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INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY LEARNING POLICY
MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE
TOOLKIT

**To promote and protect the health of Canadians through leadership, partnership,
innovation and action in public health.**

—Public Health Agency of Canada

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The background of the page is a soft, abstract watercolor wash in various shades of purple, ranging from light lavender to deep, rich violet. The wash is more concentrated at the top and bottom edges, with a lighter, more airy feel in the center where the text is located.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY (ICC) LEARNING POLICY MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE TOOLKIT

This Toolkit was designed to support manager and employee implementation of the Public Health Agency of Canada's Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Policy. The Toolkit aims to equip and empower managers with the knowledge to support their employees in their Indigenous learning journeys, and for employees to understand the process. The Policy, supportive tools and guidance on effective Performance Management Agreement discussions are highlighted in the Toolkit.



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THE CANADA GOOSE

The Canada goose visual was selected for the Indigenous Cultural Competency publications as a shared symbol for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Canada, as we journey together.

The Canada goose (as well the Crackling goose and six other subspecies) is found across Turtle Island and are one of the few animals that has a pervasive representation in Indigenous symbolism and communities. The Canada goose is not considered the most important animal, but holds a place of significance as it is one of the only birds that can soar as high as an eagle and is a key food source.

PHAC encourages employees to have a coordinated and strategic journey in the development of their Indigenous cultural competency with the expectation that acquired knowledge and skills be applied to create a culturally humble organization and public health system. This journey is much like the Canadian goose and its long and annual migration. It will require regular and consistent work and be a lifelong journey for us all.

When Canadian geese migrate in a V formation, they take turns in the position of leader representing that no one individual or group can make progress along the journey of reconciliation on their own. It requires sharing the work, and relying on each other's cooperation and insights to achieve a shared goal.

The Canada goose is known for its clear communication, teamwork, equity, cooperation and shared leadership, as well as its commitment to their group and community. They persistently work together, representing our dependence on each other's strengths and presence.

Throughout Canadian history, the Canada goose has represented the wilderness; however, as the goose has adapted and integrated itself into urban centres its image has developed as a symbol of flexibility, adaptability and resilience.

We invite you to engage with this Indigenous Cultural Competency Manager and Employee Tool Kit as a Canada goose, with resolve, commitment and the wonder of flight.





INDIGENOUS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Managers and Employee Toolkit is for use across Turtle Island, which is the traditional homelands of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

Specifically, this toolkit was developed in the following locations:

- In Ottawa, also known as Adawe, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation, members of the Anishinabek Nation Self-Government Agreement. Ottawa is now home to many Urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples from across Turtle Island.
- In Bélair, on the south shore of Lake Winnipeg, also known as Weenipagamiksaguygun, which resides on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, the homeland of the Métis Nation, and just south of the lands of the Inuit. Bélair is a part of Treaty 1.
- In Vancouver, also known as X̱əp̱x̱ páy'em, is the unceded and ancestral territory of the hən'q̱əmin'əm' and Skwx̱ wú7mesh speaking peoples, the xwməθkwəy'əm (Musqueam), Skwx̱ wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and has been stewarded by them since time immemorial. Vancouver is now home to many Urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples from across Turtle Island.

We recognize that there is much more work ahead to create a culturally humble and safe public health system and work environment, which can address the harmful legacy of colonialism. We remain strongly committed to working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canada.

Contributor's Acknowledgement

The Indigenous Cultural Competency Policy was led by the Indigenous Relations Team of the Intergovernmental and Indigenous Affairs Division, Strategic Policy Branch and developed in consultation with the Indigenous Employee Network, the PHAC Indigenous Working Group, the Indigenous Regional Relations Hub, many PHAC governance tables as well as numerous branches and cultural safety experts.

The development of this ICC Manager and Employee Tool Kit received significant support from the Indigenous Regional Relations Hub. Thank you to the following for their review and input to the Tool Kit: the Human Resource Service Directorate (Workplace Wellbeing and Workforce Development Division, Program Support, Centre for People Management and Learning & Career Management), the Centre for Ombuds, Resolution and Ethics (CORE), Labour Relations and the National Manager's Network.





BACKGROUND

What is Indigenous Cultural Competency (ICC)?

Cultural competency is the knowledge that enables individuals to interact with people of other cultures in a way that is sensitive to differences. Cultural competency can apply to learning about any group that you do not belong to, including racial groups, sexual identities, and cultural groups. The process of developing cultural competency and becoming culturally humble involves self-reflection of one's own attitudes, beliefs, and values and how these may influence how one understands the cultural norms of others. This Toolkit focuses on Indigenous cultural competency - the awareness and knowledge that one develops about Indigenous Peoples.

Is cultural competence the same as Cultural Humility and Cultural Safety?

Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience, acknowledging one's level of cultural competency, existing knowledge gaps, acknowledging if past actions were unintentionally not culturally safe, and taking action to address knowledge gaps and required learning. A culturally humble individual assumes that they are a learner positioned to listen to the people they interact with, especially about another's culture, perspectives, and what needs to be accomplished. All public servants are to participate in ICC training with the intention of acting in a culturally humble manner.

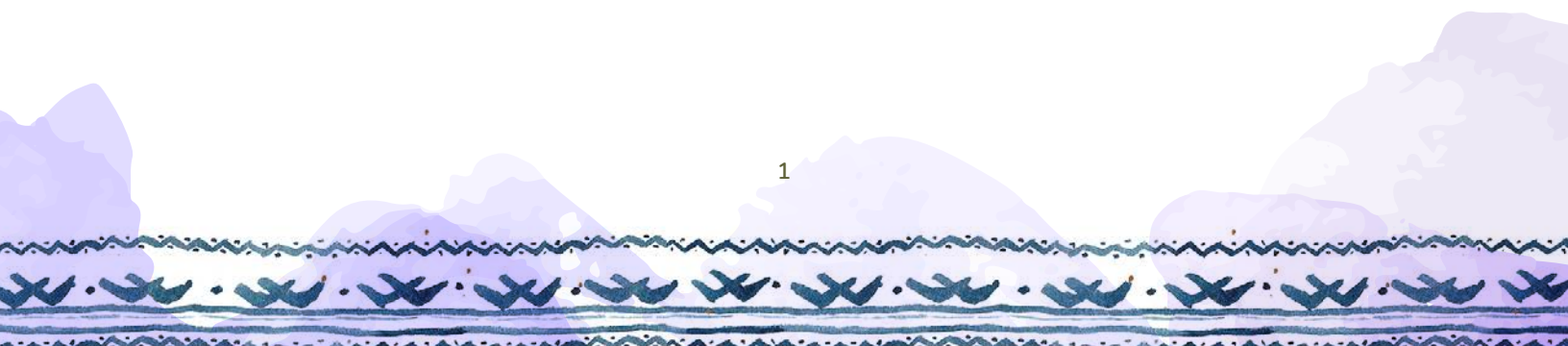
Cultural safety is the goal of the Public Health Agency of Canada's Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Policy (the Policy). A culturally safe organization is developed by having employees trained in cultural competency, developing the key skills they need for their position, and acting in a culturally humble manner. Cultural safety results in Indigenous people feeling respected and employees being able to meaningfully contribute to reconciliation, reduced systemic barriers and improved health outcomes. The level of cultural safety can only be determined by the Indigenous Peoples with whom the Public Health Agency of Canada interacts.

~ Refer to definitions in Annex A ~

Why Indigenous Cultural Competency?

As a result of the legacies borne out of the intersection between colonialism, racism, and the striking health inequities that persist between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Peoples across Canada, many governments, private sector and non-governmental organizations within and outside the health sector are striving to build Indigenous cultural competency of their employees.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was created through a legal settlement between Residential Schools Survivors, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives and the parties responsible for the creation and operation of the schools, the federal government, and church bodies. The TRC's mandate was to inform all Canadians about what happened in residential schools and document the truth of Survivors, their families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience. The final report included Ten Principles for Reconciliation and 94 Calls to Action that speak to all sectors of Canadian society.





