

# Indigenous Verification Policy

## Background

BC College of Nurses & Midwives (“BCCNM”) has committed to eradicating Indigenous-specific racism within our health systems in order to provide anti-racist and culturally safe care for Indigenous Peoples. Guided by In Plain Sight Recommendation #14 and our 2023/24 action plan – *Redressing Harm to Indigenous Peoples in the Health-care System*, the college aims to increase recruitment and retention of Indigenous people with lived experience and expertise to leadership, staff and contractor roles.

In April 2025, the college received Special Program designation from the British Columbia’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner for a 5-year duration for its initiative to create Indigenous-specific positions and hire verified Indigenous applicants into these roles.

This policy serves to ensure Indigenous-specific positions are being offered to Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) people with the lived experience and lived expertise required for the position, and any benefits reserved for Indigenous employees are being provided to the intended Indigenous employees only. This process aims to uphold the integrity of Indigenous spaces at BCCNM and foster the enrichment of current and prospective Indigenous employee experiences by drawing on relevant perspectives and community connections.

This policy was developed drawing on recent policies and best practices for Indigenous identity verification from universities across Canada and BC health authorities, given their experience and efforts to ensure the benefits that come with employment opportunities and grants, are awarded to Indigenous people.

## Purpose

Indigenous-specific opportunities are held for Indigenous applicants with the lived experience and lived expertise directly relevant to the work of BCCNM. Recognizing that misrepresenting Indigenous identity exploits Indigenous individuals and communities, BCCNM acknowledges the harm caused when non-Indigenous individuals falsely presenting themselves as representatives. This deception erodes trust and exacerbates socio-economic disparities already affecting Indigenous peoples. Such fraudulent acts perpetuate systemic injustice and inequity, further reinforcing historical injustices and undermining efforts towards reconciliation and self-determination.

This policy provides a framework for the implementation of Indigenous verification through documentation, with the intention to safeguard Indigenous spaces and voices and to uphold Indigenous Peoples’ rights and access. This process will aid in providing greater transparency for applicants and employees by clearly communicating the process and intention of collecting and verifying Indigenous identity documents. This verification process ensures the authenticity that the applicant or the employee claims, reducing the risk of potential harm from misrepresentation of Indigenous identity.

BCCNM is committed to working towards reconciliation which requires, and is not limited to, a recognition of the Indigenous right to determine their own membership/citizenship in accordance with their community’s governance, customs, traditions, and procedures.

## Scope

This framework applies to anyone hired for Indigenous-specific positions at BCCNM or intends to access benefits expressly reserved for Indigenous employees. This policy does not apply to non-Indigenous specific positions.

## Policy

Verification by documentation will be required for all incoming assertions of Indigenous membership/ citizenship by members of the community where that claim may directly result in employment, for positions that have been identified as Indigenous-specific, or benefits specifically held for Indigenous employees.

The verification of documentation process is described below and recognizes the inherent rights of self-determination and self-governance by Indigenous communities. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) describes the right of Indigenous communities to determine their own membership in accordance with their customs and traditions, and this is upheld by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (SBC 2019, c.44).

Documentation of Indigenous identity varies across communities, provinces, and the country; the intent of this policy is to ensure Indigenous Peoples have privileged access to Indigenous-specific positions or benefits reserved for Indigenous employees at BCCNM. The intention is not to create barriers for Indigenous people, but rather to protect their rights and access.

## Implementation and compliance

Demonstrating commitment and actions toward safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and upholding Indigenous cultures and values within BCCNM spaces and resources requires reflection, active learning, and the verification of documentation. As such, application of this policy will focus on providing the education, resources, and support to meet the verification of documentation accountabilities as outlined.

