environmentally friendly, reducing the reliance on paper, envelopes and postage for service delivery.

Starting in May 2025, a digital copy of the SIN confirmation letter will be generated as a PDF from MSCA. This feature could eventually further reduce the reliance on mail-outs of SIN confirmation letters, resulting in additional cost savings.

## **DELIVERING SIN SERVICES TO PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE**

Service Canada's Community Outreach and Liaison Service regularly promotes the use of the online SIN application at events and activities in communities throughout Canada. Information about how to apply for a SIN is available on all related communications products. This information is also included in the presentation material that regional staff from the Community Outreach and Liaison Service use when they offer information sessions on Service Canada programs and services.

### **SIN clinics**

Certain times and locations can experience high demand for SINs. This includes Service Canada Centres welcoming large numbers of international post-secondary students at the start of the fall and winter semesters. To help with this increased demand, Service Canada

works with community organizations and other partners by offering strategically placed, easy-to-access clinics that offer in-person support to those who need help with their SIN applications.

This initiative reflects Service Canada's commitment to reaching clients where they are. For international students and newcomers, this means direct access to the services they need as they begin their journey in Canada.

In 2023, Service Canada collaborated with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency to update their communication products to provide international students with SIN information prior to their arrival in Canada.

These products include information on how to apply for a SIN and invite them to contact the international student centre at their educational institutions to receive more information on SIN clinics available in their area.

### **SIN@Landing**

Newcomers arriving in Canada are able to get their SIN at select airports, thanks to Service Canada services offered on-site. Newcomers can apply on-site and obtain their SIN before leaving the airport. SIN@Landing helps reduce the number of clients that stand in line at Service Canada Centres, while providing a smoother and more straightforward arrival experience to newcomers.

**In 2023-24,  
1.7 million  
first-time SINs  
were issued**

## **Number of SIN clinics held in**

**2023-24:**

**2,790**

**2024-25 (up to November 30):**

**1,936**

SIN@Landing is available at select airports across the country, either permanently or as needed:

- Toronto Pearson International Airport;
- Montréal Trudeau International Airport;
- Vancouver International Airport;
- Halifax Stanfield International Airport;
- Calgary International Airport; and
- Edmonton International Airport.

### **SIN@Entry**

In 2025–26, Service Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada will start to introduce SIN@Entry, an integrated and automated bundle of immigration services and SIN services.

SIN@Entry will significantly reduce the volume of newcomers who access SIN related services in person at Service Canada Centres.

It is estimated that this one measure could reduce in-person visits to Service Canada Centres by as much as 50%, which would also reduce wait times for clients accessing other programs in person.

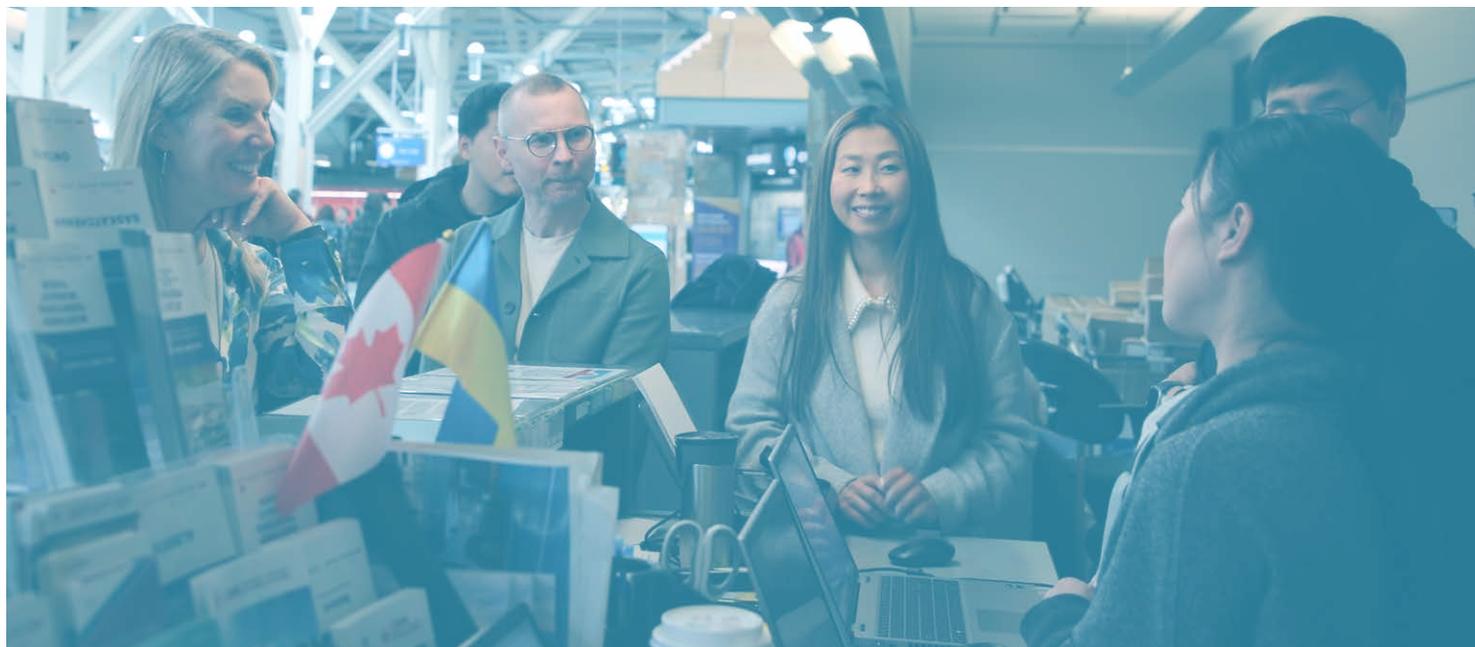
At Toronto's Pearson Airport,  
the SIN@Landing service issued

