



# Government 101

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\*what we weren't taught/forgot from school





# Introductions





# Overview - How it works

- Electoral process
- Executive Branch
- Legislative Assembly
- Civil service vs political staff



**What questions do you have about how government works?**





Denying  
inequality  
and  
racism



Changing  
the  
system





# Electoral process



# Levels of Government



## Federal

- Across Canada
- Prime Minister/MPs
- Parliament
- Ridings

## Provincial

- Across BC
- Premier/MLAs
- Legislature
- Constituencies

## Municipal

- Across a city
- Mayor/City Councillors
- City Hall
- ?



**Indigenous Governance**

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# Parliamentary Democracy: how does it work?

[Elections BC video](#)







Today's BC Liberals



greens  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA





## Official Opposition

- 2<sup>nd</sup> political party with the most number of seats
- "watchdog" of government
- Leader is chosen by the membership of the political party

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## Activity

- Who is your local MLA?
- What party are they with?
- Do you know where their constituency office is?





# Parliamentary Democracy





## 3 key branches



Legislative



Executive

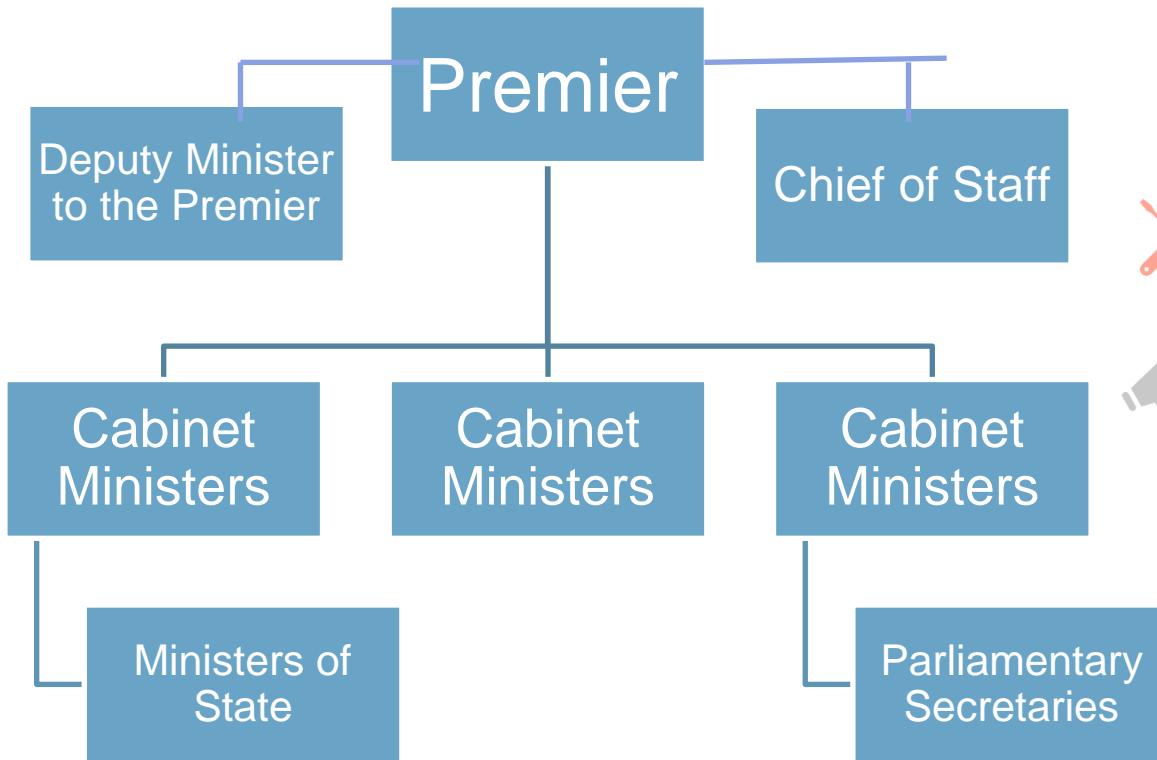


Judicial



# Executive Branch





## Office of the Premier



Deputy Minister to the Premier is the highest public servant



Chief of Staff is the highest political staff

# Cabinet committees

- Priority and Accountability Committee
- Treasury Board Committee
- Legislative Review Committee
- Environmental and Land Use Committee
- Child Care Working Group
- Sustainable Shared Prosperity Committee
- Social Initiatives Committee
- Mental Health and Addictions Working Group
- Housing Working Group
- Cabinet Committee on Reconciliation





# Shadow cabinet

- Official opposition critics of the cabinet ministers
- Develop a level of expertise on a subject matter



## Activity



- What is an public policy area that you are interested in?
- Find the minister who is responsible.
- Look for their mandate letter. What insight do you get from their mandate letter?