Of relevance to Indigenous cultural competency are the TRC's Calls to Action, specifically #57, which states:

"We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism."

The Call to Action #57 calls upon public servants to learn and understand three broad categories of information:

- the impact of colonialism and intergenerational trauma;
- the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); and,
- Indigenous practices, cultures, and worldviews.

It is our responsibility as public servants to learn, to know the truth and to understand Canada's history and its impacts on Indigenous people.

Government of Canada Commitments

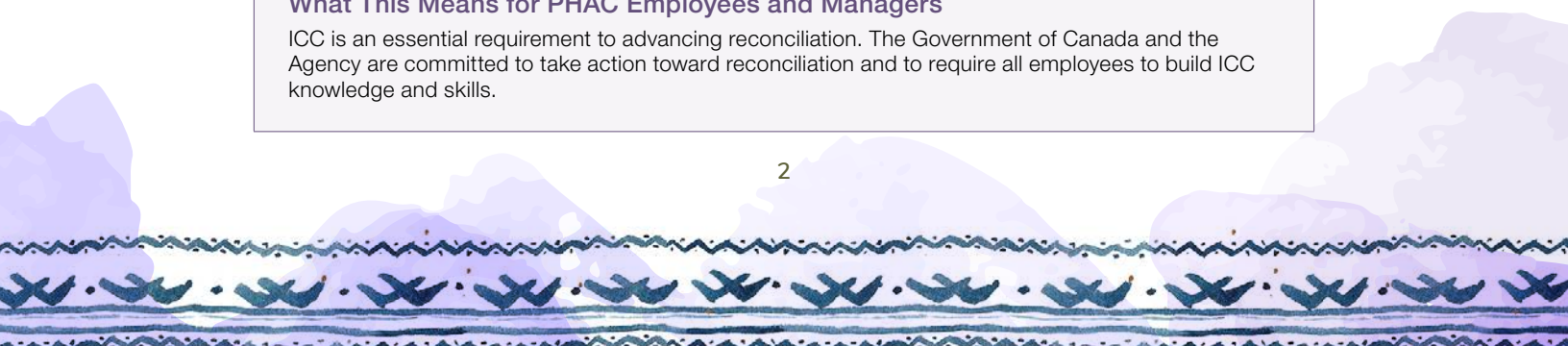
The Federal Government is committed to improving the lives of Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Prime Minister Trudeau has stated; "No relationship is more important to Canada than the relationship with Indigenous Peoples" (Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on National Aboriginal Day, 2017). In the 2022 Ministers' Mandate Letters, Ministers were directed to work "in full partnership with Indigenous Peoples and communities to advance meaningful reconciliation." Working in full partnership requires a level of cultural competence on the part of all public servants.

PHAC Commitments

PHAC is committed to advancing reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people through renewed nation-to-nation, government-to-government and Inuit-Crown relationships based on affirmation and implementation of rights, mutual respect, cooperation, and partnership. PHAC priorities include addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health systems, the reduction of health inequities for Indigenous people, addressing the impacts of residential schools and Indian hospitals, as well as incorporating an Indigenous lens and Two Eyed Seeing Approach into research, policies, and programs.

To advance these commitments and priorities, PHAC must work towards building Indigenous cultural competency that promotes culturally safe interactions, policies, and programs for Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous cultural competency learning is required in Performance Management Agreements (PMA) across all levels. Enhancing the knowledge and culturally safe practice of all employees will enable PHAC to work towards reconciliation and to improve processes and outcomes of public health initiatives for the benefit of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

What This Means for PHAC Employees and Managers
ICC is an essential requirement to advancing reconciliation. The Government of Canada and the Agency are committed to take action toward reconciliation and to require all employees to build ICC knowledge and skills.





THE RECOMMENDED PRINCIPLES OF INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY LEARNING

ICC learning is best achieved by following these three principles:

1. Cultural Humility

- Humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience¹.
- Recognizing that it is not possible as an outsider to ever become fully competent in another's culture or experience.
- Being open to recognizing one's limitations in understanding the lives of others.
- Taking responsibility for one's interactions with others, both intentional and unintentional.
- Being aware of personal biases (conscious and unconscious).
- Recognizing power imbalances, and striving to work toward co-development of initiatives with Indigenous Peoples.

2. Critical Self-Reflection

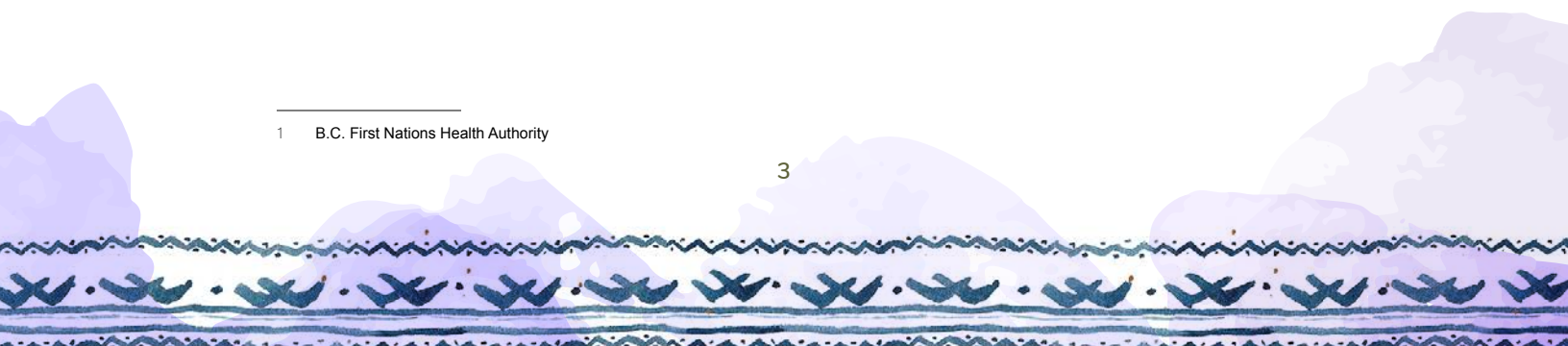
- Seeking to challenge one's way of thinking and acting, and positively contributing to the traditional communities on whose land one resides.
- Engaging in and embracing teachings of Indigenous Peoples.
- Being aware of the lens through which one views the world, and critically evaluating how one's world views could affect interactions with Indigenous Peoples.

3. Brave and Supported Learning

Everyone has a role in creating a brave and supportive learning environment for employees at all competency levels, including Indigenous employees.

In safe spaces, the well-being of Indigenous employees is sometimes compromised as non-Indigenous employees tend to set the bounds of what is safe, with potentially unsafe boundaries being chosen for Indigenous employees, or by refusing to touch subjects important to Indigenous employees, because it can make non-Indigenous people feel uncomfortable.

¹ B.C. First Nations Health Authority





Brave space should be safe space, but this does not necessarily mean comfort and the absence of disagreement. The following guidance on how to develop a brave space is provided below:

- Brave spaces seek intellectual risk-taking, which in turn requires distinguishing between challenge and aggression.
- Aggression is defined as any behavior directed toward another as a personal attack or comments with the intention to cause harm, while challenging is asking a person to consider broadening their perspective and to consider the effects their actions might have on others.
- A brave space can also be a place where non-Indigenous people are challenged to explore their own preconceptions, and where Indigenous people set the boundaries of the discussion.
 - As Indigenous employees can frequently and inappropriately be expected to educate their peers; some may be willing to assume this role, but for others it may feel like a burden or trigger trauma. Indigenous employees should not be asked to educate others, especially when it is not part of their position.
 - Indigenous employees may feel triggered by certain learning activities or how a discussion is being handled, these responses require consideration, not just the comfort levels of non-Indigenous employees who may not have a personal connection to the topic.
- Employees can choose to not engage in uncomfortable situations, but may be asked to consider what it means to disengage from the conversation.
- Signaling that someone is experiencing discomfort is often the best way to address it, whether by working through the discomfort as a group or making adjustments to how the conversation or activity is carried out.