**105,307 SINs**  
in 2023–24.

As of **February 2025**,  
they had issued

**61,967 SINs.**

during the 2024–25 fiscal year.  
This service, right at the point of entry  
to Canada, has helped ensure that  
fewer clients need to wait in line at  
Service Canada Centres in this region.





## **EFFICIENT, TIMELY, AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICE DELIVERY ACROSS GOVERNMENT**



Across the Government of Canada, departments and agencies are laser-focused on improving how they provide services to citizens. In September 2023, the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Service Delivery was created to examine ways to ensure that the full suite of government services is delivered in a more efficient, timely and accessible manner for Canadians.

The following examples illustrate several service improvements aimed at addressing Canadians' needs.



## CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Many lower-income and vulnerable Canadians are missing out on valuable benefit and credit payments because they may not have been able to file their income tax and benefit returns. Benefit and credit payments, such as the Canada child benefit and the goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax credit, help make life more affordable. Filing a tax return is also one of the eligibility requirements to apply for certain programs such as the Canadian Dental Care Plan.

Individuals need to update their information with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) each year by filing their taxes to receive, or continue to receive, benefit and credit payments. The CRA has introduced several initiatives to make filing an income tax and benefit return easier.

The CRA offers several automatic tax filing services to reduce filing barriers for lower-income individuals, including:

- **Auto-fill my return service:** Auto-fill my return is a secure digital service that allows individuals and authorized representatives using certified software to automatically complete parts of an income tax and benefit return with information that the CRA has available at the time of the request.
- **Let us help you get your benefits:** This is a paper-based simplified filing option available to all Indigenous communities.
- **SimpleFile services:** SimpleFile invites eligible lower-income individuals with a simple tax situation to auto-file their income tax and benefit return by answering short questions over the phone, online, or on a paper form.

Last tax season, the CRA expanded SimpleFile by Phone to over 1.5 million Canadians. By November 2024, 93% of invitees had filed a tax return using the filing service of their

choice, and they are collectively receiving \$3 billion in benefits and credit payments, including:

- more than \$1.4 billion in Canada child benefit payments;
- a little over \$115 million in Canada workers benefit payments;
- about \$490 million in GST/HST credit payments;
- nearly \$451 million in Canada Carbon Rebate payments; and
- over \$535 million in provincial and territorial benefits issued by the CRA.

This past summer, the CRA expanded its SimpleFile options to all provinces and territories as part of a pilot, where over 500,000 invitation letters were sent to lower-income and non-taxable individuals who had either never filed a tax return, or had a gap in their filing history. Again, the CRA offered simplified phone, digital, and paper options to file. These services ended on January 31, 2025, with results from the pilot expected in March 2025.

## CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is mandated to provide integrated border services supporting national security and public safety priorities while facilitating legitimate travel and trade flow. Under its Traveller Modernization initiative, the Agency invests in several initiatives to provide a safe, modern, and efficient travel experience for Canadians and visitors crossing our borders.

### Primary Inspection Kiosks

The Primary Inspection Kiosk (PIK) uses a border clearance kiosk solution to partially automate the processing of travellers seeking entry to Canada. PIKs are in the top ten international airports in Canada. Of the

34.7 million travellers who entered Canada at PIK-enabled airports in 2023–24, over 95% used a PIK or a NEXUS kiosk. To further enhance the Agency’s capacity for processing air travellers, the Agency recently deployed systematic fingerprint verification at one of the two remaining sites, and discussions are ongoing to complete the last deployment. The installation of this system has improved the efficiency of the identity verification process and allowed for a more focused approach to determining traveler admissibility.

### **Advance Declaration**

The CBSA further expanded its digital service offerings with the Advance Declaration mobile technology, allowing travellers to voluntarily make their customs and immigration declarations up to 72 hours before they arrive in Canada. Participating travellers can access dedicated express lanes upon arrival and experience time savings of up to 50% at a kiosk or eGate. As of 2024, the CBSA had successfully deployed the Advance Declaration feature at 10 major airports across the country, with plans to expand to other modes of travel through the Traveller Modernization initiative in future years. Currently, 12.5% of all travellers arriving in Canada are using Advance Declaration.

## **IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has expanded its digital services for citizenship clients to include online applications and testing, virtual citizenship ceremonies, electronic citizenship certificates, and an online application tracker that helps clients to stay updated on their files.

In 2019–20, the paper-based system for individuals applying for a grant of Canadian citizenship resulted in approximately 248,000 new citizens, and 80% of applications were processed within 15 months.

As of December 2024, 81% of the citizenship grant inventory were e-applications. As of December 2024, the processing time (the time it takes to process 80% of applications) was nine months and 88% of applications were being finalized within the 12-month service standard.

## **INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CANADA**

Canadian entrepreneurs and innovators have historically struggled to find government business supports, often resorting to paying external companies to research relevant government programming and make recommendations. To address this gap, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada launched the Business Benefits Finder ([innovation.canada.ca](https://innovation.canada.ca)) in 2018. This is an interactive digital tool that helps innovators and entrepreneurs find the proper support to start, grow, and scale — all in one place.

By answering a few quick questions, Canadians can get a tailored list of federal, provincial, and territorial business supports in under two minutes, including funding, wage subsidies, research facilities, tax credits, expert advice, and more. Users can also sign up for notifications about new programs, important changes, and upcoming application deadlines.

The Business Benefits Finder has continually evolved in response to user testing and feedback, ensuring that it is efficient, effective, and accessible for all users. The in-house product design team employs an accessible-by-design approach, focusing on user experience design principles. Additionally, third-party agencies are consulted to conduct

user testing and provide independent recommendations for improvements, especially regarding usability and accessibility.

Several types of user experience research and testing have been conducted on the Finder tool to ensure its continued effectiveness and accessibility.

In response to this testing, the Finder has continually evolved to meet the needs of entrepreneurs and business leaders in Canada. Improvements have been made to:

- make the site more accessible;
- segment and present the information in new and iterative ways to help audiences narrow down results and find the most appropriate supports;
- adjust content to make the client experience easier and more intuitive;
- introduce new audiences to help specific demographics better find targeted support;
- present the results in an easy-to-follow, scannable, and plain language format; and
- create an option for users to save search results and receive notifications of updates.

As a whole, user experience research efforts have resulted in a highly responsive, user-friendly site, with increased discoverability through search engine optimization, improvements to several features, and better support for users on mobile devices. The Finder is accessible: it meets and exceeds current Government of Canada web accessibility standards (WCAG 2.0 AA compliant).

## SHARED SERVICES CANADA

Shared Services Canada (SSC) is responsible for operating and modernizing the Government of Canada's information technology (IT) infrastructure across the public service.

By providing common IT infrastructure and services, SSC enables digital services that allow the Government of Canada to meet Canadians' expectations of a 24/7 digitally enabled and accessible government. As the Government's IT provider, SSC provides the IT infrastructure that is the backbone for federal government programs and services that Canadians rely on every day.

