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Annual Report on the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act 2023 to 2024

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Annual Report on the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act 2023 to 2024

From: [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat](#)

On this page

- [Message from the Chief Human Resources Officer](#)
- [About this report](#)
- [Part 1: Organizational enquiries and disclosures](#)
- [Part 2: Allegations active in 2023-24](#)
- [Part 3: Investigations, findings and corrective measures](#)
- [Part 4: Education and awareness activities](#)
- [Part 5: Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer: activities to support ethical workplaces](#)
- [Appendix A: Summary of Disclosure-Related Organizational Activities](#)
- [Appendix B: Disclosure Process Under the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*](#)
- [Appendix C: Key Terms](#)

Message from the Chief Human Resources Officer

I am pleased to present the 17th annual report on the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act* to the President of the Treasury Board for tabling in Parliament. This report provides an overview of disclosure-related activities in federal public sector organizations for the 2023–24 fiscal year.

During this period, the Clerk of the Privy Council initiated a reinvigorated discussion around the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector*, which describes the values and expected behaviours that guide public servants at all levels. Publications reporting on those conversations, their outcomes and next steps, include among others, the [Deputy Minister's Task Team on Values and Ethics Report to the Clerk of the Privy Council](#) and the Deputy Clerk's progress report, [Continuing our dialogue, positioning for the future: Progress update on values and ethics](#).

The *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act* requires that each organization in the public sector have its own specific code of conduct consistent with the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector*. It also requires organizations to establish mechanisms that allow public servants to come forward if they believe that a serious breach of a code of conduct or other serious wrongdoing has occurred or is about to occur in the workplace. Reporting wrongdoing takes courage. The act provides public servants with important protections from reprisal if they come forward in good faith to disclose serious wrongdoing in the workplace.

This year's report shows that:

- more public servants came forward about possible wrongdoing this year than last year
- they made more disclosures
- those disclosures contained more allegations of wrongdoing

This increase demonstrates that employees both have an awareness of the act and are willing to report wrongdoing. It also indicates that we are heading in the right direction in raising awareness and building confidence in the protections for public servants who disclose wrongdoing.

In 2023–24, 36 organizations in the public sector received internal disclosures. While the specifics of investigations are confidential, it is possible to share outcomes of disclosures and other recourse mechanisms with employees to promote transparency. Examples of such information-sharing like the [Second Annual Report on Addressing Misconduct and Wrongdoing at Global Affairs Canada](#) help build confidence that allegations of wrongdoing are taken seriously and result in action. In this way, each disclosure and investigation contributes to the continuous improvement of the public sector.

In November 2022, the President of the Treasury Board appointed a task force of experts who will make recommendations on possible amendments to the act to further support and protect federal public servants who come forward to disclose wrongdoing.

All these efforts are key to maintaining the integrity of Canada’s public sector and Canadians’ trust in government. The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer is committed to these goals and will continue to work to promote a healthy, respectful, and inclusive public service.

I invite you to read this report to learn more about disclosure activities in the federal public sector, and how the Government of Canada is addressing wrongdoing and supporting values and ethics.

About this report

The [Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#) (the Act) provides federal public sector employees with:

- a secure and confidential process for disclosing wrongdoing in the workplace
- protection from acts of reprisal

This annual report on the Act covers the period from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. The report contains information on disclosure activities in the federal public sector, which includes departments, agencies and Crown corporations, as defined in [Section 2](#) of the Act.

The chief executive of every organization subject to the Act is required by [Section 10](#) to:

- establish internal procedures to manage disclosures
- designate a senior officer for internal disclosure who is responsible for addressing disclosures made under the Act

Alternatively, organizations that are too small to designate a senior officer or establish their own internal procedures can have disclosures handled by the [Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada](#).

[Section 38.1](#) of the Act requires chief executives of federal organizations to submit a report at the end of the fiscal year to the Chief Human Resources Officer on disclosures made under the Act within their organization. This report compiles the information on disclosures that organizations received. It does not contain information about:

- disclosures or reprisal complaints made to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada, which are published in the [Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada’s annual report](#)
- other recourse mechanisms
- anonymous disclosures

Part 1: Organizational enquiries and disclosures

▼ In this section

- [Enquiries](#)
- [Disclosures and allegations of wrongdoing](#)

- [Allegations carried forward from previous years](#)
- [Preliminary analysis of allegations](#)
- [Breakdown of allegations assessed in 2023–24](#)

Organizations in the public sector¹ have an internal disclosure mechanism that gives public servants three choices for making a protected disclosure. They can disclose issues to any of the following:

- their supervisor
- their organization’s senior officer for internal disclosure
- the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada

An organization’s senior officer for internal disclosure helps create a positive environment for disclosing wrongdoing and handles disclosures of wrongdoing made by public servants of their organization.

It is a best practice for the senior officer for internal disclosure to regularly provide information, advice and guidance to employees about the organization’s internal disclosure procedures, including:

- how to contact the senior officer to make enquiries and make disclosures
- how investigations are handled
- how disclosures made to a supervisor should be brought to the senior officer’s attention

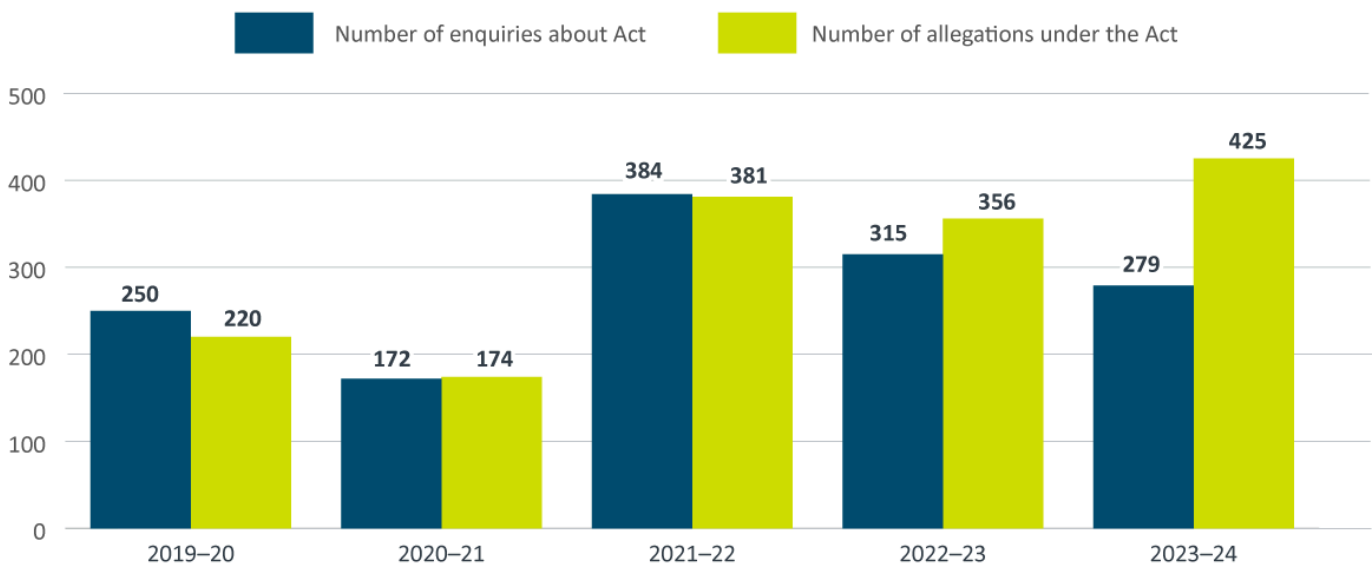
The senior officer should also provide information on how the identity of an employee making a disclosure and others involved will be protected.

Enquiries

Public servants are encouraged to contact the senior officer for internal disclosure in their organization when they need information about the disclosure process or have questions. They can do this without officially reporting a disclosure or allegation.

