

# This is the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs







## The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in brief

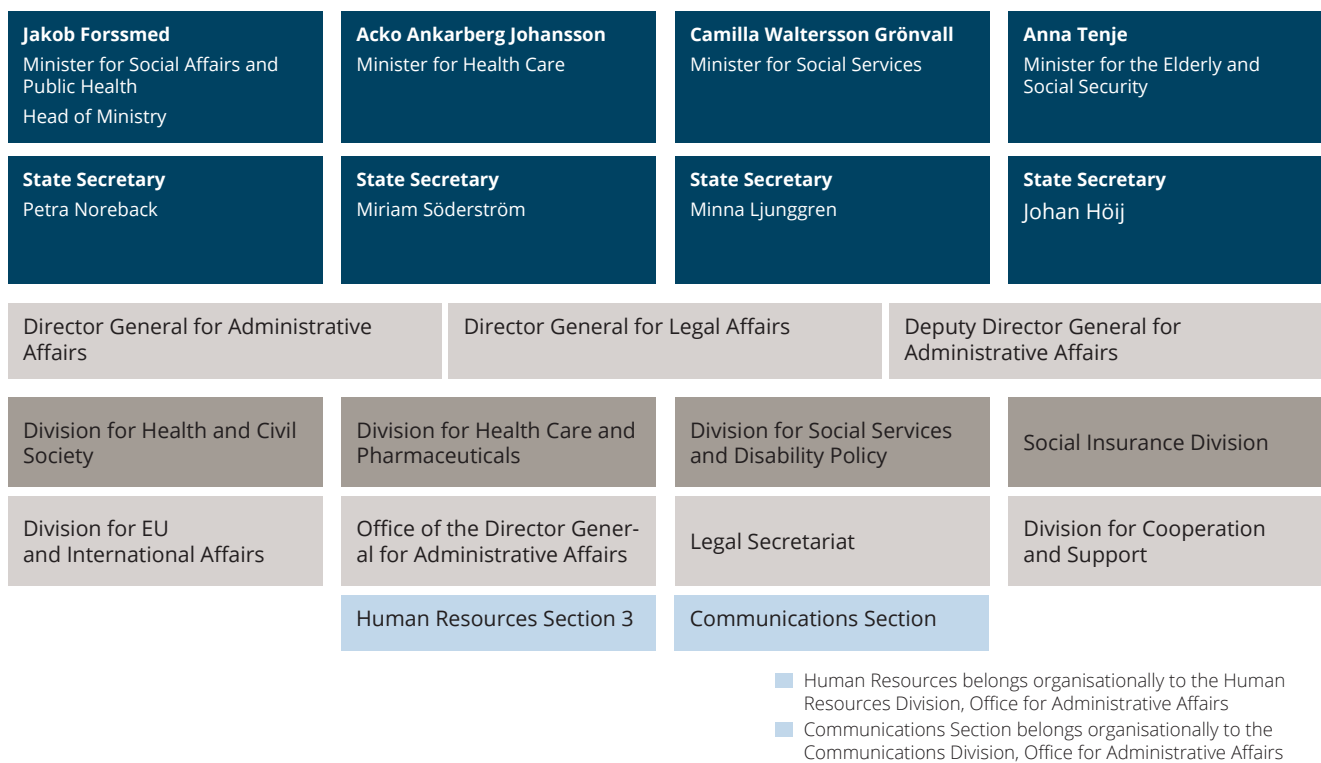
The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for issues concerning the welfare of the Swedish people. These include promoting people's health, ensuring sick people receive the care they need, and social insurance that provides financial security to people when they are sick or older, or when their children are young. The Ministry is also responsible for social

services support to individuals and families, and care for people with disabilities and older people. In addition, its work includes the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of the child. The Ministry of Social Affairs is also responsible for issues concerning civil society, faith communities, burial and cremation services, sport and youth policy. The Ministry's areas of responsibility

include the Government's international action and work in the EU.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs employs around 240 people, around 20 of whom are politically appointed. It is one of the 10 Government Offices ministries with responsibility for various policy areas.

# Ministry of Health and Social Affairs – Organisation chart



## Political leadership

The Ministry has four ministers with various areas of responsibility.