# The Legislative Assembly

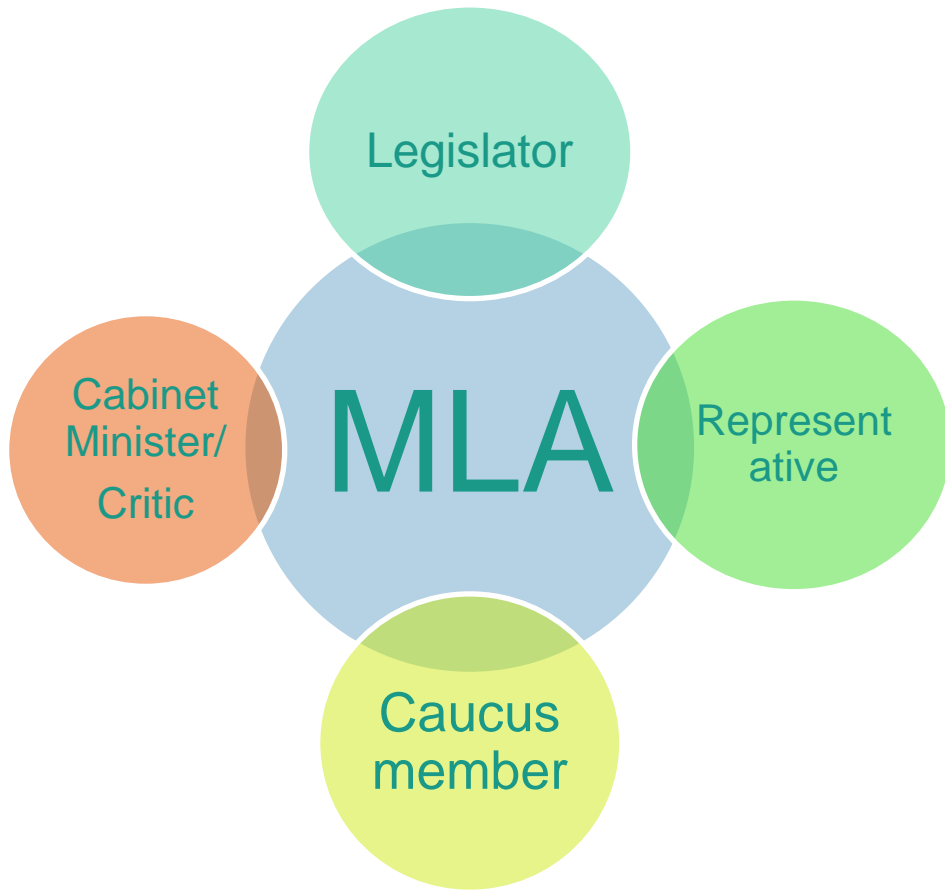




# The Legislative Assembly



- Lieutenant Governor
- 87 elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)
- Different branches, bodies and committees



# Roles of a MLA

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# Speaker of the House

- Mandatory
- Role to oversee debate and conduct in the House
- Elected by peers
- Neutral