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, public sector organizations reported that 279 enquiries were made about the Act (see Figure 1). There were fewer enquiries in 2023–24 than in 2022–23 when there were 315 enquiries.

Figure 1: enquiries and allegations received, 2019–20 to 2023–24



▼ Figure 1 - Text version

Type	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Number of enquiries about the Act	250	172	384	315	279
Number of allegations under the Act	220	174	381	356	425

Disclosures and allegations of wrongdoing

When a public servant or a group of public servants give information to their supervisor or senior officer for internal disclosure about possible wrongdoing in the public sector, they are making an internal protected disclosure.²

A single disclosure may contain one or more allegations. An allegation refers to the communication of a possible instance of wrongdoing as defined in [section 8](#) of the Act. An allegation must be made in good faith, and the person making it must have reasonable grounds to believe that it is true.

In 2023–24, 250 public servants made 266 internal disclosures concerning 425 allegations of wrongdoing. This compares to 152 public servants who made 246 internal disclosures concerning 356 allegations of wrongdoing in 2022–23.

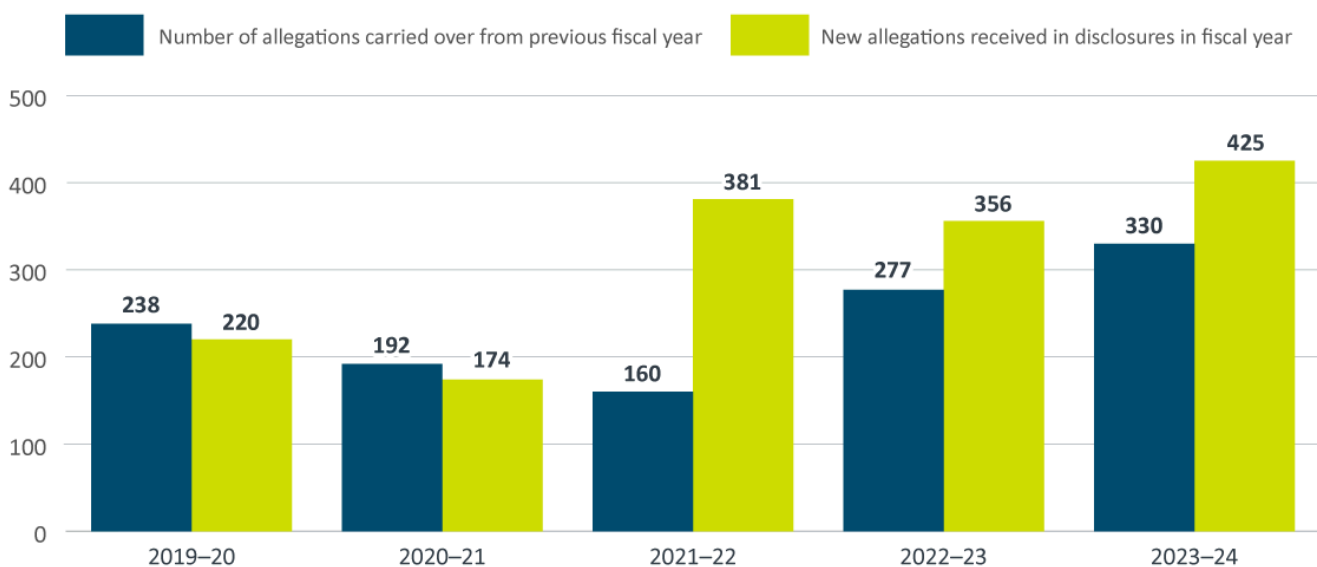
The number of allegations increased from 356 in 2022–23 to 425 in 2023–24. This increase is likely due to more employees being aware of the Act and its protections and being encouraged to make a disclosure.

Allegations carried forward from previous years

Depending on the complexity and volume of allegations received in any given year, organizations may carry forward some allegations into future years before they are resolved. Allegations that are not handled by March 31 are reported as being carried forward into the next fiscal year.

As shown in Figure 2, in 2023–24, there was again an increase in the number of allegations carried over from the previous fiscal year, from 277 in 2022–23 to 330 allegations in 2023–24. This represents an increase of nearly 20%.

Figure 2: new allegations and allegations carried over from previous fiscal years, 2019–20 to 2023–24



▼ Figure 2 - Text version

Type	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Number of allegations carried over from previous fiscal year	238	192	160	277	330

Type	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
New allegations received in disclosures in fiscal year	220	174	381	356	425

Federal organizations reported that delays in handling allegations (assessing, investigating and reporting) are often associated with:

- resource limitations, both within the organization and with contracted investigators
- the complexity of addressing allegations related to historical wrongdoings
- delays from having to postpone interviews with disclosers or witnesses due to extended leave or other factors

These circumstances result in longer process times and allegations being carried over to the next fiscal year.

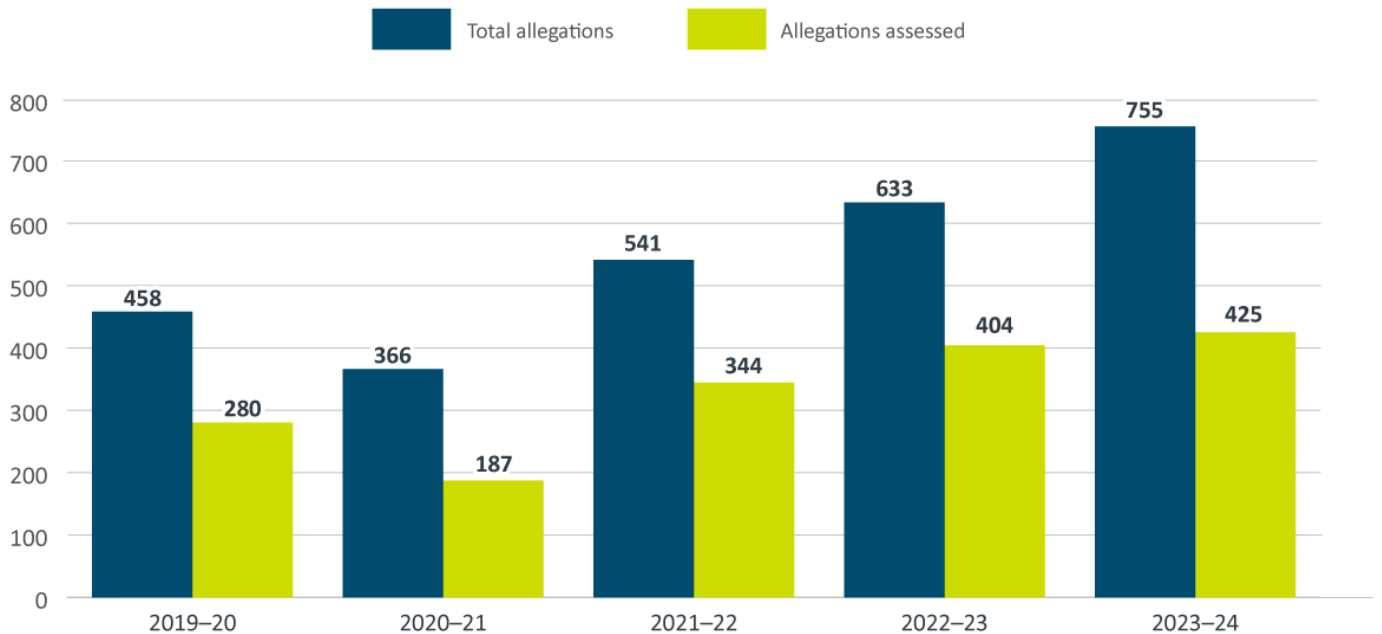
Preliminary analysis of allegations

When a disclosure of wrongdoing is received, the organization’s senior officer for internal disclosure conducts a preliminary analysis to determine whether the allegation or allegations meet the Act’s definition of wrongdoing and categorizes the allegation by type of wrongdoing.

