

WIFI → Network Name: DBDLI-Guest → Password: Guest@dbdli

East Coast Public Policy Training Institute Session 1: Introduction to Public Policy



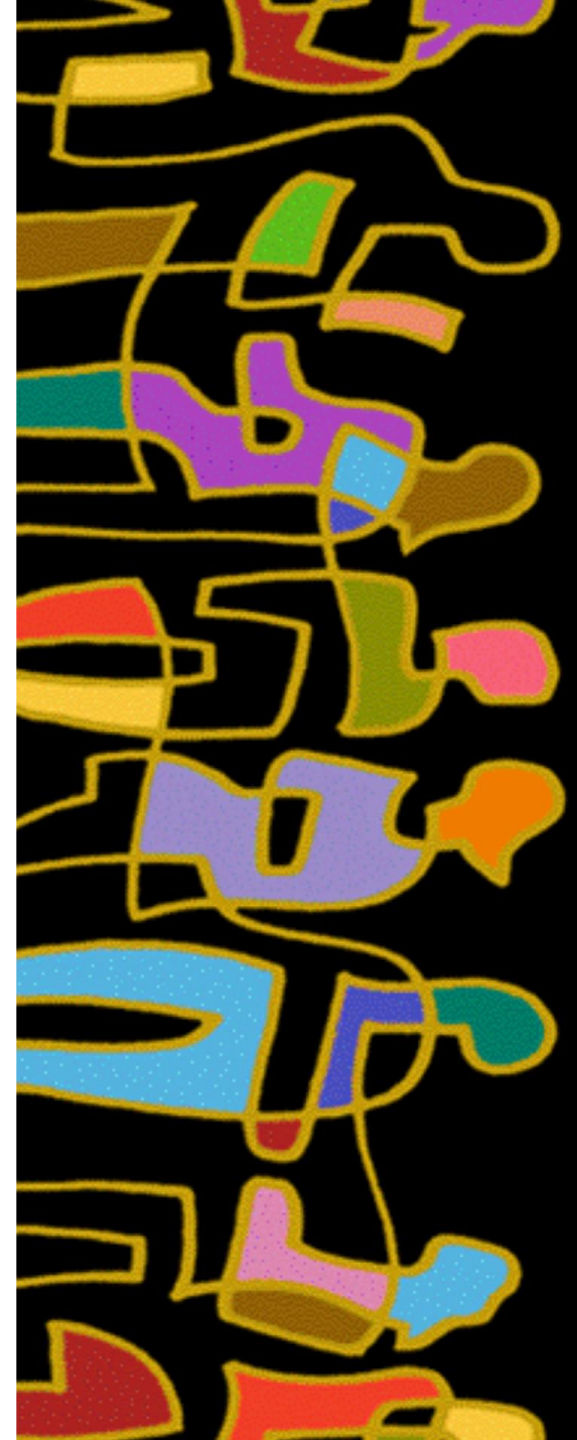
United Way
Halifax



Delmore "Buddy" Daye
Learning Institute

*Excellence in Africentric
Education & Research*

nscc



Land acknowledgement

We are in Mi'kma'ki- the unceded and ancestral territory and traditional homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation. Our relationship is based in a series of Peace and Friendship Treaties between the Mi'kmaq and the Crown dating back to 1725.

In Nova Scotia, we are All Treaty People.

Equity and Inclusion Commitment

We acknowledge a deep and shared responsibility to work towards reconciliation and to stand in solidarity and take action to overcome the racism, systemic exclusion and other horrors of colonialism experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada.

We also have a deep and shared responsibility to work to address the barriers faced by the Black and African Nova Scotian communities historically impacted by systemic racism and marginalization rooted in a euro-centric, colonial system of power.

Exclusion and marginalization based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ableism, neurodiversity and other characteristics can take many forms. In our work, we will strive to learn, educate and hold each other accountable to disrupt barriers in striving for a more equitable Nova Scotia.



Introductions

PPTI Partners: Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute, NSCC, and United Way Halifax

Faculty & Mentors:

- Jane Allt
- Chris Bryant
- Bryan Daniels
- Sharon Davis-Murdoch
- Lynn Hartwell
- Jennifer McGill
- Roz Penfound
- Wyatt White
- Linda Wilson



Participant Introductions

Find someone you don't know, chat for 5 minutes, then be prepared to introduce them to the group:

- where they work
- their experience in the NP sector
- public policy focus
- personal interests
- etc.



PPTI Program

- Non-profits have a critical (and growing) role to play in public policy
- Governments want & need NP support in developing equitable and effective public policy
- Strong, collaborative relationships with public policy decision makers is key
- Allies, networks, and external resources are invaluable
- Finding alignment with decision makers is critical
- Influencing public policy is an ongoing and strategic process



What will you take with you?

- An understanding of the structure and processes of government
- Improved data collection and evidence generation skills
- An appreciation for a "relational" approach to public policy engagement
- Strategies for identifying and engaging public policy decision makers
- Strong relationships with dedicated non-profit sector colleagues
- Tools to help choose the right policy agenda for your organization
- A well-developed strategy for action on your policy area of interest



Logistical Details

...which you will know if you read the syllabus

Sessions

- Typically held on the last Thursday (1pm – 5pm) and Friday (9am to 3pm) of each month
- Thursday dinner attendance is not required, but strongly encouraged
 - Costs covered up to \$40/meal (alcoholic beverages not included)
 - May be attended by guest speakers, faculty & mentors
 - From 5:30pm to 8pm at a local restaurant
- Sessions 1-5 include a subject-based assignment
 - To be completed/submitted to your mentor for review (please cc Samantha) before the next session
 - Faculty mentors will follow up by email with comments and/or suggestions



Logistical Details

...which you will ALSO know if you read the syllabus

Policy Ask

- You have all identified a Public Policy ask to be developed throughout the program, as you learn
- End deliverable is a 15-minute presentation during Session 6 (November)
 - Feedback from all faculty, guests, and fellow classmates will be provided
 - Certificate of Completion presented following Session 6 presentations

Tuition Reimbursement

- 50% Tuition (\$375.00) reimbursed upon completion
- Must complete all assignments, evaluation surveys, and presentation



Expectations

Session guidelines

- Be present
- Make space for other voices, and take space for yourself (scheduled & unscheduled breaks)
- Keep what is discussed here confidential
- Respect start and stop times
- You will get the most of this program if you are active and engaged (in class and out)

Contacts

- Samantha (swilliams@unitedwayhalifax.ca)
- Loice (loice.busingye@dbdli.ca)
- Faculty & mentors are accessible by email (which are listed in the syllabus... READ THE SYLLABUS!!!)



Introduction to Public Policy



United Way
Halifax



Delmore "Buddy" Daye
Learning Institute

*Excellence in Africentric
Education & Research*

nscC

Session 1: Agenda

Day 1

- Why are you here?
- Reasons to talk to government
- Public policy and ways to engage with it
- The role of non-profits in public policy
- Public policy context

Day 2

- Government 101
 - Orders of government
 - Indigenous governance and the Indian Act
 - The Courts
 - Behind the scenes
 - The cycles of government
 - Understanding government priorities
- Policy process and cycle
- Workshop

Why are you here?