A list of supports available to staff, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are listed in the in [Annex C](#).





PHAC INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY LEARNING POLICY

The Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Policy (the Policy) was developed in consultation with other federal departments and with significant internal dialogue. The Policy received Executive Committee approval and came into effect in April 2022. The Policy aligns to the Functional-specific competency development component of PHAC & Health Canada's Learning Framework.

Policy Purpose: To build Indigenous cultural competency of all employees, especially those that engage with Indigenous partners, and/or work on policies and programs that (either directly or indirectly) affect Indigenous Peoples.

Policy Benefits

The benefits of increasing Indigenous cultural competency at PHAC include:

- Advance culturally appropriate processes and respectful engagement and co-development with Indigenous partners;
- Support inclusive, culturally safe, and appropriate federal public health programs and policies for Indigenous Peoples;
- Strengthen relationships between Indigenous partners and PHAC;
- Promote a positive work environment and improve Indigenous employee retention; and
- Fulfill legal and federal reconciliation commitments.

Implementing the Policy is one of the key initiatives that the Agency has undertaken to strengthen our corporate culture, to build an inclusive work force, and strengthen capacity to apply an Indigenous health equity lens to PHAC programs and policies.

~ [Read the ICC Learning Policy](#) ~

What This Means for PHAC employees and managers

Implementation of the Policy is a corporate priority, and involves the new responsibility for managers and employees to support and build Indigenous cultural capacity to advance toward becoming a culturally safe organization and to fulfill the Policy benefits for Indigenous policy, programs and engagement.



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

The Policy establishes a common approach to ensure that all employees, regardless of their position, work towards building Indigenous cultural competency. Performance Management Agreements (PMAs) are the mechanism used for employees to identify annual ICC learning objectives in their Personal Learning and Development Plan (PLDP), and for managers to provide support and feedback on the application of the learning. PHAC managers have the delegated authority to assess the performance of each employee, and to support employee learning and development plans, including ICC.

PHAC recognizes and is sensitive to the fact that employees will have very different Indigenous cultural competency learning needs. Managers and employees are encouraged to have ongoing discussions to identify ICC learning objectives and activities.

What This Means for PHAC Employees and Managers

All employees share the responsibility to implement the Policy. Managers play a critical role in the Policy implementation by guiding employees on their Indigenous learning journey using the annual PMA process.

ICC is to be included in the annual PLDP section of the PMA.

The following process chart outlines the steps taken by managers and employees to implement the Policy in the annual PMA process. Each step is explained in more detail below the chart.

Indigenous Cultural Competency Process Chart

1. Initial Discussion

- Employees understand the rationale and need to build and deepen their Indigenous cultural competence
- Managers determine, in consultation with employees, the ICC Learning Road Map level required for each employee (from basic to in-depth knowledge) based on their responsibilities and level of engagement with Indigenous people

2. Indigenous Learning Road Map

- Employees know where they need to travel to on the ICC Learning Road Map according to the responsibilities of their position
- Employees identify their existing competencies and knowledge gaps

3. PMA Personal Learning Plan

- The identified knowledge gaps become the immediate or fiscal year ICC learning goals
- The ICC learning goals are included in the Personal Learning and Development Plan

4. ICC Learning Inventory (myLEARNING Portal)

- The inventory is organized to align with the ICC Learning Road Map competencies
- Employees select the learning activities that best build their specific competency goals
- Additional experiential learning activities can also be identified

5. PHAC Indigenous Learning Calendar (myLEARNING Portal)

- The calendar is continuously updated to include Indigenous learning opportunities from PHAC and other departments and partners
- Employees visit the calendar regularly to determine if any events align with their PMA learning goals or other interest areas
- Employees register for learning activities on the myLEARNING portal and complete the event pre and post reflections

6. PMA Review & Goal Setting

- As per the annual PMA cycle, managers and employees have discussions which include review of learning goals
- The ICC Toolkit also includes recommended annual PMA ICC discussion questions
- Employees identify which competencies have been built, which to deepen and which new competencies to focus on the following year

STEP 1 - INITIAL DISCUSSION WITH EMPLOYEE:

- Initial discussions are recommended to get a sense of whether employees understand the rationale and need to advance their Indigenous cultural competency. This will provide managers with an impression as to the employee's commitment to advance their Indigenous knowledge.
- If further understanding is needed, managers can have further discussion by highlighting the information contained in the Why Indigenous Cultural Competency? and Policy Benefits sections found above.

Suggested PMA Discussion Questions:

It is recommended that managers have a discussion with employees on ICC and reconciliation. This is not to be a part of a performance review, but rather an informal exchange. Employees will have various levels of understanding and engagement in dialogue.

For Initial Year (Baseline):

- Do you understand the rationale and need to develop your Indigenous cultural competency?
- What does reconciliation mean to you?
- How do you see your role as a PHAC employee in advancing reconciliation?

STEP 2 – SITUATING SELF ON PHAC INDIGENOUS LEARNING ROAD MAP:

~ Please see the companion document entitled PHAC Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Road Map

The Indigenous Cultural Competency Learning Road Map (the Road Map):

- Is a key tool to support the implementation of the Policy by providing a pathway to help guide employees along their learning journey;
- Has been designed specifically for the needs of the Agency and developed through extensive internal consultations and reviewed by Indigenous cultural safety experts; and
- Has six pillars and four levels of knowledge.

Where do Employees Need to Travel to on the Road Map?

Managers will discuss the level of understanding required for each employee according to their position.

Those that do not have responsibilities for, or influence on, Indigenous policy or programming are required to have a basic awareness level, the first level found on the Road Map.

- After the basic awareness level has been developed employees should work towards the General Knowledge level, the second level found on the Road Map.
- Those employees that have influence, or indirect responsibilities related to Indigenous policies, programs or engagement are required to have a core understanding level, the third level found on the Road Map.
- Those employees that have direct responsibilities related to Indigenous policies, programs or engagement are required to have an in-depth understanding level, the fourth

level found on the Road Map.

- Please note that a change of employee position may alter where on the Road Map one needs to work towards, and adjustments should be made.

The following chart provides some guidelines to help determine the level of knowledge that aligns with an employee's responsibilities. Managers should review the competencies on the Road Map and determine what competencies and level fit each employee's responsibilities.

Level	Responsibilities
Basic Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baseline requirement for all PHAC employees
General Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After the basic awareness level has been developed employees should work towards the General Knowledge level, the second level found on the Road Map
Core Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employees who work on policies and procedures that indirectly impact Indigenous Peoples or recipients ▪ Managers that are responsible for a team that works on Indigenous files, but does not have direct contact with Indigenous partners ▪ Employees working on policy or programs that have been identified as priorities for Indigenous partners ▪ Employees who work on products that require an assessment of Modern Treaty Implications or other Indigenous assessment processes
In-depth Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employees with any interaction or contact with Indigenous partners ▪ Employees working with Indigenous data or doing research involving Indigenous Peoples ▪ Employees who work on program or policy development with an Indigenous focus ▪ Employees who work on program and policy that directly impacts Indigenous Peoples or recipients ▪ Employee involved in Indigenous engagement activities ▪ Employees who complete assessment of Modern Treaty Implications or other Indigenous assessment processes

How to Use the Road Map

- The Road Map is not meant to be a tick the box exercise, but rather an incremental and iterative process to understand and complete learning objectives. The Road Map helps identify the building blocks of cultural competency that employees need to build.
- Some employees may also wish to build their cultural competencies beyond the level of their responsibilities or current position.
- Employees can use the Road Map to identify their existing competencies and knowledge gaps to set future learning goals.
- Descriptions for each Road Map competency have been provided. Employees can review the description of each competency to help determine if they have reached a minimum level of understanding.
- Should employees reach the minimum level of understanding required for their position, it is expected that they will either continue to identify where they want to deepen their knowledge each year, or work to develop their understanding beyond their required level.