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# Budget

- Budget day
- Budget debate
- Estimates debate
- Contingencies







# Question Period



- [ESL Matters in Question Period](#)
- Hansard – transcripts of the debates



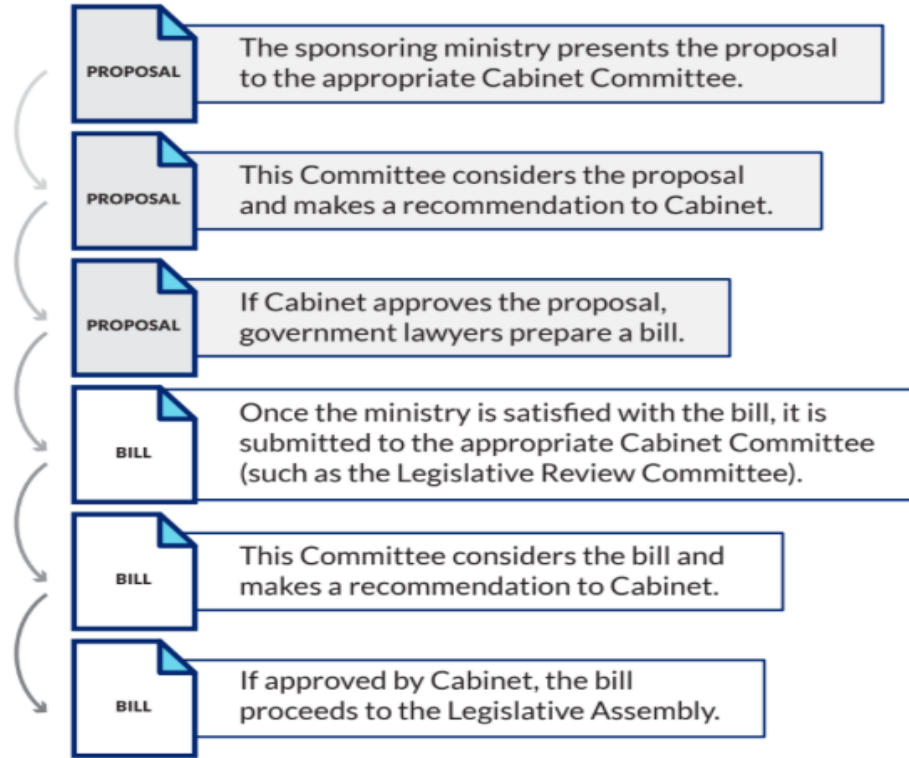


## Change – how to do it?

Depending on the issue you are working on, the outcome may require the following actions:

- Administrative change in policy at the ministry level
- Passage of an Order-in-Council (OIC) by Cabinet
- Passage of legislation or legislative amendments by the Legislature

# How a bill becomes law



## HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW





## What to consider

- Your strategic approach - what is the policy change you want to see
- Who and how - determine who it is that you want to approach and how you will engage with:
  - elected MLAs, Cabinet Ministers, and Cabinet
  - critics and opposition MLAs
  - the public service



## Activity



- Some changes can be made easily without a large amount of consulting or budget implications.
  - What is a change that can be made that doesn't cost money?
  - What are some changes that would be expensive?



# Civil Service and Political staff – what's the difference?



# Political Staff



Ministers report to the Premier. Staff report to Ministers/Premier's Chief of Staff