- Government decisions directly impact your non-profit organizations.
- Influencing the decisions of government will help achieve your mission.
- If you understand how decisions are made, you have a better chance of influencing decision makers and/or effectively creating the conditions for change.
- Savvy organizations build their capacity to influence public policy and have it “in a bank” to use when the opportunity or need arises.

Reasons to talk to government and influence public policy

1. Government may be planning changes that affect your organization or the people you serve
2. Government has resources beneficial to your mission: information, contact, funding and regulatory/administrative tools
3. If you don't share your views, someone else's views will be shared.
4. Governments look for knowledgeable and reasonable partners who are close to real problems and willing to work on solutions.
5. Government will partner with you to achieve their goals. Governments don't have all the answers. You have valuable experience and insight.
6. Your donors/board are asking if your organization is effective
7. You want to build public trust. Speaking out on public policy issues can increase the profile of your organization and your mission.



What is public policy?

- Put simply, public policy is whatever government does or chooses not to do.
- It incorporates legislation, regulations, policies and procedures and other actions.
- A common definition goes something like:

“Essentially, public policy is a set of laws, guidelines, and actions decided and taken by governments in order to work in favor of the public. Public policy can dictate things such as: which laws are passed, where funding goes, and which topics concern the general public.” (Uofpeople.edu)



**Influencing
public policy
includes, but is
not limited to:**

Requests for government funding

Advocating new laws or changes to
existing laws

Advocating for government action to
address an issue



Role of Non-Profits in public policy

Because non-profit organizations are based in community, they can hold considerable sway in public policy development and implementation, with the right approach and skills.

Through their direct engagement with the issues, NPs can support equitable and inclusive policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

Public policy change happens when people with interests collaborate and sometimes collide - decision makers, interest groups, dissenters, proponents.

Community based organizations have the power to galvanize support or opposition, to reach deep into community and engage individuals and offer services and supports in impactful way.

Our conversations will be all about identifying, honing and harnessing the impact that non-profits have in the public sphere.



Public Policy Context

So What?

- The decisions and priorities of government are impacted by a wide range of complex factors
- Developing effective and viable public policy requires serious consideration of its relationship to a host of variables



Public Policy Context in NS

(For example)

- Perceived as "have not" province
- Changing demographic profile
 - Growing population
 - Large percentage of seniors
 - Increasingly young (25 to 40 years)
- Significant cultural diversity
 - (Mi'kmaq, African, Acadian, English, Celtic, Lebanese, etc.)
- Eurocentric, colonial power structure
- Rural/Urban divide with ongoing municipal amalgamations
- Economy traditionally dependent on natural resources & gov't inputs
- Diversifying / growing economy
- Conservative government



Public Policy Context

- For those of you in NS: Are there other important contextual factors that should be considered?
- For those of you outside NS: What are some key contextual factors about your province that should be considered?



Current (and influential) Trends

- Rapid social, economic, and cultural change
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Social media influence
- Digitization
- Quality of life/ non-economic indicators
- Housing and healthcare in crisis
- Workforce shortages
- “wokeness” v. lived experience
- Rising cost of living
- Global instability and geopolitical shift
- Energy security
- Climate Change
- Post-Covid recovery
- Others?

Wrap up



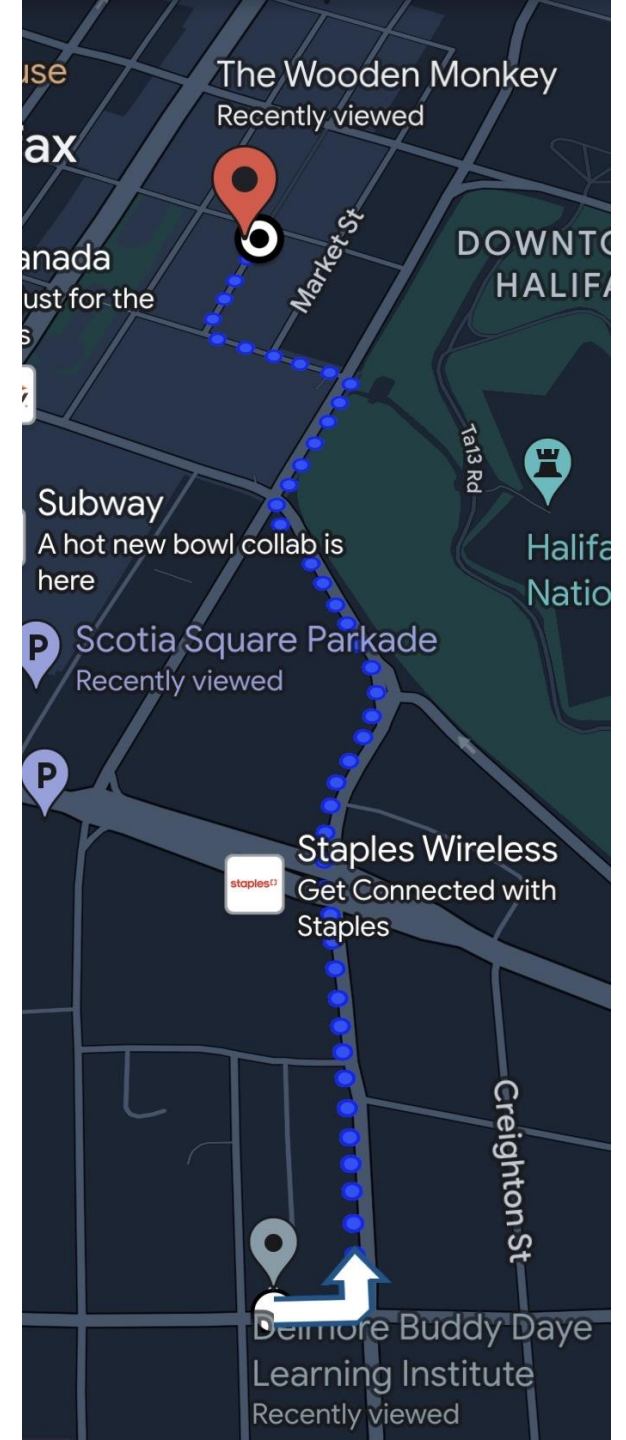
Hand in your completed evaluation survey to Samantha



Dinner: Wooden Monkey Halifax
@ 5:30pm



Tomorrow: Government 101, Policy Process & Cycle, Workshop & Mentorship Time





United Way
Halifax



Delmore "Buddy" Daye
Learning Institute

*Excellence in Africentric
Education & Research*

nsc

WIFI → Network Name: DBDLI-Guest → Password: Guest@dbdli

East Coast Public Policy Training Institute

Session 1: Introduction to Public Policy



United Way
Halifax



Delmore "Buddy" Daye
Learning Institute

*Excellence in Africentric
Education & Research*

nscc



Government 101: Structures and Institutions

- Constitutional Monarchy - British Westminster system
 - King/Queen - Head of State
 - Prime Minister – Head of Government
- The Constitution of Canada – legal framework
 - S. 91 & 92 detail roles of federal & provincial gov'ts
 - Courts act as arbiters in jurisdictional disputes
- 4 orders of government:
 - Indigenous
 - Provincial
 - Federal
 - Municipal