EXAMPLE 1: Basic Awareness Level

Competency - Introduction to Urban Indigenous Peoples: Any learning opportunity that provides a broad overview of the context or experiences of urban Indigenous populations. Learners should be able to explain what makes a person a member of an urban Indigenous population, and why these diverse populations often face unique challenges compared to members of their communities that do not live in an urban setting.

Questions:

What has been my exposure to learning about urban Indigenous populations or communities?

To what extent do I know about the diversity of urban Indigenous experiences?

To what extent do I know about the unique challenges of urban Indigenous Peoples in comparison to members of their communities that do not live in an urban setting?

What are my awareness gaps?

Do I need to gain initial awareness, deepen my understanding, or do I feel comfortable with my existing level of awareness?

EXAMPLE 2: General Knowledge Level

Competency - What is colonization, and decolonization: Activities which discuss colonization, colonial systems, and what it means to decolonize. Decolonization is seen as an important component of reconciliation. Learners should be able to explain how Canada was colonized, provide examples of colonial systems in Canada, understand that decolonization is an ongoing process, and why there are different perspectives on what decolonization should look like in Canada.

Questions:

What has been my exposure to learning about colonization and decolonization in Canada?

To what extent do I know about why and how the Indigenous colonization process took place in Canada and what the resulting colonial systems are?

To what extent do I know about the diverse perspectives of decolonization as a method of reconciliation?

What are my awareness gaps?

Do I need to gain initial awareness, deepen my understanding, or do I feel comfortable with my existing level of awareness?

It is generally recommended that employees start on the left-hand side of the Road Map and move toward the right. Employees may have different levels of knowledge for each pillar of knowledge. For example, an employee that works on Indigenous health data may need an in-depth understanding of Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Concepts of Health, but only a General Knowledge level for Indigenous Engagement and Relationships.

What This Means for PHAC Employees and Managers

The Road Map provides a pathway to help guide employees along their Indigenous learning journey. It identifies competencies at the various levels, which employees can use to identify their existing competencies and knowledge gaps, in order to set future learning goals.

Managers are responsible for identifying the desired competency level for each employee and if needed, assist employees to situate themselves on the Road Map.

STEP 3 - ESTABLISHING LEARNING PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- After discussion with their managers, employees now know where on the Road Map they are to travel based on their position and responsibilities. Employees have completed the review of the Road Map, have identified their knowledge gaps, and where they need to deepen their knowledge.
- Employees are now ready to set their ICC learning to be included in the PLDP of their PMA.
- As with any PLDP goals, the information is to be specific and identify the learning activities. This may not always be possible for identifying ICC learning activities, as not all Indigenous learning events will be known at the time of the PMA discussions. Managers should allow flexibility for employees to attend events that will contribute to the competencies identified in their learning plan. If time allows, emerging Indigenous learning events may be of value regardless of whether they contribute to an employee's specific PLDP goals.

STEP 4 – IDENTIFY LEARNING ACTIVITIES FROM ICC LEARNING INVENTORY (the Learning Inventory):

~ [See the ICC Learning Inventory myLEARNING Portal here](#) ~

- The Learning Inventory includes a selection of suggested learning resources. The Learning Inventory is organized to align with the Road Map competencies and includes a range of learning approaches. Emphasis is placed on Indigenous-led experience-based learning, as well as a distinction-based approach. The Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) self-paced Indigenous learning courses are included in the inventory.
- The Learning Inventory is housed in the myLEARNING portal and provides a description and a direct link for each activity. The language in which the learning activities are offered is noted.
- Once an employee has identified their knowledge gaps and prioritized learning goals, the next step is to identify those activities will build that specific competency.
- Employees can select activities from the Learning Inventory that best build their specific competencies or address knowledge gaps. The Learning Inventory is not exhaustive, and an employee may know of other suitable learning activities.

Experiential Learning:

Not included in the ICC Learning Inventory are offline and hands on options of experiential learning including:

- CSPS in classroom sessions
- Attending a community event, with prior discussion with IRT
- Discussions or sessions with Elders or Knowledge Keepers
- Learning of traditional skills
- Land based learning
- Interactive or live seminars/workshops on specific topics
- Experiential learning opportunities are housed in the PHAC Indigenous Learning Calendar (Learning Calendar) described below.



Employees at a more advanced level of competency development may benefit from more experiential learning in community and/or interacting with Indigenous people. Managers should view participatory cultural competency building as a valid and valued learning opportunity.

The Indigenous style of experiential learning may be difficult for some employees, as it may push them out of their comfort zone; however, experiential activities should be prioritized because of the depth of value and benefit.

An employee's observation of Indigenous programming, participation in community events, and receiving teachings directly from Indigenous people cannot be replaced by western styles of learning. Respecting the pedagogy of Indigenous based learning also builds capacity and understanding.

It is important that employees have developed the competencies at the Core Understanding level prior to entering a community and participating in ceremony or traditional activities.

What This Means for PHAC Employees and Managers

The Learning Inventory provides learning activities that align with the competencies of the Road Map. Employees are welcome to identify relevant learning activities that are not listed in the inventory. Employees can refer to the tool to identify learning activities to fulfil their immediate learning goals. More advanced learners should partake in experiential learning activities.

STEP 5 – CHOOSE LEARNING ACTIVITIES FROM INDIGENOUS LEARNING CALENDAR:

The myLEARNING portal includes the PHAC Indigenous Learning Calendar (Learning Calendar) for employee ease of access and selection of continuously updated Indigenous learning events. The Calendar will highlight PHAC and HC Indigenous learning activities, as well as events from other departments and partners.

Ideally, time invested in event participation will align with the employee's PLDP, but there may be instances where the topic of discussion had not been previously identified, but is still an excellent learning opportunity.

There are pre and post session self-reflection questions that must be answered by an employee when registering for an Indigenous learning event in order for the event to be tracked as completed.

Evidence has shown that self-reflection helps to establish the roots of mutual understanding, respect and trust. As the CPHO report in 2019 summarized, Indigenous learning events in an organization have limited impact on reducing bias and discrimination. However, when learning events are coupled with self-reflection opportunities, organizations demonstrate a better ability to build trust and a better understanding of the ability to share power. This is the link from cultural competency to becoming a culturally humble and safe organization.





What This Means for PHAC Employees and Managers

The Learning Calendar will profile Indigenous learning activities and events that will be of interest to employees and will ease access to cross-departmental learning events. The myLEARNING portal functions as the registration mechanism.

STEP 6 - PMA REVIEW AND GOAL SETTING:

As per the annual PMA cycle, managers and employees are to review the previous year's learning goals, including which ICC learning goals required focused attention.

- The completion of the ICC learning activities should include a discussion on the following guiding questions:
 - Did the learning you participated in this year help to improve your understanding or knowledge of Indigenous cultural competency? If not, why?
 - What does reconciliation now mean to you?
 - How have you applied your learning this year to your work?
- Discussion on whether the previously identified competencies have reached a level of understanding or require further deepening. Employees may be ready to identify new competencies to work on.
- Should there be disagreement that cannot be successfully resolved between managers and employees on the level or competencies that an employee should be working on, please consider contacting Labour Relations.
- Employees should refer to the Road Map and the competency descriptions to set new goals.
- The continued or newly identified Indigenous learning goals should inform the next fiscal year's PLDPs.
- The above process would take place on an annual and continual basis.

CUSTOMIZED LEARNING

Branches can work with the Indigenous Relation Team (contact info in Annex B), as needed, to design and facilitate learning events based on the unique needs and priorities of their team. For example, Branches or teams may wish to build on courses offered in the Learning Inventory to adapt content to their unique needs or to support operationalizing the learning into their work.

