Auditor General OF ALBERTA

NEWS RELEASE

Auditor General audits reports on government reporting, program effectiveness, and expense oversight

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada—November 19, 2026— Auditor General Phil Peters tabled three reports in the Legislative Assembly today examining the effectiveness of ministry annual reports, services supporting young adults transitioning from government care to adulthood, and oversight of travel, meal, and hospitality expenses.

"These audits highlight the importance of effective systems and processes that help government report results, make informed decisions, and use the information to ensure programs and services are delivering meaningful benefits for Albertans that rely on them," said Peters. "The audits released today identify opportunities to strengthen performance reporting and program effectiveness, while also recognizing areas where practices are already in place and working effectively."

Effectiveness of Ministry Annual Reporting (Treasury Board and Finance)

Ministry annual reports play a key role in public accountability. Public trust in the administration of government programs and services is informed, in part, by effective public performance reporting. Over the past 30 years, Auditor General audits of individual government programs have regularly identified the need for departments to improve results reporting in their ministry annual reports.

The Public Accounts Committee, a committee of the Legislative Assembly, relies on ministry annual reports to understand how ministries use taxpayer dollars in the delivery of programs and services for Albertans. To fulfill this role, departments must consistently provide ministry annual reports with clear, meaningful information about results achieved using *Ministry Annual Reporting Standards* developed by Treasury Board and Finance from best practice guidance.

"A significant amount of time goes into planning, preparing, reviewing, and approving a ministry annual report and the business plan that guides it," said Peters. "Improving the clarity, transparency, and accountability of ministry performance reporting would provide better value for this investment and give Albertans a clearer understanding of what the ministry is achieving. This will increase public trust in the administration of programs and services."

We found that the reporting standards were not consistently interpreted and public sector performance reporting best practices were not always applied in the sample of ministry annual reports we looked at. Incomplete performance analysis reduces the accountability and transparency of ministry performance results.

The report makes two recommendations:

- The Department of Treasury Board and Finance establish a central formal benchmark for how to interpret and consistently apply the *Ministry Annual Report Standards*.
- The selected departments improve performance reporting in their ministry annual reports.

Services to Support Young Adults Transitioning to Adulthood (Children and Family Services)

The transition to adulthood is a critical period that can have lasting effects on a young person's future well-being and independence. For young adults formerly in government care, this stage in life can be especially challenging as they navigate the transition to independence with fewer supports and resources. The Transition to Adulthood Program supports these young adults as they move toward independence.

Given the importance of these supports and intended outcomes, the Auditor General assessed whether the program effectively meets young adults' needs, provides appropriate supports, and measures whether it is achieving its intended results.

"Young adults leaving government care face major life transitions and need support to build stability, pursue education or employment, and establish strong community connections. Because program participation is voluntary, effective planning and ongoing engagement are essential to ensuring supports align with their goals and evolving needs.

"Without outcome reporting, the department cannot assess whether the program is effective in providing vulnerable young adults with the support they need to successfully transition to adulthood. As a result, young adults may not receive timely and effective supports, increasing the risk of poorer long-term outcomes," said Peters.

The audit found that the Department of Children and Family Services needs to improve processes to identify and respond to young adults' needs and improve performance management processes.

The report includes three recommendations:

- Improve processes to respond to the needs of young adults
- Improve processes to engage with young adults
- Improve performance management processes

Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses of the Premier, Ministers, and Their Staff (Treasury Board and Finance)

The Auditor General established an annual rotational audit of departments' systems for verifying that the expenses of the Premier, ministers, associate ministers, and their staff comply with policies as described in our May 2017 report. This is the tenth year of our audit.

"Albertans expect ministers and public servants to be responsible and transparent when spending taxpayers' dollars to conduct government business," said Peters. "Effective processes are needed to ensure that people are complying with the expense policies. Albertans need assurance that these systems are well designed and working effectively."

This year's audit included the following ministries: Executive Council / Premier's Office; Hospital and Surgical Health Services; Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration; Mental Health and Addiction; Primary and Preventative Health Services; Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction; Technology and Innovation; and Treasury Board and Finance.

The audit found that the ministries examined had effective processes to help ensure compliance with government policies between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.

-30-

The Auditor General Act establishes the Office of the Auditor General as independent of government and the organizations it audits. The Act gives our Office the mandate to conduct financial and performance audits, along with the authority to obtain the information needed to provide assurance to Members of the Legislative Assembly and Albertans that public money is properly accounted for and provides value. We are a credible, transparent, and trusted source of information.

For more information, please contact:
Cheryl Schneider, Executive Director, Engagement and Communications
Mobile: 780-399-0554 | Telephone: 780-422-8375
Email: cschneider@oag.ab.ca

Stay up to date on our latest news by subscribing to our mailing list.