The number of allegations ³ assessed in a fiscal year continued to rise year over year.

Of the 755 total allegations that were active in 2023–24, including allegations carried over from previous fiscal years and those newly received during 2023–24, 425 (56%) were assessed in 2023–24 (see Figure 3). The 2023–24 rate of assessment is lower than that of the previous fiscal year, during which 64% (404 of 633 total allegations) were assessed.

Figure 3: total allegations and allegations assessed, 2019–20 to 2023–24



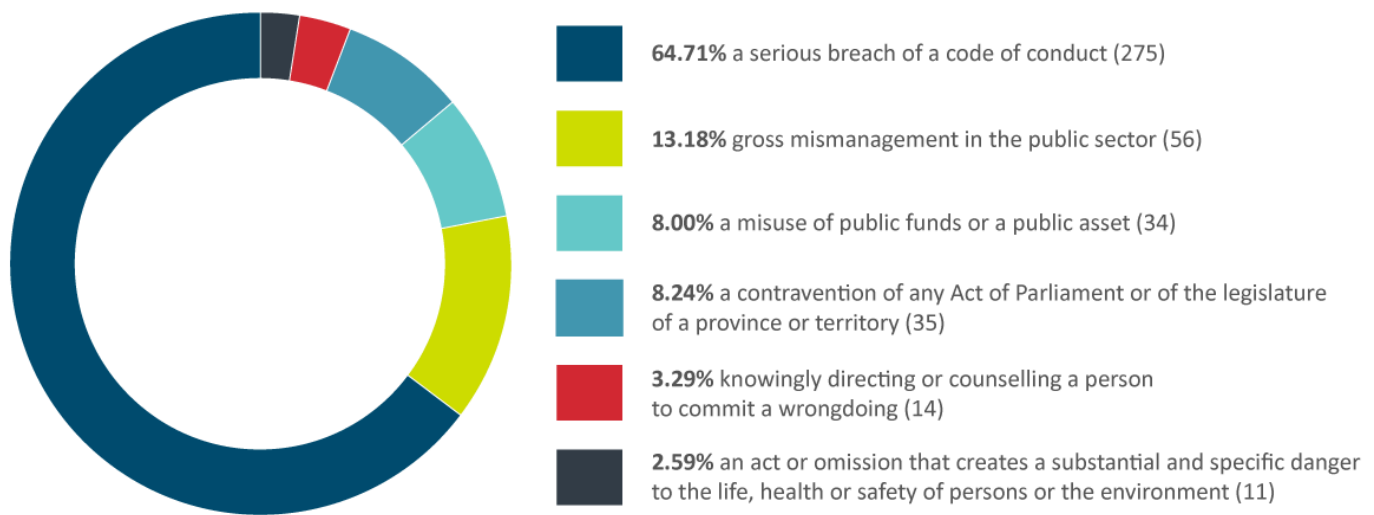
▼ Figure 3 - Text version

Type	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total allegations	458	366	541	633	755
Allegations assessed	280	187	344	404	425

Breakdown of allegations assessed in 2023–24

Each allegation is categorized under one of the six types of wrongdoing specified in [section 8](#) of the Act (see Figure 4). Of the 425 allegations assessed in 2023–24, 275 (65%) were categorized as a serious breach of a code of conduct. There were 261 (73.31%) allegations in this category in 2022–23.

Figure 4: breakdown of allegations by type of wrongdoing, 2023–24



▼ Figure 4 - Text version

Type	2023–24	
A serious breach of a code of conduct (275)	64.71%	275
Gross mismanagement in the public sector (56)	13.18%	56
A misuse of public funds or a public asset (34)	8.00%	34
A contravention of any act of Parliament or of the legislature of a province or territory (35)	8.24%	35
Knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing (14)	3.29%	14
An act or omission that creates a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment (11)	2.59%	11
Total	100%	425

In 2023–24, the percentage of allegations categorized as a serious breach of a code of conduct decreased. However, the percentage of allegations categorized as a contravention of any Act of Parliament or of a provincial or territorial legislature increased from 3.93% in 2022–23 to 8.24% in 2023–24. In addition, allegations in the category of gross mismanagement increased from 10.11% to 13.18%.

Each year, the category of serious breach of a code of conduct has the most allegations assessed. This is likely because codes of conduct set out clear standards for workplace behaviour, making it easy for employees to recognize and report breaches.

Part 2: Allegations active in 2023-24

▼ In this section

- [Reasons allegations were not acted on](#)
- [Allegations carried forward to the next year](#)

Organizations determine whether to “act on” or “not act on” an allegation based on criteria set out in [Section 8](#) of the Act.

“Acted on” means taking any steps to determine whether wrongdoing has occurred, including preliminary analysis (fact-finding) or investigation. It also means that a conclusion of the disclosure (whether the finding of wrongdoing occurred or not) was made during the reporting period (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024).

Of the 755 allegations received and carried forward, in 2023–24, 199 were acted on under the Act. Of these 199 allegations:

- 53 were received in 2023–24
- 54 were received in 2022–23
- 92 were received in 2021–22 or earlier

“Not acted on” refers to any decision not to proceed with allegations of wrongdoing after the disclosure is received because of one of the following:

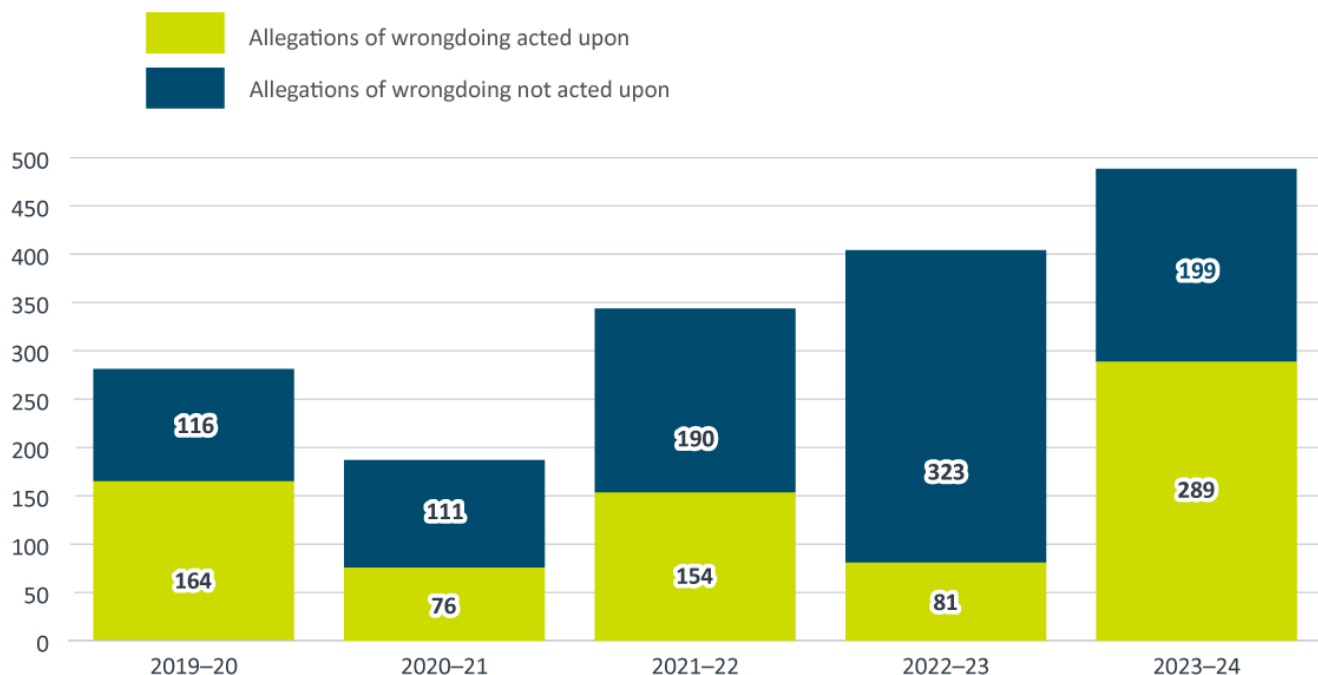
- it was determined that the allegations should be dealt with under a more appropriate recourse mechanism
- the allegations did not meet the definition of “wrongdoing” in the Act
- another reason

In total, 289 of the 755 allegations were not acted on under the Act. Of these 289 allegations:

- 241 were received in 2023–24
- 46 were received in 2022–23
- 2 were received 2021–23 or earlier

Figure 5 illustrates the number of allegations that were acted upon or not acted upon from 2019–20 to 2023–24.

