

Government news

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## Reinforcing legislation, refocusing health care

Bill 55, the *Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2025*, advances Alberta's plan to improve public health delivery and system oversight.

### On this page:

- [Refocusing public health](#)
- [Other proposed amendments](#)
- [Quick facts](#)
- [Related information](#)
- [Related news](#)
- [Multimedia](#)

Improving health care for all Albertans – May 1, 2025



In November 2023, Alberta's government announced plans for a refocused health system to ensure patients receive the care they need, when and where they need it. Since then, significant changes have been made to both legislation and regulations to establish the refocused health care system. The proposed *Health Statutes*

*Amendment Act, 2025*, would address all outstanding policy items and ensure a successfully refocused health care system.

Under Bill 55, amendments are proposed to the *Provincial Health Agencies Act*, *Hospitals Act*, *Protection of Persons in Care Act*, *Health Information Act* and the *Public Health Act*.

“A year and a half in, and we are in the final stages of refocusing Alberta’s health care system. The proposed changes will help us continue to improve the health care system for all Albertans.”

*Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Health*

## **Refocusing public health**

Throughout the public engagement sessions held across the province, Albertans and health care workers have stressed the need for a consistent and strategic approach to public health, which the current organizational structure doesn’t facilitate.

As part of the health care system refocusing, Alberta’s government will transfer several public health functions that currently reside within Alberta Health Services to Primary Care Alberta later this year. Primary Care Alberta will oversee front-line public health services, such as communicable disease control, immunizations, newborn screening and health promotion.

Additionally, key functions like policy development, public health inspections and surveillance will be moved to Alberta Health, and the province’s medical officers of health will move into the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Amendments to the *Public Health Act* will enable these transitions while ensuring these important functions are not interrupted and Albertans can rely on a consistent delivery of services.

“Promoting and protecting the health of individuals, families and communities is foundational to Primary Care Alberta’s commitment to bringing the right care to patients where they are. I look forward to welcoming our front-line public health providers to the Primary Care Alberta team and working with these dedicated professionals to build a strong, unified health care system that improves health outcomes for all those who call Alberta home.”

*Kim Simmonds, president and CEO, Primary Care Alberta*

There will be no disruption to public health delivery in the province during the transition. Albertans will continue to access public health services as they always have. There will be no front-line job losses, and the collective bargaining process will be respected as this work moves forward.

## **Other proposed amendments**

If passed, amendments will strengthen health foundations by streamlining governance functions like bylaw approval and board member appointment processes, bring clarity to public health’s role in the refocused system and ensure legislation accurately reflects how hospitals will be managed and operated.

The new health shared services entity, which supports all four health services sectors, will provide oversight for health foundations in the refocused system. This is a natural fit for health foundations, as they work across all sectors. Legislation will also establish a clearer connection between health foundations and the communities they serve.

The Government of Alberta takes all allegations of abuse in publicly funded care facilities seriously. A proposed amendment to the *Protection of Persons in Care Act* will provide additional capacity to complete investigations into allegations of abuse and is part of Alberta Health's commitment to provide timely service and protect vulnerable adult Albertans in care.

The *Health Information Act* is also being amended to provide the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services with further powers to enable it to fulfil its mandate as the sector ministry for continuing care. This ensures the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services can collect, use and disclose health information necessary to support the minister's role as the sector minister responsible for continuing care in Alberta, including Assisted Living Alberta, the provincial health agency that became a legal entity on April 1 and will be operational later this year.

Also proposed in this legislation is that sections of the *Hospitals Act* be repealed. Certain aspects of the *Hospitals Act* will be integrated into the *Provincial Health Agencies Act* and will ensure governance of the health system is under one statute. The *Hospitals Act* is outdated legislation that does not reflect current acute-care system governance or the introduction of new governance structures and ministerial roles. There will be no effects on the standards of care provided within hospitals by repealing portions of this act.

## Quick facts

- Amendments to legislation would enable key policy shifts to support refocusing efforts, including:
  - Updating the oversight and governance for health foundations.
  - Ensuring hospital governance aligns with the health system refocusing direction.
  - Reorganizing the governance and planning for public health services.
  - Repealing references to regional health authorities, health regions and Alberta Health Services (AHS) in legislation (to be proclaimed in fall 2025, after AHS' functions and responsibilities as the regional health authority have transitioned to other entities).
- In spring 2024, the *Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*, passed, along with regulatory amendments to enable the stand up of the provincial health agencies.
- In fall 2024, the *Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (No.2)*, amended the *Provincial Health Agencies Act* and its regulations, establishing AHS' legal status as it transitions from a regional health authority to an acute-care service provider.
- The *Health Information Act* was amended in fall 2024 to designate the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services (SCSS) as a custodian under the act, meaning SCSS can access specific health information for the purpose of fulfilling its mandate.

## Related information

- [Streamlining the health care system for Albertans](#)

- [Bill 55: Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2025](#)

## Related news

- [Refocusing emergency services](#) (March 10, 2025)
- [Refocusing continuing care for the future](#) (Jan. 30, 2025)
- [Refocused health care: Continuing the conversation](#) (Jan. 9, 2025)
- [Refocusing acute care leadership for the future](#) (Jan. 8, 2025)
- [Ensuring a successfully refocused health system](#) (Nov. 18, 2024)

## Multimedia

- [Watch the news conference](#)
- [Listen to the news conference](#)

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