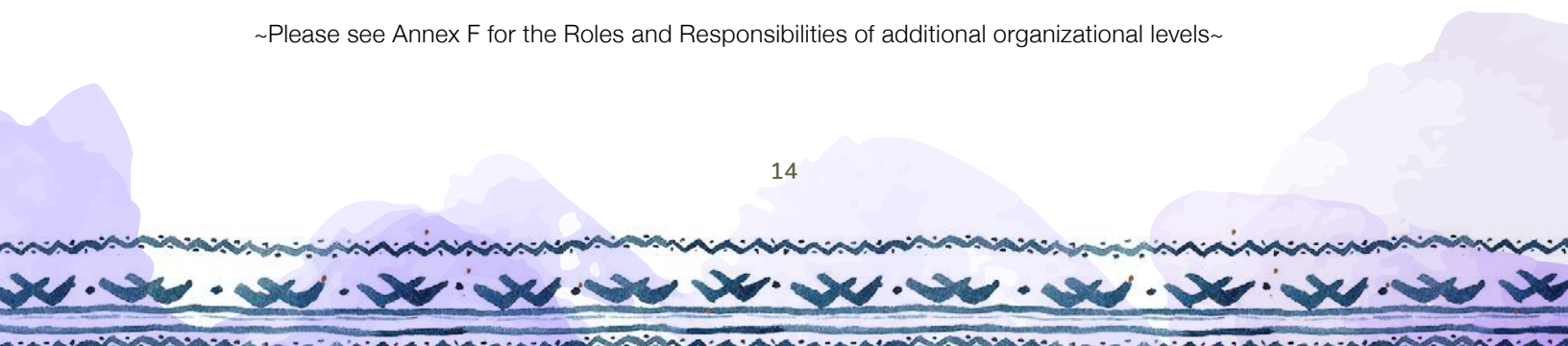
MONITORING

The Indigenous Relations Team will report to the Executive Committee (EC) on a quarterly basis, on the status of overall staff completion of yearly goals.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following manager and employee roles and responsibilities will contribute to enabling a corporate environment which values and promotes Indigenous learning and capacity building.

~Please see Annex F for the Roles and Responsibilities of additional organizational levels~





Manager/Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

Manager & Supervisor Responsibilities	Description
Align the Road Map to employee position responsibilities	Managers, in discussion with employees, will need to determine the level of understanding required to fulfill their responsibilities and to where on the Road Map employees should journey.
Promote access to Indigenous cultural competency resources, tools and learning activities necessary to achieve employee learning objectives	Managers are to promote the use of the Indigenous cultural competency resources which include the Learning Inventory and the Learning Calendar, to help employees identify learning activities and events that meet their required competency building. These resources are found on the myLEARNING portal.
Organize collective learning activities tailored to particular interests and competencies associated with the geographic location, function, or public health issue area	<p>While the Road Map and resources identify a general approach to competencies, branches or teams may want to organize specific competency development for their priorities and unique needs. The Indigenous Relations Team is available to facilitate this planning.</p> <p>Managers are encouraged to plan divisional or team level group learning. For example, a team may collectively take an online course or event, followed by a group self-reflection discussion. There are many benefits to this approach including the opportunity to discuss operational implementation of the learnt competencies.</p>
Demonstrate respect and flexibility for Indigenous experiential learning in community, and various learning styles and preferences of employees	<p>Employees will likely have a preferred style of learning and the ICC resources lean towards western learning styles such as classroom, online courses, videos and documentaries or broadcast events (all Indigenous-led learning).</p> <p>Experiential, in-community learning is also of high value for some employees. A variety of learning approaches is recommended.</p>
Support employees in the development, implementation and tracking of PLDPs within PMAs	<p>As with any PLDP within PMAs, employees may require discussions to support their selection of learning goals (competencies) and of learning activities.</p> <p>Managers are encouraged to support the time required to participate in learning activities.</p> <p>Annual review and discussion of PLDP are part of the PMA process.</p>





Manager & Supervisor Responsibilities	Description
Monitor the learning needs of teams and flag gaps in identified competencies and learning resources	Implementation of the Policy will in time identify gaps in cultural competencies or learning activities. Please let the Indigenous Relations Team know if there are any gaps that need to be filled.
Support the cultural safety of employees	Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees learn best when they feel supported and safe. Indigenous cultural competency development is to be supported with recognition that there may be emotional responses to some of the learning events.
Identify and apply cultural competency requirements in hiring processes	In policy or program areas that are Indigenous specific or may impact Indigenous populations, managers may want to identify the desired Indigenous cultural competencies in the Statement of Merit. The Road Map can be used as a resource to identify these competencies, and/or plans to develop the required competency level for the position.



Employee Roles and Responsibilities

Employee Responsibilities	Description
Employees plan for the ICC component of their PLDP	With the support of their manager, employees determine cultural competency learning objectives according to the competency requirements that align with their position and correspond to their individual learning needs and preferences. Employees identify the appropriate learning activities to build their identified ICC gaps.
Meet, or exceed, their cultural competency learning requirements each year	Employees complete their ICC Learning activities with the possibility of supplemental activities.
Commit to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection and integrating newly acquired learning into every aspect of their work	Employees grow in their ICC practices by completing self-reflections on their competency development and learn how to apply their knowledge.
Acquire and maintain the knowledge, skills and competencies related to their position and function	Employees continually strive to build their capacity to perform their responsibilities in a culturally safe manner.
Contribute to a culturally safe and humble workplace within the team	Employees support each other in their ICC learning journeys and contribute to a positive corporate culture.

FINAL WORDS

The opportunity to build and deepen Indigenous knowledge is an important activity for all employees with the support of managers. It is hoped that ICC development is viewed as an opportunity for personal and professional growth and development.

The Policy and the supporting tools will guide employees and managers through this process. Please contact the Indigenous Relations Team if you have any questions or concerns. (Please see Annex B for contact information)



ANNEX A - INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY (ICC) DEFINITIONS

What is ICC?

ICC is a self-reflective process to understand personal privilege and systemic biases, and to develop and maintain respectful relationships based on mutual trust and work to create conditions for inclusion, equity and justice. Cultural competency and cultural humility involve humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. (BC First Nations Health Authority)

What is Cultural Humility?

Cultural humility is a lifelong journey of self-reflection and learning to redress power imbalances. It involves listening without judgement; being open to learning from and about others; and learning about one's own culture and biases. Through cultural humility, it is possible to develop and maintain respectful relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility is a building block for cultural safety.

What is Indigenous Cultural Safety?

The goal of cultural safety is to create an environment free of racism and discrimination where Indigenous Peoples feel safe when receiving services, interacting with PHAC employees, or problem solving with their Agency colleagues. Cultural safety considers how social, political and historical contexts have shaped PHAC's workplace and service delivery experiences for Indigenous Peoples. It is each employee's responsibility to understand how those forces might still be affecting their own interactions with Indigenous Peoples.



ANNEX B – INDIGENOUS RELATIONS TEAM (IRT) CONTACT INFORMATION

All inquiries to the Indigenous Relations Team can be directed to the single window at:
indigenousrelations-relationsautochtones@phac-aspc.gc.ca



ANNEX C – LIST OF SUPPORTS

Topics discussed when engaging in ICC learning, such as Residential Schools, may cause trauma invoked by memories of past abuse and intergenerational impacts.

A National Residential School Crisis Line has been set up to provide support for former residential school students and their families. You can access information on the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program website or access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the 24-Hour National Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419.

The Hope for Wellness Help Line also offers immediate help to all Indigenous people across Canada. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call the toll-free line at 1-855-242-3310 or connect to the online chat at www.hopeforwellness.ca.

The Employee Assistance Program and Wellness Together Portal are available 24/7 to all employees.

The Centre for Ombuds, Resolution and Ethics (CORE) is a neutral, confidential, independent resource where all employees can raise, discuss and resolve work-related issues through informal approaches without fear of reprisal. Email ombudsman@hc-sc.gc.ca or call 1-888-490-2573.