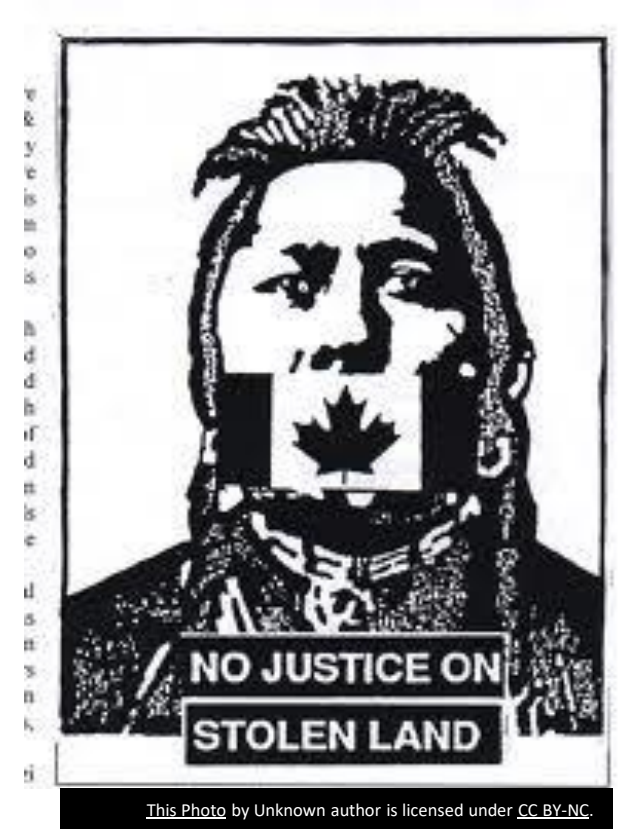
Indigenous History and Governance

- Over 10,000 years of social and cultural history
- Traditional governance based on kinship, alliance, and treaties between nations
- Each Indigenous Nation has its own legal framework and constitution, predating colonialism
- All Indigenous peoples have rights that may include access to ancestral lands and resources, and the right to self-government.
 - No simple, comprehensive definition – complex and evolving
- Without negotiated self-governance, most First Nations governed by the Indian Act



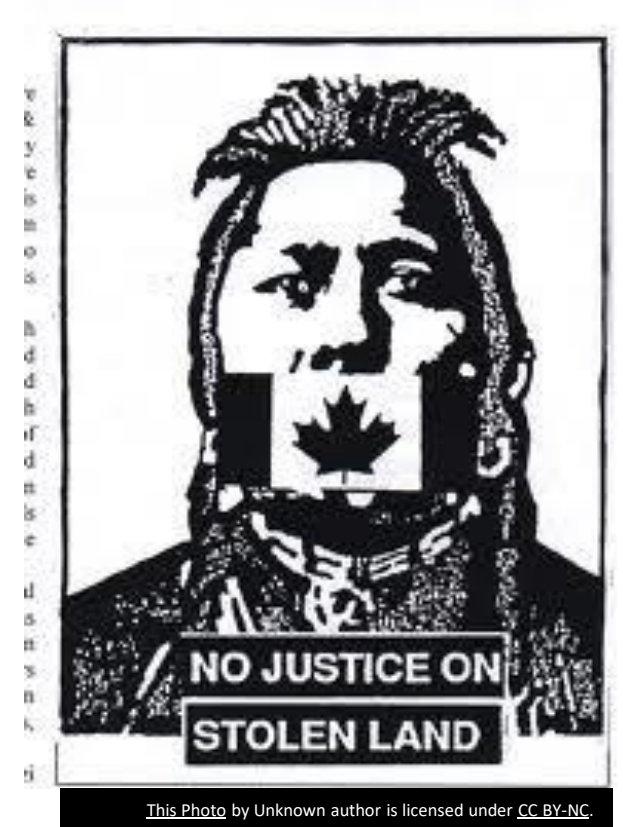
Colonialism – Indigenous Rights & Governance

- Peace and Friendship Treaties (1725 – 1779)
 - Signed between the British and North-Eastern Indigenous peoples
 - Meant to prevent war, facilitate trade, and define resource rights
 - Rarely honoured historically, but still in effect today
- "The Indian Act" (1876)
 - Primary law of federal government defining relations with First Nations peoples
 - Only refers to those with Indian Status
 - Has enabled trauma, human rights violations, and systematic social and cultural disruption



Indigenous Governance Today

- Constitution Act, 1982 (section 35)
 - recognizes right to Indigenous self-government
 - Indigenous laws must be in harmony with federal and provincial laws
- First Nation Bands – basic unit of gov't for those under the Indian Act
 - Chaired by elected or hereditary chief
 - 13 Bands in Nova Scotia



Indigenous Governance Today

- Tribal Councils – Regional band coalitions
 - e.g., Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq & Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Treaty Councils – Represent signatory bands of treaty areas
- Assembly of First Nations
 - Advocates on issues of treaties, Indigenous rights, land, and resources
 - Led by elected national chief and committee of 10 regional chiefs



