

Manitoba Government NEWS RELEASE



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GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION PLANS ARE ANNOUNCED

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More Than 690 Positions To Be Moved Throughout Province

As its initial phase in decentralizing services, the Manitoba government today unveiled details of its plan to move 692 government and crown corporations positions from Winnipeg to rural Manitoba.

In making the announcement, Premier Gary Filmon said 593 civil service and 99 crown corporation positions will be relocated to more than 60 communities, injecting more than \$25 million in payrolls into local economies.

"This initiative reflects our commitment to strengthen the rural economy and improve delivery of government programs and services," said Filmon.

The decentralization process will take place over the next two years and will benefit communities throughout Manitoba. By region, the breakdown by number of positions is:

- . Western Manitoba - 237 jobs, including 101 in Brandon.
- . Pembina Valley - 110 jobs, including 32 in Winkler, 27 in Morden and 26 in Carman.
- . Eastern Manitoba - 53 jobs, including 29 in Steinbach.
- . Parkland - 79 jobs, including 34 in Dauphin, 20 in Russell and 17 in Roblin.
- . Northern Manitoba - 82 jobs, including 33 in Thompson, 24 in Flin Flon and 12 in The Pas.
- . Central Plains - 84 jobs, including 75 in Portage la Prairie.
- . Interlake - 47 jobs, including 34 in Selkirk and five in Gimli.

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"When we first announced the decentralization task force last June," said Filmon, "we undertook to identify services and programs which could be equally or more effectively delivered in communities outside Winnipeg. As a result, we are ready to embark on the process of providing a more balanced and diversified approach to delivering government services."

This first phase of decentralization involves 16 government departments and two crown corporations, Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Telephone System.

"In some cases," said Filmon, "the relocations involve smaller numbers, while others involve the moving of entire units, such as the move of the Manitoba Agriculture Credit Corporation to Brandon and the Soils and Crops branch of Manitoba Agriculture to Carman."

However, said the premier, a move of this magnitude can not happen overnight. "We are not just talking about 692 jobs, we are talking about people, many of them with families."

In order to balance the need to regionalize services with the concern for affected employees and their families, employees are being notified of the relocations with specific dates of their moves expected to be relayed to them in the next 60 days. Every effort will be made to find positions for those employees who can not accept the transfers.

The actual moves are expected to be completed over the next two years.

"This is a massive undertaking," said Filmon, "which reflects our commitment to providing equal opportunity to all Manitobans, regardless where they live in this province."