ANNEX D – ADDITIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
<p>Senior Executives Vice Presidents</p>	<p>Create a culture that recognizes continuous learning, including ICC</p> <p>Allocate financial resources, if required, and give supervisors the authority to support employees in meeting their work objectives and development, including Indigenous cultural competency</p> <p>Receive IRT reports and monitor the effectiveness of the Policy</p> <p>Champion and support the direction and intent of the Policy</p>
<p>Executives Director Generals</p>	<p>Ensure employees are informed of the Policy and work toward building ICC awareness, understanding and attitudes to do their work with cultural competence</p> <p>Promote a culture of continuous learning among employees through leading by example, and encouraging employees to continuously strengthen their Indigenous cultural competencies</p> <p>Create a sense of cultural safety within the organization and model being a committed, humble learner</p> <p>Provide messaging of the policy's requirements</p>
<p>Indigenous Relations Team (within Strategic Policy Branch)</p>	<p>Develop clear communication and dissemination of the Policy and Road Map for effective operational implementation</p> <p>Develop tools and resources to support managers and employees for effective implementation</p> <p>Work with the Office of Audit and Evaluation and Performance Measurement and Reporting to design and implement an ICC Learning Policy performance measurement and evaluation plan, report findings and identify recommendations for improvements</p> <p>Recommend changes to the Policy based on evaluation findings and annual reviews</p> <p>Support branches and divisions in identifying ICC profiles specific to their needs, and support their planning</p> <p>Update the Road Map and the Learning Calendar on an ongoing basis</p> <p>Collaborate with Human Resources on the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Policy and Road Map</p>

ANNEX E – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. QUESTION:

What is Indigenous cultural competency (ICC)?

RESPONSE:

Cultural competency is the knowledge and skill that enables one to interact with people of other cultures in a way that is sensitive to, and respectful of, differences. Cultural competency can apply to learning about any group to which one does not belong (racial groups, sexual identities, age demographics, societal groups, etc.).

ICC is gained through an increased appreciation of the diverse values, lived experiences, and social conditions of others. It involves self-reflection of one's own attitudes, values and norms, and how these influence interactions with others. People who are culturally humble are willing to learn, reserved in judgment, open to accepting feedback, mindful in their approaches, and take responsibility for their actions (including when mistakes are made, even when intentions were not meant to be harmful).

ICC is the awareness and knowledge that one develops about Indigenous Peoples. It is required to work effectively on policy or programs that impact Indigenous Peoples, to engage with Indigenous partners, and to respect and appreciate Indigenous People within the workplace.

2. QUESTION:

What is PHAC's ICC Learning Policy?

RESPONSE:

The ICC Learning Policy helps guide PHAC to enable important actions towards building ICC capacity and becoming a culturally safe organization. It is one part of PHAC's commitment and direction to embrace and recognize the importance of Indigenous Peoples and their history and give priority to addressing Indigenous public health concerns in an appropriate manner.

The Policy creates a unified approach to ensure all employees have appropriate access and opportunities to ICC learning in accordance with their responsibilities regardless of level. It also ensures that learners are recognized for their efforts in the Performance Management Agreement.

It will build the Indigenous cultural awareness of all employees, especially those that engage with Indigenous partners, and work or have influence on policies and programs that affect Indigenous Peoples. The policy responds to the requirement to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action #57, which requires governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The PHAC ICC Learning Policy establishes a common approach to enable all employees to gain ICC knowledge and skills needed for their positions, and learning objectives reflected in the Personal Learning and Development Plan section of their Performance Management Agreement.

The Policy includes a description of processes, recommended and supportive principles, defined roles and responsibilities as well as tools to support ICC development.



3. QUESTION:

Which employees are subject to the PHAC ICC Learning Policy?

RESPONSE:

The Policy contributes to a shift in organizational culture; thus every employee is encouraged to take part. While it specifically applies to all PHAC employees who are eligible to engage in the annual Performance Management Agreement process (i.e., term and indeterminate employees), all others are encouraged to engage in ICC learning through dialogue with their manager.

4. QUESTION:

Why do PHAC employees need to complete yearly ICC training?

RESPONSE:

The ICC Learning Policy responds to the commitment to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action #57, which calls on governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

It is our responsibility as public servants to learn, to know the truth and to understand Canada's history and its impacts on Indigenous people. Fully incorporating the ICC Learning Policy is a foundational initiative that also contributes to PHAC's commitment to reconciliation.

5. QUESTION:

What ICC training is mandatory at PHAC?

RESPONSE:

PHAC had made the completion of the Canada School of Public Service - Indigenous Learning Series courses 101-105 mandatory in 2020.

Upon the completion of the above courses, every employee is expected to have annual ICC learning objectives and activities in their Personal Learning and Development Plan. The amount of time to invest in ICC is part of the employee/manager PMA discussion.





6. QUESTION:

What is my responsibility as an employee under PHAC ICC Learning Policy?

RESPONSE:

The ICC Manager and Employee Toolkit was developed to equip managers and employees with the knowledge necessary to support each employee's Indigenous learning journey, and for employees to be aware of the process. Employees are encouraged to review the Toolkit in its entirety as it provides important information about the ICC policy context and rationale, as well as three principles to support effective Indigenous learning.

Employees are responsible to plan and complete the ICC component of their Personal Learning and Development Plan, complete the identified learning activities, and take the time to complete the relevant self-reflections questionnaires. Commitment to an ongoing learning process, and engagement in self-reflection, are key elements to PHAC increasing Indigenous cultural competency. Employees are to integrate newly acquired learning into every aspect of their work as applicable.

Please see the ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES Section of the Toolkit for more information.

7. QUESTION:

I am an employee who does not have responsibilities for Indigenous files nor contact with Indigenous partners. Will this policy allow or require me to gain valuable training on Indigenous Peoples?

RESPONSE:

The extent of ICC learning is determined by what is required for each employee according to their position and file responsibilities. Those employees that do not have responsibilities, or influence on Indigenous policy or programming are required to build a basic awareness level. This is viewed as what Canadians should have learned in the public education system if the true history of Canada had not been withheld.

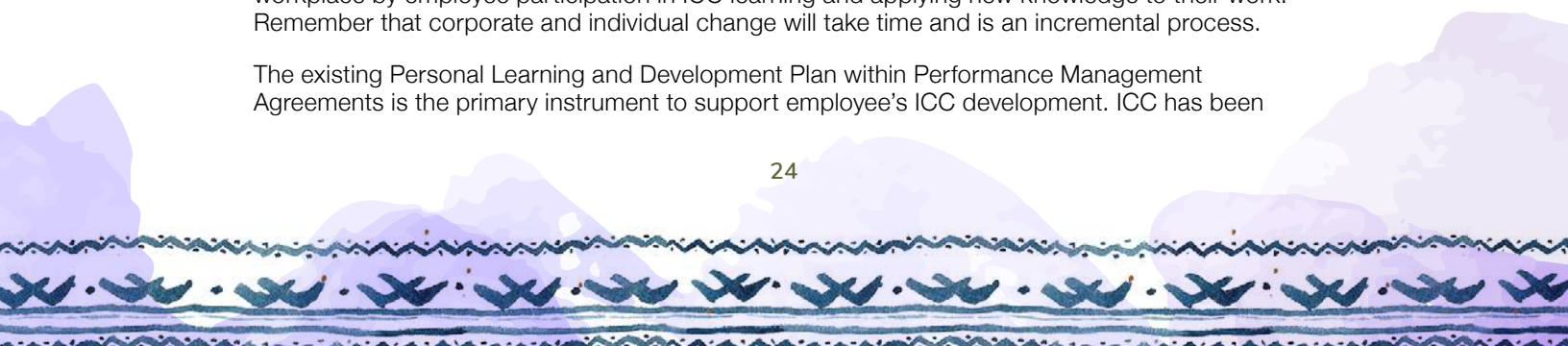
8. QUESTION:

As a manager/supervisor under the PHAC ICC Learning Policy, how will my responsibilities allow me to contribute to a culture shift and support ICC development?

RESPONSE:

Managers are typically well-positioned to have significant influence over shaping the culture of an organization. The ICC Policy allows managers to have meaningful discussions with employees and to help assess the level of understanding required to fulfill employee responsibilities for Indigenous policy, programs and engagement. Managers are to explore how ICC can be integrated into the workplace by employee participation in ICC learning and applying new knowledge to their work. Remember that corporate and individual change will take time and is an incremental process.