<https://www.afn.ca/Home/>



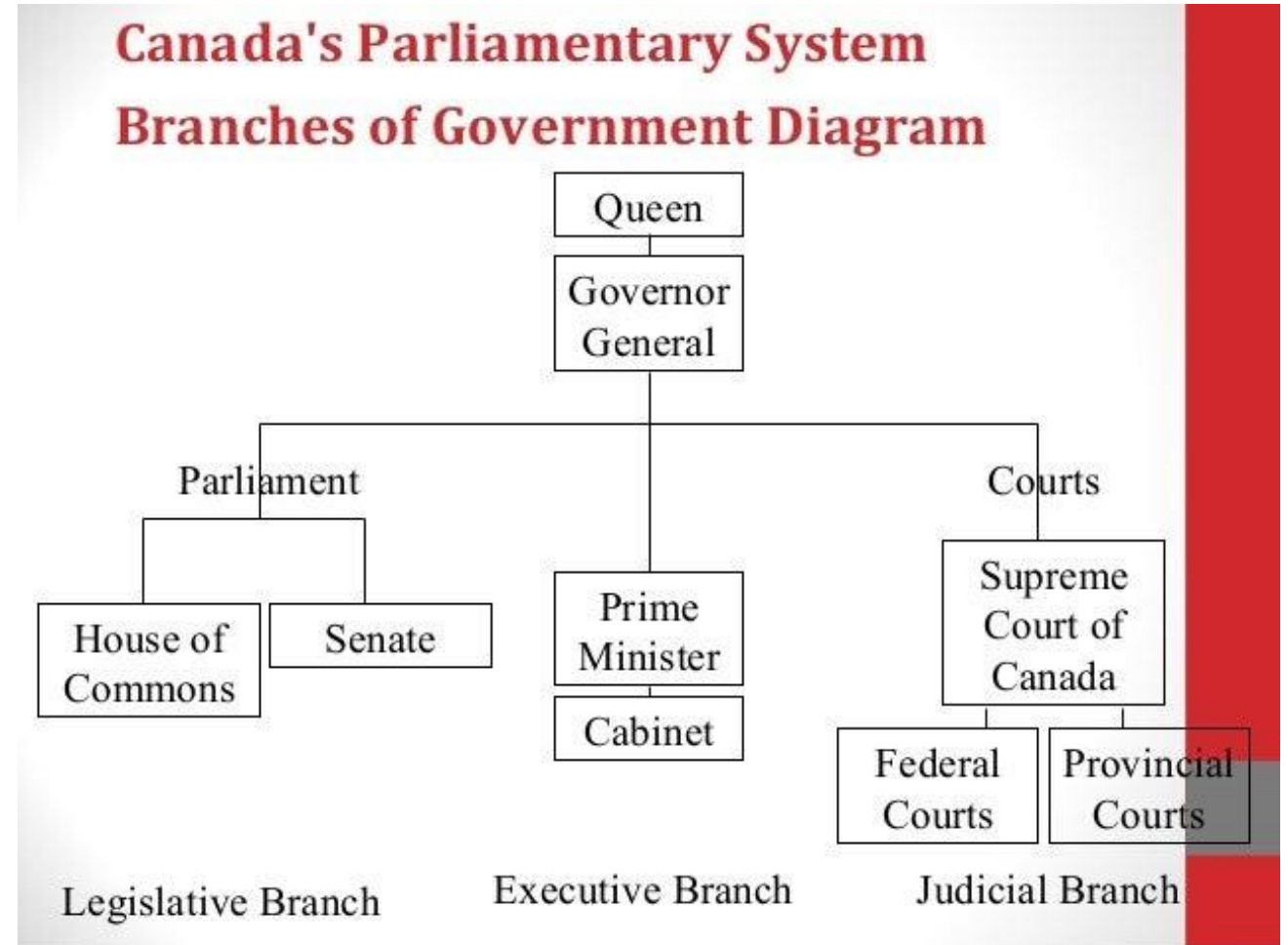
Federal Government

- Issues of National or International Significance
 - Citizenship/Immigration
 - National Defense
 - International Trade
 - **Aboriginal Lands and Rights**
- 338 MPs and 105 Senators



Federal Government

- 3 Branches
 - (Legislative, Executive, Judicial)
- Cabinet
 - Form government with Crown
 - Composed of Ministries
 - Led by Prime Minister
 - Legislation re. raising/spending of public revenue



The Courts

- Exist at both the National and Provincial/Territorial levels
- Supreme Court of Canada presides over the whole system
- Resolve disputes according to law, legal precedent, jurisprudence, and interpretation of the Constitution/the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Parliament can overturn courts based on S. 33 of Charter of Rights and Freedoms



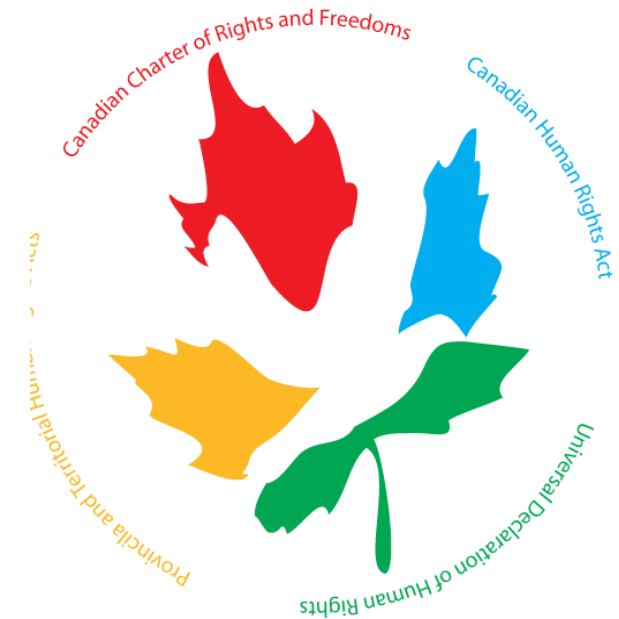
The Courts

- Can have significant influence over public policy
- Some suggest that Canadian Courts have become more “activist” in recent years, e.g.,
 - Legalization of medicinal marijuana (2015)
 - Overturning the “Lord’s Day Act” (1985)
 - Legalization of safe injection sites (2011)