Jakob Forssmed is Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health and head of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Acko Ankarberg Johansson is Minister for Health Care, Camilla Waltersson Grönvall is Minister for Social Services, and Anna Tenje is Minister for Older People and Social Security.

The political leadership includes state secretaries in addition to the ministers. The state secretaries are responsible for various policy areas directly under the ministers and support them in initiating, planning, coordinating and monitoring the Ministry's activities.

The ministers and state secretaries have a staff of political advisers who support them in policy work, providing background material, political assessments, planning and media contacts.

## Non-political appointees

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has a Director General for Administrative Affairs, a Director General for Legal Affairs and a Head of Administration who, like the state secretaries, assist the ministers in managing, planning and coordinating activities. The Director General for Administrative Affairs ensures that the Ministry's matters are dealt with lawfully, consistently and uniformly. The Director General for Administrative Affairs also monitors the governance of the agencies under the Ministry. The Director General for Legal Affairs is responsible for ensuring that proposals for laws and other statutes are drafted, and ensures that the Ministry's legislative matters are prepared lawfully, consistently and uniformly.

The Ministry has four policy divisions responsible for ensuring that the Government's policies in the areas of the Ministry of Social Affairs are translated into various initiatives.

The policy divisions are the Division for Health and Civil Society, the Division for Health Care and Pharmaceuticals, the Division for Social Services and Disability Policy, and the Social Insurance Division. The divisions lay the groundwork for government decisions. This includes working on government bills, budgets and governance issues concerning government agencies, and development work in the form of inquiries and remits of their own and tasked to government committees.

In addition, there are some divisions that are responsible for, coordinate and support on interdivisional issues such as legal issues, EU and international affairs, the central government budget, agency governance and operational management, analysis and research issues, and administrative data. The Office for Administrative Affairs at the Government Offices supports the Ministry on issues of staff (HR) and communications.



# Ministers and their areas of responsibility

## Jakob Forssmed, Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health

Jakob Forssmed is responsible for policies in the areas of public health, mental health, youth policy, civil society, sport, health data and life sciences.

### Public Health

The objective of public health policy is to create societal conditions that promote good and equitable health throughout the population. This is primarily about promoting people's health and preventing diseases, and also includes good dental care.

This area includes issues that concern living habits, such as eating habits and physical activity, as well as structural factors such as economic and social conditions, the physical environment and conditions in which children grow up. Protection against communicable diseases and other threats to people's health is also included in this area.

The objective of alcohol, narcotics, doping, tobacco and gambling policy is a society free from narcotics and doping, with a reduction in medical and social harm caused by alcohol, and a reduction in tobacco use. The objective of society's measures as regards gambling addiction is to reduce the harmful effects of excessive gambling.

### Health data and life sciences

This area includes issues concerning the collection and management of people's health-related data generated in health and medical care, and digital infrastructure in health and medical care.

This area also includes issues concerning life sciences.

The objective of the Government's national strategy for life sciences is for Sweden to be a leading life sciences nation. Life sciences contribute to improving the population's health and quality of life, ensuring economic prosperity, advancing the country as a leading knowledge nation and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### Youth policy

Youth policy is cross-sectoral and covers all decisions and measures that affect conditions for young people between the ages of 13 and 25 in various areas, such as employment, housing, education, health, leisure, culture and influence. The objective is for all young people to have good living conditions, the power to shape their lives and influence over developments in society.

### Civil society and sport

Civil society refers to the arena – separate from the state, the market and the individual household – in which people come together to take collective action around shared interests. Civil society includes networks, non-profit organisations and registered faith communities. The Government's policy for civil society provides opportunities to create organisations, receive state aid and encourage people to become involved and conduct activities. The objective is to improve the conditions for civil society as a

cornerstone of democracy.

The objective of support to faith communities is to create the conditions for faith communities to conduct active and long-term religious activities in the form of worship, spiritual guidance, teaching and social services.

The objectives of sport policy are to give girls and boys, women and men opportunities to take part in exercise and sport so as to promote good public health, support a free and independent sports movement and give girls and boys, women and men positive experiences of sport as entertainment.



Jakob Forssmed,  
Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health

## Acko Ankarberg Johansson, Minister for Health Care

The Minister for Health Care is responsible for health and medical care issues, including pharmaceutical issues.