The existing Personal Learning and Development Plan within Performance Management Agreements is the primary instrument to support employee's ICC development. ICC has been





integrated into the existing and trusted PMA system, so it is convenient for managers and employees.

Managers have an opportunity to be curious and strategic by defining the ICC needs of their unit, and planning beyond the individual PMA Level.

Please see the ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES Section of the Toolkit for more information.

9. QUESTION:

As a manager, what supports are available for me to prepare for annual Performance Management Agreement (PMA) discussions on ICC with employees?

RESPONSE:

The ICC Manager and Employee Toolkit was developed to equip managers and employees with the knowledge to support employee's Indigenous learning journey, and for employees to be aware of the process. Managers are encouraged to review the Toolkit in its entirety as it provides important information about the ICC policy context and rationale, as well as three principles to support effective Indigenous learning.

Located in the Performance Management Section of the Toolkit is a step-by-step Performance Management Agreement (PMA) process description as well as a Process Chart to summarize the PMA proceedings.

Incorporating ICC into the annual PMA discussion will become more comfortable over time. The general steps and principles are the same; it is a matter of supporting employees in identifying specific Indigenous learning in their Personal Learning and Development Plan and using the tools as described.

Managers should not forget to plan and participate in their own ICC development.

If you have any remaining questions after reviewing the Toolkit, you can speak to your manager or send an inquiry to the Indigenous Relations Team single window at: indigenousrelations-relationsautochtones@phac-aspc.gc.ca.

As with any challenging PMA discussion, employees have access to the Centre for Ombuds, Resolution and Ethics (CORE) as a neutral, confidential and independent resource to discuss and resolve work-related issues. Email ombudsman@hc-sc.gc.ca or call 1-888-490-2573.

Conversely, Managers have access to Labour Relations to support difficult discussions.





10. QUESTION:

As a manager, how am I to determine where on the ICC Road Map an employee should journey?

RESPONSE:

Managers can consider employees as being in two categories:

Category 1:

- Employees who do not have responsibilities for, or influence on, Indigenous policy or programs are required to work toward a basic level of awareness, the first level found on the ICC Learning Roadmap.
- After the basic awareness level has been developed, employees should work toward the general knowledge level, the second level found on the ICC Learning Road Map.
- Remember, ICC is a long-term and incremental process.

Category 2:

- Those employees that have influence over, or indirect responsibilities related to Indigenous policies, programs or engagement are required to have a core understanding level, the third level found on the ICC Road Map.
- Employees who have direct responsibilities related to Indigenous policies, programs or engagement are required to have an in-depth level of understanding.
- Remember, ICC is a long-term and incremental process.
- The pace that ICC competency development should develop is circumstantial. For example, if an employee with ICC competencies at the awareness level was to move to a position where they had indirect responsibilities related to Indigenous policies, programs or engagement, they would be required to build capacity toward the core understanding level, which would likely require a robust ICC development plan. This planning would take place within annual PMA discussions and with the ongoing support of their manager.

The section entitled; “Where do Employees Need to Travel to on the ICC Learning Roadmap?” includes a chart that provides some guidelines to help determine the level of knowledge that aligns with an employee’s responsibilities. Please use your best judgement.

Please note that a change of employee position or files may alter where on the ICC Learning Road Map an employee needs to work towards, and adjustments should be made.





11. QUESTION:

What happens if an employee is not able to complete their ICC training during the fiscal year?

RESPONSE:

There may be several reasons an employee is unable to complete their Indigenous learning goals and activities established in their Personal Learning and Development Plan, including workload, an emerging organizational priority or the need to be absent from work. It is important that employees are making progress toward building their ICC even if their learning plan is incomplete.

The implications of employees not being able to complete ICC training during the fiscal year is dependent on their responsibilities. If an employee does not have direct or indirect responsibility for Indigenous policy or programs, it may be a matter of, after problem solving with their manager, recommitting for the next fiscal year.

If an employee has direct or indirect responsibility for Indigenous policy or programs, a discussion with their manager regarding the specific barriers that prevented the completion of the planned ICC activities is recommended.

Determining the amount of time to give priority to Indigenous learning (over other learning needs or workload demands) should be an annual PMA and ongoing manager/employee discussion.

12. QUESTION:

Where do I find more information about PHAC's ICC Learning Policy?

RESPONSE:

A link to the ICC policy is included in the Toolkit and can be found at ~ Read the ICC Learning Policy ~

The Toolkit should provide you with all the information you need to know about the ICC Learning Policy.

If there is information that you cannot locate in either the Policy or the Toolkit, you can speak with your manager, or send an inquiry to the Indigenous Relations Team single window at: indigenousrelations-relationsautochtones@phac-aspc.gc.ca





13. QUESTION:

Where can I find ICC courses and learning activities?

RESPONSE:

ICC Learning Inventory

The ICC Learning Inventory includes a sampling of Indigenous learning resources. The Inventory is organized to align with the competencies found in the ICC Learning Road Map, and includes a range of learning approaches such as the Canada School of Public Service self-paced Indigenous learning courses, YouTube videos, and documentaries from Indigenous sources, etc.

The Learning Inventory is housed on the myLEARNING portal. The ICC Indigenous Learning Inventory provides a direct link for each activity and the language(s) of the learning activity is noted.

Employees are welcome to seek additional learning resources that are not listed in the ICC Learning Inventory as it is not an exhaustive list. If in question, employees should discuss with their manager when using a non-inventory activity to ensure it meets their learning needs.

Indigenous Learning Calendar

For ease of access, the myLEARNING portal includes the PHAC Indigenous Learning Calendar, which is continuously updated with Indigenous learning events. The Calendar highlights PHAC and HC Indigenous learning activities, as well as events from other departments and partners.

Please note that completion of a pre and post self-reflection questionnaire are a registration requirement for many of the calendar events.

Ideally, time invested in event participation will align with employee's Personal Learning and Development Plans, but there may be instances where the topic of discussion was not previously identified as a learning need but is still an excellent learning opportunity.





14. QUESTION:

Why do I need to complete the pre- and post self-reflection questionnaires?

RESPONSE:

Self-reflections pre and post learning is a common tool used in adult learning and Indigenous cultural competency building. Organizational research has proven that self-reflection is a proven practice to enhance the effectiveness of targeted learning activities.

Learners are asked to reflect on what they already know about a topic and what they would like to learn. At the completion of the learning, employees are asked to reflect on what they learned, and how they can apply this to their work.

These reflections are compiled and used to assess the quality and usefulness of the individual ICC learning activity, and to assess PHAC's response to TRC #57, and progress towards creating a culturally safe organization.

There is no personal information shared at the individual level. Any quotes from written reflections are done anonymously.

15. QUESTION:

Can my manager prevent me from doing ICC training?

RESPONSE:

No, the PHAC ICC Learning Policy was approved by PHAC's Executive Committee and managers are responsible to implement the policy and support employees in their ICC development.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be unique and unforeseen circumstances, such as a public health emergency, where managers have been directed to deploy an all-hands-on deck and priority approach. This direction would be given at the executive level.

As with all learning activities, managers are responsible for ensuring that employees take the required courses and should be supportive in assisting employees to find appropriate time to complete ICC learning activities. That said, employees should seek manager approval for any ICC learning activities beyond learning activities approved in their Personal and Professional Development plan, prior to attending courses to ensure that operational requirements are met.

Additionally, a manager may request that an employee prioritize a different competency or ICC activity not included in the employee's Personal Learning and Development plan, based on emerging operational needs.





16. QUESTION:

Are there expectations that I share my ICC learning with my colleagues?

RESPONSE:

There is no corporate level expectation that employees share ICC learnings with colleagues.

Having said that, there may be divisional or regional level expectations for knowledge transfer activities across or within teams. This would be applicable with any learning activities, and can be common practice for high quality or strategically significant learning events where group presentation and dialogue is recommended.

17. QUESTION:

What if ICC learning events occur after work hours?

RESPONSE:

Attending an ICC learning activity after work hours would be applicable to any after hour learning and subject to the applicable Labour Agreement. Again, typical policies and processes for any learning activities (i.e., approval to attend an evening ICC learning event) applies to ICC learning.