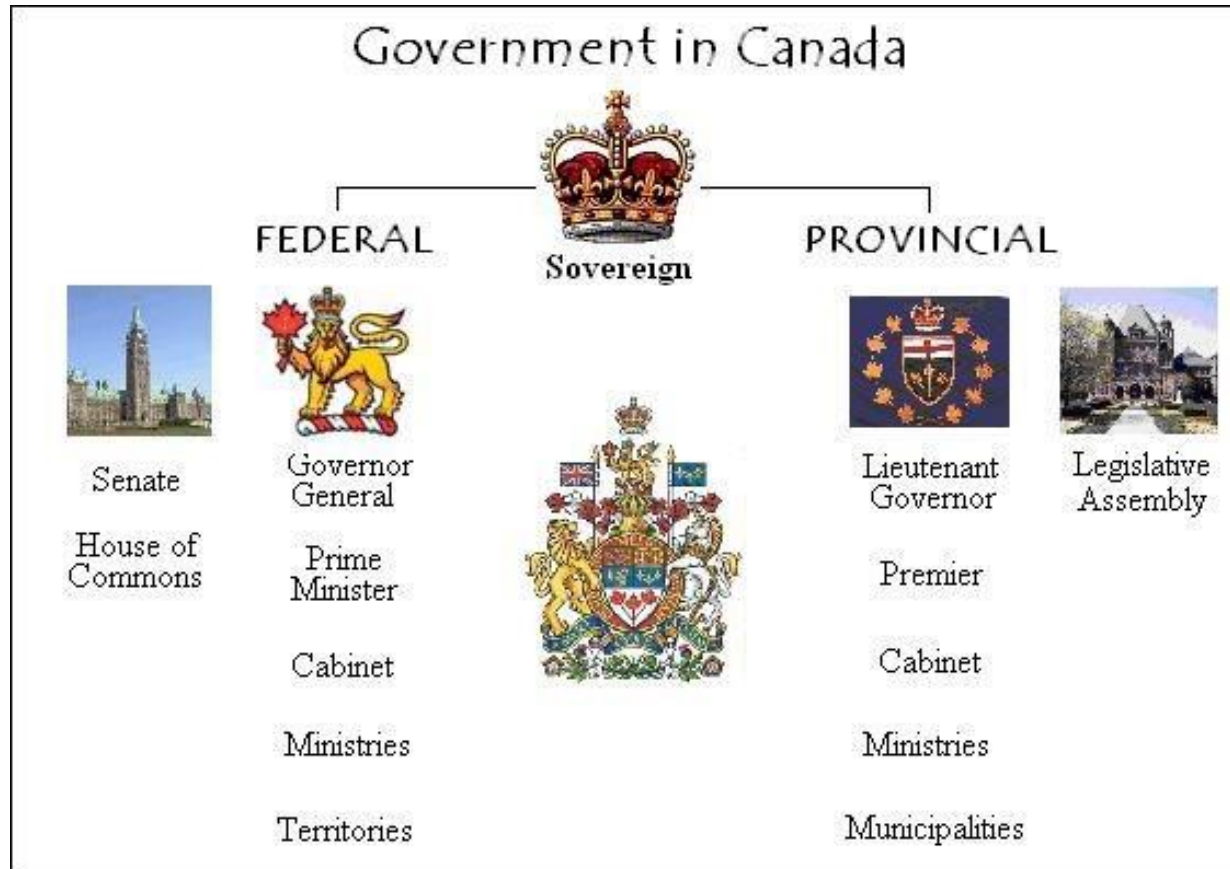
Quasi-Judicial Bodies

- The Tax Court of Canada (1983): Superior, independent tribunal for the disposition of cases between taxpayers and the Minister of National Revenue
- Tribunals (aka: Boards or Commissions) – A person or institution with authority to adjudicate claims or disputes; established by Federal or Provincial legislation
- Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (1977):
 - Adjudicates cases of alleged/suspected discrimination according to the Canadian Human Rights Act
 - Cases are referred to the Tribunal by the Canadian Human Rights Commission
 - Ordered Federal gov't to implement full "scope and meaning" of Jordan's Principle in 2016



This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#).

Provincial Government

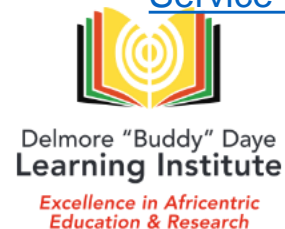


https://www.cadavies.com/uploads/6/0/0/3/60032895/z16_orig.jpg

- Local and provincial issues (e.g., Education, health care, infrastructure like roads, social services)
- Lieutenant Governor: Represents the Crown; assents legislation
- Legislative Assembly: Elected representatives (MLAs – 55 in NS, 49 in NB, 27 in PEI)
- Cabinet AKA Executive Council, or the Government
 - Responsible for gov't administration & policy
 - Premier – President of the Executive Council
 - Decision making for the executive branch composed of Ministers who oversee depts.

NS Government: [FULL LIST HERE](#)

- [Acadian Affairs and Francophonie](#)
- [Office of Addictions & Mental Health](#)
- [African Nova Scotian Affairs](#)
- [Advanced Education](#)
- [Agriculture](#)
- [Communications Nova Scotia](#)
- [Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage](#)
- [Community Services](#)
- [Economic Development](#)
- [Education and Early Childhood Development](#)
- [Emergency Management Office](#)
- [Office of Equity & Anti-Racism Initiatives](#)
- [Finance and Treasury Board](#)
- [Office of the Fire Marshal](#)
- [Gaelic Affairs](#)
- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Justice](#)
- [Labour Skills and Immigration](#)
- [Office of L'nu Affairs](#)
- [Municipal Affairs and Housing](#)
- [Natural Resources and Renewables](#)
- [Public Service Commission](#)
- [Public Works](#)
- [Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness](#)
- [Seniors and Long-term Care](#)
- [Service Nova Scotia](#)



NB Government: [FULL LIST HERE](#)

- [Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries](#)
- [Education & Early Childhood Development](#)
- [Environment & Local Government](#)
- [Executive Council Office](#)
- [Finance and Treasury Board](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Indigenous Affairs](#)
- [Intergovernmental Affairs \(Executive Council\)](#)
- [Justice & Public Safety](#)
- [Natural Resources and Energy Development](#)
- [Office of the Premier](#)
- [Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour](#)
- [Regional Development Corporation](#)
- [Service New Brunswick](#)
- [Social Development](#)
- [Tourism, Heritage & Culture](#)
- [Transportation & Infrastructure](#)
- [Women's Equality](#)

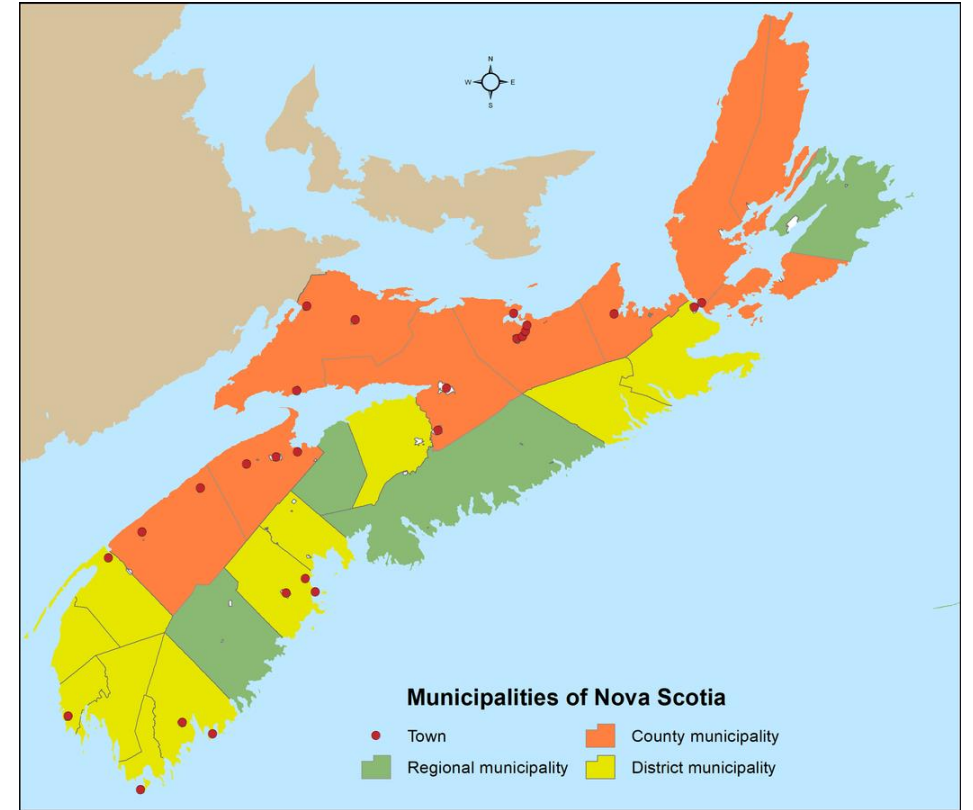
PEI Government: [FULL LIST HERE](#)

- [Agriculture](#)
- [Economic Development, Innovation & Trade](#)
- [Education & Early Years](#)
- [Environment, Energy & Climate Action](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [Fisheries, Tourism, Sport & Culture](#)
- [Health & Wellness](#)
- [Housing, Land & Communities](#)
- [Justice & Public Safety](#)
- [Social Development & Seniors](#)
- [Transportation & Infrastructure](#)
- [Workforce, Advanced Learning, & Population](#)