### Procedure for Verification of Indigenous Identity for Employment or Benefits Access

1. An Indigenous-specific position is one where only First Nations, Inuit and Métis applicants will be considered.
2. The posting for the position will clearly stipulate that applicants will be required to provide documentation that will support and verify their Indigenous identity.
3. The job posting will speak to the requirement of Indigenous lived experience and lived expertise that forms part of the qualifications for the role.
4. The application process will include screening questions where applicants can self-identify their Indigenous background and affiliation.
5. A benefit reserved for Indigenous employees is one that expressly indicates so and is not intended for other employees.
6. People & Talent will collect the information required to verify identity in accordance with this policy.
7. If the applicant or employee does not have an acceptable form of government documentation, People & Talent will work with the Indigenous Cultural Safety & Humility Consultant to determine an appropriate approach for verifying Indigenous identity in an alternative manner. Each case will be assessed individually and may be subject to additional discussions with BCCNM's external First Nations and advisor and the candidate's community to support the verification process.
8. All verifications must be completed as part of the final stages of the employment offer or before the provision of the benefit.

9. Documentation related to the identification verification process are considered confidential and will be retained in accordance with document retention procedures for recruitment files and employment files.

### Identification Verification

To be considered for Indigenous-specific positions, applicants must self-identify through the application platform and provide supporting government documents:

*Candidate to provide specific information and documentation regarding their First Nation, Inuit Community, land claim affiliation, or Métis community.*

Some examples of acceptable forms of documentation include:

- A copy of a valid Indian Status or Treaty card;
- A copy of a valid Nunavut Trust Certificate card, roll number or any other proof accepted by Inuit communities;
- A copy of a citizenship card from a recognized Métis registry or The Manitoba Métis Federation; or
- A copy of a membership card from a Métis Settlement General Council community.

In the case of employees intending to access benefits that are designated for Indigenous employees only, they will begin the identification verification process (if one has not been completed before) by contacting People & Talent. The same supporting documents as outlined above will be required.

### Fraudulent Claims

Trust and honesty underpin every employment relationship. For the purposes of this policy, fraudulent claims are defined as any false or misleading documents or information submitted with the intent to gain employment or access employment benefits. Applicants and employees must have their Indigenous identities verified to the satisfaction of BCCNM.

If a candidate is found to have engaged in fraudulent claims, the offer of employment will be rescinded, and the candidate will be disqualified from consideration for any future positions with BCCNM.

If an employee is found to have engaged in fraudulent claims, their employment will be terminated for cause, immediately. The employee will not be entitled to any compensation or notice in lieu of compensation and will be ineligible for rehire with BCCNM.

## Exceptions

None.

## Review

This framework will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if required, by the Director, People & Talent, the Executive Director, Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, and the Indigenous Cultural Safety & Humility Consultant.

## Related documents

- [University of Saskatchewan: deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth Policy](#)
- [Indigenous Identity fraud | University of Saskatchewan](#)

- [Wilfrid Laurier University | Indigenous Identity Verification Process](#)
  - [Hiring of Indigenous Specific Positions - Interim Policy | University Secretariat and Legal Counsel \(queensu.ca\)](#)
  - [Indigenous Admissions Pathway - Medical School Admissions - Dalhousie University](#)
  - [Indigenous Peoples | Division for Inclusive Social Development \(DISD\) \(un.org\)](#)
- [BCCNM's Two-Year update: colleges report on progress towards dismantling racism in healthcare](#)

## History

Responsible (role)	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Next review date	Date replaced or retired	Superseded by (name of new policy)
Director, People & Talent	SLT	June 9, 2025	June 9, 2025	June 9, 2026		
Executive Director, Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion						

## Glossary

“Indigenous” means First Nations, Inuit or Métis Peoples those who “are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic, and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live.” This definition has been established within the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

“Special Programs” treat disadvantaged people and groups differently to promote substantive equality (or equity). This can mean that advantaged and dominant groups are excluded from opportunities provided by the special program. BCCNM’s special program focuses on ensuring Indigenous-specific positions in the organization are filled by verified Indigenous staff with lived experiences.