This area comprises health and medical care, pharmaceutical products, pharmacy services, and preparedness in health and medical care.

Medical care involves the measures taken to provide care for those who are ill, and to develop medical and health care services, skills supply and the professional practice of health and medical care staff. The objective of health and medical care policy is to offer the population needs-based, effective and quality health care. This care must be equitable, gender-equal and accessible. This includes developing primary care to create quality, local and coordinated care, further developing and improving cancer care and childhood cancer care, and strengthening the region's conditions to develop and improve maternity care.

Needs-adapted health and medical care means that care is provided based on the needs of the individual patient and that the patient should be involved in their own care. Equitable health means that everyone must be offered care based on needs and on equal terms, and must receive good treatment. Accessible health and

medical care in all parts of the country means that it is easy to come in contact with and is provided within a reasonable time.

Policies to increase the accessibility of care include increasing the number of care places and supporting the regions' efforts to shorten waiting times and queues. In the area of rare health conditions, conditions for quality, equitable and accessible patient-centred care should be improved.

The objectives for pharmaceutical policy include continuing to improve access to medicines and pharmaceutical products, and ensuring that appropriate and safe products can be prescribed at a reasonable cost to the individual. The risk of pharmaceutical products' environmental impact should be minimised. The availability of pharmacies is important to ensure access to pharmaceutical products and pharmacy service throughout the country.

Preparedness in health and medical care is about protecting the lives and health of the civilian population in the event of crisis and, ultimately,

war. It also involves ensuring the health and medical care system's ability to respond to suddenly increased patient flows in such situations. Sweden must have sufficient stocks of pharmaceuticals and medical devices to cope with a crisis.



Acko Ankarberg Johansson,  
Minister for Health Care

## Camilla Waltersson Grönvall, Minister for Social Services

The Minister for Social Services is responsible for the support and help provided by society to people who are particularly vulnerable or experiencing difficulties. This includes the areas of individual and family care, support for people with disabilities and the rights of the child.

### Individual and family care

Individual and family care includes social services' role in social care for children and young people, substance abuse and dependency care, homelessness, financial assistance, and national and international adoptions. This also includes efforts to combat youth crime, placements and compulsory care outside the family home, and support and assistance to victims of crime. This area also includes support to parents in their parenting role and other preventive measures. The objective is to strengthen the capability and opportunities of people who are in economically and socially vulnerable situations to participate in society, and to strengthen the protection of children at risk.

### Support for people with disabilities

The national objective for disability policy is to achieve equal living conditions and full participation for people with disabilities in a society based on diversity. This may involve social services' support measures for people with disabilities, accommodation with special services,

employment, companion services, relief services, personal assistance, and state support in the form of assistance allowance, care allowance, compensation for additional costs and car allowance.

Disability policy is cross-sectoral. This means that matters of support and measures for accessibility and full participation of people with disabilities are the shared responsibility of all ministries. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for coordinating and monitoring disability policy.

### The rights of the child

The rights of the child are about safeguarding the rights and interests of children and young people in society. Children and young people must be respected and given opportunities for development, security, participation and influence. This area covers all activities that affect children, such as education policy, migration policy, culture policy and social services policy. A fundamental prerequisite is that children are aware of their rights. The Government also prioritises

combating violence and other forms of abuse against children who grow up in homes where substance abuse or mental illness is prevalent, and supporting municipalities in their social care for children and young people.



Camilla Waltersson Grönvall,  
Minister for Social Services



## Anna Tenje, Minister for Older People and Social Security

Anna Tenje is responsible for issues concerning social insurance and older people. Social insurance is about providing financial security in the event of illness, in old age, and for parents of small children. This area covers sickness insurance, pensions, parental insurance and benefits for households with children. Issues concerning older people include their care, financial security and opportunities to participate in society.

### Social insurance

The objective of financial family policy is that it contributes to good financial living standards for all families with children and reduces the differences in financial conditions between households with and without children. Financial family policy should also contribute to gender-equal parenting. Child allowance and adoption allowance are general allowances, while other allowances such as housing allowance and maintenance support are means-tested.

The objective of sickness insurance is for rates of sickness absence from work to be low and stable over time, and not fluctuate more than is attributable to normal seasonal variation. The differences in sick leave between women and men, and between different parts of the country, must also decrease. This area includes sickness benefit, rehabilitation cash benefit, activity and sickness compensation, and occupational injury compensation.