Figure 5: allegations that were acted upon or not acted upon in 2023–24



▼ Figure 5 - Text version

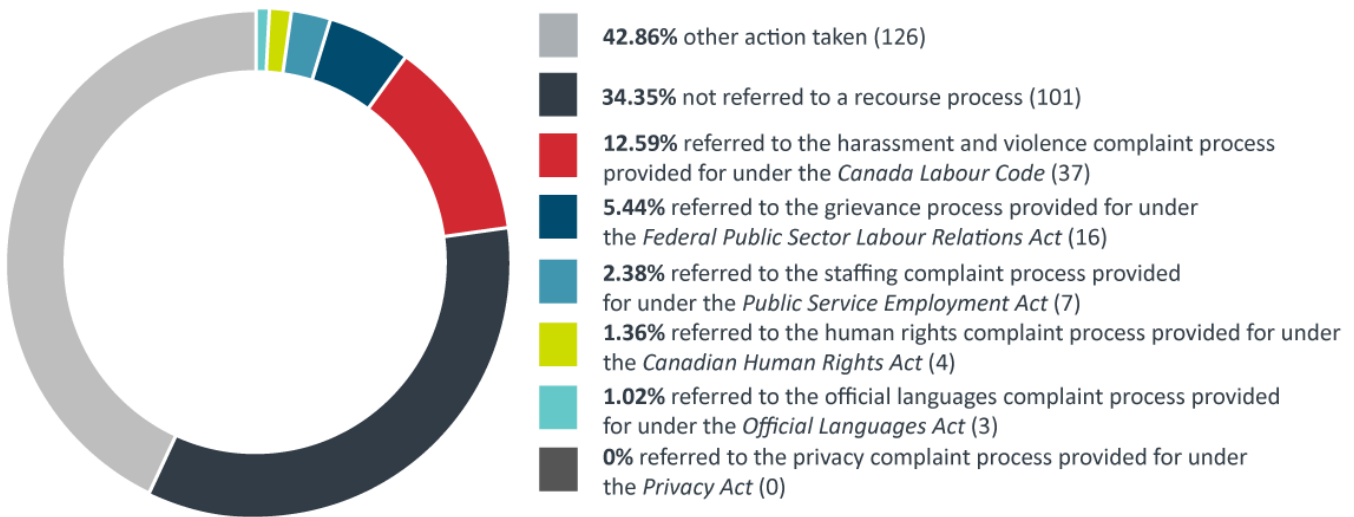
Type	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Allegations of wrongdoing not acted upon	164	76	154	81	289

Type	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Allegations of wrongdoing acted upon	116	111	190	323	199

Reasons allegations were not acted on

In 2023-24, 289 allegations were not acted on under the Act. Figure 6 illustrates how they were handled.

Figure 6: breakdown of allegations that were not acted on under the Act in 2023-24



▼ Figure 6 - Text version

Type	2023-24	
Other action taken (126)	42.86%	126
Not referred to an official recourse process (101)	34.35%	101
Referred to the harassment and violence complaint process provided for under the <i>Canada Labour Code</i> (37)	12.59%	37
Referred to the grievance process provided for under the <i>Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act</i> (16)	5.44%	16
Referred to the staffing complaint process provided for under the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> (7)	2.38%	7
Referred to the human rights complaint process provided for under the <i>Canadian Human Rights Act</i> (4)	1.36%	4
Referred to the official languages complaint process provided for under the <i>Official Languages Act</i> (3)	1.02%	3
Referred to the privacy complaint process provided for under the <i>Privacy Act</i> (0)	0%	0
Total	294	100%

A total of 67 of the 289 allegations were referred into the legislative recourse mechanisms listed in Figure 6.⁴

Since there are many other recourse mechanisms available to organizations for referral outside of those that are legislated, organizations categorize many allegations as follows:

- not meeting the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a recourse process as listed above (101, or 35%)
- other action taken (126, or 43%)

Organizations indicated that they put allegations in the category of “not meeting the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a listed recourse process” when:

- not enough information was received and no additional information was provided by the discloser
- they referred the case to the human resources unit for administrative support or investigation
- there were misunderstandings and miscommunications that could be better handled by informal conflict management systems and management
- they referred the case to management and conflict of interest practitioners to assess for real, apparent or potential conflict of interest situations
- they referred to the organization’s ombud office, the access to information and privacy unit, or the finance office

Organizations reported that “other action was taken” for reasons such as:

- the same information was received from multiple disclosers, so the allegations were combined
- the subject matter was found to be frivolous, malicious or vexatious
- the issue was resolved informally

Allegations carried forward to the next year

Allegations are carried forward to the next year when the conclusion (whether the finding of wrongdoing occurred or not) was not made before March 31. Organizations reported that they carried forward 267 allegations into 2024–25.

Part 3: Investigations, findings and corrective measures

▼ In this section

- [Investigations](#)
- [Findings of wrongdoing and corrective measures](#)

The senior officer for internal disclosure is responsible for managing investigations into allegations of wrongdoing, including deciding whether to:

- handle an allegation under the Act
- start or stop an investigation

Senior officers must also report the following directly to their chief executive:

- any findings of investigations or systemic problems that could lead to wrongdoing
- any recommendations for corrective action

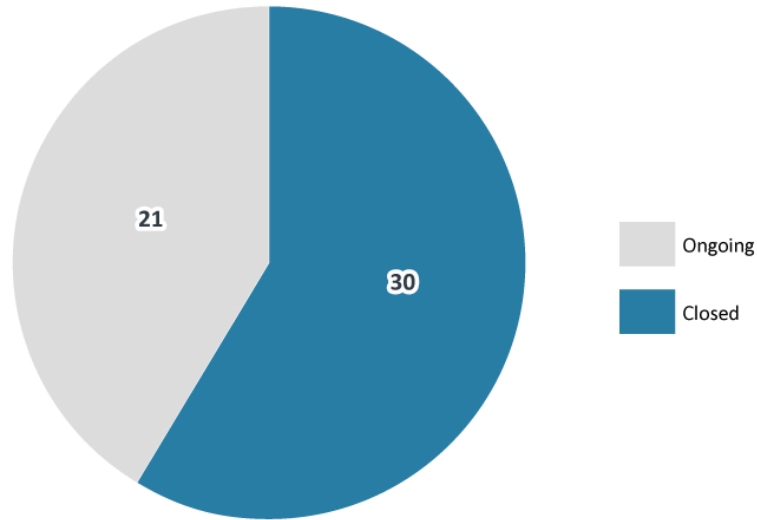
Investigations

An investigation looks at all relevant evidence and witness testimony to decide whether a disclosure is founded, based on a balance of probabilities. An investigation can examine one or more allegations. If the preliminary analysis does not lead to a formal investigation, it is not counted as an investigation; however, preliminary analyses can still lead to corrective measures.

In 2023–24, 51 investigations were launched or underway, which is comparable to the 50 investigations launched or underway in 2022–23.