### Improving connectivity in remote locations

Not all of SSC's clients and partners are located near urban areas where multiple forms of connectivity (such as fibre, cable, or cell phone towers) are available. Limited connectivity in northern and remote sites can impact the service provided to Canadians.

SSC uses satellite services to support communication to and from remote areas, both nationally and internationally, where its clients are based. SSC has also established contracts for low earth orbit (LEO) satellite services to improve connectivity in remote areas. LEO satellites operate at a much lower altitude than geostationary satellites which helps improve the speed and reliability of Internet connections in remote areas. This provides a viable connectivity option for vehicles on land and at sea and for fixed infrastructure operating in areas with limited traditional coverage from terrestrial or cellular providers.

LEO satellite services benefit multiple partners. For example, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Department of National Defence are using the service in Iqaluit and at Canadian Forces Station Alert to provide connectivity to their corporate networks.

### Contact centres keep Canadians connected with the Government

SSC supports the contact centre solutions that enable federal departments to deliver critical services to citizens. SSC has been modernizing legacy departmental call centres to ensure that partners have secure and accessible

solutions that can support multiple service channels such as chat and email as well as emerging technologies.

SSC can mobilize these services to support the Government of Canada's priorities across departments. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, SSC provided new toll-free numbers for Global Affairs Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency. These toll-free numbers were vital for Canadians overseas trying to get back home to Canada and for responding to travel-related inquiries. In 2022-23, SSC helped Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada set up emergency contact centres following conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine. Through these contact centres, IRCC was able to advise Canadians and refugees in hazardous areas to find safety and come home. In 2023-24, SSC established contact centre infrastructure to support Census 2026 and the new Canadian Dental Care Plan.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

Veterans are a unique and diverse community, and they place a lot of value on trust. There are over 461,000 veterans, and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) has approximately 180,000 clients. This includes veterans, serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and serving and retired members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, as well as their families and survivors.

The veteran population covers a wide range of ages, from people in their early 20s to some who are over 100 years old. Most VAC clients have physical and mental injuries, with varying needs when it comes to support. Some individuals may need physical rehabilitation, some are looking for support to enter the workforce, while other veterans need the support of long-term care facilities.



That is why it is imperative that veterans trust the service and support they are receiving. It is essential that we serve our veterans with an understanding of military culture, knowledge of the complexity of their physical and mental health needs, and with compassion.

VAC is improving service delivery by enhancing digital tools, including increasing early registration on [MyVAC Account](#), an online system that allows veterans to communicate with VAC simply and securely.

**To date there are over  
178,000 users,  
with more than  
1,400 new users  
joining each month.**

## Service to veterans

Depending on the complexity of a veteran's needs, there are three types of support that they can receive: self-service, guided support and case management. The level of support needed by the veteran is determined through a screening process. Veterans' voices need to be heard, and VAC is continually learning and advancing its knowledge of veterans' needs to ensure that programs are tailored appropriately.

VAC has invested in automation and artificial intelligence that has helped develop platforms such as VAC Healthshare, which allows for medical documentation to be received faster. The development of the Service Health Records search tool reduces time taken to search through thousands of pages of material by packaging information into a relevant evidence bundle. Automated services free up more time for disability processors, case managers and support staff, which leads to quicker decision making.

VAC has established dedicated teams to help reduce gaps in areas that affect underrepresented veterans. VAC has been able to close processing gaps for women+ veterans and support equitable care through the Women Veterans team.

With the Indigenous Veterans team, VAC has made significant efforts in increasing awareness of its programs and services, built stronger relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis veterans, and increased its knowledge of culturally appropriate services to better tailor its programs and services. By partnering with various stakeholders and other government departments (such as Canadian Rangers, the Royal Canadian Legion, Service Canada and Indigenous Services Canada), VAC has gained valuable opportunities that increase awareness of its programs and services.

Through a partnership with Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, the Veterans Homelessness Program launched, connecting organizations across the country to provide rent supplements and mental health supports to veterans.

Veterans are a vulnerable population and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to support their range of needs. VAC is committed to continue its focus on finding ways to connect with veterans to address their needs when and where they need it.

