

The
Shoreline Journal **Tid-Bits**

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Call for Nominations for 2025 Human Rights Awards

People can now submit nominations for this year's Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards. The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission presents awards annually to Nova Scotians whose work advances human rights in the province.

People can nominate individual Nova Scotians and groups who have demonstrated excellence in this area until November 1. Award categories are: Youth (up to age 20) - for work that promotes equity and inclusion, advances understanding of human rights and its importance in empowering youth to advocate for themselves, their peers and their communities; Individual (age 21 and older) - someone who demonstrates leadership and whose work has contributed to change in their community by advancing equity, inclusion and the value in promoting and protecting human rights; Group/Organization - its human rights in Nova Scotia- presented to an individual of African descent whose work reflects and builds upon his legacy of championing racial equality, advancing justice and fostering socio-economic empowerment

Wel'lukwen Award - presented to an L'nu individual (youth or adult), group or organization whose work advances the rights of Mi'kmaw/Indigenous people while creating a just, equitable and inclusive society.

The 2025 Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards will be presented in Halifax on Wednesday, December 10, to mark the United Nations' international Human Rights Day.

More information about the awards and the nomination form are available at: <https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/awards>

Heating Assistance Rebate Program Opens October 1

Nova Scotians living on a low income can soon apply for help to pay their heating bills this winter. Applications for the annual Heating Assistance Rebate Program open Wednesday, October 1.

The Heating Assistance Rebate Program is in addition to a host of other affordability measures launched by the government, which has brought in more than \$500 million in tax-saving measures by reducing the HST and changing income taxes so more Nova Scotians will pay less tax; the combined measures are expected to save the average Nova Scotian family more than \$1,000 this year; removed tolls for Nova Scotians on the Cobequid Pass and Halifax Harbour bridges, making travel for many commuters cheaper and easier; increased support for people on income assistance; quadrupled investment in the rent supplement program, helping 12,000 Nova Scotians last year; invested 10 times the budget of previous governments in the community housing sector, creating and preserving more than 3,000 affordable housing units; raised the minimum wage twice in 2025 (it will increase to \$16.50 on Wednesday) and increased disability support funding so that 29,000 people and families receive more each month.

"The Heating Assistance Rebate Program is back to help with home heating costs and this year our focus will be on helping the most vulnerable citizens of our province," said Jill Balser, Minister of Service Nova Scotia. "We encourage all eligible Nova Scotians to take advantage of the program and apply. It's one of the many support programs we deliver along with the Seniors' Care Grant, the Property Tax Rebate for Seniors, Your Energy Rebate and more."

Families earning a combined net income of up to \$45,000 and single-person households earning a net income up to \$30,000 are eligible to apply for the heating assistance rebate whether they rent or own, provided they pay for heat. Recipients of the Guaranteed Income Supplement or income assistance are also eligible. The rebate for 2025-26 is \$400.

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News from our Provincial Capital - Tom Taggart

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allowed Nova Scotian families keep over five hundred million dollars. That alone accounts for a large portion of this years debt. But more importantly! Where do we or could we cut? Do we reduce spending in Health Care? Do we stop building long term care beds or reduce the services provided to help seniors age in their homes. It is no secret that we have a large percentage of our population, myself included, needing health care based on our age. Modern Medicine is giving us a longer, better quality of life.

We always say, we cannot leave this debt to our children. I agree! I also agree that the seniors that came before us, who raised us, supported us and who built our communities also deserve a quality of life. Every day when we turn on the news, we hear about a housing crisis, an affordability crisis, not just in Nova Scotia but across Canada. Drivers want better roads and we must support our most vulnerable.

My view is that as government we must be frugal and watch our spending. No question! However, as I look to the future, I believe that we must move forward with industry growth. Whether

FOIPOP Response Rates Among Best in Canada

The Province managed a record-breaking volume of freedom of information requests in 2024-25 and completed 89 per cent of them on time - one of the highest rates in Canada. The number of requests under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act reached more than 3,800, an increase of 15 per cent from 2023-24. That is the highest number of applications submitted to the government in the 30 years the legislation has been in place.

"Nova Scotians want and deserve to have a government that is responsive, transparent and accountable," said Jill Balser, Minister of Service Nova Scotia. "The team did an incredible job in being a leader in compliance rates across the country while managing the most requests we have ever received."

The statistics are included in the 2024-25 annual report of Information Access and Privacy Services, released September 22. Other highlights include: 80 per cent response rate to FOIPOP requests within 30 days; more than 426,000 pages of records reviewed; the largest response to an application was 10,155 pages and among applicant groups, businesses and private individuals/public filed the highest number of requests.

The report was issued as part of Right to Know Week, an annual event that promotes the public's right to access government-held information.

it be wind west, onshore and offshore wind, green hydrogen or responsible extraction of critical minerals. For future governments to support and build the infrastructure that provides a quality of life for our children, and their families there must be new opportunities. This may require managed deficit spending; it will require vision and most likely some risk. But what is the risk of not moving forward? Not building much needed infrastructure and not continuing to invest in health and long-term care.

Enjoy this most beautiful season of the year!

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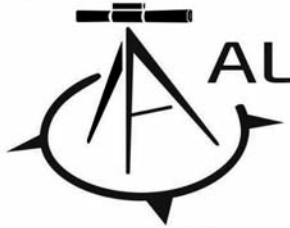
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