SPORT POLICY IN ALBERTA

BEFORE 2001

1988 Winter Olympic Games was hosted in Calgary. Ralph Klein - who was the mayor at the time and later became the premier of the province - was a major proponent.

In 1989, Ministry of Recreation and Parks, and Alberta Sport Council released **Sport Development Strategy into the 1990s.** This document highlighted nine strategic areas: funding, technical leadership, sport participation, excellence in sport, communication and coordination, sport recognition, organization development, hosting sport events, and facility development.

In 1994, **Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation Act** was created to initiate the foundation, which aimed to develop and maintain sport, recreation, parks, fish and wildlife programs and raise funds to assist its operations.

1995 Canada Winter Games was hosted in Grande Prairie, Alberta. The funding legacy from this event led the city of Grande Prairie to establish the **Pursuit of Excellence Funding** which provides assistance to athletes, coaches, and sport organizations

In 1996, **Alberta's Future Leaders** program was created to provide sport, recreation, leadership, and cultural programming for Indigenous youth.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE
Ralph Klein

Ralph Klein was first elected in the 1993 elections. In the beginning of his term, Ralph Klein-led government introduced legislation that required government to balance the budget by 1996-97, which resulted in expenditure cuts, downsizing and privatization of services. Government-run gambling was expanded. These actions resulted in revenue generation and Klein was elected to a second term in 1997.

2001 - 2004

Ministry responsible from sport in this period was **Ministry of Community Development.** Ministers in this period:

- Stan Woloshyn (1999-2001)
- Gene Zwozdesky (2001-2004)

In 2003, **A New Century for Amateur Sport: From Participation to Excellence** was developed by the Alberta Sport Plan Task Force and released by the Government of Alberta. This plan aimed to align with Canadian Sport Policy themes and identified areas of emphasis: which are sport participation, excellence in sport, leadership and volunteer development, sport marketing and communication, business of sport, facilities, funding, safe environment, research, development and planning, and partnerships.

In 2004, Government of Alberta conducted the **Alberta Recreation Survey** that aimed to learn about the recreation activities of Albertans and what influences their recreation choices. Survey results highlighted topics such as benefits of recreation and parks, favourite and desired activities of households, and reasons for not participating.

One of the few documents that can be found in this time period is the **Bullying Prevention in Sports** toolkit**.** It highlighted Alberta's commitment to preventing any kind of verbal, social, physical, or cyber bullying that could happen in gyms, rinks, or playing fields with parents, players or coaches.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE
Ralph Klein

Klein government continued to pursue privatization and taxes were being lowered. In 2001, a single-rate tax system was adopted. The Prosperity Bonus program was introduced to make government oil royalty payments to Albertans.

2004 - 2008

The ministry responsible for sport between 2006-2008 was the **Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture**. Ministers:

- Gary Mar (2004-2006)
- Denis Ducharme (2006)
- Hector Goudreau (2006-2008)

2004 Arctic Winter Games were hosted in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo. Surplus funding from the event contributed to the Alberta **Games Legacy Reserve Fund** which supports cultural and sport activities.

In 2005, Calgary adopted the **Calgary's Civic Sport Policy** which was one of the first examples in Canada. Some of the outcomes of this policy included the formation of Sport Calgary (formally Calgary Sport Council) and formalizing the role of the Calgary Sport and Major Events Committee (formally Calgary Sport Tourism Authority).

In 2005, Alberta Ministry of Education adopted a daily physical activity for schools. This policy required schools to provide a minimum of 30 minutes daily physical activity for students in grades 1-9.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE
2004-2006
Ralph Klein

2006-2008
Ed Stelmach

Ralph Klein was elected again in the 2004 election until Ed Stelmach won the 2006 Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta leadership election and took over leadership.

During his time as the 13th premier of Alberta, Ed Stelmach was known for the actions around the Athabasca Oil Sands. There were concerns about the environmental effects of the oil sands even though they were growing the Alberta's economy.

2008 - 2012

Ministry name changed to **Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation** in 2008. Ministers in this period were:

- Cindy Ady (2008-2011)
- Jacy Hayden (2011-2012)

In 2008, another iteration of the **Alberta Recreation Survey** was conducted which was influential in drafting the Active Alberta (2011-2021) policy.

In 2011, **Active Alberta (2011-2021)** was released by the Government of Alberta setting 6 outcomes to guide the government and organizations while designing programs, delivering services and making investments towards sport, recreation, and active living. These outcomes are: Active Albertans, Active Communities, Active Outdoors, Active Engagement, Active Coordinated System, and Active Pursuit of Excellence.

In this period, many documents discuss the economic impact of sport events such as **2011 Canadian Cross Country Ski Championship, 2011 Snowboard World Cup, 2011 World Allround Speed Skating Championships, and 2011 Lake Louise Winterstart World Cup.** The Government of Alberta released The Economic Impact of Alberta's Winter Olympic Legacy Events document highlighting the economic benefits of these events including employment, revenue, and visitor expenditure.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE
Ed Stelmach

Ed Stelmach was the premier in this period until the 2011 Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta leadership election. During his second term, Stelmach's main agenda was the global recession affecting Canada's and Alberta's economy.

