

The Alberta Human Rights Commission's (Commission) *Indigenous Human Rights Strategy* will guide the Commission's work to reduce barriers Indigenous individuals and communities face when seeking to enforce their human rights under the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

The Strategy has several purposes:

- It sets out the principles and values the Commission commits to in working towards reconciliation and change.
- It creates space for discussion and deliberation, to learn and identify meaningful steps the Commission will need to take to better serve Indigenous individuals and communities in Alberta.
- It proposes ways in which the Commission will seek advice on programs and resources we should offer, and perspectives we should incorporate into our work with Indigenous communities.
- It aims to increase understanding and inclusion of Indigenous peoples and perspectives in all aspects of the Commission's business.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the *Indigenous Human Rights Strategy* charts a course for how the Commission will enhance and support Indigenous human rights in the province. An effective strategy must be specific to the unique needs of Indigenous communities. We must recognize that Indigenous communities are diverse, and we must be respectful and responsive to the many cultures, experiences, and needs of Indigenous communities in Alberta.

The overarching goals of the strategy are:

- To help address and reduce systemic racism against Indigenous peoples in health, education, child welfare, housing, justice (including policing and corrections) and other social systems.
- To meaningfully collaborate with Indigenous communities throughout Alberta to address the racism and discrimination Indigenous people encounter in their day-to-day lives.
- To build capacity and knowledge within and across the Commission to ensure we can serve Indigenous individuals and communities with respect. This must address the accessibility of our processes, relevance of our educational materials, and our awareness of the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples, in all their diversity.

- To strengthen and expand Commission's relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations.

As a support to the Strategy, the Commission will bring together an Indigenous Advisory Circle (Circle) to provide advice on and insight into proposed initiatives. The Circle will be comprised of members with lived and professional experience and will aim for geographic and cultural inclusion. The Circle will *not* replace broader engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations on specific initiatives tied to implementation of this Strategy.

The Commission's work will be guided by the teachings and directions contained in the *Truth and Reconciliation Final Report* (2015), the *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report* (2019), and the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996). The Commission respects the principles of Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty and right to self-determination and affirms the principles enunciated in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007).

The Strategy identifies four focus areas:

1. Changes the Commission will make internally to increase its capacity to understand and address Indigenous human rights issues;
2. Changes the Commission will make to its complaints process so that it is more accessible and relevant to Indigenous peoples;
3. Enhancements to the Commission's external advocacy and public education with respect to Indigenous human rights issues; and
4. Strengthening the Commission's relationships with Indigenous communities, organizations, and service providers.

We know that the development of an *Indigenous Human Rights Strategy* is long overdue. We also know that as we move forward, the advice and input we receive from Indigenous communities, organizations and service providers will continue to shift how we approach Indigenous human rights issues. Embarking on a journey like this is a learning process; we will not get everything right and we will need to listen and adjust as we go. This is our initial effort to set our commitments and to provide a structure for

implementing those commitments. A detailed Implementation Plan for the Strategy will be developed with the advice of the Indigenous Advisory Circle, and with input from Indigenous communities, organizations, and service providers.