By March 31, 2024, 30 investigations were closed. There were 21 investigations still ongoing at the end of 2023–24 that will be carried over to 2024–25 (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: investigations commenced and ongoing



▼ Figure 7 - Text version

Closed	Ongoing
30	21
59%	41%

To support federal organizations' capacity to investigate disclosures of wrongdoing, a National Master Standing Offer (NMSO) of experts who can investigate allegations is available. It is continuously updated, and new resources are regularly assessed.

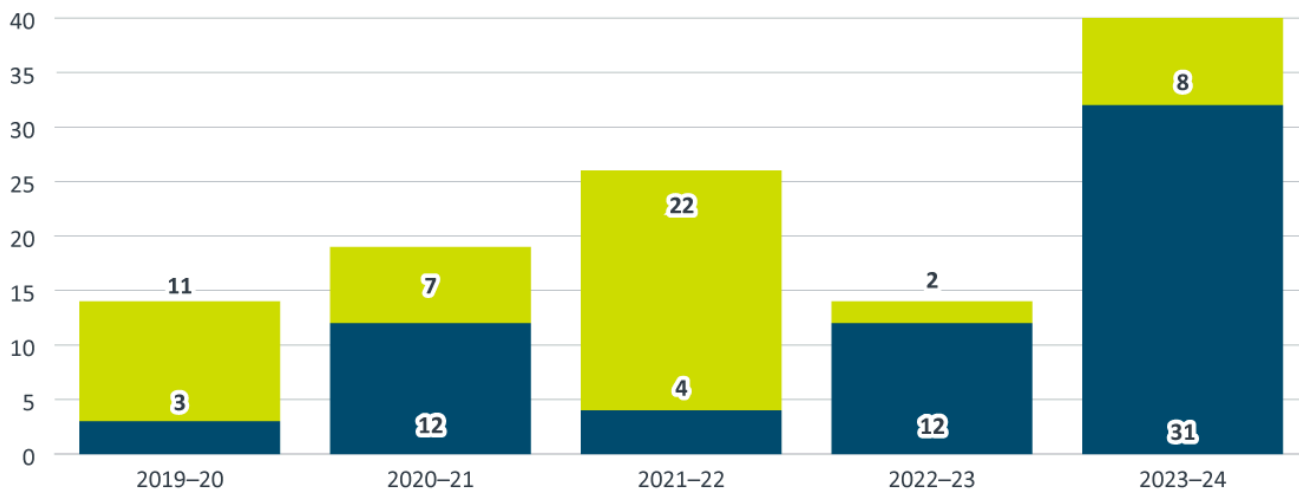
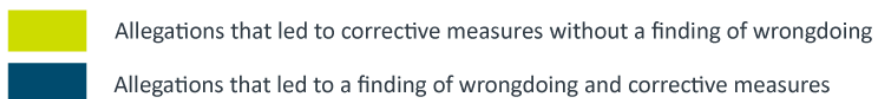
During 2023–24, seven organizations used the NMSO. The NMSO is most helpful for smaller organizations that have limited investigative capacity.

Findings of wrongdoing and corrective measures

In 2023–24, the 30 investigations that were closed by March 31, 2024, examined 152 allegations that resulted in the following (see Figure 8):

- 31 allegations that led to a finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures⁵
- 8 allegations that led to corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing

Figure 8: outcomes of investigations into allegations



▼ Figure 8 - Text version

Type	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Allegations that led to a finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures	3	12	4	12	31
Allegations that led to corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing	11	7	22	2	8

In 2023-24, there were fewer formal investigations launched and fewer investigations closed than in the previous fiscal year.

Part 4: Education and awareness activities

This year, further to the Clerk of the Privy Council’s renewed focus on values and ethics, various activities have been undertaken across the federal public service and within individual government organizations to promote a values-based, ethical culture.

In addition to the mandatory “Values and Ethics Foundations” courses available to employees and managers, the Canada School of the Public Service has created a [Values and Ethics Learning Path](#) for all public servants. This learning path includes many useful tools, webcasts and links to training. The learning path also features:

- a Values and Ethics Discussion Toolkit for scenario-based team conversations
- links to the updated [Values Alive: Discussion Guide to the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](#)

In 2023-24, federal public sector organizations continued to raise awareness among public servants by informing them of:

- their organization’s code of conduct
- disclosure processes
- ways to support public servants who want to disclose wrongdoing

Organizations used various methods to raise awareness about the role of their senior officer for internal disclosure, the Act, and the protections it affords public servants. Common methods included:

- annual or periodic messages from the chief executive or the senior officer for internal disclosure

- intranet content, videos, town hall meetings and presentations
- highlighting links to other awareness campaigns such as the annual Fraud Prevention Month in March
- using updates from the [Review of the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#) as a reason to communicate

Some organizations required yearly acknowledgements from employees to confirm their awareness of the Act, its protections, and the role of the senior officer each year. Others worked closely with their ombud offices, human resources and labour relations units and union representatives to increase the ways that employees learned about their options for reporting wrongdoing. This approach helps employees understand the available mechanisms and the best person to contact for support.

Several organizations updated their codes of conduct, internal disclosure procedures and forms to ensure that they continued to meet their employees' needs. Training on the Act continued and was often paired with training on:

- values and ethics
- conflict of interest
- respectful workplace
- prevention of harassment and violence

Including information about internal disclosure in onboarding material is a common way to reach new employees. Organizations use videos and [communications tools](#) from the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner's website.

Part 5: Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer: activities to support ethical workplaces

▼ In this section

- [Senior officers and communities of practice](#)
- [Diversity and inclusion in the workplace](#)
- [Preventing and resolving harassment and violence in the workplace](#)
- [Mental health in the workplace](#)
- [International engagement](#)

The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) acts as the focal point for driving people management excellence across the federal public service. As part of this mandate, it develops and disseminates policies, guidelines, initiatives and guidance in the areas of integrity and ethics in order to promote an ethical and healthy workplace. As it pertains to this report, the policies, programs and initiatives of OCHRO that are described below contribute to fostering a workplace environment where public servants are aware of the resources available for addressing workplace issues and feel comfortable coming forward with enquiries or allegations of possible wrongdoing.

Senior officers and communities of practice

It is also OCHRO's role to support the implementation and administration of the Act, the [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](#) and the Directive on Conflict of Interest and to support the President of the Treasury Board in their responsibility under the Act to promote ethical practices across the public sector.

OCHRO's policy centre engages with the Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner, the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal, public sector organizations, senior officers, international organizations, bargaining agents and other stakeholders with an interest in integrity and ethics in the workplace.

In particular, OCHRO facilitates a government-wide community of practice to support senior officers in internal disclosure of wrongdoing and managers in supporting public servants in their organizations. This community of practice provides an opportunity for sharing strategies and recent developments in the fields of values and ethics, disclosure of wrongdoing, reprisal protection and conflict of interest resolution. The community of practice activities include hosting meetings of the Internal Disclosure Working Group and the Interdepartmental Network of Values and Ethics practitioners. These meetings allow for discussion and collaboration on managing a healthy workplace culture, ethical leadership, managing ethical risks and promoting integrity within the public sector.