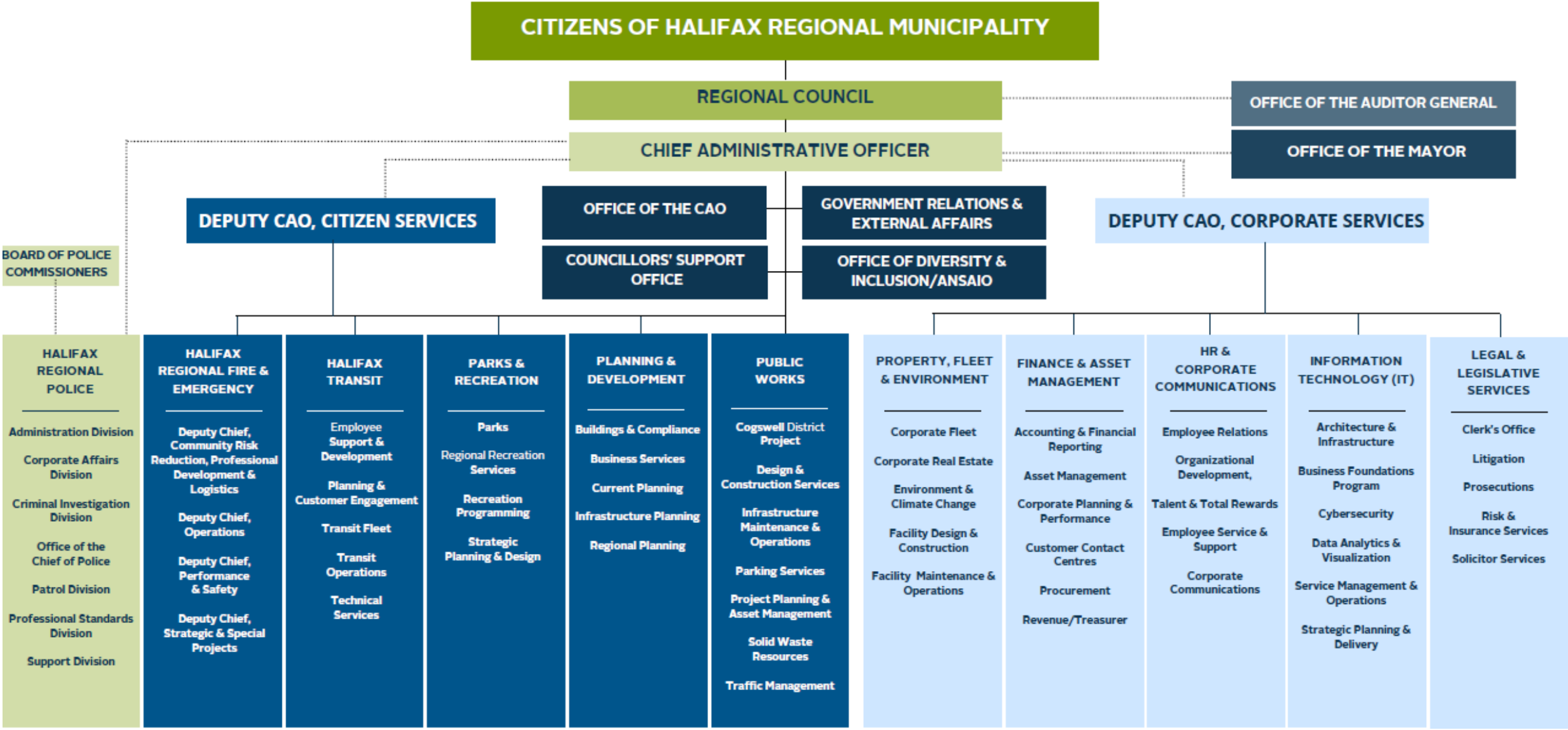
Municipal Government

- Derive authority from provincial legislation –
 "The Municipal Government Act"
- Responsible for local public services – e.g.,
 police, water services, parks, garbage collection, etc.
- Council
 - Primary governing and legislative body
 - Elected, non-partisan reps. of municipal "wards"/"districts"
 - Include a Mayor, elected at-large
- Municipal Public Service
 - Administers the functions of gov't through a departments
 - Led by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
- Boards of Commissioners (appointed)
 - Established by legislation to oversee areas of service