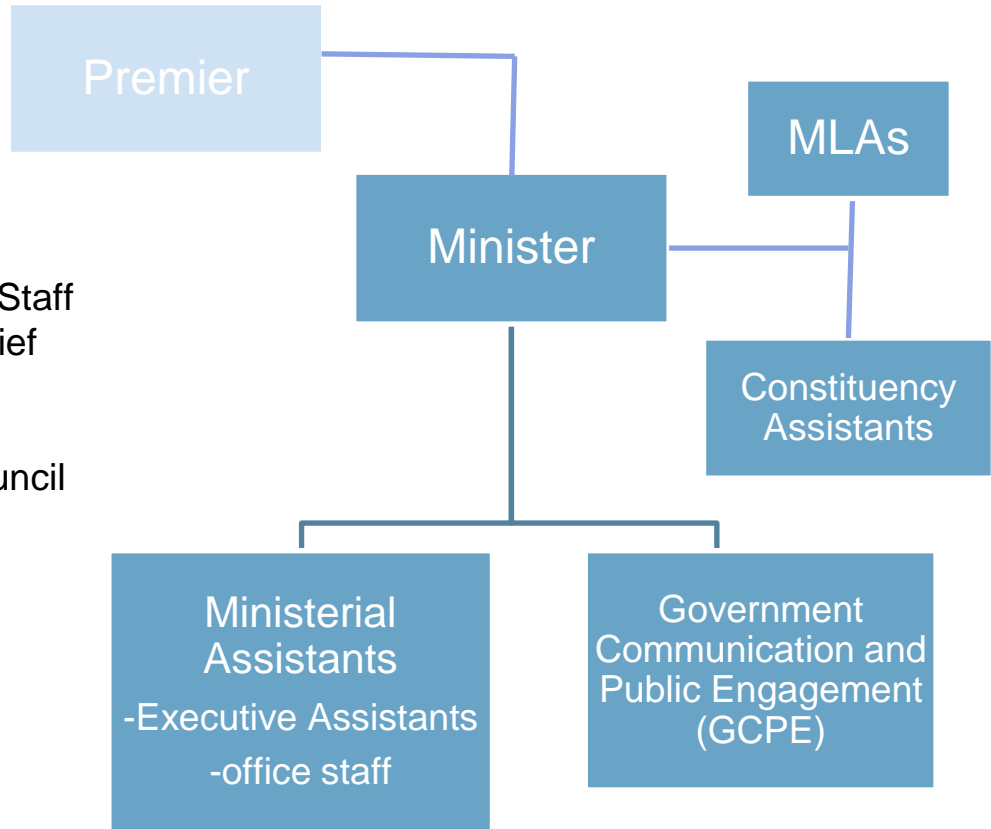
Are appointed by Orders in Council

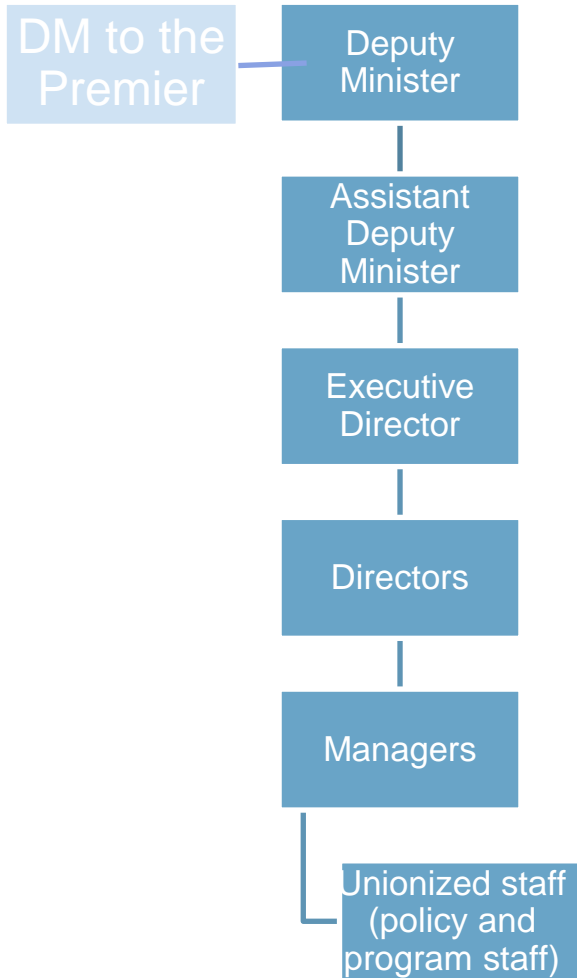


Change when different political parties get into government



Ministers set high level policy – mandate letters





## Civil Service



Report to the Deputy Minister. DMs reports the Deputy Minister to the Premier/Minister