18. QUESTION:

I regularly attended Indigenous learning session or events in my previous positions and in my personal life. Does this mean I am required to plan for additional ICC learning in my Personal Learning and Development Plan of my PMA?

RESPONSE:

The specific response is again sensitive to circumstances and depends on an employee's current ICC level of awareness and their responsibilities related to policy, programs or engagement related to Indigenous Peoples. Manager and employees will likely identify where on the ICC Learning Road Map an employee needs to travel, and what specific competency development is required.

The concept of life-long learning and the expansion and deepening of one's knowledge is a healthy pursuit from both a lifestyle and professional perspective, but it is also a strong belief held by many Indigenous people and communities. Indigenous cultural competency can always be deepened and extended.





19. QUESTION:

I am an Indigenous employee. How does the ICC policy apply to me?

RESPONSE:

The lived experience of Indigenous employees is very individual and personal and must be respected. Due to life circumstances and the continual impacts of colonization, the Indigenous experience is very diverse across Canada. Many Indigenous employees have been denied access to their ancestral culture and language, while other may lead/or be exposed to a very traditional way of living and world views.

Indigenous employees often speak to their need to deepen their cultural competency within the context of their personal Indigenous identity (i.e., within and across individual communities) while some are beginning their journey. Many see the need to expand their knowledge across all distinction groups. Even Elders speak to their commitment to life-long learning.

Being a federal public servant can often require a broad understanding of Indigenous Peoples who live across Canada, which results in the need for ICC across distinction group representation and approaches.

The ICC Road Map is also an effective tool for Indigenous employees where one can reflect on their current competencies, where they need to travel to perform their responsibilities, and identify their specific knowledge gaps.

Indigenous employees will also develop Indigenous learning activities for their Personal and Professional Development Plan in their PMA.





ANNEX F – EMPLOYEE SCENERIOS

SCENARIO #1 Glenda's Story

(Employee who is an enthusiastic Program Consultant – no Indigenous files)

Description:

Glenda is a program consultant and works for a division on a non-Indigenous program and does not have any direct or indirect interaction with Indigenous policies or programs. Her daughter has been coming home from school and sharing stories of Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

Glenda is intrigued, as she never learned about residential schools, or other such issues when she went to school. She would like to learn more, as a mother and as a Canadian, so she can have meaningful discussions with her daughter.

The Policy states that all PHAC employees need to develop their Indigenous cultural competency, and Glenda understands that she fits into the “Basic Awareness” level for her Indigenous learning journey.

Glenda has included her Indigenous learning goals in her PLDP of her PMA. She plans to register for numerous events she found on the Learning Calendar.

Manager's Response:

Glenda's Manager feels that she is a model of enthusiasm for Indigenous learning.

The manager supports Glenda's participation in Indigenous learning events and has asked Glenda to ensure that her level of participation does not impede her other learning goals, as well as her overall work responsibilities.





SCENARIO # 2 Joel's Story

(Employee does not understand Indigenous cultural competency requirements for a position with indirect interactions with Indigenous programs or policies).

Description:

Joel is an administrative officer and works for the Center for Grants and Contributions. He interacts with a number of Indigenous recipients, but feels his interactions are specific to financial monitoring and reporting.

During the annual talent management and training plan discussion, his manager recommended that Joel work toward attaining Indigenous cultural competencies at the "General Knowledge" (the second level) of the Road Map.

Although Joel is always interested in furthering his learning opportunities, he does not see the link between his work and ICC since his interactions are limited to financial transactions. He feels that he interacts with Indigenous recipients like any other recipient.

Manager's Response:

Joel's manager begins the conversation describing how all relationships with Indigenous recipients could be strengthened with competencies that increase one's understanding of the history and current context of Indigenous Peoples living in Canada. While Joel's work is strictly financial monitoring and reporting, Joel's manager describes the three ICC principles to embrace – humility, self-reflection, and bravery.

Joel's manager expresses that to have humility means that the Center may be impacting Indigenous Peoples in ways they haven't considered and wants to keep an open mind as to what that could be. The manager also expresses that he trusts Joel's ability to self-reflect and speak up when changes are needed. Therefore, Joel's managers recommends that he works within the second level of General Knowledge as he can see the value of using this knowledge.

Joel agrees to identify with his manager's support, the Indigenous cultural competencies that he will work on this fiscal year. Together Joel and his manager agreed that they will check in at the PMA Mid-year Review to discuss how Joel is doing, and how he is incorporating his new understanding into his work.





SCENARIO #3 Amare's Story

(Employee who is overconfident of his competency levels)

Description:

Amare is a policy analyst within a team working on health equity. He has eighteen years of experience and has been involved in several successful consultations with Indigenous partners.

Amare feels confident in his Indigenous cultural competency and does not feel the need to invest additional time in advancing his Indigenous cultural competencies. During his PMA discussion, Amare describes himself as being very busy and having other learning priorities. He feels that he has been doing just fine on his Indigenous related files.

Manager's Response:

Amare's manager reviews his assessment of where Amare's position and responsibilities lie on the Road Map and validated that he is currently within the third level (Core Understanding) and should aim towards the fourth level (In-depth Knowledge). Amare's manager makes note of the important distinction between the two levels as well as the significant contribution that someone in Amare's position would have on Indigenous public health and PHAC with continued effort.

Amare's manager explained that even Indigenous public servants have a life-long commitment to ICC as learning and development should be considered continuous.

Amare's manager begins by noting that he appreciates the continuous efforts Amare has made and that one can see the direct application of his learning on his Indigenous related files. Amare's manager then discusses the points found in the scenario description. Amare's concerns about being busy and having other learning needs were not ignored, but rather incorporated into Amare's overall learning plan.

Flexibility around scheduling was expressed as long as learning begins during the fiscal year. The manager began with an exploration of what the Indigenous learning objectives for this year could be to help guide the overall learning plan. To do so, Amare's manager asked if they could jointly review the Road Map and identify areas/competencies worthy of further development by examining it through multiple lenses:

- How would Amare rate himself?
- How does he think his colleagues would rate him?
- How does he think Indigenous right holders would rate him?

Noting that Amare's critical self-reflection was engaged, Amare's manager took note of the potential areas for competency development this year, while asking Amare what competencies and learning activities he would find valuable to his work.





SCENARIO #4 Giishkaatig's Story

(Indigenous employee seeking experiential learning)

Description:

Giishkaatig has been with the federal government for five years and recently moved to PHAC to work as a program consultant with the Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Branch. They are Indigenous and from an urban setting. Giishkaatig's is part of the 60's scoop and their adopted family is non-Indigenous.

Giishkaatig has participated in prior Indigenous cultural competency training in their previous department and is personally and professionally committed to strengthening their Indigenous identity. They feel that they would benefit from more exposure to Indigenous communities and organizations.

In preparation for their PMA discussion, Giishkaatig identified a learning goal of being in community and identifying a residential school event being organized by an Indigenous NGO.

Manager's Response:

Although this event is not identified in the learning inventory, Giishkaatig's manager supports the learning activity, given the benefits of a community-based event identified by the learner themselves. Giishkaatig also explained that they want to build their confidence and competencies regarding relationship building.

Giishkaatig and their manager agreed to include one community-based event and one on-line activity for each competency that Giishkaatig was working to develop.

Note to Managers

There may be situations where a manager feels that an employee does not recognize the need to build their ICC and does not demonstrate a willingness to participate in Indigenous competency learning activities. This would be similar to an employee not meeting the Performance Management Agreement- Core Competency of Demonstrating Integrity and Respect and the demonstrated behavior of Supporting and Valuing Diversity and Bilingualism.

Unconscious bias training may be recommended, and in extreme situations, the engagement of Labour Relations or the Centre for Ombuds, Resolution and Ethics (CORE). What is of vital importance is that employees who demonstrate overt or significant unconscious bias not be directly or indirectly involved in files that involve contact with Indigenous Peoples, or other equity seeking groups until capacity is built, or other strategies are in place.