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=46033706>

E.g., HRM Org. Chart



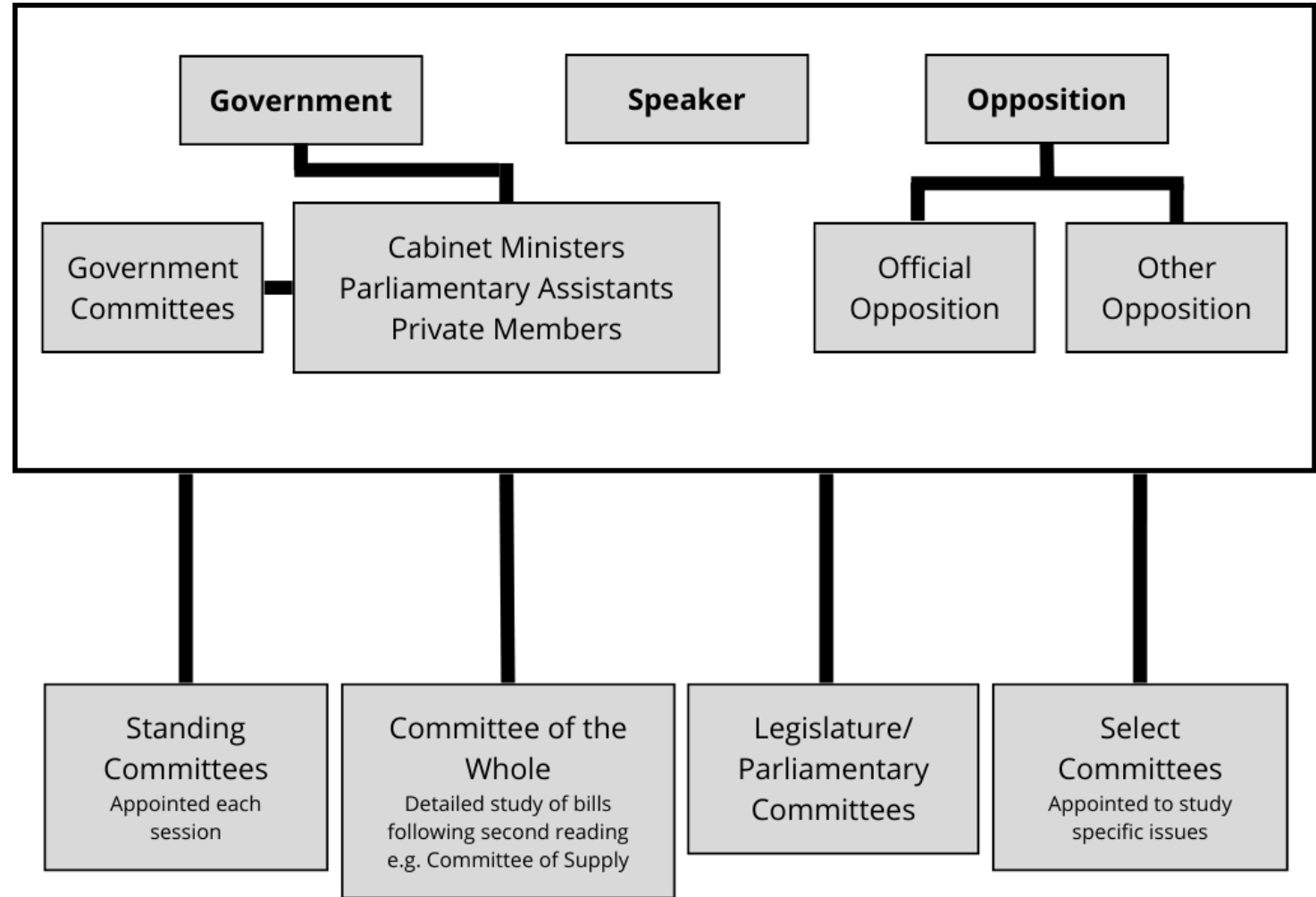
Government 101: Behind the Scenes

- Bureaucracies
 - Unelected, non-partisan, administrative branch of government
 - Highly structured, hierarchical, and process driven
 - Relationships can be just as helpful at this level
 - "Bureaucrat" has baggage – Use "Civil Servant" or "Public Servant"
- Crown Corporations
 - Federal or Provincial organizations structured like private companies
 - Subject to less political influence than gov't departments (examples – Invest NS, Canada Post)
- Other agencies
- The Informal - Events, emerging needs, and relationships often supersede gov't process and priorities
- Changing democratic norms



Committees

- Provide in depth analysis and guidance on policy, departmental spending, proposed legislation, and other key issues
- Composed of elected representatives from all parties
- May include community or stakeholder representation (a great opportunity to engage!)



Elections

Timing & Lifecycle Implications

- Canadian Constitution - the Prime Minister and Premiers can call an election anytime within five years of the last.
- Fixed elections
 - 4-year fixed election legislation established at Federal and Provincial levels.
 - May be unconstitutional and have been ignored.

Evolution of Voting Rights in Canada

Originally restricted according to gender, property, race, faith, and loyalty to the British Crown.

1918: *Canadian women are granted the right to vote in federal elections.*

1948: *Parliament overturns a section of the Dominion Elections Act that allows provinces to deny voting rights "for reasons of race." Failure to own property is also no longer permitted restriction.*

1960: *Status Indians are permitted to vote in Canadian federal elections.*

1970: *Canada's voting age is lowered from 21 to 18.*

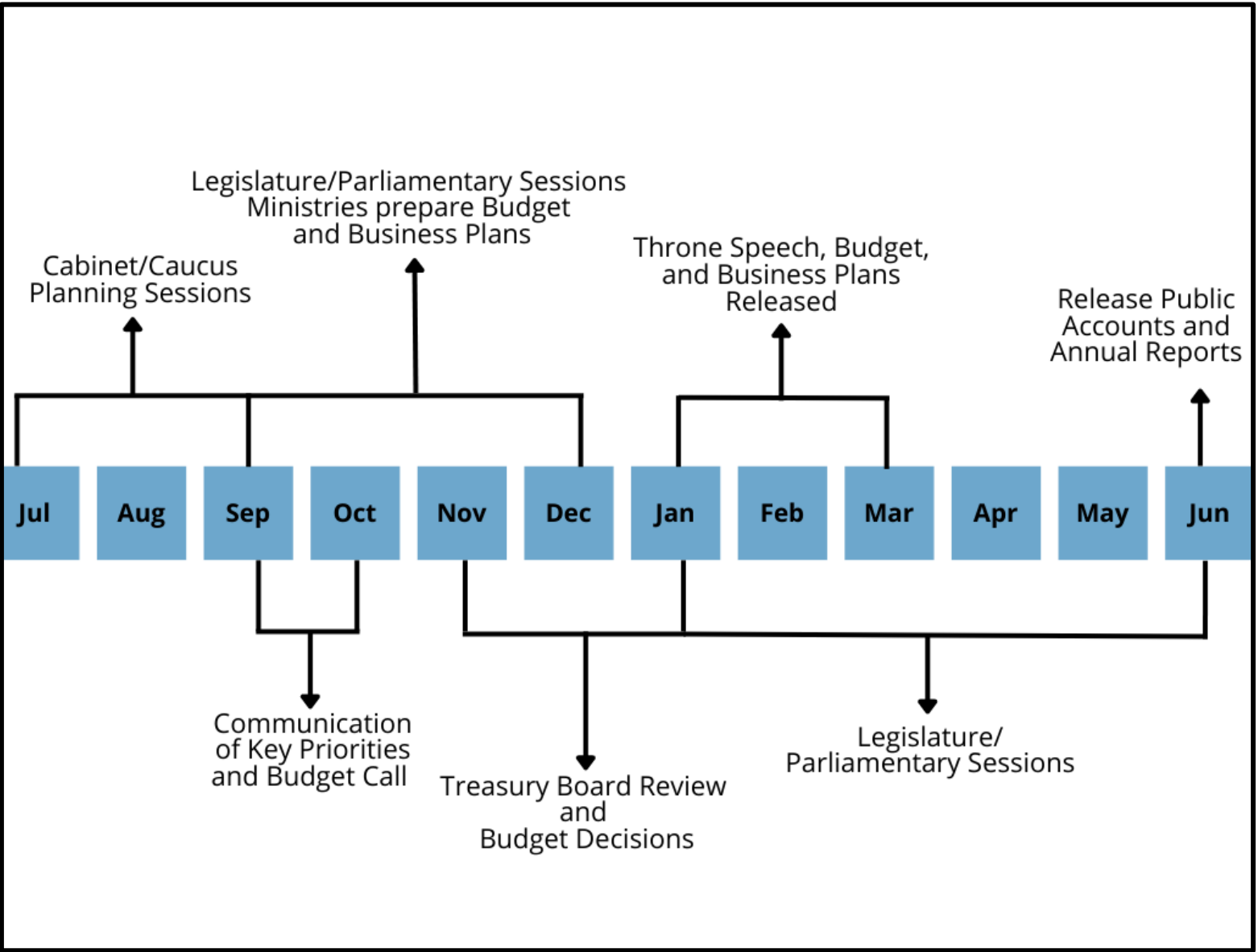
1975: *British citizens can no longer vote in Canadian elections.*

Government Lifecycle

(4 year term & policy implications)

- Opportunities to influence public policy are highly dependent on a government's political capital and its lifecycle stage
- Understanding the election cycle and knowing who's in office is key!
 - **Months 1-4: Familiarization**
 - Getting to know the issues and players
 - **Months 4-38: Activist**
 - Best chance to tackle new challenges
 - **Months 38-42: Patching and Filling**
 - Bolstering its reputation by addressing priority issues and fulfilling promises
 - **Months 42-48: The Red Zone**
 - Preparing for the next election

Federal & Provincial Legislative & Budget Cycles



Assessing Priorities & Policy Opportunities

Election platforms (e.g., [GPNS-Platform-2021.pdf \(greenpartyns.ca\)](#))

Public / Media Statements

Budget briefing documents (e.g., [Budget documents 2022 to 2023 - Government of Nova Scotia](#))

Policy papers/engagement sessions

Meet and greets: sharing the narrative

Mandate letters (e.g., [Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion Mandate Letter \(pm.gc.ca\)](#))

Minister of Housing, Diversity, and Inclusion- Mandate Letter (Dec. 2021: from the Prime Minister)

To realize these objectives, I ask that you achieve results for Canadians by delivering the following commitments.