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace

A public service that is diverse, equitable and inclusive is essential for a workplace culture where all public servants, including employees from equity-seeking groups, can feel comfortable disclosing wrongdoing. To improve workplace culture and support culturally safe workplaces where employees feel comfortable disclosing wrongdoing, OCHRO advanced efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in 2023–2024. Initiatives and activities included:

- collecting and disseminating disaggregated enterprise data on the composition and experience of employment equity groups and subgroups while continuing to develop a modernized self-identification approach to provide data on the representation of employment equity groups and to foster an inclusive workplace
- conducting a TBS-Public Service Alliance of Canada Joint Review of diversity and inclusion training programs and informal conflict resolution systems
- promoting the Maturity Model on Diversity and Inclusion as an optional self-assessment tool informing organizations on progress in five dimensions of diversity and inclusion

Some notable projects include the development of guidance on:

- assessing inclusive and anti-racist behaviours in performance management
- consequential accountability
- establishing performance indicators to measure and report on inclusion outcomes

Furthermore, a panel of experts created by OCHRO led consultations and prepared a report with recommendations regarding the design of a new restorative engagement program that would work to dismantle systemic barriers that contribute to workplace harassment, bullying, racism and other forms of discrimination and violence. OCHRO also continued to engage with enterprise-wide equity-seeking networks and manage enterprise-wide initiatives to raise awareness and address barriers faced by equity-seeking employees such as

- the Mosaic Development Program
- the Mentorship Plus Program
- the Federal Speakers Forum on Lived Experience

The Action Plan for Black Public Servants initiatives aim at improving the psychological health and safety of Black public servants and increasing opportunities for career mobility. In 2023-2024, the Task Force for Black Public Servants developed and started implementing the Action Plan for Black Public Servants, with early initiatives including:

- an executive leadership program for Black executives
- individualized assessment, counselling and coaching services to Black public servants
- Black-centric enhancements to the Employee Assistance Program led by Health Canada

Preventing and resolving harassment and violence in the workplace

A workplace that is free of harassment and violence is crucial to enable public servants to come forward with enquiries or allegations about wrongdoing without fear of reprisal. OCHRO remains committed to preventing and addressing incidences of workplace harassment and violence by providing continuous support to organizations in applying Part II of the *Canada Labour Code* (CLC), *Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations* (the Regulations) and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's (TBS) *Directive on the Prevention and Resolution of Workplace Harassment and Violence* to:

- prevent occurrences
- identify risk factors and develop and implement preventive measures
- support resolution of issues in a timely matter
- support employees affected by harassment and violence
- ensure appropriate training is provided

OCHRO continues to engage with the Communities of Practice (CoP) of Designated Recipients and Occupational Health and Safety professionals by:

- responding to enquiries
- providing advice and guidance
- advise and guide in the application of TBS's Directive, the CLC and the Regulations
- organizing knowledge transfer discussions including best practices
- participating in learning events across the public service
- leading the development of training and tools

OCHRO collaborates with key stakeholders, including bargaining agents through the National Joint Council, to prevent workplace harassment and violence. We develop and maintain tools and guidance to ensure psychological health and safety are prioritized in our policies.

Mental health in the workplace

Having the right workplace conditions to support mental health and wellness generates higher levels of employee engagement and enhances public servants' confidence in coming forward with concerns about wrongdoing.

To support a culture of positive mental health in the workplace, OCHRO is engaged in work to support organizations in aligning with the *National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* (the Standard) and implementing the objectives of the *Federal Public Service Workplace Mental Health Strategy*. In 2023-24, resources developed to that end include an updated and improved [Federal Public Service Workplace Mental Health Dashboard](#), which measures organizational performance on the psychosocial factors from the Standard, and [the Back Pocket Guide to Executive Supports](#), which summarizes enterprise-wide supports available to federal public service executives so they can more quickly receive support on challenges they are facing.

International engagement

In 2023-24, OCHRO continued to collaborate with international bodies and organizations to promote global integrity and address corruption. Through these international engagements, OCHRO stays updated and involved in global activities, research and sharing of knowledge on integrity, accountability, anti-corruption, and best practices on disclosure regimes around the world. OCHRO's involvement also allows for promoting Canada's practices, approaches and strategies. International engagements that occurred during the 2023-24 fiscal year included

Canada's participation in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Working Party on Public Integrity and Anti-Corruption (PIAC), through which OCHRO contributes to strengthening public sector governance and safeguarding the integrity of public policymaking.

Appendix A: Summary of Disclosure-Related Organizational Activities

▼ In this section

- [A.1 Disclosure activity from 2019–20 to 2023–24](#)
- [A.2 Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023–24](#)
- [A.3 Organizations that reported a finding of wrongdoing under the Act, 2023–24](#)
- [A.4 Organizations that reported no disclosure activities in 2023–24](#)
- [A.5 Organizations that do not have a senior officer for disclosure of wrongdoing that declared an exception under subsection 10.4 of the Act](#)

Subsection 38.1(1) of the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act* (the Act) requires chief executives to prepare a report on the activities related to disclosures made in their organizations and to submit it to the Chief Human Resources Officer within 60 days of the end of each fiscal year. The information and statistics presented here are based on those reports.

Statistics from the previous four fiscal years are also provided below for the purpose of comparison. Although these statistics provide a snapshot of internal disclosure activities under the Act, it is difficult to draw conclusions because of the variety of organizational cultures within the public sector. For example, employee concerns or issues may be referred through different recourse mechanisms and processes in different organizations.

Although the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC) and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are excluded from the Act by virtue of section 52, they are required to establish their own procedures for managing internal disclosures and protecting disclosers from reprisal. The Treasury Board must approve these procedures as being similar to those set out in the Act. CSIS's procedures were approved in December 2009, CSEC's procedures were approved in June 2011, and the CAF's procedures were approved in April 2012.

A.1 Disclosure activity from 2019–20 to 2023–24

General enquiries	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22	2020–21	2019–20
Number of general enquiries related to the Act	279	315	384	172	250

Disclosure activity	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22	2020–21	2019–20
Number of public servants who made disclosures	250	152	194	123	Not applicable
Number of disclosures received	266	246	178	101	Not applicable
Number of allegations received in disclosures under the Act	424	347	378	169	216
Number of allegations of wrongdoing received resulting from a disclosure made in another public sector organization	1	9	3	5	4
Number of allegations carried over from previous fiscal years	330	277	160	192	238

Disclosure activity	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
Total number of allegations handled (allegations received, including those resulting from a disclosure made in another public sector organization and carried over)	755	633	541	366	458
Number of allegations that were acted on	199	323	190	111	116
Number of allegations that were not acted on	289	81	154	76	164
Number of investigations commenced as a result of disclosures received	51	50	85	63	38
Number of allegations that led to a finding of wrongdoing but no corrective measures	0	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of allegations that led to corrective measures but no finding of wrongdoing	8	2	22	7	11
Number of allegations that led to a finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures	31	12	4	12	3

Organizations reporting	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
Number of organizations	138	135	136	137	133
Number of organizations that reported enquiries	40	38	35	30	33
Number of organizations that reported allegations received in disclosures	36	29	29	27	24
Number of organizations that reported findings of wrongdoing	2	7	4	3	3
Number of organizations that reported corrective measures	5	7	6	6	4
Number of organizations that reported finding systemic problems that gave rise to wrongdoing	1	4	3	2	0
Number of organizations that did not disclose information about findings of wrongdoing within 60 days	0	3	3	2	1

A.2 Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023-24

Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023-24	General enquiries	Allegations received in disclosures								Allegations received in disclosures that led to		
		Received	Carried over from the 2022-23 fiscal year	Acted on	Not acted on	Referred to another recourse process	Did not meet the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a recourse process	Other action was taken	Carried over into the 2024-25 fiscal year	Investigations commenced	Finding of corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing	Finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	1	5	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Atomic Energy of Canada Limited	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bank of Canada	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Business Development Bank of Canada	0	21	0	0	21	5	16	0	0	0	0	0
Canada Border Services Agency	5	33	80	42	26	7	12	7	45	11	0	0

Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023-24	General enquiries	Allegations received in disclosures								Allegations received in disclosures that led to		
		Received	Carried over from the 2022-23 fiscal year	Acted on	Not acted on	Referred to another recourse process	Did not meet the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a recourse process	Other action was taken	Carried over into the 2024-25 fiscal year	Investigations commenced	Finding of corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing	Finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures
Canada Post Corporation	0	101	0	2	92	0	0	92	7	1	0	0
Canada Revenue Agency	4	4	0	0	4	1	0	3	0	0	0	0
Canada School of Public Service	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	4	2	3	0	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian Grain Commission	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian Heritage	1	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Canadian Human Rights Commission	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian Museum of Nature	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Canadian Space Agency	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Correctional Service Canada	41	0	34	28	6	6	0	0	0	1	0	0
Courts Administration Service	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Finance Canada	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Department of Justice Canada	1	0	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Destination Canada	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Elections Canada	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0

Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023-24	General enquiries	Allegations received in disclosures								Allegations received in disclosures that led to		
		Received	Carried over from the 2022-23 fiscal year	Acted on	Not acted on	Referred to another recourse process	Did not meet the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a recourse process	Other action was taken	Carried over into the 2024-25 fiscal year	Investigations commenced	Finding of corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing	Finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures
Employment and Social Development Canada (including Service Canada, Labour Program, and Canada Employment Insurance Commission)	36	10	26	2	24	5	10	9	10	0	0	0
Environment and Climate Change Canada	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Farm Credit Canada	0	28	1	27	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0
Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Global Affairs Canada	14	40	62	50	23	7	13	3	29	12	5	17
Health Canada	8	10	0	1	9	0	7	2	0	1	1	0
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	19	19	1	0	4	1	3	0	16	4	0	0
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indigenous Services Canada	1	6	0	0	3	0	3	0	3	1	0	0
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada	3	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
International Development Research Centre	4	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Defence	12	20	6	0	17	5	10	2	9	1	0	0
National Gallery of Canada	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
National Research Council Canada	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Natural Resources Canada	4	3	4	4	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Parks Canada	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Organizations reporting activity under the Act in 2023-24	General enquiries	Allegations received in disclosures								Allegations received in disclosures that led to		
		Received	Carried over from the 2022-23 fiscal year	Acted on	Not acted on	Referred to another recourse process	Did not meet the definition of wrongdoing and not referred to a recourse process	Other action was taken	Carried over into the 2024-25 fiscal year	Investigations commenced	Finding of corrective measures without a finding of wrongdoing	Finding of wrongdoing and corrective measures
Public Health Agency of Canada	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Safety Canada	1	5	0	0	4	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
Public Service Commission of Canada	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Services and Procurement Canada	0	17	32	21	8	2	3	3	20	7	0	14
Royal Canadian Mint	1	7	0	0	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	25	42	60	0	0	0	0	0	102	0	0	0
Shared Services Canada	0	3	1	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0
Staff of the Non-Public Funds, Canadian Armed Forces	9	8	1	0	8	5	1	2	1	0	0	0
Statistics Canada	0	6	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
The Jacques-Cartier and Champlain Bridges Inc.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Transport Canada	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Veterans Affairs Canada	3	7	0	1	3	3	0	0	4	0	0	0
VIA Rail Canada Inc.	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority	0	2	3	2	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
Grand total	279	425	330	199	289	67	101	126	267	51	8	31

A.3 Organizations that reported a finding of wrongdoing under the Act, 2023-24

Organization	Link to published report
Global Affairs Canada	Acts of Founded Wrongdoing: Reference Number – PSDPA2021-0021
Public Services and Procurement Canada	Acts of Founded Wrongdoing: Reference Number – SIID-2022/23-058

A.4 Organizations that reported no disclosure activities in 2023-24

1. Accessibility Standards Canada
2. Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
3. Atlantic Pilotage Authority Canada
4. Canada Council for the Arts
5. Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation

6. Canada Development Investment Corporation
7. Canada Energy Regulator
8. Canada Infrastructure Bank
9. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
10. Canada Science and Technology Museum
11. Canadian Air Transport Security Authority
12. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) / Radio-Canada
13. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
14. Canadian Commercial Corporation
15. Canadian Institutes of Health Research
16. Canadian Museum for Human Rights
17. Canadian Museum of History and Canadian War Museum
18. Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
19. Canadian Transportation Agency
20. Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police
21. Correctional Investigator Canada, The
22. Defence Construction Canada
23. Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions
24. Farm Products Council of Canada
25. Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
26. Financial Consumer Agency of Canada
27. Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada
28. Great Lakes Pilotage Authority
29. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
30. Indian Oil and Gas Canada
31. Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
32. International Joint Commission (Canadian Section)
33. Invest in Canada
34. Laurentian Pilotage Authority
35. Library and Archives Canada
36. Marine Atlantic Inc.
37. National Arts Centre
38. National Capital Commission
39. National Security and Intelligence Review Agency Secretariat
40. Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
41. Office of the Auditor General of Canada
42. Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs Canada
43. Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
44. Office of the Intelligence Commissioner
45. Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada
46. Office of the Secretary of the Governor General
47. Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Canada
48. Pacific Economic Development Canada
49. Pacific Pilotage Authority Canada
50. Parole Board of Canada

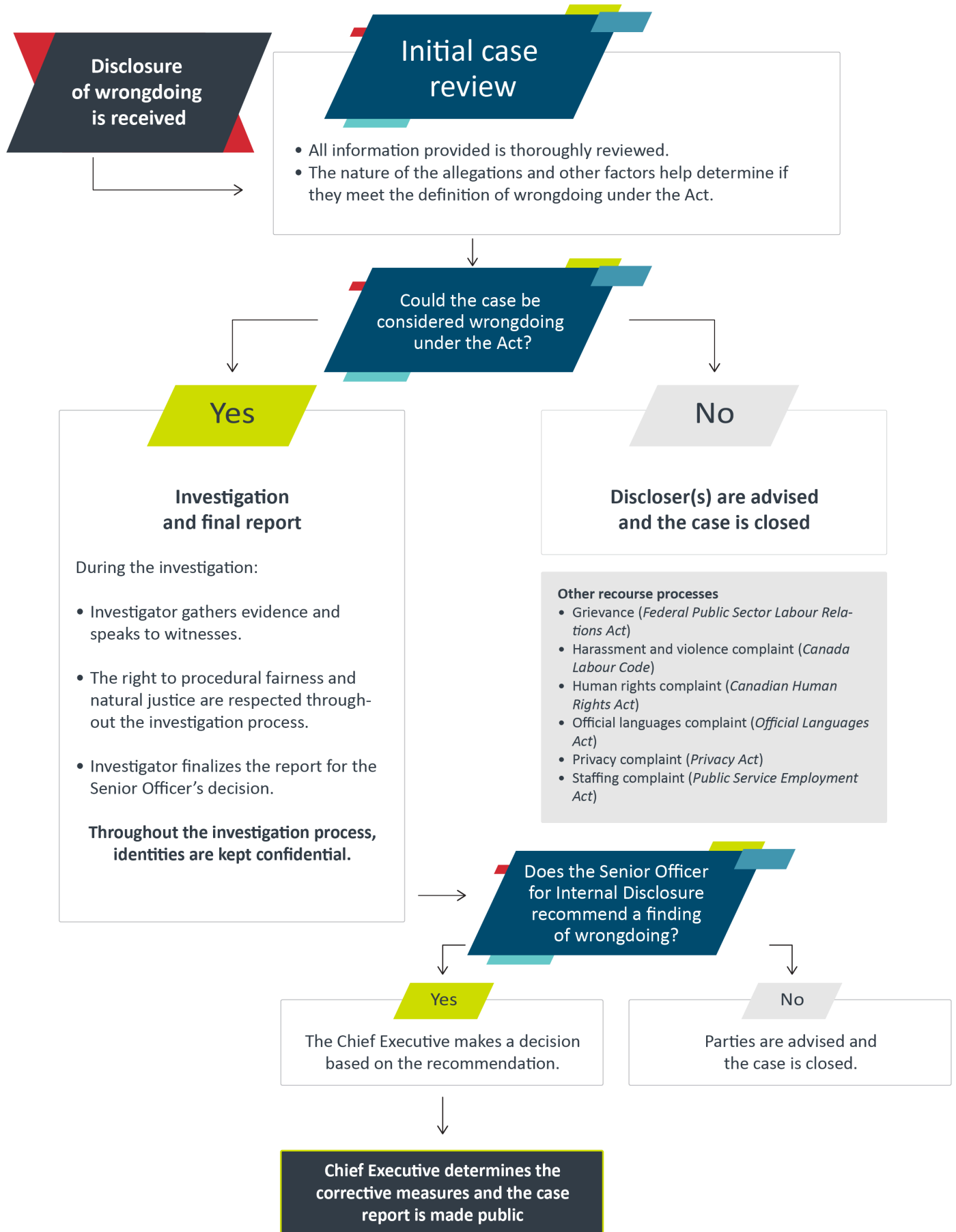
51. Patented Medicine Prices Review Board Canada
52. Prairies Economic Development Canada
53. Privy Council Office
54. Public Sector Pension Investment Board
55. Secretariat of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians
56. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
57. Standards Council of Canada
58. Statistical Survey Operations
59. Supreme Court of Canada
60. The Federal Bridge Corporation Limited (FBCL) (reporting data includes the Seaway International Bridge Corporation ("SIBC") – a subsidiary company of the FBCL)
61. The National Battlefields Commission
62. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
63. Veterans Review and Appeal Board
64. Women and Gender Equality Canada

