

A. Guiding Principles

In the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration, the Alberta Human Rights Commission has brought together the Indigenous Advisory Circle (the Circle) as an advisory panel on its Indigenous human rights strategy and initiatives.

The gifts and knowledge of Elders and traditional knowledge keepers guide and inform the Circle. Indigenous ways of knowing and the interconnectedness of traditional ecosystems of care will advance the work of the Circle. Circle members may consult and connect with Elders, knowledge keepers, and other leaders in their respective communities for advice and guidance as they conduct their work on the Circle.

The Circle acknowledges that we are situated on the territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 First Nations, as well as the homeland of the Métis, including the eight Métis Settlements, in Alberta. This includes First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who are living in urban, rural, and remote communities across Alberta.

B. Mandate

The mandate of the Indigenous Advisory Circle is to provide independent advice and perspectives to the Alberta Human Rights Commission on its strategies to address and reduce discrimination faced by all Indigenous people in Alberta. Although the Circle will serve a critical role in advising the Alberta Human Rights Commission on its Indigenous Human Rights Strategies, it is important to note that the Circle's input will not replace broader engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations throughout the province.

C. Shared Values

The Circle acknowledges that Alberta's Indigenous population includes diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. This includes Indigenous people in urban centres, on First Nation reserves, on Métis Settlements, and in other rural and remote communities. The Circle will operate in a spirit of inclusion and respect for the diversity of Indigenous cultures, communities, and experiences in Alberta.

The Circle aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Reconciliation Principles:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada believes that in order for Canada to flourish in the twenty-first century, reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canada must be based on the following principles:

- 1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.*
- 2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.*
- 3. Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.*
- 4. Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.*
- 5. Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.*
- 6. All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.*
- 7. The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.*
- 8. Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.*
- 9. Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.*

Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.

D. Responsibilities

Reporting to the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals, the Circle will be focused on human rights, diversity, inclusion, and equity issues that Indigenous Peoples in Alberta face by providing strategic advice on initiatives that include:

- A. Addressing and reducing discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, including

systemic discrimination

- B. Making the Commission's programs, services, and operations more accessible and relevant to Indigenous individuals and communities
- C. Strengthening and expanding relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations

It is understood the Circle members have no formal decision-making authority over Commission's policies, programs, or activities. However, Circle members will contribute their individual knowledge and expertise to advance the Commission's work in addressing human rights, which includes reconciliation, anti-racism, diversity, inclusion, and equity issues. Members will provide strategic advice and recommendations at Circle meetings, by email, and through other methods, as needed. Some of the information that they will see or hear is privileged and confidential, or in draft form and yet to be released. Circle members will keep information that is privileged, identified as confidential, or in draft form confidential until released.

E. Organization

The Circle shall consist of the Chief and a maximum of twelve members appointed by the Chief:

1. Members will be appointed for a two-year term, with the option for renewal, up to three terms in total.
2. Circle membership will be inclusive of various geographical regions across Alberta and also of the diversity of Indigenous communities and cultures in Alberta.
3. Members will be leaders in their field of work with recognized expertise that may include (but is not limited to) policing, criminal justice, health, education, and economic development, as well as 2SLGBTQ+ and women's issues.
4. Circle members will not be able to send a delegate if they are unable to attend a meeting.
5. The Committee will meet a minimum of quarterly or more frequently if required.
6. A co-chair will be elected from within the membership.
7. Sub-committees may be struck as necessary.
8. In consultation with Circle members, the Commission may include an Elder or Knowledge Keeper on the Circle to provide guidance on cultural protocol, bridging traditional practices and western ways, and related issues, as needed.
9. The Circle will review its Terms of Reference and work-plan on an as-needed basis.

F. Administration

Staff from the Office of the Chief of the Commission and Tribunals and from Communication, Education and Engagement will support the Circle's ongoing administrative, logistical, and information needs.

The Circle will elect a Co-Chair who will support the Chair with leading the Indigenous Advisory Circle. The Co-Chair will be nominated and elected by Circle members for a one-year term, with the option to extend for an additional one-year term. Roles and responsibilities include:

1. Attending a minimum of one pre-meeting before each Circle meeting to determine meeting format and agenda, and to discuss issues, etc.
2. Determining who will provide opening and closing prayers
3. Attending the regularly scheduled meetings
4. Liaising between Circle members and Commission representatives to help translate traditional practices into western ways and to identify and resolve issues
5. Providing an Indigenous perspective to the Commission in planning, coordinating, and approaching issues

G. Remuneration

Circle members and the Co-Chair will be paid an honorarium for their participation in Circle meetings, which includes preparation for meetings, emails, reviewing documents, and discussion between meetings. All pre-approved travel and meal expenses (as required) will be reimbursed at Alberta Government rates.