- *Work with provinces, territories, municipalities and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to develop a Fairness in Real Estate Action Plan that includes:*
 - *Amendments to the Income Tax Act to require landlords to disclose in their tax filings the rent they receive pre- and post-renovation and to pay a proportional surtax if the increase in rent is excessive;*
 - *An anti-flipping tax on residential properties, requiring properties to be held for at least 12 months;*
 - *A temporary ban on foreign buyers of non-recreational residential property in the Canadian housing market so that housing does not sit vacant and unavailable to Canadians;*
 - *Supporting the review of, and possible reforms to, the tax treatment of Real Estate Investment Trusts;*
 - *Developing policies to curb excessive profits in investment properties while protecting small independent landlords;*
 - *Continued....*



Honourable Ahmed Housen



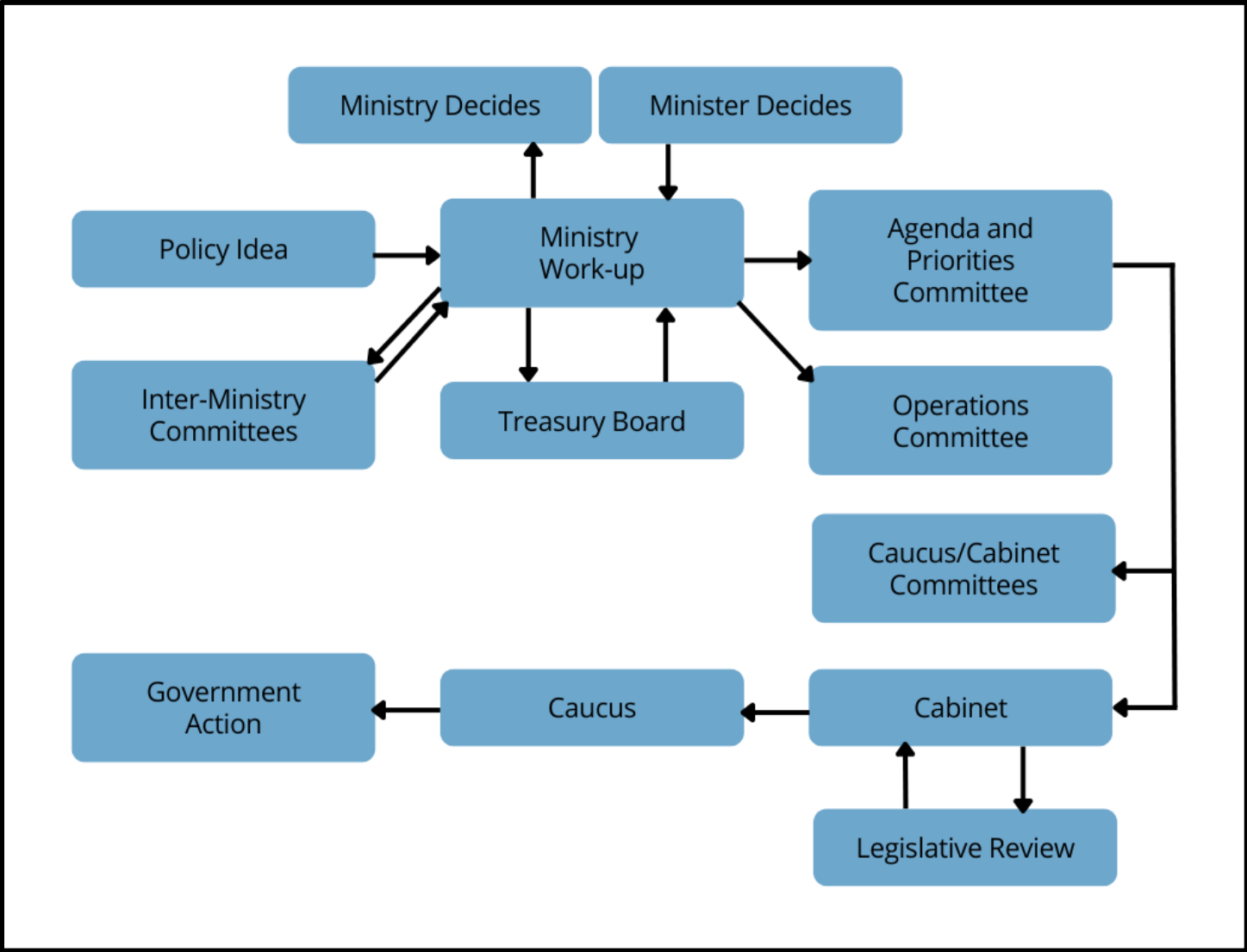
Government 101: policy influencers

It's not just the obvious folks!

- Elected officials
- Political staff
- Senior civil servants
- Service delivery staff
- Lobbyists / Industry
- Advocates
- Other?



The Policy Process: Is this how decisions are made?



Workshop: Assignment 1



Assignment #1

In small working groups, introduce your policy ask idea & begin working on Assignment #1.

Your assignment has two parts:

1. In two or three sentences, state your “ask” as clearly and specifically as you can at this point. In other words, what public policy change are you seeking? Keep in mind that this is not the same thing as identifying the problem (e.g., “there are too many accidents at intersection X”). The “ask” is the public policy solution you’ll be working to have implemented (e.g., “a four way stop should be installed at intersection X”).
2. In 1-2 pages, give an account of the Government, Policy, and Organizational Context for your “ask.”



Assignment #1

Your assignment is due **May 29 @ 6pm AST**

Send directly to your mentor & cc Samantha
(swilliams@unitedwayhalifax.ca)

Learning resources (available on e-learning platform):

- Participating in Federal Public Policy: A Guide for the Voluntary Sector (pages 5-22)
- Be H.I.P.P.: Have Influence on Public Policy (pages 17-29)



Wrap up



Your assignment is due May 29 @ 6pm (AST)



Email directly to your mentor & cc Samantha



Next session: May 30 & 31



United Way
Halifax



Delmore "Buddy" Daye
Learning Institute

*Excellence in Africentric
Education & Research*

nsc