A.5 Organizations that do not have a senior officer for disclosure of wrongdoing that declared an exception under subsection 10.4 of the Act

1. Administrative Tribunals Support Services of Canada
2. Canada Lands Company Limited
3. Canadian Dairy Commission
4. Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat
5. Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
6. Canadian Race Relations Foundation
7. Copyright Board Canada
8. Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation
9. Law Commission of Canada (in August 2024)
10. Military Grievances External Review Committee
11. Military Police Complaints Commission of Canada
12. National Film Board
13. Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada
14. Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages
15. Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada
16. Polar Knowledge Canada
17. RCMP External Review Committee
18. Telefilm Canada
19. Transportation Safety Board of Canada

Appendix B: Disclosure Process Under the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*

Figure B1: Disclosure process under the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*



▼ Figure B1 - Text version

Disclosure of wrongdoing is received

Initial case review

- All information provided is thoroughly reviewed.
- The nature of the allegations and other factors help determine if they meet the definition of wrongdoing under the Act.

Could the case be considered wrongdoing under the Act?

Yes

Investigation and final report

During the investigation

- Investigator gathers evidence and speaks to witnesses.
- The right to procedural fairness and natural justice are respected throughout the investigation process.
- Investigator finalizes the report for the Senior Officer's decision.

Throughout the investigation process, identities are kept confidential.

No

Disclosers are advised and the case is closed

Does the Senior Officer for Internal Disclosure recommend a finding of wrongdoing?

Yes

The Chief Executive makes a decision based on the recommendation

Chief Executive determines the corrective measures and the results are made public

No

Parties are advised and the case is closed.

Other recourse processes

- Harassment and violence complaint (*Canada Labour Code*)
- Human rights complaint (*Canadian Human Rights Act*)
- Grievance (*Federal Public Sector Labour Relations Act*)
- Staffing complaint (*Public Service Employment Act*)
- Official languages complaint (*Official Languages Act*)
- Privacy complaint (*Privacy Act*)

Appendix C: Key Terms

▼ In this section

- Other relevant terms

For the purposes of the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act* (the Act) and this report, “public servant” means every person employed in the public sector. The term includes the deputy heads and chief executives of public sector organizations, but it does not include other Governor in Council appointees (for example, judges or board members of Crown corporations) or parliamentarians and their staff.

The Act defines **wrongdoing** as any of the following actions in, or relating to, the public sector:

- a violation of a federal or provincial law or regulation
- misuse of public funds or assets
- a gross mismanagement in the public sector
- a serious breach of a code of conduct established under the Act
- an act or omission that creates a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or to the environment
- knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing

A **protected disclosure** is a disclosure that is made in good faith by a public servant under any of the following conditions:

- in accordance with the Act, to the public servant's immediate supervisor or senior officers for disclosure of wrongdoing, or to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada
- in the course of a parliamentary proceeding
- in the course of a procedure established under any other act of Parliament
- when lawfully required to do so

The Act defines **reprisal** as any of the following measures taken against a public servant who has made a protected disclosure or who has, in good faith, cooperated in an investigation into a disclosure:

- a disciplinary measure
- demotion of the public servant
- termination of the employment of the public servant
- a measure that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of the public servant
- a threat to do any of the above or to direct a person to do them

Every organization subject to the Act is required to establish **internal procedures** to manage disclosures made in the organization. Organizations that are too small to establish their own internal procedures can declare an exception under subsection 10(4) of the Act. In addition, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Communications Security Establishment Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces, which are excluded from the Act by virtue of section 52 of the Act, are required to establish their own procedures for the disclosure of wrongdoing, including for protecting persons who disclose wrongdoing.

In organizations that have declared an exception, disclosures under the Act may be made to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada.

The **senior officer for disclosure of wrongdoing** is the person designated in each organization to receive and address disclosures made under the Act. Senior officers have the following key leadership roles for implementing the Act in their organizations:

- providing information, advice and guidance to public servants regarding the organization's internal disclosure procedures, including the making of disclosures, the conduct of investigations into disclosures, and the handling of disclosures made to supervisors
- receiving and recording disclosures and reviewing them to establish whether there are sufficient grounds for further action under the Act
- managing investigations into disclosures, including determining whether to deal with a disclosure under the Act, initiate an investigation or cease an investigation
- coordinating the handling of a disclosure with the senior officer of another federal public sector organization, if a disclosure or an investigation into a disclosure involves that other organization

- notifying, in writing, the person or persons who made a disclosure of the outcome of any review or investigation into the disclosure and of the status of actions taken on the disclosure, as appropriate
- reporting the findings of investigations, as well as any systemic problems that may give rise to wrongdoing, directly to their chief executive with any recommendations for corrective action

Other relevant terms

allegation of wrongdoing

The communication of a potential instance of wrongdoing as defined in [section 8](#) of the Act. The allegation must be made in good faith, and the person making it must have reasonable grounds to believe that it is true.

disclosure

The provision of information by a public servant to their immediate supervisor or to a senior officer for disclosure of wrongdoing that is made in good faith and includes one or more allegations of possible wrongdoing in the public sector, in accordance with [section 12](#) of the Act.

disclosure that was acted upon (admissible disclosure)

An allegation received in a disclosure where action, including preliminary analysis, fact-finding and investigation, was taken to determine whether wrongdoing occurred and where that determination was made during the reporting period.

disclosure that was not acted upon (inadmissible disclosure)

An allegation received in a disclosure for which the designated senior officer for disclosure of wrongdoing determined that the definition of wrongdoing under the Act was not met, or should be referred to another process, or required no further action.

general enquiry

An enquiry about procedures established under the Act or about possible wrongdoings, not including actual disclosures.

investigation

A formal investigation triggered by a disclosure. An investigation may look into one or more allegations that result from a disclosure of possible wrongdoing.

Footnotes

- 1 Public servants in organizations that have declared an exception can disclose to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada.
 - 2 Disclosures made to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada are not considered internal disclosures and are not included in this annual report.
 - 3 Total allegations include allegations received, those referred from other public sector organizations and those carried over from previous years.
 - 4 Allegations can be referred to more than one alternate recourse process.
 - 5 Corrective measures (for example, discipline, improved procedures, enhanced transparency and communication, or mandatory training) can be applied, even when there is no finding of wrongdoing.
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