Alison Redford

Allison Redford took over leadership and became the 14th premier of the province.

2012 - 2015

In 2013, Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation began the transition to **Alberta Sport Connection.** This change was made due to shift in the focus of the Foundation towards sport.

In 2014, **Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan (2014-2024)** was released by the Government of Alberta. This policy document sets the vision as coordinating efforts and activities to transform sport into an adaptive system, advancing Alberta sport system through making sure sport support and delivery institutions (i.e., government, PSOs, clubs, schools) are functioning optimally, and creating a positive impact for Albertans through sport.

In the first **Business Plan (2014-2017) of the Alberta Sport Connection**, there was an environmental scan that determined key trends and developments which are highlighted in the following years' business plans as well. Some of the priority areas was listed as the aging population, changing family types, gender, people with disabilities, volunteering, and Indigenous people.

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE

2012 - 2014 Alison Redford
2014 Dave Hancock
2014-2015 Jim Prentice

Alison Redford was the first woman to be premier of Alberta. She expanded disclosure and transparency policies, and allocated funding for education enhancements. After her resignation in 2014, the Auditor General of Alberta concluded that she and her office were using public resources for personal uses. Dave Hancock was the interim party leader and the premier after Redford's resignation.

Jim Prentice was elected as the 16th premier of Alberta and took actions toward healthcare and environmental regulations.

2015 - 2019

Ministry responsible for sport was **Ministry of Culture and Tourism** between 2016-2019. Ministers served in this period:

- David Eggen (2015-2016)
- Ricardo Miranda (2016-2019)

In 2019, Ministry of Culture and Tourism was dissolved and sport and tourism went under **Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism.**

In 2019, **Alberta Sport Action Plan (2019 - 2029)** was released by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Three main goals highlighted by this plan were sport delivery, coordinated efforts and activities, and sport support.

In 2019, **Alberta Sport Connection** was dissolved by the Government of Alberta.

In 2019, **Canada Winter Games** was hosted in Red Deer. After this event, 2019 Canada Winter Games Legacy Fund was created to support not-for-profit sport and community groups.

NDP
Rachel Notley

In 2015, Rachel Notley was elected when the NDP defeated the Progressive Conservatives, which was the longest serving government in Canadian history (since 1971). Her main actions were Alberta Child Benefit, infrastructure projects towards schools and hospitals, and a Climate Leadership Plan.

2019 - 2023

In this period, sport was under **Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism.** Ministers:

- Tanya Fir (2019-2020), (2022)
- Doug Schweitzer (2020-2022)
- Brian Jean (2022-current)

In 2019, Government of Alberta published the **Fact sheet: Sexual harassment in sport and recreation** highlighting the resources for reporting sexual harm and abuse. This aligned with Government of Canada's safe sport efforts including the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) led by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.

In **2022, IIHF World Junior Hockey Championship** was hosted in Edmonton and Red Deer. This event was originally scheduled for 2020 but was cancelled mid-tournament due to pandemic protocols.

In 2022, **Alberta Sport Leadership Association** was established as a volunteer led organization to support the organized sport community with the emphasis in safe and inclusive sport. They received funding support from Government of Alberta for a three-year pilot project to support the establishment of a Safe and Welcoming Sport Program for Alberta.

UNITED CONSERVATIVE

Jason Kenney (2019-2022)

Jason Kenney as the 18th premier of Alberta was known for his criticism towards the federal government's policies of climate change and energy. There were also budget cuts to social programs under his leadership.

Danielle Smith

After Jason Kenney's resignation, Danielle Smith won the United Conservative Party leadership elections and became the 19th premier of Alberta.

2023 - 2026

In 2023, ministry responsible for sport was changed to **Ministry of Tourism and Sport**. Two ministers served in this time period:

- Joseph Schow (2023-2025)
- Andrew Boitchenko (2025-current)

In 2024, 2025, and 2026 Ministry of Tourism and Sport published 3 year business plans highlighting objectives and performance metrics. Some objectives highlight fostering sport participation and leadership opportunities for underserved populations and supporting affordable access to sport and recreation opportunities for youth.

In 2024, **The Fairness and Safety in Sport Act** (Bill 29) was established to "protect the integrity of female athletic competitions by ensuring women and girls have the opportunity to compete in biological female-only divisions, while also ensuring transgender athletes are able to meaningfully participate in the sports of their choice." This act received criticism in terms of being discriminatory.

In 2026, Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Branch announced **Major Sport Events Grant Program.** This program provides funding up to $250,000 for non-profit organizations to host national and international single sport events in Alberta.

UNITED CONSERVATIVE

Danielle Smith

Danielle Smith remains the premier of Alberta Government.

Danielle Smith's main action as the premier was the legislative project the Alberta Sovereignty Act which aims to provide a framework for provincial government of Alberta to push back against federal government policies.