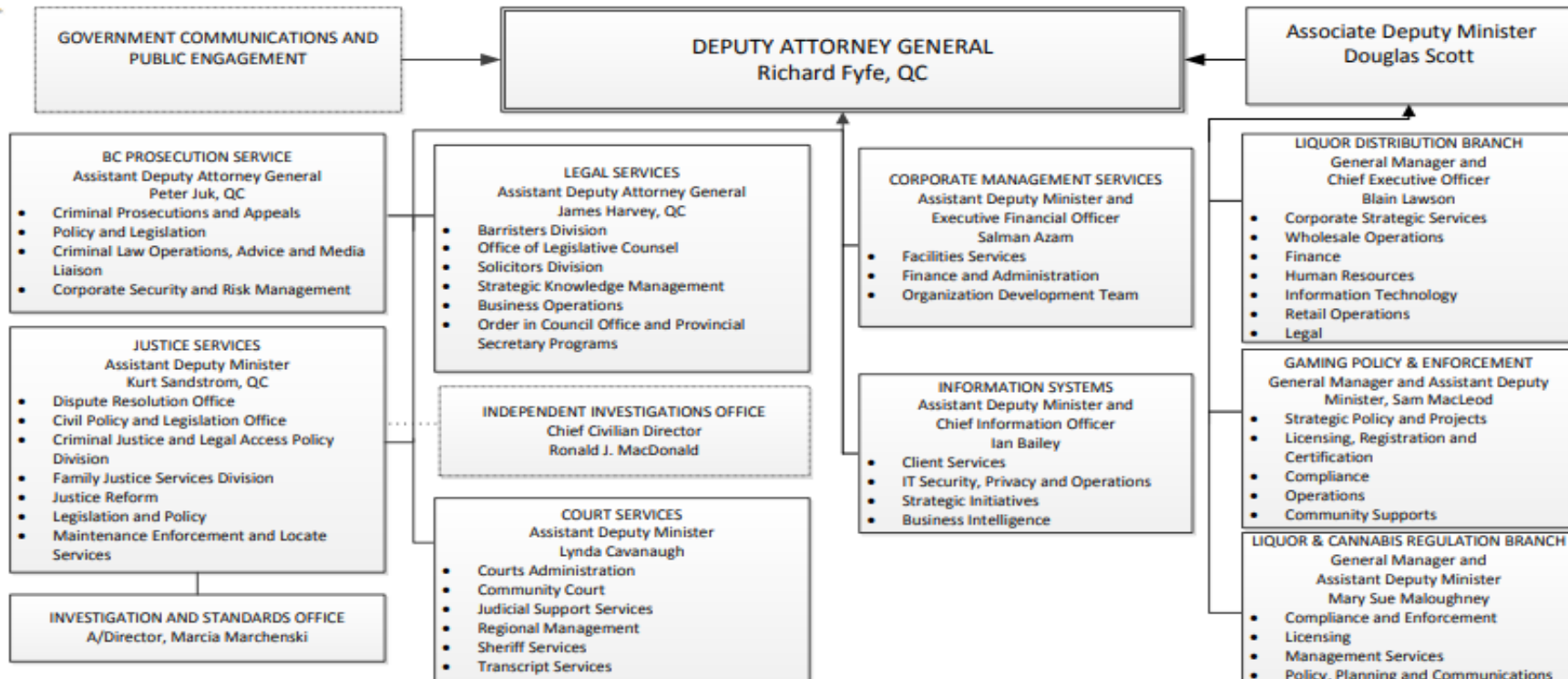
DMs and ADMs are appointed by Orders in Council



Non-partisan and don't change with new political parties in power



Are responsible for developing policy, implementing and overseeing programs



The Attorney General makes appointments and/or recommends Lieutenant Governor-in-Council appointments to a number of other entities related to the ministry's mandate such as:

BC Law Institute	Judicial Council of the Provincial Court of BC	Law Society of BC
Continuing Legal Education Society	Judicial Justices Compensation Commission	Legal Services Society of BC
Electoral Boundaries Commission	Justice Education Society of BC	Notaries Public Board of Examiners Judges
Compensation Commission	Law Foundation of BC	Notary Foundation
		Supreme Court Rules Revision Committee

#### AG AGENCIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND CROWN AGENCIES

BC Ferry Commission	Employment Standards Tribunal	Labour Relations Board
BC Human Rights Tribunal	Environmental Appeal Board	Legal Services Society of BC
BC Lottery Corporation	Financial Services Tribunal	Mental Health Review Board
BC Review Board	Forest Appeals Commission	Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal
BC Utilities Commission	Health Professions Review Board	Property Assessment Appeal Board
Building Code Appeal Board	Hospital Appeal Board	Public Guardian and Trustee
Civil Resolution Tribunal	Industry Training Appeal Board	Safety Standards Appeal Board
Community Care & Assisted Living Appeal Board	Insurance Corporation of BC	Surface Rights Board











**Thank you.**

