

Responding to and Preventing Sexual Violence Project Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

The **Advisory Committee** for the **Responding to and Preventing Sexual Violence Project** will be established to guide the Project, Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator), and Project Management Team (the Paqtnkek Health Centre and the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association).

1. Background

The Paqtnkek Health Centre and the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association have received funding from Status of Women Canada for a two-year, collaborative project to develop how we address sexual violence against Aboriginal women, working on both the response to violence and the prevention of violence, based in a culturally relevant and culturally revitalizing approach. While the focus of our work will be in Paqtnkek, we will also be connecting with seven other Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia (Indian Brook, Millbrook, Pictou Landing, Waycobah, Potlotek, Eskasoni, and Membertou) to share our knowledges and to build our local capacities.

2. Purpose of the Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Advisory Committee is to ensure that stakeholders in sexual violence response and prevention have their interests represented throughout the duration of the Project, and that by playing a key role in the creation of the work plan, the communities will have a strong sense of ownership and support of the outcomes of the Project. In this way, Advisory Committee members will help to ensure that future actions on the issues of sexual violence against Aboriginal women will be relevant and revitalizing to the communities involved.

3. Role of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee will be designed to provide community stakeholders, elders, and youth opportunities to have their interests represented in the Project in a focused and multi-interest group structure, based on consensus decision-making.

The Committee will share opinions and perspectives and offer collective advice to the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator). The Committee's input, along with broad public consultation and specialist consultation, will enable a planning process that is open, transparent, and meaningful to the communities. Input will flow from the Advisory Committee to the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator) throughout the planning process in the form of information, feedback, and recommendations that will be used by the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator) in developing the work plan.

Additionally, the Advisory Committee will be instrumental in advising the Project Staff Team on the best avenues for broad community engagement and communication of critical information.

Final decision-making authority in all project-related matters will lie with the Project Management Team (the Paqtnkek Health Centre and the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association) with key input from the Advisory Committee.

4. Duties of the Advisory Committee

- Meet on a monthly basis (or a bi-monthly basis as required) with the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator) acting as organizers and facilitators;
- Aid the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator) in recording meeting minutes (outlining the highlights of the meeting, areas of agreement, disagreement or decision, and recommendations or options) and/or in preparing project materials to be shared with the Advisory Committee and other interested partners as needed;
- Advise and provide recommendations for the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator) and for the work plan;
- Consult regularly with community members on the work plan;
- Share knowledges to help build local and connected capacities to the issues;
- Share relevant resources to the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator);
- Be open to learning from each other, the Project Staff Team (Community Facilitator and Project Coordinator), and the Project Management Team (the Paqtnkek Health Centre and the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre & Sexual Assault Services Association).

5. Committee Membership

Representation will be from interested individuals/groups working in response to and/or prevention of sexual violence in Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia – Paqtnkek, Indian Brook, Millbrook, Pictou Landing, Waycobah, Potlotek, Eskasoni, and Membertou.