The old-age pension system comprises the income-based pension

and the premium pension. It also includes basic protection for older people, consisting of a guarantee pension, a housing supplement for pensioners and income support for older people. The objective is that these benefits help both single and cohabitating people with low or no earnings-related pensions enjoy a good economic standard.

### Care for older people

Care for older people is about efforts to ensure security and improve quality of life for older people. The objective of care for older people is to enable them to participate in society, lead active lives and be in charge of their daily activities. Older people should be able to age in security, maintain their independence and be met with respect. They should have access to quality health and social care.

This area includes services and care for older people provided by the social services. Home care services, service accommodation and daytime activities are among the services available to older people.



Anna Tenje,  
Minister for Older People and Social Security

# Decision-making and cooperation bodies

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs participates in the activities of various decision-making and cooperation bodies at both national and international level.

## The Riksdag

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs' issues are dealt with in the following Riksdag bodies, where the ministers regularly present issues that are on the table:

- Committee on Social Insurance
- Committee on Health and Welfare
- Committee on Cultural Affairs
- Committee on European Union Affairs.

## EU bodies

The primary responsibility for social and health care-related issues lies with the Member States. The EU plays a role in supporting and complementing the Member States' policies in several of these areas.

Some of the Ministry's areas of responsibility are subject to governing rules in the form of EU regulations and directives. In other areas, strategies, action plans and programmes define the direction of the Member States' work. EU Member States also collaborate to learn from one another's experience and good practices.

Together with the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union adopts EU legislation based on proposals from the European Commission.

The Council comprises government ministers from the Member States. The relevant minister from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs attends Council meetings in which the Ministry's issues are discussed. These issues are addressed in the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) and the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council (EYCS). The Ministry's issues are also taken up in the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council and the Competitiveness Council.

The relevant European Parliament committees are primarily:

- Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)
- Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)
- Culture and Education (CULT)
- Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)

It is primarily the following European Commission Directorates-General that deal with the Ministry's issues:

- Health and Food Safety (SANTE)
- Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)
- Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (EYCS)
- Justice and Consumers (JUST)

## International bodies

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs also takes part in the work of other international cooperation bodies. These include:

- United Nations (UN)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children
- Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance
- Commission on Social Connection
- World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)
- Council of Europe
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)

## Nordic Council of Ministers

- Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)
- Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)
- Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)

# Government agencies, boards and foundations under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The area of activities under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs includes government agencies and boards responsible for the day-to-day operations of public administration. The Government sets the objectives, determines the tasks and allocates the resources for the agencies' activities, but must not influence how the agencies apply laws or make decisions in individual cases.

The Ministry's areas of activity also include some foundations. In a number of areas, the Government –

on behalf of the State – has special agreements with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and

Regions (SALAR) and partnerships with the following private and non-profit organisations:

## Government agencies and boards

Alcoholic Beverages Product Range Board  
Dental and Pharmaceutical Benefits Agency  
Family Law and Parenthood Support Authority  
Health and Social Care Inspectorate  
Medical Products Agency  
Medical Responsibility Board  
National Board of Health and Welfare  
National Board of Institutional Care  
Ombudsman for Children in Sweden

Premium Pension Fund Selection Agency  
Public Health Agency of Sweden  
Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis  
Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment of Social Services  
Swedish Agency for Participation  
Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities  
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society  
Swedish eHealth Agency  
Swedish Inheritance

Fund Commission  
Swedish Pensions Agency  
Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare  
Swedish Social Insurance Agency  
Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate

## Foundations

Children's Welfare Foundation Sweden  
General Practitioners Foundation  
WHO Collaborating Centre on International Drug Monitoring

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Photo: Page 1 Maskot/TT

Page 2 Maskot/TT

Page 3 Maskot/TT

Page 5 Maskot/TT

Page 6 Ninni Andersson/Government Offices of Sweden

Page 7 Magnus Liljegren/Government Offices of Sweden

Page 8 Ninni Andersson/Government Offices of Sweden

Page 9 Ninni Andersson/Government Offices of Sweden

### **More about the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs**

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs website contains more information in Swedish and English about the Government's policies and the ministers' engagements.

#### **Visit:**

[Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se)  
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